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Couched in Death

Klinai and Identity in Anatolia and Beyond

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Introduction

Approaches to *Klinai* and the Cultures of Anatolia

The image of a person relaxing on a banquet couch endured as a funerary icon in the ancient Mediterranean from the Archaic Period through Late Antiquity. Whether on sarcophagus lids or grave reliefs or in tomb paintings, such images are easily called to mind and understood as expressions of the deceased's identity or status and his or her membership in the leisure-loving elite and, perhaps, in an eternal afterlife-banquet (or aspirations thereto). Less well known is the three-dimensional counterpart to such imagery: the actual placement of the dead on a banquet couch within a grave. This "burial language," too, makes a statement of some sort, but its audience is somewhat different and its meaning equally ambiguous. Is the furniture intended to mark the occupant as an elite banqueter *in perpetuo*? Or is it included for its own sake, as a luxury item or personal possession? These questions are complicated by several factors. For one, the Greek term for such furnishings, *kline* (plural *klinai*), had the dual meanings of "bed" and "banquet couch." After the emergence of the custom of reclined dining in the Near East around the eighth century BCE and its adoption by most elite cultures of the Mediterranean by the end of the seventh, the two functions were often served by one piece of furniture. Given the natural associations in human thought between sleep and death, it is possible that funerary *klinai* could have been perceived simultaneously as beds and banquet couches. Second, evidence for actual luxury *klinai* in burials is meager compared with the hundreds of stone and rock-cut beds or couches that are known in tombs across the Mediterranean. Some of these are made of marble, delicately carved or painted, and others still are monolithic—not, in other words, cheap or convenient alternatives to real wooden couches, even highly ornamented ones. What choices lie behind such *kline*-tombs, and what can they tell us about their occupants and the societies in which they lived? How did *klinai*, or replicas of them, come to be used as burial receptacles, and what meaning(s) did they carry? Were these *klinai* conceptualized as banquet couches, equipping the dead for eternal symposia or simply identifying them as members of the privileged class that enjoyed symposia in life, or were they seen as beds for eternal rest, or perhaps both? And can we date *klinai* stylistically and use them as criteria for establishing tomb chronologies?

These are some of the questions that have fueled the present study, conceived after a visit to a Lydian tumulus near Sardis. The tomb chamber had recently been vandalized, and salvage excavations had revealed an unparalleled assemblage of marble *klinai* with carved and painted decoration, in an unusual arrangement accommodating at least seven burials, as well as remarkable wall and ceiling

paintings with strong Phrygian affinities (Plate 1).² Most of the grave goods had been looted, but masonry style and scattered pottery remains pointed to a date in the late sixth or early fifth century BCE. The tomb raised important questions about cultural interaction and identity in Lydia in the Persian period. What was the significance of the *klinai* and their unprecedented arrangement? A recent study of Achaemenid Sardis had treated funerary *klinai* as indicators of Persianization, on the assumption that the practice of *kline*-burial was introduced to Asia Minor by the Persians when they conquered Lydia in the middle of the sixth century.³ But the funerary *klinai* found so widely in western Anatolia—in stone chambers buried beneath earthen tumuli as well as in tomb chambers carved directly in natural rock outcroppings and cliff faces, in a range of media (stone, wood, and bronze)—had never been studied systematically, and many remained unpublished. And new discoveries in Lydia and other regions of Asia Minor were beginning to reveal a wider distribution and variety of types than previously thought. This study, then, began in an effort to bring together this diverse evidence as a means of investigating the origins and cultural significance of *kline*-burial as well as the stylistic development and distribution of funerary *klinai* in Anatolia.

It soon became clear that a full understanding of funerary *klinai* in Anatolia would require looking well beyond the borders of modern Turkey—not only to occurrences of funeral beds and couches in contemporary cultures, such as Etruria, but also to other contemporary representations of *klinai*, as in the numerous symposion scenes on Greek vases, as well as representations of reclining banqueters in funerary art. It is important to stress that most funerary *klinai* are just as representational as vase paintings and grave reliefs, if not more so, in that they represent perishable luxury furniture in a more permanent medium at the same time that they help to construct a three-dimensional “representational tableau” that conveys ideas about the dead people who occupy them.⁴ In order to understand what *klinai* mean in these funerary contexts, it is necessary to consider what meaning(s) they carried in other representational contexts. Investigating the origins of the *kline*-tomb concept, in turn, requires rethinking some commonly held assumptions about the origins of the furniture form itself and the custom of the reclining banquet in general—and therefore also investigating cultural exchange and interaction in the eastern Mediterranean and the Near East in the eighth and seventh centuries.

Moreover, reassessing many of the assumptions that have shaped the dating and interpretation of *klinai* in the past opens new paths for exploring cultural identity in Achaemenid Anatolia. *Kline*-tombs and contemporary grave monuments depicting reclining banqueters make up a rich complex of images and artifacts, providing a window into funerary ideologies and elite self-representation in Persian-period Asia Minor. By closely examining the interrelation of these different forms of funerary expression and their associated grave assemblages, we can approach broader questions of cultural interaction and identity in this fascinating era of Anatolian history.

GEOGRAPHIC, CULTURAL, AND FUNERARY CONTEXTS

The Anatolian peninsula has been a crossroads of cultural interaction from earliest antiquity. By the sixth century it was occupied by several different cultures that were linguistically and archaeologically distinct: Greek-speaking peoples on the western coast in Ionia, Aeolis, and Mysia and in cities along the Black Sea coast; Carians and Lycians in the southwest; Lydians in the Hermos River valley

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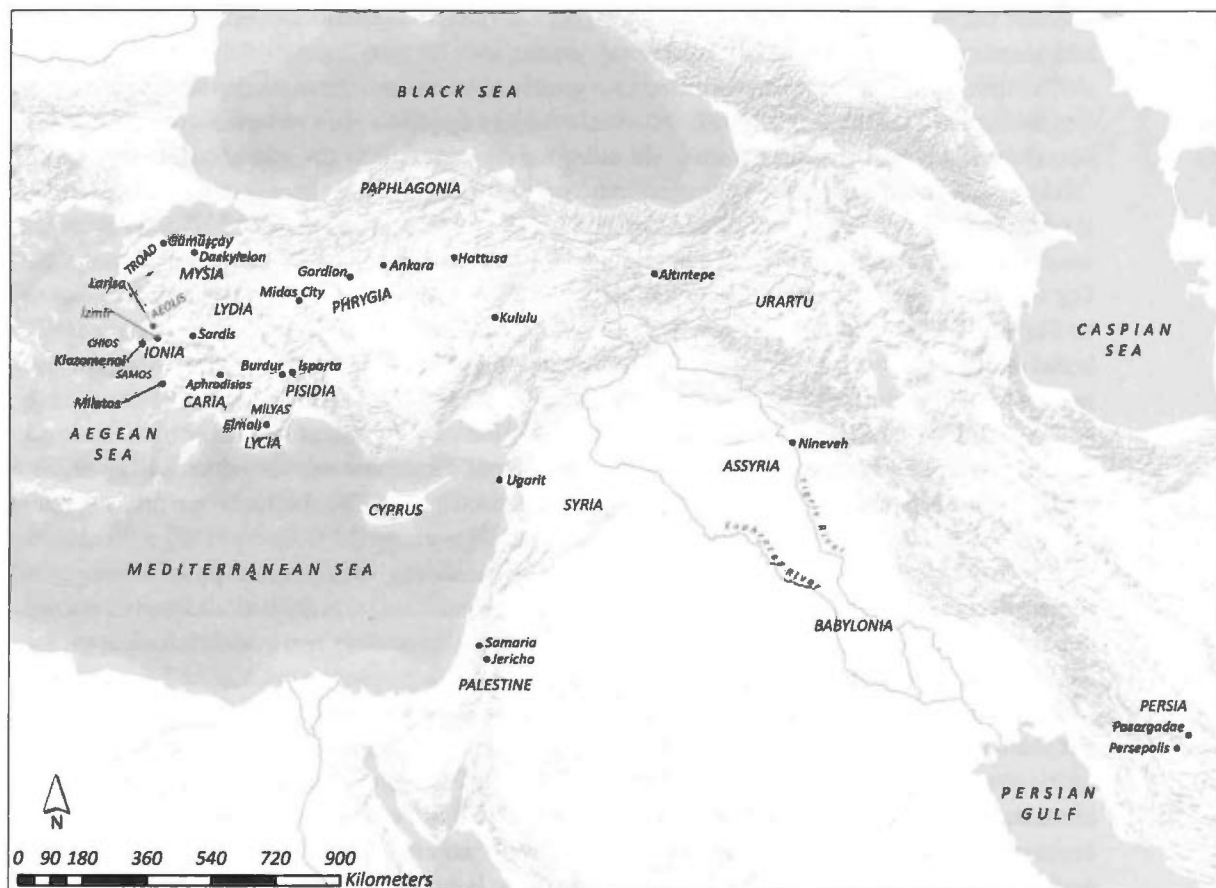


Figure 1. Ancient Anatolia and the Near East: sites mentioned in the text. (Map by N.P. Niemeier)

and surrounding fertile plains and foothills; and Phrygians on the central plateau, to name only the major players (Fig. 1). Kroisos of Lydia brought most of these diverse areas of western Anatolia under Lydian control by the middle of the sixth century. The previous centuries of the Iron Age had seen the rise and fall of the Urartian empire in far eastern Anatolia and the Phrygian kingdom of the central steppe. It was in this central-eastern part of Anatolia that the expanding Median empire of northwestern Iran began to establish outposts sometime in the early sixth century. By about 540 the newly founded Achaemenid empire under Cyrus the Great, of mixed Median and Persian descent, had conquered Lydia and thereby established control over nearly the entire peninsula.⁵ In this rich and varied cultural landscape, interaction and exchange were stimulated and facilitated by natural routes of communication and travel as well as the ebb and flow of imperial power. The geographic focus of this study is thus a broad one but at the same time a natural one, since these different cultural areas of the Anatolian peninsula existed in a common cultural landscape.⁶ A cross-cultural

approach to the study of funerary *klinai* allows for consideration of issues of interaction, exchange, and identity within the realm of funerary expression.

The funerary material presented here thus comes from several different cultural regions, with similar but distinct tomb traditions. In Lydia, evidence for *klinai* is found in many of the tumuli that dot the Lydian landscape and in chamber tombs carved into the soft conglomerate of the “Nekropolis” hill at Sardis, the Lydian capital. Tumuli are found along routes of travel and in clusters throughout the valleys and ridges surrounding the Hermos, Kogamos, and Kayster rivers and associated tributaries, and their distribution gives us some idea of Lydian settlement patterns (see Fig. 63).⁷ The largest collection of tumuli in Lydia is the “royal” cemetery just north of Sardis, known as Bin Tepe. Though the name means “a thousand mounds,” it contains just over one hundred burial mounds. The three largest and presumably earliest have long been associated with the Lydian Mermnad dynasty and were probably inspired by Phrygian royal burial mounds.⁸ Most of the smaller mounds at Bin Tepe were likely built in emulation of the royal tumuli, many of them during the Persian period.⁹ It is uncertain when the tradition of rock-cut tombs began at Sardis, because finds are rare and may reflect reuse, but they were certainly in use by the sixth century, and some have associated inscriptions or relief stelai.¹⁰

Tombs of both types attracted looters and explorers before the birth of scientific archaeology and remain targets of illicit excavation. Of more than 600 tumuli in Lydia, the burial chambers of only about 115 have been archaeologically investigated. Among these, only two burials have been found undisturbed.¹¹ Documented exploration of Lydian tumuli began in the middle of the nineteenth century with the work of Spiegelthal at the Tumulus of Alyattes and was continued by Dennis in the 1870s and 1880s and Choisy in 1875.¹² The first Sardis expedition under Butler in the early part of the twentieth century explored only a few tumuli but excavated over eleven hundred rock-cut chamber tombs in the Sardis Nekropolis, most of which are now inaccessible because of heavy erosion of the soft conglomerate.¹³ Since 1958 the joint Harvard-Cornell expedition has excavated and/or recorded six additional chamber tombs in the Nekropolis and several tumuli at Bin Tepe and elsewhere in the Sardis region.¹⁴ Illicit digging has resulted in additional salvage excavations by local museums throughout Lydia.¹⁵ Though conducted under unfortunate circumstances, these rescue operations have shed valuable light on the Lydian tumulus tradition and, in particular, the use of funerary *klinai*. Much of the material returned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art to Turkey in the 1990s as the “Lydian Treasure” is associated with tumuli looted in the 1960s in the area of modern Güre in eastern Lydia, and many of these tumuli held funerary *klinai*.¹⁶ Most recently, Roosevelt’s comprehensive survey of Lydian tumuli has significantly enhanced our understanding of their distribution and internal features and has provided evidence for many more tombs with *klinai*.¹⁷ Under Roosevelt’s direction, the Central Lydia Archaeology Survey has recorded additional tombs with *klinai* and continues to monitor tumuli for evidence of illicit excavation and looting.¹⁸ Of the Lydian tumuli that have been archaeologically explored thus far, around 50 have chambers that are known to have contained couches of some sort, usually of stone; at least 62 of the chamber tombs Butler excavated had rock-cut beds or couches, as far as we can tell from surviving records, and 7 additional rock-cut tombs with beds or couches are now known in Lydia.

In Phrygia, evidence for burial *klinai* comes from rock-cut tombs and tumulus burials of

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somewhat different types than those found in Lydia. Phrygian tumuli normally covered wooden chambers, simple inhumation pits, or cremations. A few tantalizing pieces that may belong to decorated wooden *klinai* have been found in several of the sixth-century tumuli at Gordion, while evidence for wooden beds and bedding in earlier tumuli may represent the roots of this tradition.¹⁹ Phrygian rock-cut tombs are much better preserved today than Lydian chamber tombs, owing to the more resilient nature of the bedrock, but they have consequently been more conspicuous targets for looting, vandalism, and reuse over the centuries and are never found with burials intact.²⁰ Dating can therefore be quite difficult, and some could belong to the Late Phrygian, Hellenistic, or Roman period. Rock-cut chamber tombs and other rock-cut monuments (such as cult façades and step-thrones) are most prevalent in the “highlands” of Phrygia, a series of lush upland valleys and picturesque rock outcroppings west of Ankara in the area between Afyon, Eskişehir, and Kütahya (see Fig. 91). In the 1950s Haspels investigated this region and catalogued around forty tombs, most of which contain rock-carved beds or couches of some kind.²¹ Recent research in the region of Sivrihisar, beyond the eastern extent of Haspels’ study area, has added significantly to this corpus.²²

Surveys in northwestern Pisidia and the highland regions of the Kibyrtis and Kabalia have extended the distribution of Phrygian-style rock-cut tombs and monuments significantly toward the south.²³ Recent discoveries of tumuli with chambers and markers similar to those found in Lydian tumuli suggest that the inhabitants of these highland border zones shared cultural traits with Lydians as well as Phrygians.²⁴ Clusters of Lydian-style tumulus tombs have also been identified in northeastern Caria, in the regions of Harpasa and Aphrodisias.²⁵ Such tombs found outside of Lydia proper do not necessarily reflect the presence of Lydian settlers; they more likely indicate, as Ratté suggests, the “adoption by local landowners of Lydian aristocratic customs, and perhaps even the incorporation of this local landowning class into the Lydo-Persian feudal system.”²⁶

Tumuli in the Elmalı basin of northern Lycia (the Milyas) have affinities with both Phrygian and Lydian burial traditions. The inhabitants of this region were known to Herodotos as Milyans, but the area was later considered part of the Roman province of Lycia.²⁷ In the Iron Age and Archaic period, the region seems to have had cultural connections with Lydia and Phrygia. The discovery of Phrygian-style tumuli (with items carrying Phrygian inscriptions) near Bayındır in the northeast part of the Elmalı plain suggests that Phrygian culture was widely distributed in its heyday, whether or not the occupants of these tombs were ethnically Phrygian.²⁸ Two other tumuli excavated by Melink and her Bryn Mawr team in the 1970s near Elmalı held stone *klinai* in stone-built chambers with remarkable wall paintings, each including a banquet scene.²⁹ These tombs are thus critical to the consideration of the meanings of funerary *klinai* and of cultural identities in Achaemenid Anatolia and will figure prominently in the discussions that follow.

In Lycia proper, rock-cut chambers with burial couches and façades replicating vernacular wooden architecture (and, later, Greek-style temples) may be found in association with nearly every known Lycian settlement, and their occurrence in the hinterlands (such as the Milyas) attests to the distribution of “Lycian” cultural elements beyond coastal Lycia.³⁰ These tombs have been dated from the fifth through the third centuries, and distinctively “Lycian” culture seems to have been most recognizable during the era of Persian rule in Asia Minor.³¹ Because Lycian tombs are so numerous and evidently later than the sixth century, when the *kline*-tomb tradition began in other regions of

Anatolia, they are not catalogued individually here; but since they reflect the cross-cultural popularity of couch-burial in Anatolia and sometimes have associated inscriptions that shed light on the occupancy of such tombs, they are included in this study as comparative material. The rock-cut tombs of Caria, Lycia's neighbor, and of Paphlagonia, in north-central Anatolia, are likewise later than the bulk of the material presented here but are considered to the extent that they demonstrate the wide distribution of this kind of funerary arrangement and offer variations peculiar to their particular cultural regions.

Isolated examples of sixth- and fifth-century *kline*-tombs also occur among Lydia's western and northern neighbors in Ionia, Mysia, and the Troad. *Klinai* are found in these areas in tumuli very similar to those in Lydia and may be understood as part of a broader phenomenon of Lydian-style tumuli in western Anatolia in the Persian period. The tumulus at Belevi, near the later mausoleum, lies on a major travel route between Ionia and Lydia, the road from Ephesos to Sardis (see Fig. 63), and has other Lydian features, such as a krepis wall and crowning monument.³² It has been associated with a pro-Persian tyrant of Ephesos in the latter half of the sixth century.³³ The remarkable tumuli of the Granikos valley in the Troad are also comparable to Lydian tumuli, and the contents of some of them suggest a clientele affiliated in some ways with the Persian culture of the nearby satrapal center, Daskyleion.³⁴ Two tumuli with *klinai* recently excavated at Daskyleion itself offer striking parallels with Lydian tombs while also introducing some unique variations, and their future publication will surely enhance the overall picture of this tradition in western Anatolia.³⁵ Tumuli in central and southern Mysia share similarities with Phrygian as well as Lydian tombs, in keeping with the hybrid culture of this mixed border region.³⁶

PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

Several scholars have collected evidence for ancient *klinai*, but the rich corpus of material from tombs in Asia Minor has never been systematically analyzed, and few studies have focused on the sepulchral contexts of extant *klinai*. In two related collections of evidence for ancient furniture, Richter outlined the main couch types that will be considered in more detail in Chapter 1.³⁷ Her interest lay mostly in establishing the types of furniture used by Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans based on real and represented evidence. Ransom's earlier, more narrow study of ancient couches and beds had also dealt primarily with form and style and was essentially antiquarian, with the goal of determining what Greek and Roman beds and couches were like, through literary sources and limited archaeological evidence.³⁸ Laser's study of "Homeric" furniture focused heavily on Geometric representations of beds in funerary scenes, and Ahlberg, in her analysis of these rituals in Geometric art, looked closely at the structural features of the depicted furnishings.³⁹ Ahlberg's focus, however, was on establishing the conventions of portrayal used by Geometric artists, not creating a typology of Geometric bed types. For that, one must consult Kyrieleis's comprehensive study of ancient thrones and couches.⁴⁰ He established the Near Eastern heritage of many of the elements that became standardized in Greek furniture forms and devised the classification system for ancient *klinai* followed here (Types A, B, and C). But the rich and varied *klinai* of Anatolia are underrepresented in his study, since few were known and adequately published at that time, and his work is more concerned with form and style than with funerary significance.⁴¹

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Studies concerned with the funerary context of *klinai* are much more limited and largely outdated. The discovery of Macedonian and Macedonian-style tombs at the end of the nineteenth century fueled an early interest in the origins of the funeral couch. Heuzey, inspired by his discovery of stone funeral beds in tombs at Palatitza and Pydna, devoted several essays to a conceptual exploration of this type of tomb furnishing.⁴² Some of his comments reveal the limited state of archaeological knowledge at the time of his writing (1873),⁴³ but others are prophetic. Although no certain trace of a funeral couch had been found in Spiegelthal's 1853 excavation of the Tumulus of Alyattes at Sardis or elsewhere in Lydia, Heuzey suspected that the custom of burial on a couch was practiced among the Lydians and predicted that this theory would be borne out by future excavations.⁴⁴ He suggested, furthermore, that the ultimate origins of the custom lay in Asia Minor.

About a generation later, another scholar inspired by recent discoveries took up the question of funerary beds in a more systematic way, as the subject of his dissertation.⁴⁵ Vollmoeller's springboard was his own study of two Hellenistic tombs with *klinai* on the island of Euboea, published in 1899 by Kourouniotis.⁴⁶ The first, at Eretria, contained two sarcophagus-like marble *klinai* with interior cavities for the placement of cremated remains, along with two thrones and a chest, also made of marble. The second tomb, at Vathia (not far from Eretria), contained two limestone *klinai* richly adorned with relief and painted decoration replicating mattresses, pillows, and coverings (Plate 2). By this time, as Heuzey had predicted, a number of decorated stone *klinai* had been discovered in Lydia during Choisy's investigations at Bin Tepe, the tumulus cemetery of Sardis.⁴⁷ Basing his study for the most part on the rock-cut chambers recorded by nineteenth-century travelers like Texier, Benndorf, and Perrot and Chipiez,⁴⁸ Vollmoeller had only two categories of *klinai*—undecorated and decorated—and saw a development from the former to the latter, though he acknowledged the difficulties in determining whether a simple stone bench is a “primitive Vorstufe” (“primitive precursor”) or a “Nachahmung” (“imitation”) of a *kline*.⁴⁹ Since rock-cut chambers are difficult to date precisely, especially when little else is known about the culture that produced them (as was the case, for example, with Phrygia prior even to the Körte brothers' exploration of Gordion in 1900), Vollmoeller's chronological conclusions are unreliable. His study nonetheless provides a useful compilation of ancient literary references concerning the custom of *kline*-burial and raises several of the fundamental questions that shape this project: when, where, and why did the *kline*-tomb become concretized as a prominent mode of elite burial?

Though the corpus of material has been steadily growing and diversifying in medium since Vollmoeller's time, the subject of funeral couches in Asia Minor has not been treated comprehensively since then. Rodenwaldt's entry on *klinai* in the *Real-Encyclopädie* (1921) includes a special section on “Totenklinai,” but his comments are necessarily general and based on limited evidence. McLauchlin considers Lydian *klinai* within their funerary context in her 1985 dissertation, *Lydian Graves and Burial Customs*, but within the framework of her larger study she could devote only a few pages (and a series of thought-provoking footnotes) to *klinai* in a chapter on tomb furnishings. She raised many interesting questions that can now be clarified by new finds and a more cross-cultural approach, placing the tradition of bed/couch burial in its wider Anatolian context. Boardman's 1990 chapter on “*Symposion* Furniture” also touches on the topic of funerary couches in Asia Minor and a

broader association of *klinai* with death and burial in the Greek world, but his survey is necessarily summary and again serves only to raise many of the issues explored in detail here.

Comprehensive studies of funeral couches outside Anatolia, in contrast, have appeared in recent decades. Steingraber's monograph on Etruscan furniture provides an exhaustive catalogue of both real and represented examples of Etruscan furniture, including many funeral beds or couches made of wood, metal, or stone or carved directly from bedrock.⁵⁰ His conclusions are mainly statistical, revealing what types of furniture occur most frequently in certain contexts or regions of Etruria, but the catalogue is an invaluable tool for accessing the wealth of furnishings in Etruscan tombs. Even more directly concerned with funerary context is Sismanidis's analysis of *klinai* and *kline*-shaped furnishings in Macedonian tombs.⁵¹ After detailed descriptions of the tomb at Potidaia and its *klinai*, Sismanidis provides a catalogue of thirty-five Macedonian tombs with *klinai* made of stone or wood and *kline*-shaped items, such as sarcophagi and cists.⁵² An appendix provides a brief overview of the use of *klinai* in a funerary context: that is, in the rituals leading up to burial, such as the *prothesis* ("lying in state"), as well as in the burial itself. The Macedonian evidence has grown considerably since Sismanidis's publication, and new finds have been synthesized by Andrianou in a recent book on furniture in Late Classical and Hellenistic Greece.⁵³ In addition, Huguenot's recent reexamination of the tombs at Eretria that had inspired Vollmoeller's study considers the broader cultural and symbolic implications of funerary *klinai* in Macedonian tomb traditions and signals a need for a study like the present one: "The origin of the custom of the funeral bed deserves to be studied in a profound manner, because it poses the question of exchange between east and west."⁵⁴ Whereas Etruscan tombs with burial *klinai* are close contemporaries with the Anatolian ones under consideration here, the Macedonian ones likely represent their legacy. The use of real or stone *klinai* in Macedonian tombs has been linked by several scholars with elite burial practices in Asia Minor in the Achaemenid era.⁵⁵ And it is to the Macedonian tradition that funerary *klinai* in Alexandria and other parts of the Hellenistic and Roman world probably trace their ancestry.⁵⁶ Although studies of these later traditions have sometimes pointed to Asia Minor or Lydia as a possible origin for the custom, no thorough study of the earliest funerary *klinai* has been carried out until now.

This study also builds upon and contributes to scholarship on the iconography of banqueting in the ancient Mediterranean world.⁵⁷ Many scholars have collected and discussed scenes of banqueting in funerary art (often called "Totenmahl" scenes) in the ancient Mediterranean and the Near East, but none of these studies have taken into account the rich tomb assemblages of Archaic Asia Minor, which constitute, in effect, three-dimensional counterparts to the Totenmahl scenes. Dentzer's landmark 1982 study is the most comprehensive, exploring the significance of the visual motif of the reclining banqueter in a wide range of contexts, but it does not draw a connection between the numerous grave stelai depicting a banquet and the real presence of items related to the banquet in contemporary tombs.⁵⁸ Similarly, Fehr's monograph on the reclining banquet, which appeared concurrently with Dentzer's first foray into the topic in 1971, is concerned primarily with the eastern origins of the custom and the transmission of the practice westward and does not consider funerary contexts.⁵⁹ The works of Thönges-Stringaris and Fabricius, on the other hand, deal fully with the funerary significance of the motif but focus on visual, rather than spatial, representations.⁶⁰ In fact, the tradition of *kline*-burial pre-dates the earliest so-called Totenmahl reliefs and

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must be considered as a backdrop to the study of banqueting imagery in funerary iconography, even if interpretations of *kline*-tomb assemblages are just as fraught with difficulty as readings of the corresponding images.⁶¹ This study aims to help resolve some of the problems surrounding interpretations of the “funerary banquet” by highlighting the correspondences between spatial and visual representations of *klinai* in funerary contexts.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The study of funeral couches is also inevitably tied to larger anthropological questions concerning the archaeology of death and burial. It is important to consider the biases of archaeological preservation and exploration inherent in the burial record. The data set presented here is necessarily limited and shaped by the history of tomb exploration in Anatolia—it represents only those tombs that have so far been explored and published. Since these tend to be the more conspicuous tombs (tumuli and rock-cut tombs), there is an unavoidable preponderance of monumental/elite burials over simpler graves.⁶² It is possible, for instance, that burials in simple inhumations or cist graves were sometimes placed on wooden *klinai*, but since these are less conspicuous in the archaeological record, far fewer have been explored. Furthermore, wooden furniture does not tend to survive well in the temperate climates of Anatolia, unless certain environmental factors are met (as in the case of the Gordion tumuli). Plain wooden beds or couches were probably much more common as burial furnishings than available evidence indicates. At the same time, the conspicuous nature of the tombs that form the basis of the study has led to centuries of looting that have left many chambers damaged or empty. While stone *klinai* are usually left behind (if in a shattered state) by tomb robbers, those of other materials may have been removed. And wooden furniture is less likely to survive in tombs that have been repeatedly opened. So the available evidence may be weighted in favor of stone couches in conspicuous (and therefore probably elite or wealthy) burials. It is also important to recognize that the concepts underlying the practice of *kline*-burial were probably more widespread than the practice itself. Other cultures in other eras may also have conceived of their dead as lying on beds or reclining on banquet couches in the afterlife but, for whatever reason, did not choose to express this concept literally in the tomb. In fact, the general concept of the funerary bed and the role of the bed in funerary ritual is much more prevalent than the physical manifestation of this belief in the tomb itself.⁶³

In the study of burial evidence of any kind, it is also important to recognize the limits of interpretation. Ethnographic investigation has shown that archaeologists’ assumptions about the original meanings of items in a grave assemblage may be far from accurate.⁶⁴ Most fallible are “direct” interpretations that posit a code-like correlation between symbol and referent (e.g., grave goods are interpreted as things the deceased will need in the afterlife); more nuanced are “linguistic” readings, in which “the role of ritual action as part of a system of relations analogous to a language” is recognized and individual elements have meaning only within larger sets of elements.⁶⁵ Interpretations of the latter type allow room for contextual meanings: the same symbols can be used in different contexts or ritual systems to “say” different things, or different symbols can be used to “say” the same things.⁶⁶ It is important to stress that interpretations of the significance of burial *klinai* are complicated by the fact that *klinai* were by nature multifunctional and by the possibility that even the

functions of which we are certain (banquet couch and bed) may have carried meanings in a funerary context that are not immediately recognizable to us today. Ethnographic study of the use of beds in funerary rituals can demonstrate the fallibility of commonly held notions, such as the assumption that funerary beds symbolize eternal rest or slumber. They may just as easily be understood as personal possessions of the deceased or as receptacles for the display of fine textiles: among the Idu Mishmi people of northern India, for instance, items of household furniture, including beds, are deposited in tombs not so much to provide a “house” or place of rest for the deceased but because of the taboo now attached to their personal belongings;⁶⁷ and in the Kalabari culture of Nigeria, the beds that figure so prominently in traditional funerary rituals serve primarily to display family textiles in programmatic and virtuosic arrangements, both during the funeral and in the following days, rather than as resting-places for the dead.⁶⁸

As the subtitle of this book implies, an analysis of *kline*-tombs in Anatolia has the potential to tell us something about the identity or identities of the people who were buried or decided to bury their loved ones in this way. Approaching “identity” in the archaeological record requires reflection upon the meaning of this term and its more specific subtypes, “ethnic identity” and “cultural identity,” and, in turn, the very concepts of “ethnicity” and “culture.” “Identity” itself has several dimensions, of which ethnicity and cultural affiliation are but two; other vectors of identity include social status, gender, and religion, and these may carry different weight in self-expression at different times or in different contexts. The relationship between ethnic and cultural signifiers in the archaeological record is complex and highly variable, depending on particular social and historical contexts. The early premise that patterning in material culture reflects distinctions between ethnic groups has long been recognized as flawed.⁶⁹ As Hall and others have shown, ethnic and cultural groups are not always one and the same, and it is important to distinguish between ethnic and cultural criteria of identity: “The ethnic group is a *social construction* rather than an objective and inherently determined category. Genetic, linguistic, religious, or common cultural factors cannot act as an objective and a universal definition of an ethnic group. . . . They are instead *indicia*, or the operational sets of distinguishing attributes which tend to be associated with ethnic groups once the socially determined *criteria* have been created and set in place.”⁷⁰ Hall defines cultural identity as “the conscious reification of ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes and practices, selectively extracted from the totality of social existence and endowed with a particular symbolic signification for the purposes of creating exclusionary distinctiveness”; he maintains that what distinguishes ethnic from cultural identity are “a putative subscription to a myth of common descent and kinship, and association with a specific territory and a sense of shared history.”⁷¹ Antonaccio has criticized Hall’s privileging of textual and oral “criteria” in this distinction and urges the reincorporation of material culture into definitions of ethnic as well as cultural identity, with an understanding that ethnic identity is just as actively constructed as cultural identity.⁷²

It is important to stress that both ethnic and cultural identities are dynamic, subjective constructions defined in self-conscious opposition to other ethnic or cultural entities. Ethnic or cultural signifiers tend to become more conspicuous in the archaeological record at times of intense cultural interaction, when group boundaries are challenged or neighboring groups are in some kind of opposition with each other.⁷³ Such signaling can be expressed through formal variation in material

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culture, or “style.” Broadly defined, “style” can include the artistic style in which an artifact is produced (such as pottery shape or architectural style) as well as other variable modes of behavior (such as burial type).⁷⁴ Stylistic variation can signal identity but carries no one-to-one correspondence with ethnicity or culture, since it is an “active” feature of material culture that can be emulated and learned.⁷⁵ The reclining banquet itself can be seen as a cultural signifier or an element of “style” in the broadest sense of the term, since it is a particular way of doing things (a form of social practice) that can also be actively involved in the process of identity construction (as a form of display).⁷⁶

Hybridized styles and cultural hybridity often result from processes of culture contact, whether in colonial or other interactive situations. Postcolonial theorists have emphasized the value of the hybridity model over the concept of acculturation, which implies passivity on the part of the colonized.⁷⁷ Hybridity, on the other hand, entails a “productive and mutual acculturation that produces new and vigorous forms.”⁷⁸ Better yet, the term “hybridization” clarifies the active and creative nature of this process.⁷⁹ Along the same lines, the concept of “interculturalization” amends the one-way implications of “acculturation” to recognize the give-and-take of culture contact, even in colonial or imperial zones of interaction.⁸⁰ In the discussion of identity in Achaemenid-era Anatolia that will occupy much of Chapter 4, it will be argued that “Persian” and “local” styles, motifs, and traditions in tomb assemblages are signifiers not of ethnicity but of cultural affiliation, and that correspondences among burials and funerary imagery in a range of different cultural areas of Anatolia (Phrygia, Lydia, Mysia, etc.) in the Achaemenid period express a hybridized cultural identity meant to distinguish both native Anatolian and Persian elites as members of an “international Achaemenid” elite network that transcended traditional cultural and ethnic boundaries.⁸¹

OVERVIEW

Chapter 1 summarizes what we know of the function and stylistic development of *klinai* in the Archaic and Classical periods, based on existing written, archaeological, and pictorial evidence, and establishes the multifunctionality of *klinai*. The chapter also outlines the evidence for an East Greek origin of the two main *kline* types at the end of the seventh or the beginning of the sixth century and explores the significance of *kline* style in Greek vase imagery, as well as the challenges of interpreting visual representation in general, concluding with discussion of Plato’s use of the *kline* in the *Republic*. Study of the visual representations has been greatly facilitated by the online Beazley Archive Pottery Database.⁸² This now indispensable resource provides unprecedented access to the visual record of *klinai* in the Greek world. The analysis of *kline* form and decoration given here therefore updates the work of Richter and Kyrieleis with a much larger corpus of evidence, allowing detailed consideration of decorative variation and its relation to painter attribution as well as pictorial context. The more than three hundred vases cited in this chapter are listed in Appendix B.

Chapter 2 then synthesizes the evidence compiled in the accompanying catalogue of sixth- and fifth-century *kline*-tombs in Lydia and neighboring regions (Phrygia, Ionia, Mysia, the Troad, the Milyas, the Kibyrtis, and northwestern Pisidia; see Appendix A), along with additional contemporary and later examples from Caria, Lycia, and Paphlagonia. Much of the material presented here has not previously been published or has been mentioned only in brief excavation reports. The discussion is organized first by medium (wood, bronze, stone, and bedrock) and then by tomb

type (tumuli and rock-cut tombs). Regional and cross-cultural trends and patterns emerge, allowing discussion of stylistic development as well as of conceptual issues of arrangement, use, reuse, and symbolic function—what makes a funerary bed a “*kline*”?

Chapter 3 investigates the origins of the *kline*-tomb concept and explores the meaning and significance of funerary *klinai*. First, the theory that *kline*-burial was introduced to Anatolia by Persians is addressed and refuted through a close reanalysis of the evidence that has been adduced in its favor, including the golden *kline* that reportedly stood in the Tomb of Cyrus the Great at his capital, Pasargadae. The chapter then presents a case for an Anatolian origin by locating the various ideological components of this tomb type there: in earlier conceptions of banqueting in a funerary context, funerary traditions involving beds, the custom of reclined banqueting, and sympotic ideology in the Archaic world. A wide range of literary, archaeological, and pictorial evidence from Anatolia, Greece, Etruria, and the Near East is adduced to support the theory that this tomb type originated in West Anatolia (probably Lydia) in the late seventh or early sixth century. Discussion of the origins of the reclining banquet locates the practice in a context of luxury rather than nomadic practicality. An excursus on Etruscan funeral beds and couches applies many of the same questions to this independent yet remarkably similar tradition.

Chapter 4 returns to the Persian question from a different angle and seeks to explain the evident popularity of *kline*-tombs in Achaemenid Anatolia and of banqueting imagery in contemporary funerary art as expressions of local traditions and hybridized identities in the unique “Anatolian-Persian” cultural landscape. This chapter also explores the possibility of a cultural *koine* among distinct regions of West Anatolia in the late sixth and fifth centuries—one that was perhaps facilitated by the unprecedented foreign administration of these diverse areas and fueled by a need to assert an “Anatolian” identity in the face of Persian presence but was, at the same time, embraced by the dominant “ethno-classe.”⁸³

A final chapter considers the relationship between Anatolian and Macedonian funerary *klinai* and explores the broader legacy of the “funeral couch” in particular and the ancient *kline* in general, in contexts as wide-ranging as Buddhist art and nineteenth-century America. This book is thus as much an exploration of ancient *klinai* in general—their styles, functions, meanings, and representations—as it is an investigation of their funerary uses and their particular significance in sixth- and fifth-century Anatolia.