The Tomb Below the Ostrusha Mound and the Painted Prosopa within the Central Boxes of the Ceiling: Proposal for a New Reading

December 23, 2013 Posted by Consuelo Manetta under Art/Archaeology, E-journal, Research Symposium No Comments Edit This

Citation with persistent identifier:

Manetta, Conseulo. “The Tomb Below the Ostrusha Mound and the Painted *Prosopa* within the Central Boxes of the Ceiling: Proposal for a New Reading.” *CHS Research Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (2013). http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hlnc.essay:ManettaC.The_Tomb_Below_the_Ostrusha_Mound.2013

“*Tribuenda est sideribus divinitas*”

(Cic., *De Nat. Deor*, 2.15)

§1 The so-called Ostrusha Mound represents an important witness for understanding artistic, social and funeral aspects of Thracian culture during the Late Classical – Early Hellenistic periods, between monuments discovered in present-day Bulgaria.

§2 The burial mound rises up in the Kazanluk Valley, located in south central Bulgaria (Figure 1), about four kilometers southeast of the town Shipka. The tomb found underneath occupies the southern periphery of the mound (Figure 2). The discovery was made accidentally in April 1993[1]. In fact, a rainstorm brought to light a large block of molded stone defined as “lid of sarcophagus”, which was immediately intercepted by grave robbers[2]. The following excavation, funded by the Ministry of Culture and conducted by the “Temp” (ТЕПП) team under the direction of G. Kitov[3], discovered a complex consisting of 6 rooms[4] (Figure 3). It consists of: a burial chamber, located in the northern part of the complex, which opens onto the southern side[5]; two rooms on the immediate northwest and northeast sides of the *thalamos,*which are small[6] and rectangular[7]; three other rooms[8] open at the front of the complex.

§3 The interest of the complex definitely lies in its articulated planimetry, specifically in the somewhat unusual plan, the inconspicuous elements of furniture and furnishings discovered within the tomb[9], and especially in pictorial fragments found inside that were used to decorate the ceiling of the *thalamos* (Figure 4a). This last aspect represents a problematic element since their poor state of preservation[10] (due to environmental factors[11] and to some conservation actions that have not produced expected results[12]) compromises the reading of the figurative themes and their final interpretation. Furthermore, the paintings had already been intentionally defaced perhaps during the Late Antique period[13].

§4 The review of the representations within central boxes of the ceiling (Figure 4a and 4b, nos. 23-34) and a proposal for their new reading are the subject of this paper. The reconsideration of motifs painted within the lacunars along the four sides of the outer rectangle is planned for the near future (Figure 4b, nos.1-22)[14].

Decorative apparatus

§5 Some ornamental details along the external, northern side of the main building (two concentric triangles painted in red)[15] – such as architectural components pertaining to the horizontal *geison*, to the tympanum, to the gable roof framing[16], and to acroterial elements of the burial room — were painted[17]. Paint traces have also been noticed in the *kline*[18]. As is known, however, the real figurative and decorative program is expressed in the ceiling decoration[19].

Formal Reading and Typological Classification

§6 The scheme of the ceiling (Figures 4a and b) provides a design of 5 squares on the short sides and 8 along the longitudinal axis[20] that border the rectangular outer surface. Another smaller rectangle is inscribed inside, at the center of which lies a first square[21], then a second one (the latter built on the diagonal)[22], and an inner circle. On both short sides there are two rows of three squares[23]. Each coffer is separated by a small channel. A same uninterrupted channel runs among the area with the design and the smooth side band. A hierarchy in terms of decreasing depth of the coffers exists between the individual sectors described (outer rectangle, internal rectangle and central squares). The series of two concentric squares and the inscribed circle identifies the point of maximum depth, followed by the grid of 12 squares within the central rectangle. Finally, the squares that surround the outer rectangle represent the most superficial part. Each box[24] has a broad stepped frame, which refers to the frameworks (πλαίσια) which framed the original coffered intersection of the beams.

§7 Except for protrusions and depressions suggested through the gradation of plans[25] and for some simple smooth mouldings[26], every decorative detail is realized in a purely pictorial manner. The *kyma* ionic painted over the "*Ovoli*" just mentioned, such as also the "*guilloche"* motif that adorns all the four sides of the channel along the external perimeter of the ceiling and of the second triangle, after the Ionic *kyma*. Otherwise, the channel that runs between every lacunar and along the frame of the central rectangle presents a *trompe-l'œil* decoration with "scale" patterns[27]. Furthermore, laths and smooth bands that frame the coffers have a monochrome yellow ocher decoration. A rich vegetal frieze adorns all the vertical bands pertaining to the three different levels of projecting of coffers[28]. Colours used to belong to a very rich palette: vermillion red, likely cinnabar derived from mercury mineral, blue, deep green, yellow ocher[29]. Traces of gilding are also attested[30].

§8 Regarding the decoration on the bottom of the coffers, a first level of analysis permits us to recognize vegetal motifs with a purely decorative purpose and figural representations, according to the well known series of figural coffered ceilings. They present heads within the central boxes and mythological scenes within coffers placed along the external perimeter. The background of the coffers is light-blue, as was custom for coffered ceilings of Doric architecture[31].

§9 Several Bulgarian and foreign scholars[32] have devoted attention to the typological classification[33] of the ceiling, especially to the interpretation of the figural scenes painted in its square panels[34].

§10 First of all, the correct formal reading of this ceiling regards the problem concerning the well-known series of "Figuralkassetten"[35] and in general terms the meaning of the word *lacunar* (*φάτνωμα* or *φάτνη* in Greek)[36].

§11 Beyond the mentioned discussions regarding the typology of the Ostrusha ceiling[37], I agree with some remarks that M. Harari has recently presented concerning the painted Tarquinia, Tomb of Festoni[38], generally attributed to samples of ceilings with illusionistic representations of figural coffers[39]. Harari's clarifications about the meaning of *lacunaria* can be fittingly applied also to the ceiling of Ostrusha, that the same scholar cites as archaeological evidence "molto più strettamente 'pausiaco' di quello tarquiniese"[40]. According to his opinion, lacunars have to be intended properly as "… i comparti di forma quadrata, rettangolare, romboidale o anche poligonale, che risultano dall'incorniciatura a incrocio di travi originariamente lignee, tradotte come tali nell'edilizia litica (contignatio): rispetto a queste, il lacunar è perciò caratterizzato – anche etimologicamente: cfr. lacus e lacuna – da una marcata depressione che, nei veri e propri 'cassettoni', viene enfatizzata da più cornici a gradino"[41].

Outlines of Research

§12 Specifically, the study of Ostrusha's ceiling requires bigger and deeper levels of analysis, with attempts to understand the meaning – still debated – of its decorative and figurative program such as of its models. As we will see, the Thracian sample could be an exegetical document of primary importance and even constitutes the first Greek pictorial original to transmit a particular iconographic theme within the series of the figural coffered ceilings. In this sense, the painted *prosopa* of Ostrusha could also contribute to overcome the generic reading previously proposed for the *prosopa* realized in them.

§13 In this sense, the investigation regards questions relating to the spread of this architectural decoration both regarding its stone translation (mostly with painted details) and the only illusionistic lacunars[42]. In this regard it is useful to follow the evolution – also in chronological terms – of the two typologies: from the first sculptured and /or painted samples dated in the fifth centuries B.C.[43], through the Late Classical and Hellenistic developments regarding both samples in relief[44] and the only painted ones[45], both in Greece and in the Eastern areas, in *Magna Graecia*[46] and in Etruria[47]. The need to identify possible lines in transmitting the iconography used within Ostrusha, also makes it appropriate to follow its attestations of the Roman (starting from the 1st century AD) and the Late Antique periods, both realistic[48] and illusionistic[49]. The research also offers the possibility to verify scale and dynamics of the phaenomenon through its reflexes (*echoes*) into the vase painting[50], in Hellenistic-Roman wall painting[51], as well as also in the textile and mosaic productions[52]. The question is also related to a proper interpretation of some controversial literary and epigraphic sources: the well-known Plinian passage (Nat. Hist. XXXV, 123-126.), which traditionally ascribes to Παυσίας[53] the introduction of painted decoration within lacunars[54], the witness of Pausanias regarding the presence of works by the Sicyon painter within the *tholos* of Epidaurus[55], as well as some informations provided by inscriptions found at Epidauro[56] and at Delos[57].

§14 In an attempt to synthesize and also consider some problems related to the dating of the monuments, the decorative motifs, in reference to coffered figurative ceilings up to now known, reveal a surprisingly recurrent repertoire, although with a significant turning point in figurative terms starting from the end of the first and the second quarter of the fourth century BC. The bottoms of the lacunars in the early Athenian attestations of temples[58] present purely decorative[59] (Figure 5): palmettes and lotus blossoms arranged to form stars[60]; geometric stars [61] and rosettes, sometimes metal, added at the bottom of the lacunars[62]. If we can ascribe a purely decorative value to the floral motifs as elements fillers, the very frequent[63] recurrence of astral symbols (such as the stars of the most ancient repertoire), can't be accidental. It is clearly related to the

representation of the celestial vault, with obvious metaphorical comparisons with reference to the paradigm “ceiling = sky”[64]. Furthermore, as has been evident since very ancient times (for instance in Egyptian areas) internal coverage of temples and funerary monuments were decoratively assimilated to a starry sky[65].

§15 The taste for vegetal and floral elements is confirmed during the Late-Classical and Hellenistic periods[66]. If, at an archaeological level, the motif of the star (as a multi-pointed polygon) appears at least seemingly, reduced[67], the gilded stars epigraphically attested to within the *Asklepeion* at Epidaurus (around 370 BC)[68], actually assure their persistence in the decorative repertoire of ceilings. Here specifically, stars are alternated with floral elements and painted *prosopa*[69]. This latter motif, mostly alternating with flowers and rosettes, registers an increasing spread starting from the end of the first and the second quarter and after mid-fourth century BC. It is heads and busts, often – but not exclusively[70] – female[71], which are carved and/or painted in a frontal or a three-quarters view (Figure 6). The critique continues to consider the lacunars of the Nereids Monument at Xanthos as the first document in the series. Actually, architectural reasons and more recent studies lean toward a lower dating of this building, which appears completely in line with all other coffers with painted and/or sculptured *prosopa*[72]. The identification of such heads and busts represents up to now an open problem in the archeological field, since their reading is often complicated by at least three orders of reasons, which are inextricably linked among them. The first one regards reasons related to the poor state of preservation; the second one is linked to the fragmentary nature of documents, which in most cases do not allow us to identify the full decorative development of the panels and then to enucleate any narrative cycles. Finally, the third one is linked to a seeming[73] or actual absence of iconographic markers, namely of those attributes, which allowed the ancient viewer (and today modern observers) to immediately recognize characters and/or figurative cycles represented, even in the case of abbreviated reproductions. In general, and especially for the oldest *prosopa* in the series, scholars there are no proposals of reading that go beyond a generic identification as deities, often linked to the chthonic and Dionysian sphere, or personifications or human characters[74]. In fact, the association between the heads of lacunaria and the number of female faces, often between spirals, which have been painted on the edge of the Apulian vases[75], on pebble mosaics[76] and in some pictorial decorations[77] after the first half of the fourth century BC have been advanced almost unanimously (figure 7). These subjects with particular reference to flowers and heads have been equally unanimously associated – as we have viewed[78] – to *Pausias*[79]. Heads and busts appear within ceilings with a single central coffer with stepped frames in the Etruscan area, not before the third quarter of the fourth century BC[80]. They are used – clearly inspired by more ancient models – within the Tomb of *Velimna/Volumni*, dated in the middle Hellenistic period[81] (Figure 8). At times (also concurrently with the phenomenon of painted and sculptured *prosopa*) the bottom of lacunars houses figured scenes, mostly mythological. Actually, this theme occurs with more insistence during the Hellenistic period[82] (Figure 9).

§16 Coffered ceilings, which are attested in the Roman period, belong to buildings of different typologies[83]. At an iconographical level they present a variegated repertoire. Actually it enriches (perhaps also for reasons linked to the causality of the discoveries) the decorative and figurative formulary known for previous periods (sometimes also according to the functionality of the building), but it doesn’t actually upset its contents. In fact, there are still rosettes and centered decorations with palmettes and flowers of ornamental value. They can be alone[84] or associated with figurative motifs[85]. Figurative themes also regard mythological themes and figures[86] such as *prosopa*. In addition to these, there are also scenes of *apotheosis*[87], mainly in honorary monuments. Furthermore, the repertoire regarding secondary or residual spaces within the hortogonal schemes of coffers appears enriched, but essentially unchanged. There are animals (such as birds, rabbits, dolphins, snakes), sometimes fantastic (such as griffins, hippocampus, sphinxes); *gorgoneia*, theatrical masks, and personifications[88].

§17 With specific regard to heads and busts[89], the problem linked to their identification remains in many cases open[90], even in Roman and provincial areas. Nevertheless and compared to the documentation referring to the Late-Classical and Hellenistic periods, in some cases the presence of attributes and/or of inscriptions within such representations have led to correct readings. It is personifications of cities[91], of Muses[92], of divinities belonging to the Greek and Roman pantheon, occasionally permeated with aspects of Eastern religion[93] (Figure 10).

§18 Actually, the astronomical and cosmological thematic appears again. However, the reference to the sky is no longer only devolved to a geometrical representation of the star in form of a multi-pointed polygon[94], but to astral personifications[95]. Starting from the first century BC, for instance, representations of planets are attested. They follow the *praxis*, which associates them to the most important divinities belonging to Greek and Roman pantheon[96]. Representations of Helios and Selene also are present among Roman documents[97]. In its turn, also the Zodiac makes its appearance within representations of ceilings[98] (Figure 11).

§19 The examined dossier, although it certainly suffers for the causality of the findings, permit us to follow the figurative choices during the different periods. The picture that emerges outlines the input and the growing favor that figurative motifs – mainly *prosopa* – received in the decoration of lacunars starting from the end of the first and second quarter or middle of the fourth century BC. After a seeming interruption between the end of the fourth – beginning of the third century BC[99] and the first century AD, attestations of figured coffered ceilings (also with *prosopa*) appear again in Roman and provincial areas, with themes not so far from those used during the previous periods. At an iconographic level, incidence and value of cosmic – astrological thematics have been not adequately emphasized. They appear to be consistent and recurrent in terms of lacunar decoration. The ornamentation is expressed – as we have seen – through stars with a geometrical rendering (starting from the fifth century BC) and through personification of asters (constellations, planets, and Zodiac) after a gap of centuries, in the Roman period. Actually, however, the fact that the reference to the decoration of the sky – so natural in terms of symbolic associations and so evident both within the most ancient ceilings and between the first coffered examples of the series – seems unexplained and can suddenly disappear (just at the moment of the widest spread of the coffered typology), only to reappear during the Roman period[100].

§20 In this regard, someone tried, more or less doubtfully, to propose an astrological interpretation (in terms of personifications of stars[101] and/or “Planetaren *prosopa*”) for some representations within the Late-Classical coffers. In fact, the supporters of this theory believed, that the *prosopa* mentioned alongside the stars with a geometrical yield, which have been attested in the inscription of Epidaurus should be connected with them at a symbolic level[102]. Actually, reasons connected to the astronomical knowledge and archaeological reasons have always been opposed to such a

reading. This is because the most ancient representations of planets according to this iconography do not appear before the first century AD[103].

§21 Regarding this issue, I believe, the central lacunars within the ceiling of Ostrusha can offer interesting arguments of discussion.

Iconography and Iconology of the Ostrusha's Ceiling

§22 Before proceeding with analysis of the iconographic program of the Thracian document, it seems appropriate to precede with the examination of the new hypothesis of reading with a brief summary of previous proposals.

G. Kitov's interpretative hypothesis (1994) (Figure 4, A and B)

§23 According to G. Kitov, the image of the Sun[104], which has now completely disappeared, would have been placed in the central box of the ceiling within the circular section (coffer no. 43). In his opinion, rays and other decorative and figurative motives, such as characters and real or fantastic animals would have appeared in the triangular fields around the central box (coffers nos. 35 – 42). Furthermore, the twelve boxes – six on each side of the center box – would contain portraits of women and men (coffers nos. 24-26-27-28-30-32-33-34), whom the scholar interprets as members of an unspecified royal family[105]. The author notices rosettes and oak and bay leaves in the external northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast boxes (coffers nos.1-8-12-19). He interprets these just as decorative motives or as awards for victories of Thracian rulers[106]. Finally, the external boxes would have hosted images of individual or grouped males, armed characters, considered to be Thracian warriors or kings. Next to them, heroic and divine characters, such as Herakles, would have been placed. Scenes from lives of deceased and mythology would be mixed together.

G. Kitov – J. Văleva – A. Barbet's interpretative hypothesis (1995) (Figure 4, A and B)

§24 In another article, G. Kitov, J. Văleva and A. Barbet recognize three types of motives: 1.*floral*, according to a common tradition in monumental Greek architecture of the same period; 2. *heads*, among them, one with a crown (coffer no. 24) poorly preserved except for the one of a female originally dressed in earrings and a necklace, as the traces of gold foil on the surface show (coffer no. 32)[107]; 3. *Figurative scenes* with different motives[108]. Furthermore, other floral patterns were located in the boxes of the external corners (coffers nos.1-8-12-19) [109].

Julia Văleva's interpretative hypothesis (2005)

§25 More recently, J. Văleva has discussed the decoration of the tomb ceiling in his monograph[110], which represents up to now the most complete research on this topic. The scholar reconstructs a complex system of mythological references related to the heroic, mythic and chthonic world of Bellerophon, Achilles, Thetis, Nereids, Dionysus, Demeter and Persephone. According to the scholar the main themes, the history of Achilles and the Dionysiac world, find their inner coherence "…in the chthonic and funerary context uniting them"[111]. Floral motives in the angular boxes of the composition (coffers nos.1-19-12-8)[112]; *Prosopa* and floral motives are in the central portion of the ceiling (coffers nos. 23-34)[113]. The scholar also respectively sees figures of Nereids (coffers nos. 35-37)[114] and of Sirens (coffers nos. 39-42)[115] within the triangle residual spaces generated by the addition of the second square within the central coffer and from the addition of the circle in the middle of the composition.

§26 In boxes 23-34, J. Văleva recognizes: male *prosopa* (coffers nos. 27-34)[116]; female *prosopa* (coffers nos. 26-28-32)[117]; unspecified male or female *prosopa* (coffer no. 24, with a crown of gold leaves; coffer no. 30 with a crown of green leaves; coffer no. 33)[118]; floral patterns (coffers nos. 23-25-29-31)[119].

§27 Although the scholar leaves the issue concerning the interpretation of the figures[120] open, she actually reads them as chthonic male and female divinities (Demeter, Persephone and Dionysus). She expressly states, "…Demeter and Persephone together with Dionysus (and members of his thiasos) were represented on the Ostrusha ceiling". In her opinion, one of the above mentioned divinities would have been placed in the central box within the circular section (coffer no. 43)[121], similar to the female goddess of the ceiling of Bolshaya Bliznitsa Tomb in Southern Russia, often compared to the Ostrusha tomb[122]. She also believes that heads of divine initiates in the Eleusinian mysteries (Heracles) or characters belonging to the Dionysian *thiasos* could be other plausible interpretations[123].

§28 The iconographic system delineated by J. Văleva undoubtedly contains interesting suggestions, which S. Miller rightly states in his review of the book[124]. We have to repeat that the wretched state of preservation of the paintings, and the complete loss of representations of some of the boxes along the short, eastern side (nn. 10-11) and the long, southern side (nn. 13-18) hinder its reading. Nevertheless, a more careful examination of plaster fragments allows us to detect details unnoticed until now and to propose a new iconographic reading of many boxes.

New hypothesis of reconstruction (Figure 4, A and B; Figure 12)

§29 J. Văleva doubtless gets the point in reading Nereids and Sirens within the residual spaces above mentioned. The scholar properly remarks the value of these representations, which are known in the Classical and Hellenistic figurative culture[125]. Vice versa, the reading that I wish to propose for the twelve lacunars (coffers nos. 23-34) located within the central rectangle moves in a completely different direction. First of all, a careful examination of the paintings permits us to recognize a regular disposition of the boxes and to conclude that they exclusively hosted female *prosopa* alternating with floral patterns.

§30 The orientation of the figures partially follows the disposition that J. Văleva has already noticed[126]: boxes nos. 26, 28, 32 and 34 point toward the internal part; boxes nos. 23, 25 and 29-31 point, instead, toward the external part of the ceiling.

§31 My sequence is as follows (Figure 12):

Female *Prosopa* (coffers nos. 24-26-28-30-32-34; figures 13-18)

Floral compositions (coffers nos. 23-25-27-29-31-33; figures 19-21).

§32 We can definitely dissolve J. Văleva's conclusion and see two female figures in boxes 24 (Figure 13) and 30 (Figure 14). Similarity in the treatment of hair – curly and softly gathered up behind the neck, sometimes with strands falling on the shoulders (30) – and the brown-orange color used for the head 32 (Figure 15) and bright pink for the skin confirm this. Even the few traces of painting visible in box 34 (Figure 16) – a male character, according to J. Văleva – recall similar decorative choices. A careful observation and the use of information technologies now permit us to reconstruct some features of a female figure with head bowed to the left. Despite the state of the painting, it was possible to verify that they wore jewels[127]. In general, the young female faces appear with three quarters vision more or less accentuated, with slight torsion of the head to the right or left side. Regarding figure 32 in particular, the head is turned to the left, with sorrowful expression evident in her eyes. A similar countenance, although in a reversed position can be reconstructed for the figure in box 34. Although some traces of green can actually refer to green leaves used as ornament among the hair of figure 30 (already mentioned by J. Văleva) the state of preservation can't allow us to verify this detail. Instead, the youth in question wears an ornament, such as a tape, above her forehead and adornments in shape of bright pearls in her hair. Figures within coffers nos. 28 (Figure 17) and 30 (Figure 14) seem have similar ornaments.

§33 In my opinion, the most important decorative detail is a "crown of golden rays", which is painted in the background behind the head of figure 24 (Figure 13). Doubtless, this element assumes an impressive value as attribute. It becomes, as we will see, a decisive argument regarding the interpretative *querelle* of the whole cycle of *prosopa*. This detail has already been noticed by G. Kitov and J. Văleva. Nevertheless, it has always been identified as a crown of golden leaves. Instead, it is evident, that it is not a diadem or a "crown", because the ornament is not placed among the hair, but rather behind the head in the background. The same shape of the element, which composes this "halo" agrees with this interpretation, rather than with the hypothesis of seeing lanceolate leaves.

§34 The six boxes containing female heads are separated by an equal number of boxes, in which it is possible to reconstruct different decorative flower and leaf compositions. J. Văleva has already correctly recognized four panels with floral motifs (coffers nos. 23, 25, 29, 31; Figures 19-21). However, I believe 27 (not preserved) and 33 (Figure 22) should be added to this group as well. According to J. Văleva, these panels contained male *prosopa* only specified as having heads decorated with ears of corn, leaves and flowers. Although significant *lacunae* complicate the reconstruction of the patterns, there are no reasons to read them as human figures. Although not preserved, it is possible to reconstruct a similar floral composition in box 31 if we follow the regular pattern of head/flower.

§35 Who do the sorrowful female faces that stand out on the blue background of the coffers of Ostrusha belong to, then?

§36 In particular: what differentiates them from those that appear as secondary decoration on Apulian vases?

§37 Nothing actually, except for a detail, which has never escaped scholars who have studied this Thracian tomb. But, I think, they have misinterpreted its original meaning. In fact, the detail regarding the crown of rays, which is unquestionably recognizable behind the head of figure 24 (up to now always intended as a gilded crown or crown made of golden leafs) is an essential element and is by itself likely enough for clarifying, first of all, the astral nature of all the represented young women. If we add to this, the question regarding their disposition and the number of the heads within the central coffers of Ostrusha (six or seven in case, unfortunately not ascertainable, that also the circular central field (coffer no. 43, Figure 4, A and B; Figure 12) hosted a similar depiction, it appears plausible to narrow down the interpretative possibilities and to identified, obviously with all appropriate caution, the women as the personification of the constellation of the Pleiades.

§38 The problem with tracing and following the iconographic evolution of these personifications requires retracing the varied mythological traditions associated with them in detail. In fact, and for reasons that we will see, the personifications of Ostrusha would represent (up to now) an *unicum*.

§39 Daughters of Atlas[128] and Pleione[129], the Pleiades were originally woods nymphs, companions of Artemis during her hunts[130] They were later changed into stars of the bull constellation. The versions regarding their metamorphosis can be connected to two currents. The first one has an Aeschylean matrix and follows the Hesiod-Homeric tradition. According to this tradition, Zeus, moved to compassion by the pain they expressed for the effort of their father, Atlas, decided to turn the sisters into stars[131]. The second one, connected to Pindar and according to a Boeotian tradition, links them to a story with Orion. Persecuted by the giant hunter, the Pleiades would have addressed Jupiter, who would have changed them into stars[132]. Merope, the last in the group, would lose herself during the escape; separated from her sisters, she is reunited with them only once a year, regenerated by Zeus[133]. For this reason, her light would be less visible than that of her sisters. Another variant of the myth attributes the poor lighting of Merope to her shame for being the only sister[134] to have married a mortal, Sisyphus[135]. Another mythographic tradition also assigns to the Pleiad Electra a similar fate of despair and expulsion from the group of the sisters, in this case with a different transformation. Desperate after the fall of Troy, Electra (from whom the Trojan dynasty descends) would leave her sisters and be converted into a comet[136]. According to another version of the myth and of the five sisters Hyades, the Pleiades would have been changed into stars after the death of their brother Hyas. Furthermore, another tradition, displayed only by a preserved fragment of a Callimachus poem[137], considers the Pleiades as daughters of a Queen of the Amazons[138]. In this case their names[139] are different in respect to the most common variant of their myth[140]. Finally, Pherecydes attributes the paternity of the Pleiades to Lycurgus and states that they deserved to ascend to heaven together with the Hyades for being nurses of Dionysus at different stages of his childhood.

§40 In general, the mythography ascribes the number of the Pleiades to seven. It also agrees in considering the seventh Pleiad – Merope or Electra depending on the tradition – only partially visible. The absence or invisibility of one of the sisters is a fact rooted in the literary tradition since some authors ascribe to six, not seven, Pleiades[141].

§41 On a literary level, the first appearance of the Pleiades as personifications can be found in Hesiod[142] and Simonides[143]. Homer recalls their

representation on the shield of Achilles[144] and on the cup of Nestor[145]. A debated question regards the mention and the presence of Pleiades or Hyades in the Alcman's *Partheneion*[146] and on the Athenian vase shaped as an astragalus, attributed to Sotades[147] Since the Archaic period, we have noticed representations of single daughters of Atlas as young girls. For example, Pausanias describes upon the throne of Amyclae (530 BC), the rape of two Pleiades, Alcyone and Taygete, by Zeus and Poseidon respectively[148]. At the end of the fifth century BC, Euripides recalls the decoration of the shield of Achilles in his tragedy Electra[149]. In the Ion, however, Pleiades[150] "advancing in the middle of the sky" is part of a complex system of representations including the sky, constellations, various stages of the day and night, and seasonal cycles that adorn tissues preserved in sacred votive offerings. As treasurer of the temple of Delphi, Ion takes the precious fabrics and stretches them out in order to form the ceiling of a pavilion during the preparations for a banquet. It is impossible to clarify what actually consisted of the representation of the constellation, that is, if the Pleiades appeared as personifications or rather like stars, referring to scientific representations of the sky[151]. As stars, they are represented on the so-called Zodiac gemstone of Leningrad[152] and upon an Etruscan mirror from Palestrina, now belonging to the Meester de Ravenstein art collection[153]. The interpretation of the Pleiades as seven female profiled faces – six grouped and one isolated – upon a crater from Santa Maria Capua Vetere (now in the National Museum of Naples) is under discussion[154] (Figure 23).

§42 Furthermore, at an epigraphical level, the word Πλειάδες occurs in a few inscriptions from Miletus, mainly concerning Hellenistic calendars, dated in the second century BC[155]. Finally, the Pleiades are mentioned in the Εικόνες of Philostratus Minor, with regard to the painting with the depiction of the battle between Eurypylus and Pyrrhus. The constellation occurs among the decorations of Pirrhus' shield. Indeed, it would be the same shield of Achilles, which was given to his son by Odysseus, who had won it as a result of dispute with Ajax[156].

§43 Finally, their cosmological value also appears immense. The observation of the constellation was considered very important both for navigation and agriculture. A metaphor of human activities upon the Earth, their apparition in May and their subsequent sunset in October signaled the start and end of summer, therefore connected to the reaping and plowing of agriculture and to the stopping and the restarting of navigation in the sea[157].

§44 First of all, therefore, the reading of Ostrusha's coffers outlines the possibility that personifications of constellations (and perhaps the Pleiades in this specific context) were included into the iconographic repertoire regarding the coffered ceilings. Secondly, the question (already partially foreshadowed in the inscription of Epidaurus, according to some possible readings) reopens the wider problem here above mentioned regarding the astronomical-cosmic interpretation of some possible decorations of coffers. Furthermore, it also seems to reiterate that the astronomical thematic was probably more frequent than so far postulated within lacunars. This new identification would allow us to overcome the already discussed idea with regard to *Planetaren prosopa*, hardly acceptable in case of Late-Classical and First-Hellenistic monuments for the reasons explained. In fact, as we have already seen, the personification and the "mythologization" of constellations has more ancient origins than the personification of planets.

§45 One asks whether it would be plausible to assume that the strong reference to the symbolism of the "starry" sky, which is archaeologically ascertainable at the beginning of the coffered ceilings series, could be suggested not only through geometric stars but also through personified "faces" of some constellations, starting from the second quarter of the fourth century BC[158]. Obviously, I don't want assert that the astronomical thematic is the only one represented within lacunars or that all *prosopa* sculptured and/or painted within the coffers can be interpretable as personifications of constellations and in particular as the Pleiades[159].

§46 Moreover, at present, none of the other *prosopa* preserved as decoration of coffers allow us to track down the parameters that can ensure an unequivocal interpretation as Pleiades: the presence i.e. of attributes, which identify the asters and the complete series of seven heads or busts. However, we also have to say that a double explanation can be found in this situation. The fragmentary nature of the findings – several times mentioned – makes it difficult to reconstruct an entire figurative cycle, especially if we consider that in the case of Ostrusha only one of the figures is delegated through the crown of rays, to connote herself and the others as stars. Furthermore, it is plausible to speculate that perhaps for some astral (such as, for instance, the Hyades) and not astral (such as, for instance, the Muses) personifications there existed a same general iconographical representation as young women or young faces with a languid and vaguely sad beauty. Their recognition became effective to the eyes of observers through a simple attribute (the crown of rays in case of the Pleiades)[160] or through the inscription with the name.

§47 It is worth – once again with caution – comparing, for instance, the faces of the Thracian ceiling (and in particular the one tilted within box no. 32) with four of the five lacunars with *prosopa* discovered in Thasos, from a monument so far not identified[161]. The paucity of the portion preserved regarding two of these fragments doesn't allow us to provide sure informations about their gender[162]. Rather, the observation of two among the best preserved boxes of the ceiling is surprising (Figure 6, C-D). A female face is depicted within each of them. For the twisting and for their general attitude, the analogy with the figures of the Ostrusha burial mound is evident. Even the measurements are almost identical (cm 21/22) [163].

§48 Although they cannot provide a direct comparison, the examination of some illustrations of illuminated manuscripts appears to be of particular interest for the identification proposed here[164]. In fact, part of these manuscripts has been handed down with illustrations pertaining to the individual constellations[165]. Some of the paintings, which generally respect the iconography described in the texts to which they refer, reveal – in the unanimous opinion of critics – a derivation from ancient pictorial prototypes, not known[166]. First of all, these texts include Latin translations of *Φαινόμενα* of Aratus of Soli[167] created by Cicero, Germanicus, by an anonymous monk who lived during the eighth century (the so-called *Aratus Latinus* or *Aratus Latinus Primitivus*) and by a revised version (known as *Aratus Latinus Revised* or *Recensio Interpolata*) of the Carolingian period.

§49 This group is known as Aratea. To it is added also the manuscripts of the "De astronomia" of Ps. Hyginus[168] and two medieval works, which hark back to the tradition of Aratus both for the text and the illustrations: the *De Signis caeli* of ps. Beda[169] and the *De ordine ac positione stellarum in signis*[170].

§50 The examination of the whole series of codes with illustrations and the study regarding the tradition of every manuscript containing the texts,

has revealed some interesting data with reference to the depiction of the Pleiades. This constellation is present in 30 manuscripts[171]. Only in four of them the picture in not properly figured[172]. For the rest, it is always characterized by seven faces or busts of maidens[173] (in serious, at times almost painful attitude), arranged in a circle around a central one or on superimposed registers. If, in the case of some codes, it is actually impossible to hark back to ancient models for the figures[174], other codes reveal, however, evident traces of their ancient prototypes[175]. In this sense, the most ancient series seems to refer to illuminated manuscripts, which have copied the Ciceronian translation of the Aratea[176]. In the first witness of this text – the ms. Harley 647 drawn up in the ninth century AD – the Pleiades (f. 4v) appear in form of 7 heads within round fields[177], each of them with her name inscribed over each rod[178] (Figure 24).

§51 Here, the series of the faces is surprising, as they are not unlike the type of the Humanized Gorgon, well known in Greek and Roman art[179]. These figures lack any attributes, which could connotate the asters. Nevertheless, the attempt to distinguish them through the slight variety of their looks and of their hair is evident. The type is similar to a painted head in the middle of the ceiling of the Tomb of Alkimos, son of Hegesippos, discovered in 1867, in Southern Russia (figure 25). The head is interpreted as Demeter or Kore. However, M. Rostovzeff points out that the face recalls a mask and the ornamental heads of Medusa[180]. The richest series of codes regarding the illustration is that concerning the translation of Phainomena provided by Germanicus (perhaps after 14 AD)[181].

§52 Among the illustrated manuscripts of this series, the sheet no. 42 of the Aratea of Leiden deserves attention, known by scientific classification as *Vossianus Latinus Q79*[182].

§53 Here the Pleiades[183] (Figure 26) are personified and appear depicted as youths, of which only the heads are visible. They have in common expressions of sadness emphasized by languid looks, a slight tilting of the heads, and a minute care for decorative detail regarding hairstyles (high *chignons,* sometimes with tapes and ornaments in the hair), as well as the vivid polychrome. Six among them have a star on their heads and are arranged in a circle around the seventh one, *capite velato* (Merope or Electra). Their faces emerge from gray clouds and stand out from a blue background.

§54 Although there are undeniable and evident stylistic differences between the painting of Ostrusha and this Carolingian miniature (where scholars have recognized iconographic ancestries back to the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century AD)[184] it is evident that they derive from a similar or, however, not a far prototype, in terms of general iconographic conception.

§55 The miniature, like all others in the code *Vossianus Latinus* Q79, is included within a double frame that provides, starting from the outside, a sequence of a red and dark blue band. The figures emerge from a light blue background that evokes the sky, just as in the case of the Ostrusha paintings. It recalls the typical coloring for the bottom of more ancient coffers[185]. The small yellow star placed on the head of all the figures of the code *Vossianus Latinus* Q 79 presents them as constellations. This detail is clearly a medieval addition[186] to the original model. This is an optional decorative detail. This is demonstrated by the fact that the astral nature of the Pleiades can be evoked with the use of an halo of light behind the head (for instance in code Madrid 19) [187] or is not evoked at all. The astral nature of the personifications within the Ostrusha tomb is recalled – as we have seen – by the light's rays behind the head. Therefore, in this sense the "gilded crown" visible at least in figure 24 have to be interpreted.

§56 It should be noted, of course, that the Pleiades depicted in medieval manuscripts are always seven and not six as rather in the Thracian tomb. In the code *Vossianus Latinus*, such as in many other manuscripts, in fact, a seventh face is located in the middle of the illustration. This figure, as is evident in the Leiden's code, is often characterized by the veil and by a more sorrowful expression than the others. These iconographic expedients are well suited to the mythographic traditions above mentioned about Merope and Electra, as well as rightly suggested by commentators.

§57 The existence of a circular field in the middle of Ostrusha ceiling (coffer no 43) of which no decoration is now preserved, does not exclude that the seventh Pleiad could appear here, according to an iconography not unlike that one attested by the codes.

§58 If the seventh sister had not found a place in the representation of Ostrusha, the question could be explained through mythological tradition associated with the Pleiades. An alternative explanation could be related to reasons depending on the structural and architectural division of the ceiling. However, this can only be a speculative consideration because we can never have confirmation of one of the two hypotheses.

Conclusions and Perspectives of Research

§59 The hypothesis of a new reading, i.e. a constellation (perhaps the Pleiades) in the central portion of the coffered ceiling below the Ostrusha mound appears extremely interesting for different reasons. First of all, it offers a new interpretative key for understanding the figurative program of the monument[188]. It also reiterates the importance of the Ostrusha burial mound among the panorama of the Thracian tombs straddling the Late-Classical and the Hellenistic periods and, in general, in the context of the funerary painting. With regard to the chronological issue, the investigated monument is well framed into the series of coffered ceilings with *prosopa*, which is documented since the first/second quarter of the fourth century BC[189]. The inconspicuous stylistic elements[190] inferable from the analysis of the paintings, considering the very poor conditions of preservation and some data, emerging from the analysis of the context[191] rather address a dating not preceding the third quarter of the fourth century BC[192]. In addition, it worth considering the results of a most properly typological and architectural analysis of the monument[193] recently conducted by D. Stoyanova. The scholar suggests – with good reasons – a slip of the dating toward the last quarter of the fourth century BC, in line with the data emerging from the examination of other contexts in the area[194]. In this chronological framework, the coffered ceiling of Ostrusha and specifically the motif of the *prosopa* painted at the bottom of the lacunars alternating with the floral patterns seems, here used in apparent "delay" compared to the total known attestations[195]. The knowledge currently available does not allow us to verify this issue [196]. Nevertheless, it seems interesting to present, as an alternative, a further possible reading of the data. The craftsmen who created the paintings within the ceiling of Ostrusha and, before them, the owner of the tomb, who chose the figurative themes represented, certainly followed a "Greek" model. Instead, it turns out rather difficult to ascertain with how much knowledge or with how much willingness this model was copied. Theoretically, in fact, it is possible that the Thracian clients

had accepted the proved tradition, according to which the roofing of a room was assimilated to the sky. It is also plausible that, on the contrary, they have intended with less interest or perception the figurative medium used for expressing this cosmical/astrological thematic (in this case the specific personification of a constellation and the mythological value of the figurative cycle). The detail of the crown of rays through which only one of the characters is delegated to clarify itself as a star could find a double explanation in this perspective. On the one hand, the attribute was enough for qualifying the asterism of all of them or rather, Thracians don't know or don't have interest in recognizing through and through the asterism of all the figures. On the other hand, Thracians don't know or aren't interested in recognizing the typical mythological implications of some catasterisms[197].

§60 Furthermore, the iconographic indirect comparison with some illustrations of the illuminated manuscripts represents an interesting argument of analysis from different research perspectives. Starting from the assumption, not farfetched, that the illustrations accompanying the early medieval manuscripts presuppose ancient models, the image of the constellation contained in sheet 42 of *Aratea* of Leiden (and together with it, the whole series of representations regarding the Pleiades in the codes related with the *Vossianus Latinus*) have in fact allowed the identification of a "new" type of iconography (also in the absence of the oldest original documents). The *prosopa* of the Thracian ceiling could represent an example – the first one known in chronological order – of an iconography clearly more widespread than up to now known, for reasons related to the causality and/or the fragmentary nature of the discoveries. At the same time, this discovery foments the discussion about the origin and the ancient models of reference regarding the illustrations of the medieval manuscripts[198]. It is also linked with the more general issue related to times and ways, according to which the inventory of the constellations would have been defined. The postulated hypotheses regarding this topic are various. Some scholars believe that the text of Aratus, composed in the third century BC, would probably have been illustrated, although any copy with depictions has been preserved[199]. Instead, according to other authors, Aratus would have actually contributed through his work to fix and to disseminate the descriptive notions regarding the Greek constellations. In fact, their catalogue had already been previously defined, at least starting from the fifth century BC and it has been progressively codified in iconographic terms[200]. With specific regard to this, other scholars defend the opinion that the didactic texts of astronomy have been equipped with illustrative apparatuses in the Late Antique periods[201]. Actually, as we have viewed, the critic agrees on seeking ancient prototypes (Classic[202] or Late-Antique[203], now lost[204]) for the astronomical miniatures. In particular, they have postulated an inspiration for them starting exactly from the astronomical depictions on celestial globes, on sky maps or on real textbooks[205]. However, we also have to say that, although these repertoires have certainly provided iconographic material for astronomical representations, they could not represent the only sources of inspiration[206]. With specific reference to the Pleiades, it is worth remarking that this constellation (if present) doesn't appear as personification either on the globes, or probably on the celestial maps. There is probably also a practical reason for this since it appears difficult to find a place for their humanized depiction[207] in the spacial organization of a globe or a map. In this context, however, the representation of the Pleiades consists of a "mass" of seven stars, which are disposed in a circle in front of the nose of the Bull[208] or on his tail. The same code *Vossianus Latinus* provides proof of the variety of the possible sources of inspiration, insofar, as it has already demonstrated[209], the choice of its illustrations is the result of an accurate compilation work, which gleans from different sources through a synthesis of different traditions. Literary sources, elegant *ekphrasis* in reference to luxurious artifacts (shields, textiles, vase paintings) describe, as we have seen, representations of the sky since the most ancient periods. The recognition of the pattern of the Pleiades as one of the possible figurative cycles, although certainly not the only one, among the series of the figurative coffered ceilings identifies a further possible context of inspiration, since about the second quarter of the fourth century BC. (i.e., when Eudoxus of Cnidus spread the descriptions of the constellations in his *Phainomena*[210]. Furthermore, the new interpretation finally offers new useful arguments for solving the iconographic enigma regarding the series of the *prosopa* sculptured and/or painted not infrequently discovered at the bottom of ceilings from the Late-Classical to the Late-Antique periods.

§61 The persistence of the figurative motif of the Pleiades from the classical prototype to the Late Antique and the Medieval periods (as demonstrated, in a certain sense, from the illuminated manuscripts) actually assumes that it has known more fortune rather than the few reproductions up to now attested or recognized allow us to reconstruct.

§62 At a second level, but not negligible in terms of research is, obviously, the possible funerary value of this representation. Nevertheless, at the moment and considered the long tradition of "starry skies" as roofing of ceilings in the *peristasis* and in the rooms of temples, it seems not possible to validate this idea.

§63 Going back to the Ostrusha's "sky". Here, it is plausible that the depiction of the Pleiades could simply recall a starry sky and/or refer to the world populated by heroes and divinities, to which the Thracian noble deceased hopes to rise after his death.

§64 In this regard, but at the moment only at a speculative level, the representation of the Pleiades in funerary context seems to receive interesting explanations, from different observed mythographic perspectives. In 1854, Giulio Minervini properly argued that the myth of the Pleiades was "*propriamente funebre*"[211]. Their death, due to despair over the death of their brother Hyas (according to this version of the myth) and subsequent ascension into heaven, together with the Hyades, is a metaphor of death and at the same time of the rebirth and apotheosis. Daughters of Atlas, all of the Pleiades joined themselves (except for Merope) to deities generating heroes of Greek and Barbarian ancestry. Diodorus[212] gives this as the reason for their fame on the earth and their throne in heaven and the same name of Pleiades[213].

§65 This connection with death justifies – according to G. Minervini – their presence next to Memnon together with Eos and Horae, as imagined by Smyrnaeus[214]. Within a similar funeral frame of "intelligenza mistica e dionisiaca," the scholar puts forward the tradition that considers the Pleiades as daughters of Lycurgus and nurses of Dionysus, and therefore deserving to rise into heaven[215].

Figures

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Figure 1. Map of present-day Bulgaria. Kazanluk's Valley.

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Figure 2. Ostrusha Mound (by Väleva 2005).

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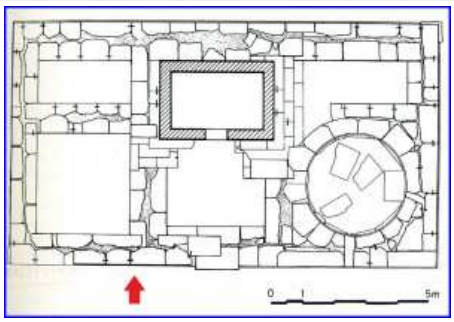

Figure 3. Plan of the tomb below the Ostrusha Mound (by Väleva 2005).

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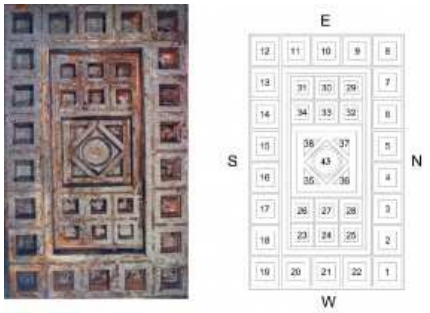

Figure 4 (A and B). Coffered ceiling within the Ostrusha tomb. B: scheme of the coffered ceiling (by Väleva 2005).

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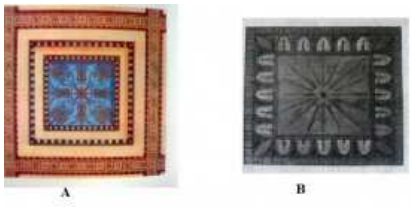

Figure 5. A. Parthenon, lacunar. B. Hephaisteion, lacunar.

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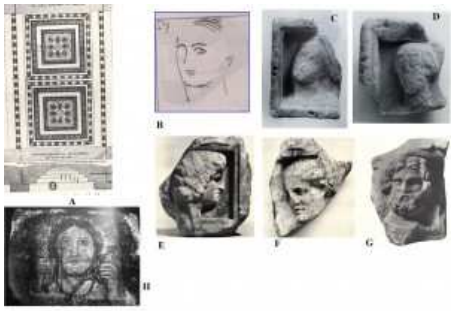

Figure 6. Samples of figural coffered ceilings. A and B. Xanthos, Nereid Monument (by Lehmann – Spittle 1982); C and D. Thasos, monument not identified (by Holzmann 1994); E, F, and G, Samothrace, propylon of the temenos (Lehmann – Spittle 1982); H. Southern Russia, Bolshaja Bliznitsa Mound (by Barbet 2004).

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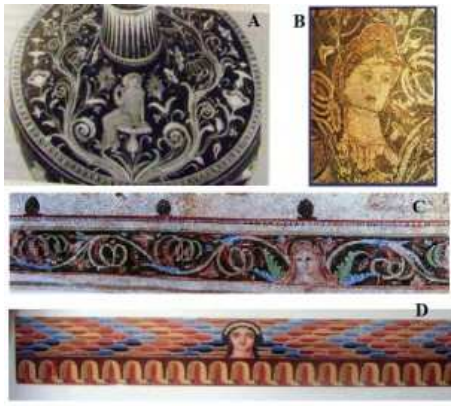

Figure 7. A. Apulian Vase (by Moreno 1994); B. Durrachium, Pebble mosaic; C. Aineias, Tomb II (by Βοκοτοπούλου 1990); D. Vulci, Tomba François (by Steingräber 2006).

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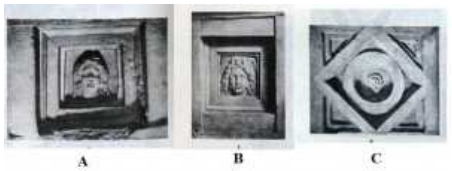

Figure 8. Perugia, Tomb of Volumni. A. Femal head; B. Gorgoneion; C. female head.

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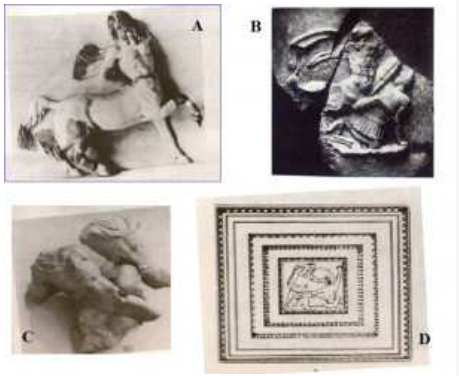

Figure 9.Samples of coffered ceilings with mythological themes. A. Samothrace, Hieron; B. Mausoleum of Belevi; C. Priene, Temple of Athena; D. Halicarnassus, Mausoleum (by Lehmann – Spittle 1982).

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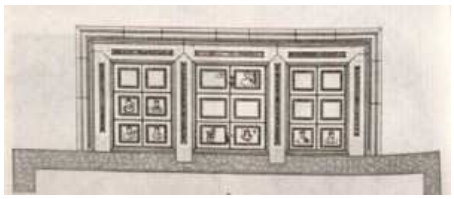

Figure 10. Miletus, Serapeion (by Lehmann – Spittle 1982).

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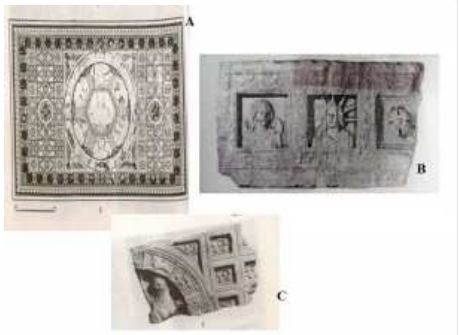

Figure 11. A. Palmyra, Temple of Bel, Northern adyton; B. Corinth; C. Palmyra, monument not identified (by Lehmann – Spittle 1982).

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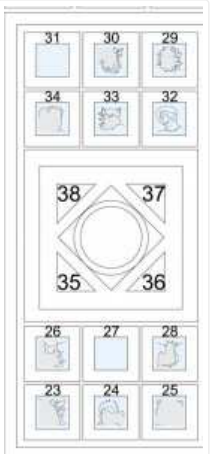

Figure 12. Scheme of the Ostrusha's ceiling according the new proposal of reading (by Barov 1995. Rielaboration and reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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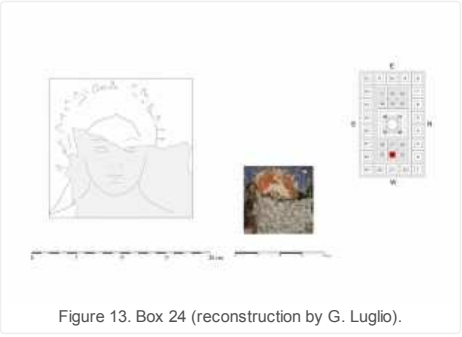

Figure 13. Box 24 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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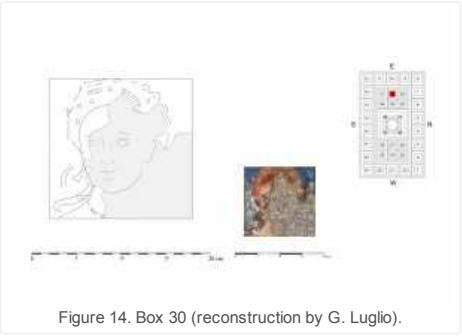

Figure 14. Box 30 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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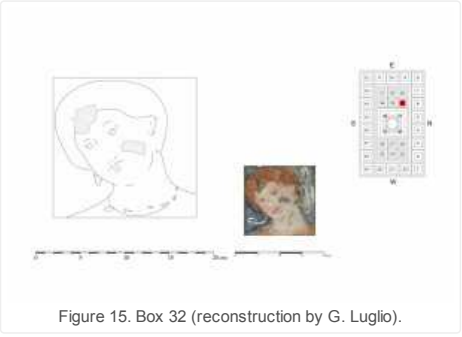

Figure 15. Box 32 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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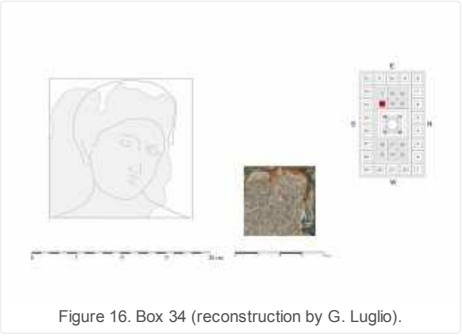

Figure 16. Box 34 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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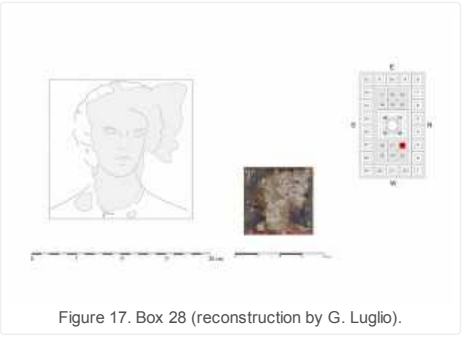

Figure 17. Box 28 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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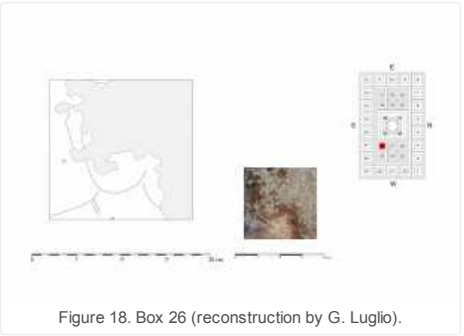

Figure 18. Box 26 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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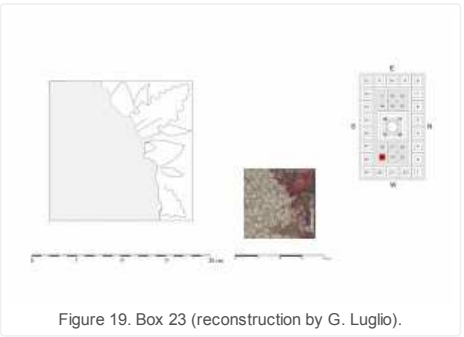

Figure 19. Box 23 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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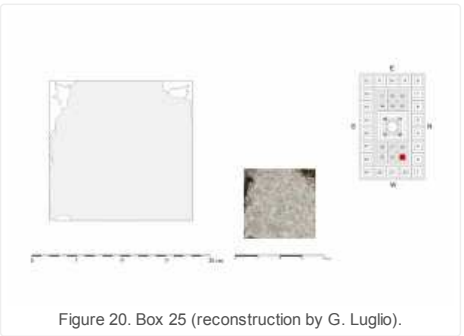

Figure 20. Box 25 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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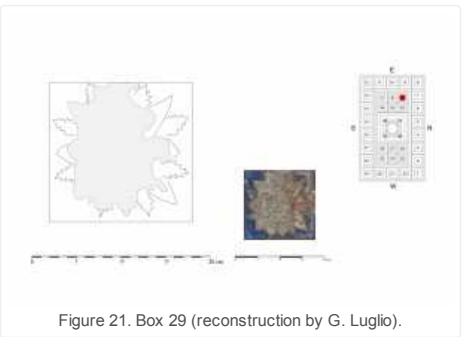

Figure 21. Box 29 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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Figure 22. Box 33 (reconstruction by G. Luglio).

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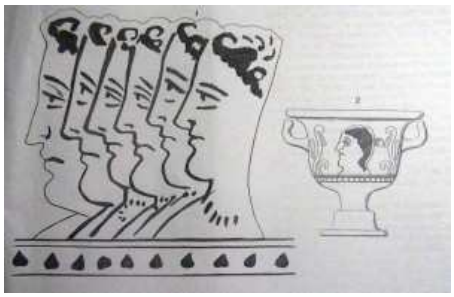

Figure 23. Crater from Santa Maria Capua Vetere (Naples, Achaeological National Museum), by Minervini 1954.

Figure 24 | return to article

Figure 24. Ms. Harley 647, f. 4v (by www.kristenlippincott.com).

Figure 25 | return to article

Figure 25. Southern Russia. Tomb of Alkimos, son of Hegesippos (by Barbet 2004).

Figure 26 | return to article

Figure 26. Aratea of Leiden, ms. Vossianus Latinus Q79, sheet no. 42 (by www.kristenelippincott.com).

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*My deepest gratitude to Greg Nagy, Doug Frame, Kenny Morrell and to all the Center for Hellenic Center's staff, especially to Lanah Koelle. Sincere thanks to Luca Giuliani for the valuable suggestions he provided. My heartfelt gratitude to Margherita Bonanno, Totko Stoyanov, Maria Reho, Vincenzo Saladino, Krasimira Stefanova, Daniela Stoyanova, Kitan Kitanov, Marcella Pisani, Giulia Rocco, Giovanna Di Giacomo, Francesca Pomarici, Simona Carosi. Special thanks to Anna Santoni, Gianfranco Adornato and to the research team on the Astronomic Manuscripts of Pisa, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. I owe to Zdravko Barov the permission for using photographs that have served for my reconstructions. Without Giampaolo Luglio, who realized the graphic reconstructions of the paintings, the reading of many details would have been impossible. My gratitude to Kevin Kriebel and Scot Sussman for the review of the English text. My research on the Bulgarian tombs would never have started without the generous permission of G. Kitov. I regret the thought that my thanks arrive only after his untimely passing.

[1] Although G. Kitov had already begun some preliminary investigations in the area during the summer of 1992.

[2] Китов 1994 c:13; Barov 1995; Văleva 2005: 11; Китов 2008: 57 and 59.

[3] Acronym for "Traholozhna Ekspeditsija za Moghilni Prouchvanija" (Трахоложна Експедиция за Могилни Проучвания = Thracological Expedition for Exploration of Tumuli). This is the name of the expedition created and directed by E' G. Kitov from 1988 up to his premature death in 2008. The Bulgarian archeologist of the Academy of Science of Sofia directed a large number of investigations and discoveries within the Kazanluk's Valley: see Китов 2008: 56–57.

[4] I am not interested here in dealing with the specific architectural and typologicla features of the funeral building. This topic and more, in general, a typological-architectural analysis of Bulgarian funeral monuments during the Early Hellenistic period has been partially addressed (Русева 2000, Русева 2002, where she does not consider the Ostrusha burial Mound; Василева 2005: especially 97–98, Vassileva 2008: 37–46, and Вълева 2013: especially 40: she classifies the Tomb within Ostrusha as Type I A (7) BBD-E). The forthcoming publication by D. Stefanova Stojanova (Sofia, St. Kliment Ohridski University) on this topic is awaited. Her PhD thesis titled *Монументална архитектура в Тракия V-III в. Пр. Хр. Строителни материали, техники, конструкции, ордери* (*Monumental architecture in Thracia 5th– 3rdBC. Bulding materials, techniques, constructions and orders*). On an architectural level, the scholar dates the monument in the last quarter of the fourth century BC. The brief planimetric description here provided is from Китов 1994c, 13–20 ; Văleva 2005: 11–16 ; Китов 2008: 57–64 , which we refer to. J. Văleva (2005, 14) reports the news of the discovery of another burial in front of the complex.

[5] The presence of holes in the threshold and in the upper framing block of the entrance assumes the original existence of a double swing door, no longer preserved. It is a monolithic structure shaped like a sarcophagus (m 3,51 e 3,55, regarding respectively northern and Southern sides x 2,5 [o 2,47, according to Văleva 2005: 12] x 3,5) with a gabled roof (H. m 0,99; L. m 4,02; Largh. m 2,91) situated above a crepidine formed by three steps. The building has three decorated sides and reproduces a horizontal (with pseudo-architrave, a step, *kyma* reversa, cornice with dentils) and oblique *geison* in a simplified manner. The northern long side does not have moldings, except for a strong overhang at the end of the wall and a painted geometric decoration in red, perhaps suggesting a fronton. The third room within the Goljama Kosmatka burial mound presents a similar conformation as sarcophagus, although in a more simplified manner. This tomb has been discovered in 2004, not far from the Ostrusha burial mound: Archibald 1998: 289ff.; Theodossiev 2000: 438ff.; Стояанова 2008: 101ff.; Saladino 2013: 132 and 176, with a complete bibliography regarding the monument: see also footnote 2.

[6] Respectively of m 1,4 x 3,1 and m 1,37 x 3,26: see Китов 1994 c: 16; Kitov–Văleva–Barbet 1995: 64; Китов 2008: 61. Văleva 2005: 13 further elaborates on these measurements: m 1,36 x 3,14 for the western room; m 1,37 x 3,29, for the eastern room; see. also Вълева 2013:n73 and 40.

[7] From their original elevation, only two rows of stone blocks are preserved, without any indication as to the possible entrances.

[8] The first, located at the southwestern end (side of m 3,15), is square. It has been interpreted as a vestibule with an entrance on the south side and with a stepped threshold; the second, in the middle is rectangular (m 3,1 x 1,83 according to Kitov's measurements [Китов 1994:17; see Китов 2008:61 and fig. 74]. The length of the room indicated by Văleva 2005: 13 and confirmed in Вълева 2013: n73 and 40) is slightly different [m 3,07]. The third one, located at the southeastern end with an entrance on the southwestern side, is round (Diam. 3,23 m) and domed. It is at the South-East end, with entrance in the South-West portion.

[9] The following architectural decorative elements (it is not clear if they belong to the *thalamos*, as suggested) were found in front of the complex: six acroterial elements (perhaps concerning the external architectural decoration), five with palmette decoration; several clay pots (no detailed documentation provided), including an imported dish, *amphorae* and *pithoi**[9]***. Furthermore, there is a stone *kline* leaning on the northern wall. The discovery of jewel fragments in front of the *thalamos* has also been mentioned. The burial of a horse is documented within the squared southwest room. Fragments of spearheads, a knife, and traces of organic material perhaps belonging to a textile bag containing silver equine trappings were discovered among the horse's bones. Several gilded silver foils found in the same room have been assigned to a horse harness as well. Silver vessels, including a *phiale* and an *oinochoe*, were found next to these *appliques*. Furthermore, horse bones and possible fragments of a chariot have been found in the round room located at the southeastern end. However, at this point in time it is impossible to confirm the discovery of sculptural elements with the animals mentioned by G. Kitov. It is also necessary to mention the discovery of several coins within the complex. Two bronze coins of Philipp II (382-366 BC) and a silver one coined in Apollonia (Sozopol) dated between the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth century BC have been found in the area between the front of the monument and the *thalamos*. Copper and bronze coins together with fragmentary clay pots and iron nails have been found in a tunnel excavated below the burial room. Here, a Persian coin (mid-third century AD), coins of Constantin I period, and Byzantine coins have been uncovered. No anthropological data is attested. The findings of grave goods and furnishings discovered within the monument have not yet been published, so information regarding ritual aspects and burial practices are not conspicuous. See: Китов 1994c:13–19; Kitov,Văleva, and Barbet 1995: 62–65; Китов 2003 a: 24; Китов 2008: 59–63, fig. 77 and 79; Văleva (2005:12 and 14, figg. 8–10–11–12 with further references). Regarding the architectural decorative elements, J. Văleva mentions 4 angular acroterial elements and a central one, with a total of 5 fragments, compared with the 6 mentioned by G. Kitov. The *oinochoe* discovered within the square room belongs to Rachmanlij-Rogozen 145-Derveni B 14 type, dated between the middle and the second half of the fourth century BC; see also Китов 2003a: 24; Văleva 2002: 55; Văleva 2005:14. Lately, the study of the two Thasian *amphorae* with stamps from the front of the complex conducted by B. Lilova (Лилова 2011: 128–138) has permitted to date them respectively at 335 and 325 BC.

[10] Upon the discovery, fragments of paintings relating to the ceiling had collapsed over the funeral bed: Китов 2008: 60.

[11] Already in 1995 A. Barbet denounced the plight of the paintings of the tomb and called for the accommodation of equipment for recording the internal microclimate, as well as the use of large polystyrene plates against the walls. She also suggested regulating the access to the tomb and to ensure illumination with cold light, for the same reasons and in order to avoid shock hygrometric: Kitov,Văleva, and Barbet 1995: 65.

[12] T. Petkova and G. Mavrov made the first conservative actions. Finally, the Ministry of Culture commissioned the study, the preservation, and the restoration of paintings to Zdravko Barov (Китов 1994c: 20, n34 and 35; Китов 2008: 60). Removable wooden frames with thin wires of gauze were mounted on the ceiling in order to recover flakes of painted decoration: Kitov, Văleva, and Barbet 1995: 65. Some evident spots of discoloration on the ground painted within individual lacunar represent the negative effect for action carried out by the first conservators on the site after the discovery. Actually, they applied a solution of polyvinyl acetate in an organic solvent on the most damaged areas, in an attempt to stabilize portions of the painted plaster. This action altered the coefficients of expansion within those areas: Barov–Faber 1996:11–15. I am indebted with Z. Barov for these informations.

[13]According to G. Kitov around the middle of the fourth century AD, when some graves were placed within the mound's fill: Китов 1994c:13; Китов 2008: 60. Only the southwestern area would have been spared, for unexplained reasons.

[14] Manetta, *forthcoming*.

[15] Maybe to suggest a real pediment: Китов 1994 c: 15; Văleva 2005:13n8.

[16] The dentils decoration pertaining to the cornice of the horizontal geison presents preparatory red traces: Kitov, and Văleva, and Barbet 1995: 63. The gable and the gabled roof's cornice reveal traces of white plaster. These testify the original pictorial decoration of the surface, better than a marble imitation as suggested by Văleva 2005: 13, fig. 5.

[17] *Supra,* footnote 9. Three of these fragments preserve traces of the original light blue painting; while the other three show fragments of pink/red colour; furthermore, traces of white stucco are in general visible: Văleva 2005: 14, who only mentions traces of white stucco. Китов 2008: 63, Kitov gives the colours a not purely decorative value, assuming a connection with the worship of the Sun. According to this scholar *acroteria* with pink-red details were originally placed on east, whereas the blue ones (linked with the sunset) were originally located on west. Actually, they are typical colours used for the Greek architectural decoration, with purely decorative purposes.

[18]The funeral bed is leaned on the northern wall of the *thalamos*: *Supra*, footnote 9. It consists of a monolithic stone block. Made from a monolithic stone block. The eastern end is higher, with reference to the stone cushion. It has a lion's paws terminations. The discoverer has described its originally painted decorations (today no longer recognizable) such as bucrania, vegetal, floral and geometric motifs. Furthermore, a *suppedaneum* was placed in front of the bed: Văleva 2005: 12, fig. 4; Китов 1994c:14; Китов 2008: 59. The Ostrusha *κλίνη* repeats testified patterns, although with possible variations, in numerous other Bulgarian and in general Macedonian funerary contexts: in addition to Σισμανιδις 1997 bibliographic updates and other interesting ideas for research in the field of Macedonian tombs can be found in Brecoulaki 2006; Huguenot 2008; Andrianou 2009: 31–50 (even with evidence from domestic sphere). In reference to the Bulgarian context it lacks a specific study on the subject. By confining here the analysis to funerary contexts (with internal painted walls or with painted furniture) funeral beds were discovered in the following tombs within burial mounds in the Valley of Kazanlăk: II (loc. Mochera, t. of Măglizh); Sashova (or Mound 81); Helvetsija (or Mound 115); Grifoni (or Mound 114): in Panaghjurska Sredna Gora, tomb at the "station Filipovo", Plovdiv; at Ruzhitsa, in north-eastern Bulgaria; within the so-called Tomb of the Caryatids in Sveshtari. Regarding the mentiond contexts: Цанова, and Гетов 1973 and Гетов 1988; Китов 1996: 9–22; Kitov 2003: 303–312; Китов 2008: 117–121; Ботушарова, and Коларова 1961: 279–297, figg. 1–20; Агре 2005a: 146–149; Агре 2005 b: 86–87; Chichikova 2012. A comprehensive bibliography in Manetta, *forthcoming.*

[19] No traces of plastering have been found on the walls of the *thalamos.*

[20] Each with a measure of m 0.20 x 0.20.

[21] With a side of m 0.55.

[22] With a side of m 0.38.

[23] With an average of m 0.15 x 0.15.

[24] Be understood in the sense of κάλυμμα, or square covering slabs placed as places to closure of the original cavities (φάτνωμα or *lacunaria*) that are generated by the arrangement of half-timbered beams or supporting brackets (στρωτήρες): Wegner 1961: 450; Michaeilides 1982: 37.

[25] Sharp-edged.

[26] The "ovolo", which characterizes both the outer frame on the bottom surface of the second triangle of the composition and the one on the bottom of each coffer, as well as the laths, which have a function of thin separation element on the internal bottom of each coffer.

[27] Alternately in blue and red, with white outlines: see Văleva 2005: fig. 18, 1. A similar motif is painted in the *thalamos* of Tomba François in Vulci, between which there is a female head: Steingräber 2006:195.

[28] Unfortunately, the detailed reading of its elements is strongly compromised. It is, in general, the well-known motif, that we meet – with differences of detail and composition – in other Bulgarian contexts (such as the famous Tomb of Kazanluk). For a discussion about the develop and the fortune of this motif, see Văleva 2005:134–147; see also Villard 1998: 203–221; Guillaume-Coirier 1995: 1093 – 1151; Brecoulaki 2006: 62–66. Furthermore, *Infra,* footnote 53.

[29] Kitov, and Văleva, and Barbet 1995: 65.

[30] Traces of gold foil are attested by J. Văleva with reference to necklace and earrings, which adorned the female head preserved within coffer no. 32: Văleva 2002, Pl. IX.2. Китов 1994c: 15 and 17; Китов 2008: 64 reports traces of yellow colour and of gold incrustations within the circular field of the central coffer of the ceiling. This information can't be proved nowadays.

[31] In architectural plastic blue has been used with red since the archaic period. Blue prevails red during the fifth century BC. It is possible that over time, already in classical times, this practice has taken on a symbolic value as a reference to heaven or "outdoor": Reuterswärd 1960: 57; Yfantidis 1985: 45f. and 130f.; Tancke 1989b: n233, and 369. Regarding *lacunaria*, a similar background present, between the others, the ceiling coffer of T. Bolshaja Bliznitsa and Mausoleum of Belevi.

[32]Китов 1993a: 27; Китов 1993b: 2–8; Китов1993c: 39–80; Kitov 1993d: 9–25; Kitov, and Krasteva 1993: 59–75; Китов 1994a: 85ff.; Китов 1994b:

5–14; Китов 1994c: 13–20; Бълева 1994: 55–62; Kitov and Krasteva 1994-1995: 7–28; Kitov, Văleva and Barbet 1995: 62–66; Kitov, Văleva and Barbet 1997: 221–223; Barov1995; Barov and Faber 1996:11–15; Kitov 1996: no. 1, 5–34; Kitov 1997: 33–45; Văleva and Gergova 2000: 182–189; Văleva 2002: 53–56; Китов 2003 a, 13–28; Kitov 2003b: 28–41; Văleva 2005; Китов 2008: 57–65.

[33] Kitov 1994c:15 speaks about a ceiling which imitates a real truss; Văleva 2005: 25, Pl. 2,1 speaks about a coffered ceiling. A. Barbet (2004a: 27–36) classify the Ostrusha ceiling among "Gradation ceilings"(IV) or "Plafonds à plans étagés". According to this scholar, this ceiling has five levels of gradations and must not be confused with the simple coffered ceiling, which has at maximum two gradations. P.G. P. Meyboom (2004: 201–206) considers the Ostrusha coverture as well as a sort of prototype on the line of which is, for instance, the painted decoration of the so-called "vault of Achilles" (room 119), in the Domus Aurea. Recently N. Theodossiev (2007) has dedicated an article to the funeral building with covering slabs jutting out and placed diagonally into the corners. He describes the central part of the Ostrusha ceiling as imitation of a lantern-roof. The Bulgarian scholar ascribes other Thracian ceilings dated between the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third century B.C. to this typology. Because these ceiling doesn't present figural decoration, they are not considered in my paper (Kurtkale, near Mezek; Zhaba Mogila, near Strelcha; Golemja Aigar, near Philippopolis). He also mentions samples from Asia Minor and Etruria (Tomba della Scimmia, Tomba del Colle Casuccini, Tombe del Pozzo and Leone in Poggio Renzo), that are generally ascribed between coffered ceilings: Theodossiev 2007: 606, fig. 32–33 and 30-34 with particular reference on Ostrusha and in general 602-613, with bibliography referring to each mentioned monument.

[34]For convenience of study my numbering of boxes follows the same one proposed by Z. Barov for the digital archive created in 1995 by the Californian Association Ethos by order of the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture. The same numbering was used by J. Văleva (2005: 32, fig.1).

[35] Tancke 1989b.

[36]Thédenat 1904: 902–904; Ebert 1924: 370–375; Deichmann 1957: 629–643;Wegner 1961: 450–454; Michaelides 1982: 32–38; Tancke 1989b: 4–11; Pensabene 1993:108.

[37] *Supra*, footnote 33.

[38]The ten illusionistic lacunars of the tomb of Tarquinia have a very elongated and flat shape without pictorial expedients to suggest protrusions and depressions compared to the beams to support the roof . They are orthogonally located along both the sides of a band of color, which has to be properly understood as pictorial transposition of a real *colŭmen.* Therefore, the logic of the ceiling of the Tomba dei Festoni remains anchored to an hip roof, although plan in its implementation. Thus, in this sense this Etruscan ceiling would be ascribed within the series of ceilings with the so-called "a travicelli" (beamed) motif. This typology was already known at Egnatia, Tomba delle Melegrane and more significantly within the Tomb of Cardinale, Tarquinia. The latest one represents a sample "*della fase estrema del passaggio dalla copertura displuviata a quella piana dell'architettura tombale etrusca*" (Morandi 1983:17–18). In T. of Cardinale the beamed motif is replaced by eleven real coffers located in the central part of the hypogeum. Furthermore, M. Harari rejects the usual interpretation as wooden or clay painted pinakes located within the framework of the truss. He rather argues to interpret them as well as decorated bands between the beams and strips of upholstery used for coating concave surfaces, which were stretched and kept by the same beams on the model of the ceiling within the tent of Tolemeo II (Aten. 5, 196 B) and of samples from tarquinia (the false velarium of Tomba del Cardinale; the ceilings of Tomba 5512 or degli Anina II, chronologically analogous to Tomba dei Festoni. These are characterized by pseudo-tapestries, although the tradition of textile furnishings in the context of Etruscan tombs is documented from the Archaic period, as evident in the Tomba dei Tori and Tomba Campana. See: Harari 2010: 56–77 and especially 59–63, with further specific bibliography regarding every monument mentioned.

[39] For instance: Steingräber 1988: 217–245; Moreno 1987:139: Rouveret 1989: 196n89 (who dates the tomb to the middle of the third century BC). Harari 2010: 65–68 faces the problem concerning the chronology of the Tomba dei Festoni and dates the tombs between the late fourth or more likely at the beginning of the third century BC. This chronology and is nowadays generally accepted. The issue is in line with the general trend towards a seriation highest of the whole phenomenon (starting from Colonna1984), that has to be placed not later than 281 BC (Torelli 2007: 169–170). The question also involves the problem regarding the chronology of the so-called *Masonry Style.*

[40] Harari 2010: 62 and 72. In general, the author blurs the references to the art of *Pausias*, often referred for the tomb also with regard to certain other aspects of its decoration.

[41] Harari 2010: 59.

[42] In addition to a bibliographical update and some integrations to the K. Tancke's *Figuralkassetten* catalogue (1989 b), it was considered appropriate to take into account, without claiming to be exhaustive, also some samples of couvertures, where the coffered scheme is rendered in a purely pictorial manner. The main purpose is to investigate their internal decorations. On the contrary, this *excursus* doens't include the single lacunars, richly decorated, which are located on the cornices among the brackets (mensole). Their use characterizes Roman architectural decoration with hellenistic prototypes (for instance in the so called Tower of the Winds, in Athens): Wegner 1961: 449–454. Furthermore, *excursus* regarding figural coffers with *prosopa* can be found in Lehmann-Spittle 1982: 148f., in the section dedicated to the coffered ceiling in the Propylon of Samothrace's temenos and in Văleva 2005: 24–26, at the beginning of this volume regarding the Ostrusha burial mound.

[43]They derive from archaic textile (curtains and-/-or textile elements used for covering the front of the trusses) and wooden models (to these models maybe derive, also the sandstone boxes decorated with stars and rosettes pertaining to the oblique and horizontal *geison* of Athena Temple of Paestum, which are not necessary related with classical samples: see among the others, Lawrence 1957: 128–129, fig. 73). Their use has attested since the Fifth centuries BC for external architectures (mainly peristasis, with almost exclusively use of enchaustic painting) of known Athenian buildings such as Parthenon, the Propylaia, Temple of Athena Nike, Erechtheion and Hephaisteion. Regarding to the Erechtheion, an inscription (I.G., i^2, 372-374) assumes the existence of a coffered ceiling, probably a wooden one, also in reference of the nàos. There are two forms

of coffered ceiling in this first phase: a) With exposed beams ("*Balkendecke*"); B) With hidden beams ("*Steinplattendecke*"). In generale: Thédenat 1904: 902–904; Ebert 1924: 369–371; Roux 1961: 181; Wegner 1961: 450; Michaelides 1982: 32–38; Tancke 1989a: 24–35; Tancke 1989b; Pensabene 1993:108. Krauss 1966: 381–386; Barbet-Guimier Sorbets 1994: 23–24, which may be consulted also for bibliographical references regarding the classical monuments mentioned.

[44] Coffered ceilings, also for interior decoration, know wide spride starting from the mid-fourth century BC. They acquire more and more distinctly decorative outcomes. Coffers privilege simple compositive schemes during this phase and up to the end of Hellenistic period: squares and-/-or rectangles and lozenges (Bassae, T. of Apollo *Epicurios*; Delphi, *Tholos*; Oliympia, *Philippeion*): Barbet- Guimier Sorbets 1994: 23–25. Painted and-/or sculptured coffered ceilings are attested in sacral and funeral Greek and Asiatic contexts (in areas at least partially Hellenized), beginning with the so-called Nereid Monument of Xanthos decorated through square coffers orthogonally disposed, with alternated figurative and ornamental motives. Only one of the figural coffers (from 1842 at the British Museum of London, BM 935,3) and a drawing concerning another small portion of it, with floral motifs are preserved. The chronology of this monument is variously placed between 420 and 380-70 BC (see the interesting but isolated attempt of W. R. Lethaby to date the monument not before the second half of the 4th BC: Lethaby 1935: 208–224, in particular, 223). Its date seems to be preferibly attested between 380-70 BC, although the reference to around 400 BC is common in literature. On the building and for a discussion on its datation: Pesce 1966: 997; Coupel and Dermagne 1969; Lehmann – Spittle 1982: 92n50, 148ff., figg. 121–122; Childs, Coupel and Dermagne 1989 (P. Dermagne dates the sculptures of this complex between 385 and 380 BC); Rocco 2003: 140–145, in particular 144 and footnote 102 (who dates the monument to the first quarter of the fourth century BC. In general terms, the author recognizes Asiatic-ionic forms for this monument. He also argues the involvement of indigenous workforce alongside workers of local origin who returned to their homeland after the Athenian defeat in the Peloponnesian War. Very probably they were previously committed and then formed in the construction yards of the Acropolis of Athens. Among other things, a such "apprenticeship" would be revealable especially from some technical details used in the achievement of the coffered *pteroma*, which presupposes the preceding of the *Erechtheion* and the Propylaia. Regarding the coffered ceiling, see Tancke 1989 b: 12–14, cat. n. 1, Tav. IX, 1, with previous references. Ceilings of the Asklepeion (380-375 BC) and the Tholos of Epidauros (second half of the fourth century B.C., 360-320 BC = Tancke 1989a: 26–27) appear more or less contemporary to the Lycian one. Although we have epigraphic and literary sources, the debate regarding the actual characteristics of both the ceilings can not be considered concluded: see. *Infra,* footnotes 55 and 56. In general, on this sanctuary and on the buildings that comprise it: Kavvadias 1891; Cavvadias 1905: 611–613; Kern 1907: 46ff., s.v. *Epidauros*; Robert 1933: 380–393; Conticello 1960: 358–367, with further references; Tancke 1989b: 14–16. Coffered ceilings with figurative reliefs are also registered within the *propylon* of the so called. *Temenos* of Samothrace (350-330 BC = Lehmann, Spittle 1982; Rocco 2003: 159n131; 340 BC = Musti 1994: 611; 340/330 BC = Tancke 1989b; possible a chronology between 330–320 BC for Webb 1996: n32; Lehmann 1952: 22, n. 16, 24); Lehmann, Spittle 1982: 267–312; Tancke 1989 b: 22–25, cat. 4.1–7, Pll. XX, 1-4 e XXI, 1-6, with a synthesis of the different prososed interpretations, not infrequent speculatives). Coffered ceilings with figurative reliefs also belong to the *Hieron* (maybe referring to the porch of the *pronaos*), within the same sanctuary, whose installation date from the second half of the fourth century BC. This ceiling is dated around 120 BC, at the time of a supposed widening of the porch; for a recent discussion on the chroonology of this monument, see Webb 1996: 23. Actually, the scholar is inclined to date the *pronaos* around 325 BC) On this topic: Tancke 1989 b: 41–43, cat. 7.1–15, Pll. XXI, 1–2, with further references; Webb 1996: 23. Furthermore, four among the fifth fragments of lacunars preserved in Thasos, appear extremely interesting for possible comparisons with Ostrusha (see *Infra,* footnote 161). The coffers have recently been published (Holtzmann 1994: 87–88, nos. 18–23, Pll. XXV a–e). Their provenience is not sure, although the author thinks about their possible attribution (and then with the same chronology) to the same *Propylon* of the *Temenos* of Samothrace. A coffered ceiling decorated the Temple of Athena at *Sounion* (third quarter of the 4th century BC: see. Stais 1900–1901: 1237–1300, pl. 9). In Asia Minor regarding the attestation, first of all, the 10 fragments of figural coffers pertaining to the decoratiob of the *pteron* within the *Mausoleum* of Halicarnassus (370/65 – 350 BC, now at the British Museum): Lehmann, Spittle 1982: 141 and fig. 123; Tancke 1989 b, 18–22, cat. 3.1–3.10, Pll. X–XIX, with further references. Coffers originally painted and in reliefs decorated also the *pteron* of the *Mausoleum* at Belevi (its dating is yet discussed; it has recently oriented in the early decades of the 3rd century BC): Thomas 1976: 56–57 and 157; Praschniker, Theuer, and Alzinger 1979: 188ff.; Tancke 1989b: 25–30, cat. 5.1–21, Pll. XXII–XXIV, with further references; Strazzulla 1990: n151; Hoepfner 1993:111–123; Webb 1996: 23). A conspicuous number of coffers in riliefs (tot. 65 fragments) has been discovered within the Temple of Athena Polias at Priene. Dating of this monument is debated and oscillates between the 4th and the 2nd century BC: Tancke 1989b: 30-41, cat. 6, 1–65, Pll.. XXV–XXIX, with further bibliography and summary of previous proposed chronologies derived from Carter 1973). Tomb II discovered in 1865 within the *Bolshaja Bliznitsa* burial mound (Rostovzeff 1913: 10–29, Pll. IV – VI; VII, 2-4; VIII – X; XI, 1; figg. 1-5 = Barbet 2004b: 33–55) has been dated between the second half (Tancke 1989b, cat. 2) and the end of the 4th century BC (Tancke 1989b:17–18, with previous bibliographical references) or better between the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd centuries BC (as A. Barbet recently proposed in the critical ri-edition of 2004 of the M. Rostovzeff's volume dedicated to Southern Russia's tombs). Here, the square closing slab in the middle of the flat coffered ceiling, which is located in the final level of gradation of the ceiling, presents a figural painted decoration. About the iconographic characteristics of the subject see. *Infra*, footnote 74. Coffered ceilings (mostly referable *aediculae*) are known in Egypt between the late Ptolemaic and early Roman domination (late 2nd – first decades of the 1st century BC). Some fragments from various proveniances – nowadays preserved at Alessandria, Archaeological Museum – present hortogonal schemes and different polygonal figures, pertinenti ad edicole (Pensabene 1993: cat. nos. 973–978).

[45] Ceilings, which imitate real coffers through a purely illusionistic manner are, for instance, attested in some funeral monuments of Alessandria: in room 2 within the *hypogeum* of Sīdī Gaber (with a grid of concentric rectangles; nevertheless, a scheme of lateral coffers with imitation of a carpet in the central part is documented within room 3 of the same tomb); within the Mafrousa Tomb (with a grid of squares with concentric decorated frameworks, with alternating rosettes); within Anfushi II Tomb (with grid of bigger squares along the external perimeter and of smaller internal square, a central square field with circle inscribed, viewed through an illusionistic grid). It must also be remarked that the external squared "pseudo-lacunars" originally housed figurative scenes. Nowadays, only a small portion of them is preserved, and only drawers illustrate further details of them. Among them two maenads (but this attribution is not sure) have been identified; room 2 of Anfushi V Tomb (with a grid of 6 x 4 squares with circle inscribed and central rosette). Regarding Alexandrian documents: see Thiersch 1904: 1–6 (Sīdī Gaber); Pagenstecher 1919; Brown 1957,

nos. 35–36, 53–55, fig. 2, pll. XXV–XXVI; 57–58 (Anfushi II and V tombs); Adriani 1963,. no. 93, fig. 236 (Mafrousa Tomb); no. 142, fig. 237; figg. 375–376 (Anfushi II and V tombs); Moreno 1994: 283 (with a general reference to Egyptian contexts; Rouveret 1989:196n89, Pl. XII, 1–2 (Sidi Gaber; Mafrousa Tomb; Anfushi II and V Tombs). Dating of Alexandrian documents is yet very discussed. Proposals ranging between an high chronology (3rd century BC according to Pagenstecher regarding the Anfushi II tomb; beginning-mid 2nd century BC, according to the proposed dating of A. Adriani and B. R. Brown; mid 1st century BC, according to the opinion of G. Grimm expressed in Hr. Von Hesberg, "Das Ptolemaïsches Aegypten". Akten des internationalen Symposions 27-29 sept. 1976 in Berlin, Mayence 1978, p. 144). On this argument, see: Barbet, Guimier-Sorbets 1994: 29n42. These last scholars lean towards a dating at the end of the Hellenistic period (end of the 2nd – beginning of the 1st century BC).

[46] In *Magna Graecia* coffered ceilings are attested at Metaponto (Necropoli of Crucinia, Contrada Ricotta), in contexts, for which has been recently proposed a dating between the second half of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BC (Rocchietti 2002). This chronology differs from the previous one proposed (Degrassi 1957: 27–28, fig. 31, n. 2142; Steingräber 1995: 72 and fig. 31) in the 5th century BC. Other coffered ceilings are also testified at Taranto (Carter 1973).

[47] Concerning the spread and the developments of coffered ceilings, the picture emerging from the analysis of Etruscan documents is generally consistent with the one outilined for other areas of the ancient world. The general chronological review regarding painted tombs (starting from the essential study of G. Colonna in 1984, the validity of which has been very recently confirmed: see Serra Ridgway 2003: 11–22; Gilotta 2007: 57–74; Torelli 2007: 149–170; Harari 2010: 56–77) permit us, although among discussions, consent, to anchor the phenomenon of the funeral paintings in this area within a specific chronological framework. This dating does not exceed the *terminus post quem* of the third quarter of the 3th century BC, in line with the gradual economic weakening that occurs in southern Etruria after the Second Punic War. Coffered ceilings – both in form of single lacunars with stepped frames and grid hortogonally disposed – with figurative decoration in rilief and/or painted on the background of the squares are particularly also spread in Etruscan area after the middle of the fourth century BC (actually, Steingräber 1995: 64–65 has already dated the first samples at the beginning of the fifth century BC; Steingräber 2006: 287). It is obvious, this is not a fully independent development (see last Rocchietti 2002). Rather, they are forms borrowed from Greek models, perhaps through intermediary of samples from Magna Graeciae. They enrich the typological range already attested during previous periods. Regarding single lacunars, see, for instance: Vulci, T. della Caccia, with figurative decoration (Steingräber 1985, no.14); Vulci, François Tomb, side chamber (Bardelli 2012: 129ff. has recently proposed for this tomb a further lowered dating at 310–300 BC, with respect to Cristofani 1967: 186–219, who dated it between 340 and 310 BC. See Steingräber 2006, who is, rather inclined for dating the tomb at the third quarter of the 4th century BC). There is a wide *querelle* around the chronology of Perugia, Hypogeum of Volumni: starting from almost unanimous consensus between 1889 and 1983-84 for a dating in the middle or the second half of the 2nd century BC (date, which has occasionally been reaffirmed in international context: for instance Tancke 1989 b, 53-55, cat. nn. 9.1-3 and Steiner 2003, 339, U 7), passing to a dating around 220 BC first proposed by G. Colonna (Colonna 1984), and confirmed in Colonna 2011: 107–134, especially 123–124, to which we refer for a complete history of the studies. Furthermore, ceilings with grid of real coffers and stepped frames (originally, maybe, with plastic and/or painted decorations, not yet preserved) are attested, within Hellenistic contexts: see, for instance, Tarquinia, in the transition area between the Tombs Orco I and II; Sovana, porch of T. of Pola, T. Ildebranda, T. 49; so called. T. of Colombario; below the pediment of the T. of Tifone, in form of lozenges. However, in this framework, the couverture's type with single lacunar, stepped frames and central squared or rectangle field with figurative reliefed and painted decoration, above described, actually appears as an evolution with respect to similar lacunars (unless we have to admit a lowered dating of these documents) probably without decoration, which are attested in the area of Chiusi starting from the Archaic period: Chiusi, T. of Scimmia, both the ceiling of the main room and the ones pertaining to the *tablinum* and to the vestibule, with paintings (480-470 BC); T. of Colle; T. of Pozzo; T. of Leone at Poggio Renzo (510 BC); T. of Poggio Gaiella, referring different rooms of the monument. Regarding the question relating to the formal reading of the ceiling of Tarquinia, Tomb of Festoni Festoni (beginning of the 3rd century BC) and about its position within the typological *range* here outlined, see *Supra,* footnotes 38 and 39. Regarding Etruscan wall painting, the lucky circumstance of the discovery of samples dating between the seventh and fifth centuries BC occurred. These are the oldest ones in the western world and they are so much more valuable when we consider that our knowledge of Attic painting between the end of the 8th and the beginning of the 6th century BC, is solely based on the vase painting: Colonna 1989:19). However, this allows us to know and to follow (for this specific geographic area), forms, derivations and possible development of ceilings from ancient times. They are ceilings with "*columina* a dischi terminali", "a travicelli", coffered, "a capriate", "a pseudo-capriate" and gabled (with or without decoration). We refer to the recent study of A. Naso (1996: 343–353) and to the summaries of S. Steingräber (2006) for samples and further discussion on this topic. In this sense, the discussion about the possible derivation of some decorative elements from textile models (lozenges and schacchiere, for decoration of wooden pavilions realized for the display of the deceased and/or tents that housed aristocratic banquets) it is very interesting. According to the author this interpretation is better than the one, which links them to the carvings of straw trellis employed in domestic architecture) and wooden models, wich recall a real *contignatio* (from the domestic and/or sacred architecture, such as for temporay wooden structures, which are reflected for instance within the so-called coffers "a travicelli" in relief and for the *cantherii* decoration of some gabled ceilings). In general: Wegner 1961: 450–454; Steingräber 1985: 38, figg. 273, 275, 279; Colonna 1986: 419; Steingräber 1988: 226–245; Steingräber 1993: 171–182 = Steingräber 1995: 53–83; Hoepfner 1991: 90–98; Naso 1996: 343–353.

[48] *Tecta caelata* e *laqueata* are attested in primary sources with reference to the period preceding the conquest of Carthage, although Pliny refers to the second century BC the introduction of gilded ceilings within the *Capitolium* and its subsequent spread into private contexts (Thedenat 1904: 903). Decorative and illusionistic experimentation, often with almost deformed results, characterize the Roman period in urban, extra urban and provincial areas. In this period schemes and decorative motifs of flat coffered ceilings are also used for vaulted ceilings and domes (up to the results of Rome, Basilica of Massentius and Pantheon, apparently so far from the original models: see Wegner 1961: 450–454). Different polygonal figures surrounding a central element, non infrequent circular (but also square, rhomboidal (sometimes disposed to form stars) and esagonal elements are prevalent. The documents are here ordered according to the monument's typology. First of all, they regard sacred buildings in Italy (Rome, Temple of *Mars Ultor*, with a single coffer among each *intercolumnium* with a decoration in relief; Milan, Temple of Jupiter; Rome, fragments of lacunars from

Piazza Montecitorio), Balkan Peninsula (*Moesia*: *Ulpia Oescus*, so called Temple of Fortuna; Split, Temple of Jupiter within the Palace of Diocletian); Syria (Palmira, Temple of Bel, Big Altar) Minor Asia (Side, Round Temple; Didyma, Temple of Apollo; Miletus, *Serapeion)*, Near East (Baalbeck, Temple of Bacchus; Round Temple), within a chronological range between the first quarter of the 1st and the 3th centuries AD. A series of onorary arches and doors with coffered flat and vaulted ceilings are among public buildings In Italic area. There are samples dated between the first quarter of the 1st and the middle of the 2nd century AD: flat coffered ceilings with different hortogonal schemes (Verona, Arch of *Gavi*; Pola, arch not identified) and vaulted ceilings also with various schemes (Pola, Arch of *Sergi*; Rome, Arch of *Titus*). In provincial area, the arched door of Perge presents both the ceiling's typologies (flat and vaulted coffers). It is dated between the 2nd and the 3rd AD. The circular medallion located at the entrance of the Arch of Thessaloniki (Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 2466) is dated at 300 AD. We found doors with coffered ceilings also in the western provincial area (Besançon, Porta *Nigra*; Reims, Porta of *Mars*). There are also less conspicuous attestations of different civil buildings in the Italic area: (beyond possible reasons related to the randomness of the findings, the real spread of this type of roofing in these specific areas was doubted); K. Tancke considers some vaulted samples (for instance, from the theater of Pola) dating from the first quarter of the first century AD. He also suggests that their development is not due to stone lacunars of the great Greek architecture, but rather (following Mielsch 1975) as a development of the free formal possibility of Italic stucco vaults. In Corinth, a fragment of coffered ceiling pertains to the so-called "Captives Façade" dated to the Antonine period.). In Minor Asia, coffered ceilings are attested in civil buildings, starting from the end of the 1st century AD (Antonine period) up to the second quarter of the 3rd century AD such as: *bouleuteria* o *odeia* (Caria, Nysa, *Gerontikon*); nymphaeums (Pamphylia: Perge, nympheum F1, near the theater and Nymphaeum F3; Laodicea on the Lykos, nympheum, fragments 1717, 1717 A, 1714) and in buildings used for spectacle (Pamphylia: Aspendos, theater; Side, theater; Perge, theater; Lycia: Myra, theater; Pisidia: Sagalassos, theater). Flat and vaulted coffered ceilings are also common in private, exclusively funeral contexts. Documents attested in the Italic area are dated between the middle of the Ist century BC and the end of the 1st – beginning of the 2nd centuries AD. They consist of hortogonal coffers (Isernia, three fragments reused in different contexts. It would be interesting to investigate the possible pertinence to the same building; *Amiternum*, San Vittorino; Benevento; *Venafrum*; Pola; Portogruaro, Monument of *Julia Concordia*; Este), coffers with circular section (Calvi Vecchia; Sestino; *Beneventum*) and with ellipsoidal form (Capua), with different schematic variants (central rhomboidal coffer with or without square lateral coffers; with central square, sometimes with rhombus or octagon inscribed). The chronological gap is broader in Minor Asia than the Italian area: dating of coffered ceilings is between the first half of the 1st and the 3rd century AD. The samples present the usual plurality of patterns (Lycia: Sidyma, with thraces of colour; a second fragment from the same site comes from an only doubtfully funeral monument. In Pisidia: *Termessos,* fragments pertaining to two different funeral monuments. In Pamphylia: Side, with vaulted ceiling. In Paphlagonia: *Neoclaudiopolis*, from a funeral monument. In the Syrian area, the tower-tombs from the western necropolis of Palmyra have yielded flat coffered ceilings (made of light limestone, such as the tower-tombs of: Bene Baa [83 AD]; of J*amblichus* [83 AD], onto three floors of the tomb, with traces of colour; of Ehlabel and his brother [103 AD], with traces of painting) and vaulted ceilings, in the form of barrels or domes (starting from the first half of the 1st century AD: Tomb 19, with purely pictorial decoration) mainly with painted and in relief decoration (but not with stucco elements as it has been sometimes asserted), with hortogonal schemes (concentric squares on the sides of a greater square with a rhombus inscribed; a grid of lozenges) and the characteristic "round buttons" at the point where the squares join together. Furthermore, funeral monuments with coffered ceilings are also known in balkanic provincial areas (Veria, Tomb IV Prophitou Elia; Thessaly, Larissa, monument now disappeared; Split, from the *pteron* of the Mausoleum within the Imperial Palace; Ladschane, from a funeral. K. Tancke's catalogue also analyzes some coffered ceilings, whose we don't know the building to which they belong. They are datable to the 2nd and the 3rd centuries AD: Tancke 1989 b: cat. nos. 65, 68 and 69 (Side); 66 (Stratonicea); 67, 1–2 (Sagalassos); 70 (Izmir); 71, 1–2 (Laodikea sul Lykos); 72 (Tavas); 73 (Perge); 74 and 75 (Hierapolis). In addition to these, we have to consider a portion of an hortogonal coffered ceiling with central bigger square, which is in the Musée du Cinquantenaire of Brussels (inv. A 1147, from an unknown origin, dated in the second half of the 1st century AD). We refer to K. Tancke's catalogue (1989 b), also for the other mentioned samples, with specific bibliography for each of them. Regarding the ceilings within the tower-tombs of Palmyra, K. Tancke (1989 b) only analyzes tower-tombs of Jamblichus (94-97 and cat. 37, Pl. LXIII, 1-2 and B2) and of Ehlabel (97–99 and cat. 38, Pll. LXIV, 1–2, B3 and B4). Coffered ceilings of the Tower-tomb of Bene Baa and of Tower-tomb no. 19 are not included in Tancke's catalogue. For them I refer to Henning 2013: 36, 57–61, cat. no 68, pl. 84 (Bene Baa); cat. no 51, Pll., 50, 51 and 84 (Tower of Jamblichus); no 13 (Tower of di Ehlabel and his brother), no 19 (cat. W 6). The *corpus* of K. Tancke also doesn't include the two fragments (already preserved within stores of Capitoline Museums, inv. nos. 8189 and 8190). For them we refer to Michaelides 1982: 3–38. For general considerations on Roman and Late Antique coffered ceilings see Thédenat 1904: 902–904; Ebert 1924: 370–375; Wegner 1961: 450–454; Michaelides 1982: 32–38; Tancke 1989b: 5–68; 145–155.

[49] The coffered motif is attested as decoration of real ceilings as a purely pictorial translation of original wooden and marmor coffers, starting from the second Style. In this period begins also the using of stucco. Stucco and painting begin to imitate coffers of real architectures (see Ling 1973, who states that in this period patterns of flat coffers are transferred to vaults). Painting has been increasingly influenced by the stucco and imitates its architectural effects, following its same evolution. Their schemes – at the beginning just a juxtaposition of lacunars (up to the 40s of the first century BC) – become more complicated. They use different geometric patterns disposed around a central element, oft with a circular section. The third style imposes a new aestethic also for the decoration of the ceilings. Starting from this moment, two parallel currents prevail, as is evident in urban and vesuvian samples. One of the currents is anchored to the squared plot of the old coffers, the other one invents free decorative plots (for instance, Rome, T. of *Caius Cestius*). The coexistence of several trends still more characterizes the IV Pompeian style (current with "pseudo-coffers"; schemes "*a cases ordennées en bandes concentriques*"; "*à reseaus*"; "*libres*"; " *a vela fictifs*"; imitating domes and vaults: Barbet 1993: 365–386, with samples. See also Barbet 1985: 78–81 (Rome, *cubicula* of House of Griffins and of Villa od Poppea at Oplontis); Mazzoleni 2004: 58 (Herculaneum, The Samnite House); Fortunati 2009: 1–6 (fragmentary ceiling from the Palatine Hill with further bibliography). See the study of H. Mielsch (1975), regarding the conspicuous samples of coffered ceilings in stucco and an reconstruction of the develop of this decorative typology, which is testified starting from the 1st century BC both on ceilings and walls. Among the possible samples of coffered couvertures is it possible to mention: Baia, Room of Sosandra's Thermes, with con a theatrical mask and a thyrsus, and Ardea, Tomb at S. Marina, with coffers decorated with rosettes (both dated between 80 and 90 AD): see Mielsch 1975: cat. nos. 79 (pl. 73,2) and 82 (pl. 74,2). Finally, the false coffered ceiling deserves

to be mentioned, which decorates the uppert part (at least up to the attack of the vault and tentatively also the same vault, not preserved) of Room C of the House of *Pinarius Cerealis* at Pompeii, with decoration of IVStyle. Within these "pseudo coffers" birds, flowers and heads can be found: Moormann 1998: 28, fig. 16.

[50]This type of couvertures are often represented within the vascular painting of the 4th century BC: Bulle 1934; see Wegner 1961: 450. By mere way of example, a crater from Eolian Archaeological Museum (10647), dated to the 340 BC is interesting. The scene represents Adrastus taking part in the duel between Tydeus and Polynices under the gaze of the king of Argos' two daughters. The action takes place into an Ionian stoa with a polychrome coffered ceiling, decorated with palmettes alterning to stars: Τιβεριος 1996: cat. 208, 351–352, with previous bibliography. A ceiling with square coffers decorated with a flower also compares to a columned building, which is painted within a fragment of a calyx krater from Taranto, dated to the 4th century BC: Robertson 1959: 162; Pensabene 1993: 108. Furthermore, coffers decorated with stars are visible on a fragment of an Apulian krater, dated around the 350 BC: Gogos 1983: 59ff., especially 71ff., figg. 2–3b; Tancke 1989a: 24, fig. 2.

[51] Nevertheless, popularity of coffered ceilings is reflected in the illusionistic painted and/or in stucco architectures on the walls of the domus in Greek (Curtius 1939: fig. 36, from Delos; Barbet, Guimier-Sorbets 1994: 25, room D, Delos, House of Dionysus, end of the 2nd- beginning of the 1st century BC: here, according to the scholar, the ceiling with square coffers has beige-brown decorations, which remind to a wooden covering) and Roman areas (especially from the Vesuvian area): see Mazois 1824, Pl. XXVI, Thédenat 1904, 903 and fig. 4323; Curtius 1929, fig. 17 (so-called House of *Vettii*); fig. 27 (so-called House of Poeta Tragico); figg. 32-33 and 35 (House of *M. Lucretius Fronto*); fig. 52 (House of Nozze d'Argento); fig. 53 (Haouse of Labirinto); figg. 54 and 62 (House of Livia); figg. 58-59-60-70-77-79 (Villa of Boscoreale); figg. 64-65 (Villa of Farnesina); figg. 74-75 (Villa of Diomedi); fig. 100 (House of Apolline); fig. 101 (House of Dioscuri); fig. 104 (*Macellum*); fig. 108 (House of Joseph II); fig. 109 (House of M. *Epidius Sabinus*); fig. 110 (House of Caccia Antica); fig. 112 (House of Epigrammi); fig. 113 (House of Palestra); fig. 115 (Terme Stabiane, in stucco); fig. 120 (House V, 1, 14); Fig. 145 (House of *Caecilius Jucundus*, Naples, National Museum) fig. 111 (Herculaneum, Naples, National Museum 9731).

[52] It is well known the scientific debate regarding the relationship among these two artistic fields and between them and panting. Especially with regard to the relationship between ceiling decoration and floorcoverings, cf. in general: Ghedini-Salvadori 2004: 46–54; Colpo 2004: 337–340. When there is the widest spread of coffered ceilings or of their illusionistic imitations through the painting (after the mid-fourth century BC), we register significant examples of pebble mosaics in Greece (Corinth, Megara, Olynthus, and especially at Sicyon. In them, the usual scheme – such as the circle inscribed within a square as central motif of the internal decoration of contemporary coverings – is reflected. (cf. Moreno 1994: 283). This repetition of patterns, some decorative motifs (substantially whole the floral repertoire attested within Fifth century Athenian coffers) and figurative (first of all the motif of female heads between vegetal spirals , which remind to Pausias) and their chromatism could be a prove – according to Salzmann (1982: 55–57, nos. 36, Pl. 27.2; 64, Pl. 23.1 with further references) – that pebble mosaics imitate coffered painted ceilings. In general, he argues a derivation of the mosaics from the painting. Therefore, he rejects the hypotesis (argued by Von Lorentz 1937: 165 ff. and generally accepted) of a derivation of mosaics from oriental textiles, which could be penetrated in Greece during the Late Classical period. The most recent analysis conducted by F. Ghedini (1995: 129-137), has certainly reaffirmed the relationship between mosaics and decoration of tissues (with exclusive reference to carpets and tapestries) and the difficulty, however, to establish a real dependency from each other. According to her, the comparison among textile and mosaic evidences of Late Classical and Hellenistic periods remarks the following: a remarkable thematic correlation between the two repertoires; possibility of iconographic interchanges among them, but also evident thematic discrepancies. Partially, these differences are due to the state of our knowledge, partially to the actual difficulty of exporting some subjects from a class of artifacts to another one. Finally, we have also to consider the spesific needs of the clienteles. On this topic, cf. Ghedini 1996: 101–118, with further references; Ghedini 1997: 73–76; Moreno 1994: 283. The up to now available bibliography regarding mosaics with so called "coffered motif" is conspicuous: Ciliberto 2010: 26n8 offers an exhaustive list of it, to which I refer. Specifically, the analysis conducted by A. Barbet (Barbet-Guimier Sorbets 1994: 27–35, with examples) offers the following development lines. "Coffered" mosaics dated between the fourth century BC and the Republican Age can be divided into two groups. the first one, which is the oldest one, derives from Greece or from the Eastern Mediterranean. Mosaics of this group are directly influenced by the real wooden or stone architecture. The second group includes mosaics dated in the first century BC (II Style). They present a greater influence from painting and stucco. Therefore, we can generally notice the same development already indicated for the painting. First of all there is a faithful imitation of coffers, then there is a preference for more complicated plots. To iconographical level, there are several themes represented within coffered mosaics: different mythological themes are present near to purely decorative motifs, such as flowers and naturalia. There are heads and busts. In Roman period they are not infrequent used to represent personifications of Seasons (cf only such an instance Canuti 1994 a, 75–109; Canuti 1994b: 485–536), months, etc. The astronomical/cosmological thematics (cf, *Infra*, regarding the hellenistic period) is mainly attested in the Roman period (for instance, with the zodiac).

[53] *Pausias,* as is known, was one of the most prominent Sicyonian school representatives of Painting, in opposition to the contemporary Attic or Theban School. This artist lived and worked between 380 and 330 BC; the informations concerning him provided by Plinius permitted us to outline the lines of his art, even if it is impossible to reconstruct the whole content of his works. Actually, themes of his works are known: Erotes; personifications, such as Methe (who was represented intent on drinking from a crystal bowl on which her face was reflected); Eros (who leaves bow and arrows for grabing the lyre), both made within the tholos at Epidaurus (Paus., *Per.* 2.27.3); portraits (which Plin. *Nat. Hist*. XXI, 4, dates after the C Olympiad), perhaps that of his mistress Glycera in the act of weaving crowns (*Stephaneplocos*) or sell them (*Stephanepolos*); children (such as *Hemeresios* accomplished in a single day); battle scenes and an oxen sacrifice (Pl. *Nat. Hist*. XXXV, 126 ff. [*boum immolatio*], cf. Brendel 1930: 217ff., this last one was a panel painting of large format exhibited in Rome, within the Porch of Pompeus. A panel painting realized at Sicyon at the behest of Aristratos (who was represented with a Victory on his chariot), which was retouched by Nealces upon the request of Aratos around 250 BC (cf. Plutarch, *Aratos* 13) and which was then brought to Rome, is also attribuited to Pausias (Pliny, *Nat. Hist*. XXXV, 125). Primary sources hand down Thespiae as one of the places where the painter worked. Here, he would restored – in tempera – paintings of Polygnotus. He also worked within the Tholos at Epidaurus. (cf. *Infra*, 55). He was son and disciple of Bryes, then a pupil of Pamphilos of Amphipolis, who was also master of

Apelles. Pausias refined the encaustic technique and he mainly realized small-format panel paintings. The so called "*Pausiaca tabella*", who Horace (Sat. II, 7, 95) refers in his satirical polemic against the rough Davus (perhaps with an implicit reference to the licentiousness of some of his works [Athen., *Deypnos*., 13, 567 B] as well as the refined artistic taste of the poet: cf. also McGann 1956: 97–99) are likely connected with these works. He continued to use a palette of four colors but was distinguished for its technical skills in the yield of the foreshortening, of the faces of the plasticity of the figures and the colorism. Representations of garlands, scrolls and flowers were an important part of his repertoire. These themes could have been received a strong boost just from this painter (Moreno 1994: 284). "L'artista ornava con questi motivi le cornici dei quadri dipinti dai suoi compagni", according to P. Moreno (1987: 138; Moreno 1994: 283), who quotes as proof of this a fragment of an epigram, preserved through a papyrus. In this epigram the painting of Apelles is praised togheter with the painter of flowers. Certainly Pausias contributed (as a representative of the school of Sicyon) to the flourishing of that "arte decorativa", of which S. Santoro Bianchi (2005: 161 with further references) has recently spoken. Nevertheless, this doesn't imply that the painter was the inventor of this form of art. In this sense, the Plinian reference (Nat. Hist. XXXV, 125) to his "races" with Glycera could does not have the etiologic value, which it has been suggested (Pesce 1966, 997–998). Pfrommer 1982: 119–190, Salzmann 1982; Villard 1998: 203–221; Guillaume-Coirier 1995: 1093–1151 oppose to this reconstruction. For this aspect of his art, connected with the female faces of Apulian vases, cf. *Infra*, footnote 75. Sources for Pausias and his works: Overbeck 1868: no 1760–63; Phful 1923: II, 732–744; McGann 1956: 97–99, with bibliography; Pesce 1966: 997–998, with further references updated to 1950; further upadates in Moreno 1994: 283–284.

[54] „(…) *Lacunaria primus pingere instituit, nec camaras ante eum taliter adornari mos fuit*", Plin. *Nat. Hist*. XXXV, 123-126. The issue, which has always animated the scientific debate revolves essentially around three points which are closely related: 1. The interpretation of words *lacunaria* and *camaras* (or *cameras*); 2. the identification of a specific type of ceilings to which the Pausiac painted decoration (also to be specified) should be attribuited; 3. the actual role as inventor to assign to the Greek artist regarding this. On the first point, the contrast of the terms in the Plinian sentence shows that the innovation of *Pausias* has concerned specifically the l*acunaria* (which have to be intended in the sense recently discussed in Harari 2010: 59, see *Supra*). In this regard, the word "*camarae*" has to be considered in a more generic sense as "vaults or ceilings" (for the use of words "*lacunar*" and "*lacunaria*", see Vitr. II, 9. 13; 3 IV, 1.5. 6.1, V 2.1: VI , 4.6, 7.3; for "*camarae*" with specific reference to vaulted ceilings in opposition to the flat ones, Vitr. VII, 2,2. It is to be noted that elsewhere the same Vitruvius (VI 3.9) uses the term "*curva lacunaria*" in reference to vaulted ceilings within Corinthian rooms; in general, it is useful Ebert 1924: 369–375, and in particular 371, 374–75 for a detailed terminological analysis; Pesce 1966: 997; Corso 1988: 429n124 and Harari 2010: 62. Separately, Rochette 1836: 136–141, translated "*cameras*" in terms of "private apartments", critized by Letronne 1835: 317–318; Cavvadias (1905: 612–613) and Lippold 1949: 2419 refer the term "*lacunar*" to vaulted ceilings rather than to flats. Instead, on regard to the second point, the debate is linked, among the other, to the interpretation of the withness of Pausanias (2.27.3). He testifies the presence of works of *Pausias* within the *Tholos* of Epidaurus. Critics have taken different positions in this regard. Some scholars (Helbig 1873: 132–134; Moreno 1987: 139; Harari 2010: 61; cf. Ebert 1924: 371) believe that these works have to be intended as real "small squares" or "small boards" for ceiling. In this sense, they had to be located as closure of the intermediate spaces (φάτνωμα), formed by the crossing beams, with a function of lids of coffers (according to Harari 2010: 61 they were indicatively square. They are generically intended as coffers, antecedents of medieval an modern ones by Moreno 1987: 139. On one hand the author associates these small squares to the "*pinakes orophikoi"* attested by Delian inscriptions; on other hand, he includes into this category also the figurative pannels of T. of Festoni at Tarquinia: Moreno 1994: 283–284; cf. *Supra*, footnote 38; Rochette 1836: 141 who speaks about wooden little panels with encaustic decoration; Six 1905: 161. Actually, *Pausias* would have decorated the flat marmor coffers of the *pteroma* (with Doric columns) of the *tholos,* cf. in this regard also Pesce 1966, 997; Rouveret 1989, 196, footnote 89). Nevertheless, other authors consider them as wall paintings. In this sense, they have to be intended as panel-paintings, which had to be hanged on the walls (Pfuhl 1923: 732; Roux 1961: 170) or real frescoes: cf. Pesce 1966: 997. Cavvadias 1891: 33ff and Cavvadias 1905. 611–613 interpretes these paintings as frescoes for decorating the wooden dome of the *tholos* (cf. also Vallois 1913: 299); cf. also Rouveret 1989:196n89. Finally, on regard to the third point, the opinion, that ascribes to Pausias the role of innovator is almost unanimous (Thedenat 1904: 903; Wegner 1961: 450–454; Pesce 1966: 997, who attributes rather to the artist the introduction of painting within ceilings of the only Greece). On the contrary the most part of critics don't ascribe to him a role as absolute inventor regarding the painted decoration within coffered ceilings (it is already known, as we saw, within Fifth century Athenian examples). More specifically, according to other scholars (Letronne 1835: 320 with particular reference to temples, to public buildings and only later to rich residential buildings; Wegner 1961: 450–454; Tancke 1989b:12) the innovation would have regarded the introduction of heads (*prosopa*), basing on the model of those ones attested within the Nereid Monument at Xanthos (this hypothesis is plausible in the light of the dating between 380-70 BC recently proposed for the installation of the monument, cf. *Supra,* footnote 44. It is obviously rejected by those who lean towards a more ancient dating – between 420 and 400 BC – for the Lycian monument (Pfuhl 1923: 731–732; Pesce 1966: 997–998; Tancke 1989b: cat. 1, pl. IX,1). This is also the opinion of Helbig (1873: 132–34). Furthermore, he thinks that these innovative Pausiac figurative decorations realized on small-format wooden boards were then for the first time put within ceilings in place of real coffers (Helbig 1873: 132–134; Ebert 1924: 371). Tancke 1989 b: 13–14 leaves the question open about the meaning of the Plinian passage. Nevertheless, she argues that Pliny could actually have known by his sources that Pausias had become the best in the art of decorating coffered ceilings with figurative motifs. She also argues that this didn't necessarily mean that the invention of this art has to be ascribed to him. In fact, this art could have been introduced before him (as attested according to her by the Nereid Monument at Xanthos) or during the activity of Pausias. According to other scholars, the innovation would have more generically regarded the introduction of "*temi di genere*" (Rochette 1836: 136–141 according to whom *Pausias* introduced painted decoration within the private architecture;Thedenat 1904: 903).

[55] Paus. II, 27.3; cfr. *Supra,* footnotes 44 and 53.

[56] IG IV 1484 = IG IV^2 102. The inscription was discovered in 1885. It is recomposed from about 16 fragments. It is engraved on both sides of a column. It refers to the building accounts of the *Asklepeion* at Epidaurus (datable around the 370 BC). More specifically, the informations related to its construction and ceiling decoration regard coll. A I (lines 56-60; 67-68; 76-78; 82-84; 86-87) and BII (lines 270-271). The epigraphical study and the research of architectural comparisons with real contemporary monuments has permitted the scholars who devoted attention to this issue to specify some characteristic aspects regarding this temple's ceiling. Coffers were probably wooden. In fact, this material is mentioned in other

passages of the same inscription as a material for carpentry, although it is never mentioned with specific reference to the ceilings. Perhaps, the coffers had stepped frames decorated with illusionistic *kymatia* and *astragaloi* (mentioned in the inscription) realized in painting or with gold leaf (also mentioned to lines 76-78 and 82-84). Very probably *καλύμνατα* presented floral motifs, stars (lines 82–83) and *prosopa* (lines 56 ff., 58 ff., 76 ff.). Furthermore, the use of specialized painters for realizing lacunaria decorated by heads (their names – *Axiochos* e *Damophon* – are mentioned in the same inscription) was necessary. Therefore, figurative decorations were considered more difficult and consequently more expensive than the simple geometric or floral ornaments (also included within the decorative repertoire of coffered ceilings): cf. also Rouveret 1989: 196n89 (who refers the mention of the two painters to Delian inscriptions). For a discussion about a possible identification of the figurative heads, see *Infra*. In general: Conticello 1960; Roux 1961: 123 ff., and 130; Tancke 1989b, 14–16n81.

[57] Vallois 1913: 297–299. The inscriptions indicate with terms πίνακες όροφικοί (in general intended as “squares for ceilings”) the painted decorations within the coffers of ceiling. Perhaps they were real panel paintings located between the beams: Hellmann 1992: 91–93; Moreno 1987: 139; Moreno 1994: 283–284; Calandra 2009: 40 (A coverage with beams wrapped with material between which were placed φατνώματα, perhaps painted small squares not far from πίνακες όροφικοί, it is assumed in the recent reconstruction of the tent of Ptolemy Philadelphus). Another two epigraphical documents are interesting for reconstructing technical and terminological aspects connected with the construction and the installation of a coffered ceiling within the Temple of Apollo at Delos. One case accounts the *hieropoioi* for the year 279 BC (I.G. XI, 2, 161 A, 45-49) and of the reached agreement with two contracting (*Phaneas* and *Peisiboulos*) for realizing 15 *phatnae* (intended as one of the large panels in which the ceiling was divided or, more specifically the cornice which surrounds a panel) and for a remuneration of 300 drachmas for each *phatne*. In the second case, it is an inscription (Dürrbach 1905: 439–468; Vallois 1913: no. 504; Holland and Davis 1934: 71–80) which refers to the same works and speaks about the same artisans, with some differences of detail in respect to the reached agreement. This text explains the different phases of the constructive process of the coffers up to the installation of *pinakes* (which have to be intended, as proposed, in terms of *kalummata* or lids of coffers).

[58] Often, as said, with reference to porch ceilings of peristasis. Cf. *Supra,* footnote 43.

[59] Predilection for these subjects has been already indicated by Ebert 1924: 370.

[60] Within the Parthenon.

[61] Within the Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Hephaisteion.

[62] In the case of the Erechtheion.

[63] Also, *Supra,* footnote 50, in reproductions of coffered ceilings within the vase painting: Ebert 1924: 370. This analysis doesn’t consider the example of stars geometrically performed through the juxtaposition of lozenges, in the central part of coffered ceilings: for instance, Delphi, *Tholos*, 380 BC.; Olimpia, *Philippeion*, 338 BC.: cfr. Tancke 1989 a: 25.

[64] Though as some scholars have postulated, it is possible that a different value other than a generic reference to the starry sky must not to be ascribed to the stars represented within coffered ceilings into sacred buildings: cf. Deichmann 1957: 642.

[65] Ceilings depicting a starry sky are found, for example, in the temple of Deir el Bahari (Krauss 1966: 381, fig. 477) and within the room of the sarcophagus in the Pyramid of Unas at Saqqara (Boffito 2010: fig. 1). Simple five-pointed silver stars on a blue background often decorated the room of the sarcophagus starting from the fifth dynasty. The purpose was to indicate the place of arrival of the complex journey that the soul would have to undertake. With the beginning of the New Kingdom, and therefore starting with the eighteenth Dynasty, the vault is enriched with symbols and divinities. The sky is represented in the middle of the vault, in the specular shape of the body of the goddess Nut. Within her body there is the daily and nocturnal path of the Sun. The planets and the constellations, which were then known, are placed in the sides: cf. on this issue: Boffito 2010: 253–255.

[66] For instance, Troy, Temple of Athena, with flowers in relief: cf. Tancke 1989 a: 28, with bibliography.

[67] Except for the Sanctuary of Apollo and Amphitrite on Tinos and the T. of Athena at Sounion (dated to the last quarter of the fourth century BC), both of them with stars in relief: cfr. Stais 1900: 122–131 and pl. 9; Tancke 1989a: 28n18.

[68] IG IV 1484 = IG IV^2 102. Cf. Lehmann- Spittle 1982, 141 who interpret the gilding in terms of golden metal applications located on the decorative motifs.

[69] In general, Hesych (200, 56 ff.) calls ἐγκοθράδες the representations within the coffers.

[70] See, for instance, the male busts in relief within the lacunars of the propylon of the temenos at Samothrace and the only one surely pertaining to a man from Thasos. Male *prosopa* are within coffers of Etruscan tombs (for instance T. of Tifone and T. François) and of Thessaly (Larissa).

[71] Nereid Monument at Xanthos, Monument not identified from Thasos, Perugia, T. of Volumni.

[72] Cf. *Supra*, footnote 44, with reference to the question related to the chronology of the monument. This issue transversally regards *Pausias*.

[73] In many cases, the fragmentary state of preservation does not allow us to check if the attribute was originally altogether missing.

[74] For instance, the painted head belonging to the central coffer of the Tomb I within the *Bolshaja Bliznitsa* burial mound is interpreted as Demeter or Kore: cf. *Supra,* footnote 44.

[75] As ornament of Apulian vases, this motif appears with the Ilioupersis Painter, coinciding with the activity of *Pausias*: cf. Rouveret 1989:196n89; Moreno 1994: 283–284, with further bibliography and conspicuous examples of Apulian vases, with reference to Trendall 1989 and to Cambitoglou, Aellen, and Chamay 1986, to whom we also refer. Actually, the identification of these faces also remains open. In general, the readings proposed lean toward Aphrodite Urania, as generic goddess of vegetation; Jucker 1961:197ff.; Ανδρονίκοι 1987: 364.

[76] A female head with hair gathered in the characteristic sakkos, who emerges from acanthus scrolls is attested in a pebble mosaic dated to 330 BC. She is variously interpreted as a goddess or a nymph. The document was discovered in 1918 in the center of the modern city of Durres, Albania. Since 1981 it has been at Museum of Tirana: Moreno 1987: 139; Salzmannn 1982; Guimier Sorbets 1993: 135–141.

[77] Female heads among vegetal scrolls are presented, for instance, within the Burial Mound A, Tomb II at Aineias. The cist tomb is dated to the third quarter of the fourth century BC. There, a young woman aged 25 to 30 years was buried through a cremation: Βοκοτοπούλου 1990: 35–49, pll.. I–III. Similarly, a female head appears in the middle of a band with scales pattern, within the T. François at Vulci: cf. Steingräber 2006: 195.

[78] Cf. *Supra,* footnote 53 and 54.

[79] Except for scholars, who connect the appearance of *prosopa* to the Nereid Monument at Xanthos and who sustain an early dating of the monument: cf. *Supra,* footnotes 44 and 54.

[80] An example is found within the lateral room III in Vulci, T. François, with an head of Charu (the dating proposed for the tomb is never before the third quarter of the fourth century BC): cf. *Supra,* footnote 47.

[81] In this respect, in fact, Colonna (2011: 119–120) points out, that the decoration of the tomb reveals an ambitious design "*manifestamente ispirata alle grandi tombe di IV –III secolo a.C. dell'Etruria meridionale"*. Actually, the reference to the coffers with *prosopa* in relief within this tomb at Perugia, concerns each of the single coffers pertaining the three side rooms. It is, as known, three female busts. Indeed, a Gorgon is recognizable within the coffer in the so called tablinum; regarding the other two cases, there are fewer certainties. G. Colonna (2011: 107–134, in particular, 120, figg. 26 and 27) has proposed to see in both the cases a representation of the goddess Cavtha, ie the Etruscan Kore/Persephone. The goddess (a young unadorned woman with short hair and high-necked chiton) would be seen as a *nubenda* within the left lacunar. Nevertheless, the goddess (with matronal aspect suggested by the veil and the jewels, also with particular eyes, which are painted as well as if they had been in glass) would appear as the bride of Hades. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning the representation within the tympanum of the entrance wall of the *atrium*. Actually, its fragmentary state of preservation doesn't allow us to give a complete reading. Two dolphins with saw crests, which are unanimously seen as an allusion to the Ocean, in terms of the boundary between the real world and the afterlife, are represented on both the sides. A shield is at the center. Its episema, almost completely missing except for the upper portion of five tips, which has to be intended as rays, has been variously interpreted as part of the representation of Helios with nimbus (from Vermiglioli to Messeschmidt: cf. Gerkan-Messerschmidt 1942: 166), or rather of the Etruscan *Thesan*, i.e. goddess of salvation for excellence. She is represented on mirrors with a radial halo beyond the head. She is early assimilated to Leucotea, as succouring of the shipwrecked Odysseus, within the sanctuary of Pyrgi (Colonna 2011: 121, with further bibliography). On the contrary, E. Lippolis (2011: 151) argues, that the rays can be rather referred to the well – known motif of the Macedonian eight-pointed star, which is attested within tombs in the Northern Greece. Then, the same motif frequently appears as decorative element within the friezes of arms discovered in Italy. The dating of both monuments appears particularly discussed. In this regard, see *Supra,* footnote 47.

[82] Centaurs, maybe alternating with ornamental decorations are registered, for instance, within the Hieron at Samothrace. The meaning of this representation it is not clear. The paucity of the preserved portions does not permit us to consider the iconographic enigma solved regarding the decoration of the coffered ceiling of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, although scholars have assumed a cycle of Theseus and/or Heracles. Centauromachy and funeral games, for example decorated the pteron of the Mausoleum of Belevi. On the contrary, Gigantomachy and Amazonomachy were the subjects of the decoration within the temple of *Athena Polias* at Priene. Figurative scenes of which we can not provide exact identification were painted within the pseudo-lacunars of the Tomb of Anfushi II at Alexandria. Cf. *Supra*, footnote 45 regarding a chronological framework of the mentioned monuments, with bibliography.

[83] Cf. *Supra,* footnote 48.

[84] For instance, Rome, Temple of *Mars Ultor*.

[85] Rome, Arch of Titus; Pola, theater; Palmira,monument not identified in the so-called Diocletian field; Perge, Theater: cf. Tancke 1989 b: cat. nos. 14; 16; 40; 50, 1–5.

[86] Among these, for instance: the Abduction of Ganymede (Milan, so-called. Temple of Jupiter; Baalbeck, Temple of Bacchus; Myra, theater; Sagalassos, Theater; Portrogruaro, Monument of *Julia Concordia*; Este, funerary monument: Tancke 1989 b: cat. nos. 10; 31; 32; 35,6; 48, 2; 49.2); cycle of Herakles (*Isauria Vetus*, funerary monument, with labours of the hero; Izmir, monument not identified, inv. no. 211, Tancke 1989 b: cat. nos. 62,1; 70).

[87] Mostly linked to public religious and honorary monuments (for instance, Rome, Arch of Titus).

[88]The heads within the triangle residual spaces from a not identified monument of Palmyra are interpreted as personifications of winds: Tancke 1989 b, cat. no. 40, Tav. LXV, 2. In general: Verona, Arch of Gavi; Pola, Arch of Sergi; Pola, arch not identified; Pola, theater; Isernia, funearry monuments; Cales, funerary monument; Sestino, funerary monument; Beneventum, monument not identified; Isernia, monument not identified; Venafrum, funerary monument; Beneventum, funerary monument; Aquileia, monument not identified; Umago, monument not identified; Pola, monument not identified; *Iulia Concordia*, funerary monument; Baone, funerary monument; Palmyra, Temple of Bel; Baalbeck, Big Altar; Myra, theater; Perge, Nynfeum F 1; Perge, Arched Door C2; Termessos, funerary monument ; *Isaura Vetus*, funerary monument; Side, monument not

identified; Sagalassos, monument not identified: Tancke 1989 b: cat. nos. 11;12;13;16,1-2; 17; 18; 20; 22; 23; 24; 25; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 31; 32; 33; 34; 48; 52,1; 56; 61; 62,1; 65; 67, 1-2.

[89] Cases in which one or more busts appear in the middle of a circle and within ceilings where the coffered scheme is completely abandoned or far should also be mentioned. In the southern Russia, for instance, the inscription identifies the female head as Demeter, which is painted in the middle of the vault of the tomb discovered in 1895, in Prodolnoja Street no 10, locality Glinišče. The bust is within a wreath of leaves, that is reminiscent of an *imago clipeatae* with a strong reference to the apotheosis, according to the opinion expressed by A. Barbet (1999: fig. 12–13 and in the comment to the volume of Rostovzeff in 2004). The Tomb is dated between the first century BC and the first century AD, according to M. Rostovzeff and between the beginning and the half of the First Century AD by A. Barbet:: Rostovzeff 1913–14: 199–226, in particular 205–206 = Barbet 2004, 253 – 288, in particular 260-261, Pl. LVII. Furthermore, a coffered painted vault with a female head in the middle was in room II within a building dated between the age of Trajan and Hadrian, located 250 palms from the Colosseum, which insists on a portion of the Baths of Titus. The building was discovered in July 1668: cf. Mariette 1757, fig. I. It is also interesting to mention the ceiling with busts from a building (Fourth Century AD) discovered beneath the Cathedral of Treviri: cf. Cagiano de Azevedo 1958: 60–63; Wegner 1961.

[90] Palmyra, T. of Bel; Baalbeck, Big Altar; Baalbeck, Temple of Bacchus; Monument of Höss Niha; Baalbeck, Round Temple; Palmyra, monument not identified; Side, Round Temple, maybe of Tyche, *pteron*; Didyma, Temple of Apollo; Nysa, Gerontikon; Aspendos, Theater; Side, theater; Hierapolis, building not identified; Split, Temple of Jupiter within the Palace of Diocletian; Lanschane, funerary monument; Split, Mausoleum within the Palace of Diocletian; Bruxelles, not known provenience; Istanbul, Archaeological Museum, inv. 2334, not known provenience: Tancke 1989 b: cat. nos. 33; 34; 35; 36; 39; 41; 42; 43; 45; 46; 47; 74; 77; 81; 82; 84; 85. “Dionysian “heads are represented within the vaulted ceiling of the Tower-tomb no 19 of Palmyra (cf. *Supra*, footnote 48).

[91] Baalbeck, Temple of Bacchus: Tancke 1989 b: cat. no. 35.

[92] Miletus, Serapeion; Side, theater (here, in full figure): Tancke 1989 b: cat. nos. 44; 47.

[93] Didyma, Temple of Apollo; Miletus, Serapeion; Side, Theater; Baalbeck, Temple of Bacchus: Tancke 1989 b: cat. nos. 35, 9; 35, 19; 43; 44; 47.

[94] On the contrary, this motif seems to have almost disappeared from the repertoire. Actually, however, it seems yet attested as decoration of the cornice, for instance among the few fragments belonging to the ceiling of the dome within the cell of the Round Temple at Side, attribuited to Tyche (second quarter of the Second Century AD). The possible division into 12 figurative fields of the vault has led to the hypothesis that it was possibly a representation of a Zodiac (?): Tancke 1989b: 102 and 154.

[95] It is interesting to note the painted ceiling with Horae, Andromeda and Pegasus, discovered between 1994 and 1996 at Brigetio (now Komàron/Szőni), dated between the end of the Second and the beginning of the Third Century AD, although it does not belong to the decoration of a lacunar: Bohry 2004: 233–244.

[96]Palmyra, Temple of Bel: Tancke 1989b: cat. no. 33.9. Cf. also Gundel 1973.

[97] Palmyra, Temple of Bel; Didyma, Temple of Apollo; Corinth, Fasade of “the Colossal Figures”: Tancke 1989b: cat. nos. 331, 33,9; 43; 84; Lehmann–Spittle 1982: fig. 133–134.

[98] Palmyra, Temple of Bel; Palmyra, monument not identified, so-called. Field of Diocletian, pertaining to the cornice of the central coffer; Side, Round Temple (dome of the naos?): Tancke 1989b: cat. nos. 33; 40 and 102 and 154. Primary sources refer to representations of constellations and zodiac images within the Palace of Nero (Suet., *Nero*, 31), within the Palace of Domitian (Mart., 7.56), within the Palace of Septimius Severus (Cass. Dion. LXXVI.11), in private residences (Petronius, XXX, 3 ff.): Gundel 1966: 1274–1276, with further references and bibliography. The same H.G. Gundel and Saxl 2007:147 mention that the Zodiaco and the astronomical representations were in general used as decoration of the ceilings within the Baths: es. John of Gaza, *Descriptio tabulae cosmicae*. Cf. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius,* Lipsia 1912: 111–135.

[99] With reference to the discussed chronologies of the lacunars with *prosopa* within the T. of Volumni and the lacunars with mythological representations within the Hieron of Samothrace and the Mausoleum of Belevi cf. *Supra*, footnotes 44, 47 and 81.

[100] It is not clear if the phenomenon also has to be linked to the causality of the discoveries. It is interesting to remark that cosmic-astronomical representations are also totally absent within Hellenistic mosaics. On the contrary, they are frequent on the textiles, at least according to the primary sources: cf. Ghedini 1995: 129–137, in particular 131–133, n26, and n77, with bibliography and further examples. In fact, at a textile level, the Hellenistic period indicates an ideological resumption of cosmical representations. Actually, however, their use is also attested referring to the previous periods (cf. Infra with reference, for instance, to the sacred textiles described in the Ion of Euripides) in different contexts: from the stromata with stars inaugurated by Demetrius Poliorcetes (cf. Plut. Dem. 41,3), to the clothes and to the stoffe woven with stars as covering for baldachins or platform for a coffin. See, for instance, the relief with a representation of the “funerary pomp”, which was discovered at *Amiternum* in 1878, already at the Archaeological Museum of L’Aquila. The astral motifs, which decorated the baldachin rendered in a reversed perspective are clearly distinguished in the depiction of the transportation of the deceased. L. Franchi dell’Orto (1963–1964: 23–32) dates the relief to the mid-first century BC. According to the author, the starry baldachin recalls neo-Pythagorean beliefs of the afterlife; S. Segenni (1979: 39–41) thinks, however, that it should be linked to eschatological beliefs about the Eastern astral immortality of the soul, partially related with the worship of the Goddess Syria-Atargatis.

[101] Tancke 1989a.

[102] This interpretation (planets associated with the cult of the Cabiri) was, for instance, proposed by Erhardt in reference to the decoration of the

coffered ceiling in the context of the pteron of the propylon at Samothrace. The issue has been re-examined by Tancke 1989 b: 24 (to whom I refer regarding the bibliography). First of all, it regards the identification of two female heads (cat. 4.5–6, Pll. XXI, 3–6) within the *propylon* at Samothrace. The hypothesis has been led by the informations provided from the inscription related to the *Asklepeion* at Epidauro and by the possibility to read the mentioned *prosopa* in an astrological sense (cf. Gundel 1936: 30ff.; 248 ff.; Gundel 1940:116ff.; Böker 1957: 868–870). The position of K. Tancke (1989b: 25) regarding this issue is critical. The scholar thinks that it is impossible to know what was the real meaning of the *prosopa* within the coffered ceiling at Epidaurus. (According to her, it is also impossible to completely read those of Xanthos). She also criticizes in general, the idea of viewing planets. The hypotheses regarding the paintings within the wooden lacunars of the Asklepeion of Epidaurus are varied and different: Gorgons, lions or other animals (Burford 1969: 57, and 214ff., A 1, 54–57, 65–66, B I, 74–76, 82–84, 219, BII, 202, 270ff.); human or divine faces (Roux 1961:127ff. and 170; Lehmann – Spittle 1982: 141ff.).

[103] Cf. Gundel 1973: 621; Tancke 1989b: 14–16.

[104] Китов 1994c: 15 and 17; Китов 2008: 64: the scholar speaks about traces of encrustation of gold and of yellow colour on the bottom of the box. At the moment, this information isn't enough to support this reading.

[105]Китов 1994c, 15–17; Китов 2008: 64. The female head within the coffer no. 32 would be the best preserved of this unlikely "portraits gallery". In this regard, the author says this character originally wore golden earrings, flakes of which would were visible at the moment of discovery. The autoptical analysis doesn't allow us to verify this because of the worsened conditions of preservation. The scholar also thinks that this face presents physiognomic characteristics. He also specifies that a similar position of the head is visible in many Hellenistic depictions. Among male characters (maybe corrisponding with coffer no. 24, although he doesn't mention the referring number), one wears a golden wreath. In this way, he can be interpreted as the Thracian king buried in the tomb. He also thinks, that it would be possible to recognize the ruler, by comparing the painting with regal portraits on coins.

[106]Китов 1994c: 15; Китов 2008: 64.

[107]She originally wore earrings and a necklace, as the traces of golden foil on the surface demonstrate. Cf. also Văleva 2002: 55, Pl. IX,2.

[108]A standing, isolated man, not better described; a sitting soldier holding a spear and a shield; a horseman hunting a lion; characters in conversation: Kitov, Văleva, and Barbet 1995: 64 without specific references to boxes.

[109] Kitov–Văleva, and Barbet 1995: 64; Văleva 2002: 55, Pl. IX–XI.

[110] Văleva 2005.

[111]Văleva 2005: 153–157, quotation p.153. In particular, she ascribes the six boxes on the northern side to the Homeric theme connected to the story of Achilles (coffers nos. 2–7). Her reconstruction provides the following readings: Thetis, who assists in forging weapons for her son (coffer no. 2: Văleva 2005: 70–78, fig. 1a and 1b, 76; Pl. 6–1); b. Hero, perhaps mourning Achilles, seated in front of a panoply (coffer no. 3: Văleva 2005: 79–85, fig. 1a e 1b, 85; Pl. 7–1); a scene with two seated men (a *presbeia?*) (coffer no.4: Văleva 2005: 86–92, fig. 1a e 1b, 91; Pl. 8–1); a fighting warrior (coffer no. 5: Văleva 2005: 93–96, fig. 1a and 1b, 95; Pl. 9–1); e. Hero standing next to his shield (coffer no.6: Văleva 2005, 97–102, fig. 1a and 1b, 100; Pl. 10.1); and a sitting warrior (coffer no. 7: Văleva 2005: 103–105, fig. 1a and 1b, 105; Pl. 11.1). Regarding the other boxes (short, western side) the author assumes the following figurative cycle: Silenus drunk connected with Dionysian *thiasos* (coffer no. 20: Văleva 2005: 108–112, fig. 1a and 1b, 111; Pl. 13–1); Bellerophon fighting the Chimera (coffer no. 21: Văleva 2005: 113–120, 1a and 1b, 118; pl. 14.1); a figure on a feline (Cybele or Dionys) (coffer no. 22: Văleva 2005: 121–128, 1a and 1b, 126; pl. 15.1); the profile of a standing female figure(coffer no 9 Văleva 2005:106; pl. 12–1).

[112] Văleva 2005: 129–133, fig. 2A and 2B, 133(coffer 8); Pl. 16.2; 16.1(coffer 1).

[113] Văleva 2005: 55–69, fig. 1A and B – 6A and B, 64–67; Pl. 5–1; 5–11.

[114]Văleva 2005: 42–53, fig. 1A and B- 4A and B, 52; Pl. 4–2.

[115]Văleva 2005: 36–41, fig. 1A and 1B, 41; Pl. 3–1.

[116] Văleva 2005 (coffer 27): 57–58, fig. 5A and 5B, 65, Pl. 5,4; (coffer 34): 61, fig. 11A and 11B, 67, Pl. 5,11.

[117] Văleva 2005 (coffer 26): 57, fig. 4A and 4B, 65, Pl. 5,3; (coffer 28): 58, fig. 6A and 6B, 65, Pl.. 5,5; (coffer 32), 60, fig. 9A and B, 66, Pl. 5,9.

[118] Văleva 2005 (coffer 24): 56, fig. 2A and 2B, 64, Pl. 5-1; (coffer 30): fig. 8A and 8B, 66, Pl. 5,7; (coffer 33): 60–61, fig. 10A and 10B, 67, Pl. 5–10).

[119] Văleva 2005 (coffer 23): 55–56, fig. 1A and 1B, 64; (coffer 25): 56, fig. 3B, 64, Pl. 5,2; (coffer 29): 58-59, fig. 7A and 7B, 66, Pl. 5, 6; (coffer 31): 59–60, Pl. 5–8.

[120] And in general, the extreme caution that is imposed in respect to the interpretation of the "religious significance" of the entire decorative program: Văleva 2005:156–157.

[121] Văleva 2005: 156.

[122] See *Supra,* footnotes 44 and 74.

[123] Văleva 2005: 63.

[124] Miller 2006.

[125] Văleva 2005: 36–51.

[126] Văleva 2005: 55.

[127] In this regard, it is interesting to reconsider what G. Kitov and J. Văleva said about finding traces of gold foil found in proximity to the ears and of the neck, indicating the presence of earrings and a necklace, in figure 32. Perhaps other necklaces are visible in other characters (i.e. 26), if this gold foil does not indicate the edge of the dress.

[128] Hes., *Op*. 383; Diod. 3, 60, 4, Ov. *Fast*. 3, 105; cfr. Ps. Hesiod. Fr. 275 S. 413 Rz; Simonid. Fr. 18; Aeschyl. Fr. 312, 1 N.^{2}, Ps. Eratosth. Cataster. 1.23 Oliv.; German. Arat. 264; Cornut. theol. 26; Avien. 573; cfr. Roscher 1965: 2550.

[129] *Schol*. Arat. 254, *Schol*. Σ 486; Hygin. *Astr*. 2,21; Schol. Apoll. Rhod. 3, 225, Apoll. 3, 10, 1, Ov. *fast*. 5.83 ff. Some sources consider Pleiade sas daughters of Atlas and Aithra (in this case associated with the Hyades): cf. Musaeus Fgr., Hygin. *Astr.*2.21; Ov. *fast*. 5.164; Schol. Σ 486 = frg. 25 M; Ps.-Eratosth. Catast. Rel. p. 13; Schol. German. p. 75, 10 (where Oceanus is mentioned instead Atlas); cf. Eustath. Ad Il. P. 1155, Myth. Vatic. 1, 234.

[130]Born in Arcadia, Monte Cillene (Hes., Op. 383; Hom., Il. XVIII, 486, ss.; Hyg., Poet. Astr., 2, 21; Ov., Fasti, V, 83 ss.). Their names – as they have been mentioned by the primary sources are: Maia, Electra, Taygete, Alcyone, Celaeno, Sterope, Merope. Ps.-Hes., fr. 275, 413; Arat., *Phaenom.* 262, 1078; Hellanikos (Schol. Σ 486) fgr. 56 M; Ps-Eratost. Catast. 1, 23, Schol. German. P. 83, p. 76; Eutasth. Ad Il. P. 1155; Ov. Fast. 4, 172 ff.; Apollod. 3, 10, 1.

[131] Fr. 312 apud Athen., XI, p. 419 a; Eustath., p. 1115.

[132] Pindar, Nem., II, 16; Schol.ad loc.; Etymol. Magn., s.v. Pleïades. Some Latin authors follow this tradition: cf. Gallina 1966: 244.

[133] Hyg., *Poet. Astr.,* II, 21.

[134]They joined with gods. From these unions several heroes have been engendered: Lakedaimon, by Zeus and Taygete; Hermes by Zeus and Maia; Dardanos by Zeus and Electra; Hyrieus by Poseidon and Alkyone; Oinomaos by Ares and Sterope; Lykos, by Poseidon and Kelaino: cf. Roscher 1965: 2551 and other sources for further downdrafts.

[135] By their union Glaukos would have been generated: Hellanikos, FGrH4 F 19 a; Ps.-Eratosth. Catast. 23; Ov. *Fast.* 4, 175-176.

[136] *Schol*. Hom., Il. 18, 486; *Schol.* Arat. Phain. 259; Hyg., *astr.* 2. 21; Ov. *Fast.* 4, 177–178.

[137] Schol. Theocr. 13, 25 from Callimachus (fr. 381 Schn.).

[138]According to this tradition, the introduction of coral dances and nocturnal festivals would be ascribed to them.

[139] Coccymo, Glaucia, Protis, Parthenia, Maia, Stonychia e Lampado. To this list are not infrequently added also Dione and Calypso (the last one, for instance, by Hyg. Fab., 11, 19 Schm.).

[140] Cf. Preller 1894: 464–469, with a further tradition regarding Pleiadea as pigeons that, during the summer, bring ambrosia taken from lands of Ocean to Zeus. One of the pigeons gets lost during each journey. Zeus regenerates them perpetually. In mythological terms, this would explain the reason why only six among Pleiades were visible, although they are originally seven. According to a variant of the myth, Zeus grants the Pleiades persecuted by Orion a metamorphosis as pigeons rather than as stars. In general, however, the tradition according to which the Pleiades were transformed into birds doesn't interest here, since the iconographic choices made within the Ostrusha burial mound regard the Pleiades'transformation into stars. In general, regarding the Pleiades, their different mythographic traditions and their primary sources, see also Karusu 1984: 921–922; Boll 1912: 2552; Gundel 1952: 2485–2523, and especially 2495–2496; Hunger 1959: 290–291; Roscher 1965: 2549–2560; Gallina 1966: 244–245; Boer 1972: 922–923; Cancik–Schneider 1996: 1127–1128; Grimal 1996: 376–377.

[141] Proclus, *De sphaera*: Tzetze ad Hesiod. Op. Lib. II, versus 1ff.; Aratus, Phaenom. 257ff. and the translation by Germanicus of the same verses "*Septem traduntur numero genitore creatas / longaevo: sex se rutilia inter sidera tantum /Sustollunt* ; Ov., Fast. IV, 169ff.; Igin. Fab. CXCII; a collection of such sources, also in Minervini 1854: 9.

[142]Daughters of Atlas, persecuted by Orion: cf. Hes. Erg., 383, 619–620.

[143] Who mentions the girls as daughters of Atlas: Page PMG frg. 555. Cf. Karusu 1984: 921.

[144] Hom., Il. XVIII, 483–489, in particular 486. According to a common opinion, the Pleiades on the hero's shield were represented in the form of a constellation, such as stars. But we can't be sure about this. The possibility that they actually figuratively represented as a flock of pigeons has also been discussed: Roscher 1965: 2550. Regarding the shield of Achilles and its decoration, see Amedick 1999: 157–206, in particular, 190–205 and most recently Giovanni Cerri in his introduction and in his comment of the XVIII book of Iliad: Cerri 2010: 39–42.

[145] Two Pleiades were represented on each of the four handles: Hom., Il. XI, 633 ff.. Asclepiades (apud. Athen., XI, 488 ff.) interprets them as constellations: cf. Gallina 1966: 244–245, with bibliography and, most recently, with interpretative variants, Pagani 2004: 353–369.

[146] Regarding this argument, see Ferrari 2008, with further bibliography (she identifies the dancers described in the chorus as Hyades); cf. also A. J. Podlecki's review of her book (Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2009.10.59).

[147] British Museum E 804; ARV^2 765.20; Beazley *Addenda* 286. The Sotades Vase has recently been re-examinated by Pisani 2013: 55–83, who proposes an interesting new reading.

[148] Paus. III.18.20 and comment; Roscher 1965: 2559.

[149] Eur., *Electra*, 468 ff.

[150] Eurip. *Ion*, 1141–1162. In this text the singular – here used for the first time in Attic literature – actually indicates Pleiades as a group: cf. Mirto 2009, 306. The representation included also: Uranus, the Sun, the Night, Orion, the Great Bear, the Moon, the Hyades and the Dawn. Actually, without a comparison it is impossible to assert which kind of depiction appeared on this textile. All commentators have used caution in this regard. Nevertheless, the detailed description provided by Euripides and the presence of attributes and actions for characterizing the single elements of the sky (for instance, the sword in the hands of Orion, with which he pursues the Pleiades or the Sun, who conducts his horses or the Night on her chariot) seem to refer to a personified decoration rather than a simple "scientific" cosmic representation.

[151] Gallina 1966: 244–245; Gundel 1966: 1278.

[152] Here the Bull is represented with stars on his head for indicating the Charites and on his tail for indicating the seven stars pertaining to the group of the Pleiades: cf. Gallina 1966: 244–245, with bibliography.

[153] In this last example derived from a Greek original of the late fifth or the beginning of the fourth century BC, Orion with his hund, 8 stars (i.e. the seven Pleiades and their mother) and a crescent appear: cf. Roscher 1965: 2558; Gallina 1966: 244–245, with further bibliography.

[154]Minervini 1854: 9–11; Fiorelli 1867: 24; Heydemann 1873: no. 925, 60, with further bibliography; Gallina 1966: 244–245. It is not sure that the seven girls on an Attic red-figure hydria now preserved in Athens, National Archaeological Museum (Inv. 17469), dated at the end of the fifth century BC represent the Pleiades. Here, the women are carrying out different actions (among them not correlated) in a garden: LIMC II,1, no. 89, 922, with bibliography; Roscher, s.v. Pleiaden: 2557–2558.

[155] Miletos 639 and 640. From another context, with a generic reference to the seasonal cycle in IG V, 1, 602; IG XII, 5, 891. Instead, in the Latin inscriptions, the name never occurs except as a female personal name.

[156] *Imagines,* X, 6. Cf. Pasquariello 2004: 105–115. Cf. also Amedick 1999: 190–205.

[157]Hes. Op. 383–390 (regarding agriculture); Hes. Op., 618–623 (regarding navigation); Preller 1894; Gallina 1966: 244–245; LimC II: 921; see also some remarks of Minervini 1854: 3.

[158] According to the chronologies proposed for the monuments, which host these decorations.

[159] We have already said, that some faces and busts are male.

[160] See, for instance, the representations of the Muses and their attributes within some coffered ceilings of the Roman period, such as Miletus, Serapeion.

[161]Holtzmann 1994: 87–88, nos. 18–23, Pls. XXV a–e. It is important to remark, cf. *Supra,* footnote 44. that the author assumes that the fragments of Thasos actually belonged to the decoration of the ceiling of the *propylon* of *temenos* at Samothrace.

[162] Instead, Holzmann argues that they are two male characters.

[163] Furthermore, it is significant that the fifth coffer, reused in Place de Limenas and previously viewed within the House of Stavropoulos in 1910 by Pichard (Pl. XXV e) – is only tentatively ascribed by Holzmann to the same group with the other coffers. This is the only one, which presents a clearly male prosopon (a barded man in profile).

[164] The portal "Certissima signa" realized by the Research Team on the astronomical illuminated manuscripts of the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa was very precious for my research, in terms of knowledge of the astronomical manuscripts, of text analysis and of image information. The project is directed by A. Santoni, in collaboration with G. Adornato, F. Guidetti, A. Iafrate and L. Ozbek. The digitalisation regards the whole group of the Aratea, the manuscripts of De Astronomia of Hyginus (I BC- I.AD), the De signis caeli and the De ordine ac positione stellarum in signis. The database can be consulted on the Internet site: http: //certissimasigna.sns.it. Much of the information, which I refer to in the present paper derive from this work. I also refer to this link for its useful bibliography on this topic and other interesting specific links. Among them, it is important to indicate the Saxl project (link: kristenlippincott.com). Regarding the Catasterismi of Eratosthenes: see Charvet-Zucker 1998.

[165] The general inventory of these manuscripts, for which a rich bibliography is now available, was undertaken in 1915 by Fritz Saxl: Verzeicnhis astrologischer und des mythologischer Illustrierter Handscriften lateinisches Mittelalters (Academy of Sciences of Heidelberg), then continued as a Catalogue of Astrological and Mythological Illuminated Manuscripts of the Latin Middle Ages (the Warburg Institute of London): cf. Saxl 1915; Saxl 1927; Saxl, Meier, and Bober 1953; McGurk 1966.

[166] Gallina 1966: 244–245; Cf. Seznec 2008: 178: the author (who relies on the studies of Saxl and Panofski of 1933, to which we refer for a complete bibliography on this topic) recognizes (although admitting possible interferences and contaminations between the two traditions) a

bipartition within the illustrative tradition of illuminated codes. On one hand, there is the group with illustrations, which have a plastic model as prototype and which are then copies of them. On the other hand, there is the group with illustrations, which derive from a simple descriptive text and that, in these terms, have to be intended as reconstructions. The images referring to the first group are also distinguished in three big "families". The first one has western origins and characteristics and essentially includes the *Aratea*. The second and the third groups are represented by Late-Medieval manuscripts and have a large oriental influence.

[167] The information, full of blanks regarding his biography, tell that the poet was born at Soli in the last decade of the fourth century BC and that he died around 240 BC. 276 BC represents the date of his entrance at Pella, by Antigonus Gonatas. From that moment, he spent all his life between the Macedonian court and Antioch. According to an ancient tradition, Antigonus would have invited him to compose a didactic poem on an astronomical theme. The Φαινόμενα (1154 esameters) constituite the only preserved work of the author. Its dating is not sure; nevertheless, it certainly preceeded the XVII Idillio of Theocritus, dated between 275 and 270 BC. The work began with a proem to Zeus and included a description of the celestial vault (versus 19–558), which almost entirely follows the astronomical science of Eudoxus. For centuries, the poem of Aratus was the most widely used textbook of astronomy. His fortune in the West is linked to several translations, paraphrases and epitomes (Latin and Arabic) of the text between the first century BC and the Fourth Century AD (Cicero, Varro Atacinus, Manilius, Germanicus, Hyginus, and Avienus. Regarding the most recent translations (*Aratus Latinus* or *Aratus Latinus primitivus* and the *Recensio Interpolata*, see *Supra*. The richest series illustrated manuscripts of Aratea is represented by the translation of Germanicus. The fame of the text was unaltered during the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, demonstrating that the poem satisfied the demand for information of a scholastic audience. I obtained this data from Rossi 1995: 606–608 and the web site: "*http://certissimasigna.sns.iit/index.php*"; cf. also Bauer Eberhardt 1991: 249 a–250 b; cf. Blume 2001: 863.

[168] Obtained in their turns from the Catasterismi of Eratosthenes of Cyrene (third century BC) and used as us *scholia* (the so-called *Scholia Basileensia*) in some editions of Germanicus and in the *Aratus Latinus*. Cf., among the others, Blume 2001: 863, with specific bibliography, in particular the critic edition: Hygin, *L'astronomie,* edited by A. Le Bouffle, Paris 1983.

[169] Obtained from the *Aratus Latinus Primitivus.*

[170] Dated to the 9th Century and obtained from the *Scholia Basileensia* to the translation of Germanicus. For the *Scholia Basileensia*, by the name of the most ancient manuscript where they are preserved (Basil. AN IV 18), see in particular Breysig 1867; Dell'Era 1979: 302–377.

[171] Any illustration referring to the Pleiades is in the manuscripts, which preserve the *De ordine ac positione stellarum in signis*.

[172] The reference is to some manuscripts, which include the *Astronomia* of Ps. Hyginus. It is interesting note, that wherever the illustrations actually furnish the verses of this work, the Pleiades are always represented as a group of seven stars disposed in circle in front of the Bull's nose: cf. sheet. 54r, ms. T.47 sup., Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana; sheet. 18 r, ms. N 690 (E 83), Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana; sheet 74v, Ms. CCLXI, Verona, Biblioteca Capitolare; sheet 87v, ms. 490, Pavia, Biblioteca Universitaria Aldini. All the mentioned codes dated at the XVth century.

[173] Except for two cases, cf. *Infra*, footnote 174, related to mss. 685, Klosterneuburg, Stiftbibliotek and 296, Zwettl, Stiftsbibliotek.

[174] They are, often, works of copyists, who "*pur attenendosi abbastanza rigorosamente a un modello, non erano più spesso in grado di comprendere determinati aspetti iconografici antichi e li reinterpretavano, riproducendoli erroneamente*": Bauer Eberhardt 1991: 250b. This is the case, for instance, of the two only (dated to the Twelfth century) of the series, which includes the text "*De Signis Caeli*" of ps. Beda, derived from the *Aratus Latinus Primitivus* and, perhaps, dated between this and the *Recensio Interpolata* (which, instead, has returned any code with illustrations of Pleiades). Here (sheet 79r of Cod. 685, Klosterneuberg, Stiftbibliotek; sheet 93 v, Cod. 296, Zwettl, Stiftsbibliotek, related), the constellation is represented with busts within circualr fields, disposed in two registers, with a last bust in the middle of the third register at the bottom. Therefore, it is worth mentioning, that in both these cases we note the attempt to distinguish the figures among them, by differentiating hairstyles and hats. Above all, however, in both cases – and these are the only two cases – some of the faces recall male characteristics rather than female. In the figure in the middle of the second register of the cod. 296 we actually see a black beard beneath the chin. Furthermore, the maidens with veils, disposed in a circle around a central one, who are depicted in 4 manuscripts containing the *Aratus Latinus* Revisionatus are clearly far from the ancient models: p. 494, cod. 250, St. Gallen, IX sec.; p. 91, cod. 902, St. Gallen, IX sec.; sheet 48v, Oxford, Bodleian Library Digby ms. 83 (SC 1684), XII sec.; sheet 30v, cod. Reg. Lat 1324, Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Vaticana, Fifteenth century.

[175] Also, for instance, with reference to the frame within which the illustrations are not infrequently included. The frame recalls ancient paintings, with an attempt to reproduce a closed figurative space: cf. SAXL 2007, 157..

[176] The tradition connected to the Phainomena's translation of Cicero has been reconstructed by V. Buescu (1941, anastatic reprint Hildsheim 1962) on the base of 11 manuscripts, organized in two families (A and B), starting from a common archetype. Family A presents illustrations and is composed of manuscripts with origin in England and in Holland. The most ancient code of this series is the ms. Harley 647, in the London British Library, copied around the mid-Ninth century in France (maybe Reims), but already since the Fifteenth century in England, in the Library of the St Augustine's Abbey at Canterbury, then included in the Babyngton Collection, and then in the Harley code. Finally it was sold to the British Museum in 1753. This manuscript represents the textual and iconographic model for the other three illustrated manuscripts of the Aratea of Cicero, which are also preserved in the British Library: ms. Harley 2506 (where, however, there is any illustration of Pleiades), the mss. Cotton Tiberius B V edited around the year 1000 (where the Pleiades are illustrated in the sheet 34v. The image is clearly derived from the Harley 647) and the Cotton Tiberius C I (here, the Pleiades at the sheet 23r. are also not unlike the Harley 647). The codes of the B family, originated in France and Southern Germany are not illustrated, except for the ms. Göttweig 7 Bl. 20 in the Stiftbibliotek of Göttweig, dated in the Fifteenth century, copied on the model of Harley 647.

[177] Or fileds in forms of lyra, as it seems evident in ms. Tiberius B V.

[178] The image is visible in the web-site of the Saxl project (www.*kristenlippincott.com*). In this code, the scholia of Hyginus complete within the figures the fragmentary text of Cicero has to be added: cf. in this regard also Bauer Eberhardt 1991: 250 b.

[179] Cf. Seznec 2008: 178; Saxl 2007: 185–264.

[180] Rostovzeff 1914-1915, 161-168, Tav. XLIX = Barbet 2004b: 210–219. The tomb is dated to somewhere between the end of the first century BC and the beginning of the First Century AD.

[181]There are only 725 esameters preserved from the originally translation of Germanicus. To these we have added about 200 verses of meteorological topic, with reference to the influences of the Zodiacal signs and of the planets on the climate. The tradition of the text, reconstructed in the critc edition edited by A. Le Bouffle (1975) is organized around two familes (O and Z). However, the relationships among the different codes are so complicate, that they don't allow us to reconstruct a stemma codicum (cfr. *www.certissimasigna.sns.it,* with bibliography). The O family is distingueshed into two groups, respectively a "French" and an "Italian" one. To the French group, mostly not illustrated, the cod. AN IV 18, Basel, Universitätsbibliotek belongs, dated to the Ninth century AD. Here, sheet 28 v. there is space for the illustration of the Pleiades, never realized. (Furthermore, this is the only code with *Scholia Basileensia*). Within the "Italian" group, the Pleiades are represented, first of all, in sheet 62r of cod. 19 (olim A 16) now at Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, maybe copied at Cassino in the Twelfth century. Here, the busts of the maidens, far from ancient models, are depicted on two registers, which are remarked by a grey line. Their astral nature is here emphasized through an halo behind the heads. Most of the subsequent codes of the Italian group derive from a common archetype (discovered after 1429 by Poggio Bracciolini, in Sicily), now disappeared. Among them, the illustration of the Pleiades as maidens with Renaissance costumes on two registers, often disposed as they looked out flowery balconies appears in the following manuscripts: cod Barb. lat. 76, at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, sheet 38 v (created in Naples in the Fifteenth century; it is the most fightful copy among those copied from the disappeared manuscript, perhaps from a Carolingian or Ottonian original); cod. Barb. lat 77, in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, sheet 24 v (created in Florence in the Fifteenth century); cod. Urb.lat. 1358, at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, sheet 22 v (made in Florence in the Fifteenth century); cod. Plut. 89 sup. 43, sheet. 30 r; ms. Additional 15819, London, British Library, sheet 28 r, (made in Florence in the Fifteenth century); ms. Egerton 1050, London, British Library, sheet 25 r (perhaps made in Naple in the Fifteenth century, with *excerpta* of ps. Hyginus). To the Z family belong some manuscripts, which preserve the text of Germanicus almost complete, although more altereted in respect with the O family. In this text there are interpolations from Avienus. Among these texts, the most ancient of the series with illustrations of the Pleiades is probably the code VLQ 79 of Leiden, Universitätsbibliotek (perhaps made in Aachen in the Ninth century), cf. *Supra*. Close to this is, in terms of illustrations, the ms. 188, today at Boulogne sur Mer, Bibliothèque Municipale, dated to the Tenth century. This code reproduces the Pleiades in the sheet che 25 r (made at Saint Omer, France). From this manuscript the cod. 88, Bern, Burgerbibliotek is probably copied, which preserves the Pleiades at the sheet 4v, made in the Ninth century and corrected on the base of the cod. Lat. 7886, olim Puteanus, Paris, Bibliothèque National de France (not illustrated, belonging to the O family, French group). Finally, the codd. Bodmer 7, Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer (made in Naples in the Fifteenth century), with the pleiades in the sheet 26v and cod. 521, Wien, Bibliothek des Schottenstifts, sheet 37v include the *Aratea* of Germanicus with the *Scholia Strozziana* (ie. with a comment to Germanicus, which fuses together materials from the *Scholia Basileensia*, from the *De Signis* and from the *Aratus Latinus* Revised). In both cases, the Pleiades don't follow ancient models.

[182] The code is composed of 99 parchment sheets and presents 35 full-pages miniatures. It is one of the two copies regarding this work. Both of them were created around the year 825, perhaps in Aachen by the court of Ludwig the Pius. This code was at Saint Omer around the year 1000. Here, two copies were created. After that, the manuscript belonged to Jacob Susius (1573), then to Hugo Grotius, then to the Queen Christina of Sweden. Finally, Isaac Vossius came into possession of the code. He donated the code to the Leiden, University Library in 1690, where the text is up to now. Cf. Thiele 1898: 1–7; Bethe 1945: 50ff.; Mütherich 2004: 147–265; cf. www.certissimasigna.sns.it.

[183] Thiele 1898: 111–113, fig. 37 ; Mütherich 2004: 167–168, 19.

[184] Cf. www.certissimasigna,sns.it; www.kristenelippincott.com with further bibliography; Bauer-Eberhardt 1991. Cf. Gundel 1973: 621.

[185] Cfr. *Supra,* and footnote 31.

[186] Or better of the copyist of the manuscript in question, since similar stars also characterize the other constellations depicted within the code.

[187] The code, realized in Cassino, represents according to Haffner 1997: 91ff. and Blume 2001: 875, "*Una delle copie più estate e complete che si siano conservate del cielo iconografico tardoantico. Tale manoscritto fornisce l'immagine più precisa delle antiche illustrazioni perdute del testo di Germanico*".

[188] Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate the possible thematic connections of the motif of the Pleiades with the heroic-mythological scenes, which are represented within the external boxes along the other sides of the ceiling.

[189] Văleva 2005: 163–166 is inclined to dating the paintings between 330 and 310 BC.

[190] Included the generic comparison with the reliefs from Thasos: cf. *Supra* and footnotes 44 and 161.

[191] Athough in the absence of precise chronological anchoring derived from the study of the elements of furniture and furnishing found within the tomb.

[192] Cf. *Supra*, footnote 9.

[193] With particular reference to the room/sarcophagus with function of *thalamos*.

[194] For instance, the room with a similar typology within the tomb below the Goljama Kosmatka mound. For this context: *Supra*, footnote 5.

[195] The reference is, obviously, to the coffered ceilings with *prosopa*. They are documented, except for the case of the T. of Volumni at Perugia (where, however, a more ancient tradition is deliberately resumed: cf. Colonna 2011 and *Supra*, footnotes 47 and 81) not after the third quarter of the fourth century BC.

[196] This fact could also depend only on the causality of the discoveries.

[197] In Thrace, a sort of "*eclecticism*" in the use and reception of Greek models seems also to emerge in other contexts, and for instance in the architectural sphere. In the context of the tomb below the Shushmanets Mound, for instance, a doric capitel is assembled as a basis at the entrance of the tomb. Regarding the Shushmanets mound: Китов 2008: 122–130, fig. 159–166.

[198] The several projects which have recently been started give an account of the interest and of the input that this research yet reveals. First of all, they are projects with a specific philological interest, linked to the transmission of the illuminated manuscript. Furthermore, other projects regard the digitalization of the large manuscripted documentation with a specific reference with texts of astronomical argument: cf. the Saxl Project [www.kristenlippincott.com] and [www.certissimasigna.sns.it]). Nevertheless, in general, the iconographic investigation seems to emerge, which, when started, has up to now privileged (and necessarily on the base of the existing documentation) the medieval iconography of the constellations. We can see, for instance, the project "Images and science. Medieval iconography of the constellations till the 1500" conducted by D. Blume and M. Haffner at the Friedrich-Schiller Universität of Jena. The results of this research emerge in some publications: Blume 2000 (with a particular reference to the astrological representations of the planets); Blume 2001, 861-888; Blume, Haffner, and Metzger 2012. A complete bibliography regarding F. Saxl can be found in Saxl 2007 (edited by S. Settis).

[199] Cf. Bauer Eberhardt 1991: 249a.

[200] Blume 2001: 863. The process of mythologization of constellations was progressive and irregular (Panofski-Saxl 1932-33; Cumont 1935: 5ff. Seznec 2008: 32–36. It begins with Homer (cf. *Il* 18.486, where Orion is described as "strong"). Around the fifth century BC myths have already been associated with many constellations. In the fourth century BC the mythological terminology was been introduced in the scientific catalogue of Eudoxus of Cnidus. In the Third century, the poem of Aratus and the circulation of the globes encouraged this trend even more. As is known, the Farnese Globe, now in the Archaeological National Museum of Naples, which presents constellations in the form of divinities is a copy of a Greek original dated to the third century BC. Then, the process of mythologization is completed by Eratosthenes (Catasterismi). Starting from the Augustan Age, however, the celestial mythology is upset through some "exotic" additions (Babylonian and Egyptian, for example, especially in reference to the planets). In this regard, the reconstruction provided by S. Settis is interesting. His introduction to the volume collects the translated papers of F. Saxl : Saxl 2007: 22–34. Depictions of constellations in the form of personifications appear, for instance, on the Attic black and red- figure ceramics, and they can be followed starting from the late sixth century BC (Helios) up to the end of the fifth century BC. R. Gautschy (2007: 36–50) analyzes, for instance, the astronomical representation of Pegasus on the body of an Attic hydria, discovered at Nola in 1845 and dated in the last quarter of the fifth century BC.

[201] Nevertheless, the reconstruction proposed by Bauer Eberhardt (1991: 249a) is different. He fixes the introduction of illustrations in astronomic illuminated codes to the al Ninth century, obviously using figures already consolidated in the tradition.

[202] For instance, Gallina 1966: 244–245.

[203] Blume 2001: 863–864. It constitues proof of this, for instance, the image of the poet Aratus with the Muse Urania and a globe, which opened the Latin translation of the Phenomena of Germaincus (realized in Rome in the Fourth century) opened. This image is preserved within the ms. 735 C in Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, and in ms. 19, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional: cf. Mütherich 2004, 148n7. The same value to other illustrations is attributed, which appear in other codes: Jupiter as ruler of the cosmos together with celestial planispheres, representations of the Sun, of the Moon, of other planets, of the four seasons, and of the winds. Furthermore, the scholar fixes it to the Third Century AD, the creation at Alexandria of rolls of illustrations, which accompained the text. Cf.www. certissimasigna.sns.it, with reference to the illustrations of the cod. *Vossianus Latinus*; cf. also Seznec 2008: 178.

[204] Any Late-Antique manuscript is preserved: an idea of their cycle of illustrations is suggested by a series of medieval copies: cf. Blume 2001: 864; Haffner 1997:75ff. At the beginning, the Christianisation interrupted these iconographic traditions, by opposing for obvious moral reasons the use of pagan iconographies for the constellations. In general, St. Augustine's rejection of astronomical science is known. In many cases, this caused the codes to be copied without astronomical images, though leaving space for them. However, already starting from the Eighth century, a recovery work regarding fragments of the ancient astronomical tradition began. The ancient iconographic tradition began to be again appreciated starting from the First quarter of the NinthCentury, just at the time of the realization of the cod. *Vossianus Latinus* (in the court of Aachen, shortly after Ludwig the Pious' ascent to the throne). In the Tenth century we assist to a revival of general interest for studies and arts of the *Quadrivium*, and of course for the astronomical texts and for the illustrations connected with them. It is important to remark that by then the pagan iconography was used without problems for these illustrations. During the Eleventh century there is a flourishing of large *compendia* with illustrations of celestial bodies; the Twelfth century marks the beginning of an intense activity of translation from Arabian in Spain and in the Southern Italy with particular interest to scientific and astrological texts. Planets receive particular importance. Up to the Fourteenth century, the knowledge of Arabian astrological science entails a rationalized approach to the myths, ensuring them a place in Western thought that is now heavily Christianized. This process ends at the end of the Fourteenth century and during the Fifteenth century, when mythology again replaces astrology: cf. Blume 2001: 861–888, Saxl 2007: 162–174, 175–185.

[205]In this regard, for instance: Thiele 1898: 17–56; Mütherich 2004: 147–154. Cf. also Saxl 2007: 147–154, regarding the frescoes within the

Dome of Qusayr 'Amra (about 712–715 AD) .

[206] The textiles, for instance, could potentially represent an excellent vehicle.

[207] I owe this suggestion to A. Santoni.

[208]In this way, the constellation is represented, as we have seen, in the Renaissance codes, which enrich the verses of the *De Astronomia* of ps. Hyginus. cf. *Supra,* footnote 172. Regarding the possible utilization of a globe by Hyginus for his text, cf. alsoThiele 1898: 48–50.

[209]Blume 2001: 868.

[210]From which the same Aratus derives.

[211]Minervini 1854: 10. In this way, the author justifies the presence of the Pleiades on the Attic red-figure hydria, discovered at Santa Maria Capua Vetere. Regarding the interpretation as Pleiades of its figures (already debated), see *Supra.*

[212]Diod., III, 60.5; cf. Minervini 1854:10 (here, however, the quotation is uncorrect).

[213]For which, it has been argued, a derivation from the verb "πλειν" = to navigate, since the appearence of this constellation in May marked the beginning of the sailing season: cf. J. Henderson (ed.), *Diodorus of Sicily*, II, p. 281 (footnote 1, Book III, 60.5).

[214]Posthom. II, 605.

[215]Minervini 1854: 10–11.

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About Consuelo Manetta

Consuelo Manetta (Ph.D. University of Rome "Tor Vergata"; University of Sofia, St. Kliment Ohridski), is adjunct professor at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata". She has been involved as staff member in different archaeological projects (University of Rome "Sapienza"; University of Padova; DAI Institut/Abteilung Rom). Her research interests include different aspects of Greek and Roman Archaeology (architectural decoration, tombs and sarcophagi, mosaics) with a special focus on funerary wall paintings of the Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods. Her doctoral thesis has regarded the study of painted tombs belonging to the territories of the ancient Thrace (present-day Bulgaria), from the Late Classical period to Late Antiquity. Some of the results of her research are forthcoming in a monograph published by L'Erma di Bretschneider, Rome. Manetta's research at the CHS will be focused on the characteristics and influences of social, material and votive Thracian culture during the Late Classical and the Hellenistic periods. The collected data of the Thracian funerary contexts will be reviewed in the light of new interpretative methodologies and recent historical as well as archeological acquisitions, in order to analyze many issues related with the wall paintings.

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