

LEFT, RIGHT, AND CENTER: DIRECTION IN ETRUSCAN ART¹

BY

JOCELYN PENNY SMALL

Abstract

The thesis proposed here is that the same direction writing takes also dominates in artistic composition. That is, since Etruscan is written from right to left, Etruscan artists will also arrange more of their scenes to be “read” in that direction than Greek artists who will naturally prefer a left-to-right orientation. A survey of archaic black-figure vases from both cultures strikingly verifies the hypothesis. In particular, the percentage of scenes represented in the retrograde or backwards direction for both the Greeks and the Etruscans is the same. These results are applied to other problems, such as Etruscan adaptation of Greek models and also fabrics of debated origin like Caeretan.

“Now, if you’ll only attend, Kitty, and not talk so much, I’ll tell you all my ideas about Looking-glass House. First, there’s the room you can see through the glass—that’s just the same as our drawing-room, only the things go the other way. I can see all of it when I get upon a chair—all but the bit just behind the fireplace. Oh! I do so wish I could see *that* bit! I want so much to know whether they’ve a fire in the winter: you never *can* tell, you know, unless our fire smokes, and then smoke comes up in that room too—but that may be only pretence, just to make it look as if they had a fire. Well then, the books are something like our books, only the words go the wrong way; I know that, because I’ve held up one of our books to the glass, and then they hold up one in the other room.”²

Instead of beginning the further adventures of Alice in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll could just as well have been writing about the reflections of Greek art in Etruscan. Etruscan things look pretty much like Greek ones. Except every so often, like Alice, the modern viewer develops a nagging suspicion that the similarities are “only pretence”; but then, he reassures himself in an Alician sort of way that only minor adjustments in his Greek focus are needed to view the Etruscan work correctly, because Etruscan really is Greek art—only it goes the wrong way. Let us step through the Greek looking glass to examine that particular aspect of Etruscan art: the directional orientation of their figured scenes. How does one read Etruscan representations? Is it merely a matter of holding Etruscan objects up to a mirror? Or are the differences from Greek pictures of greater magnitude and more significance? Finally what effect does our refined perception have on our understanding of both Greek and Etruscan art and their relationship to each other?

One need not be as clever as Alice to realize that there are only three basic ways to arrange a scene. In a Pontic depiction of the ambush of Troilus³ the viewer starts on the left with

the water fountain and the foliage, and then looks to the right to follow the action of Achilles, in armor, in the process of pulling Troilus off his horse racing to the right. Because one’s eyes move from left to right, this representation is classified as “right”. Conversely, the Pontic scene of the three goddesses, being led to Paris for judgement of their relative beauty, belongs among those going to the “left”.⁴ Despite the second herald turning round to speak with Hera, one follows the entourage as it proceeds to the left. Finally on the shoulder of an amphora by the Micali Painter two sphinxes, racing off in opposite directions, form a balanced scene which one can begin viewing from either the left or the right.⁵ Such symmetrical compositions are considered as “center”.

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In addition to the abbreviations of the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (= LIMC), Zurich 1981, the following are used:

Beazley Add L. Burn and R. Glynn, *Beazley Addenda*, Oxford 1982.
Beazley, RG J.D. Beazley and F. Magi, *La raccolta Benedetto Guglielmi del Museo Gregoriano Etrusco del Vaticano*, Città del Vaticano 1939.

Boardman J. Boardman, *Athenian black figure vases*, London 1974.

Dohrn, SFV T. Dohrn, *Die schwarzfigurigen etruskischen Vasen aus der zweiten Hälfte des 6 Jhs*, Köln 1937.

Hannestad, L. Hannestad, *The followers of the Paris Painter*, FFP Copenhagen 1976.

Hannestad, L. Hannestad, *The Paris Painter*, Copenhagen 1974.
PP

Schefold, K. Schefold, *Götter- und Heldensagen der Griechen in der spätarchaischen Kunst*, Munich 1978.

Uggeri G. Uggeri, ‘Una nuova anfora del Pittore di Micali’, *Numismatica e antichità classiche (Quaderni ticinesi)* 4, 1975, 17–43.

² L. Carroll, *Through the looking glass*, Harmondsworth 1961, 192, 194.

³ Louvre E 703; the Silen Painter; amphora. Hannestad, FFP, 61 no. 49; PP, pl. 29 top; I. Krauskopf, *Der thebanische Sagenkreis und andere griechische Sagen in der etruskischen Kunst*, Mainz 1974, pl. 14, fig. 2; LIMC I, Achle 202 C 17.

⁴ Munich 837; the Paris Painter; amphora. Hannestad, PP, 44 no. 1, pls. 1–2; R. Hampe and E. Simon, *Griechische Sagen in der frühen etruskischen Kunst*, Mainz 1964, pls. 16–17; LIMC I, 500 no. 14 and pl. 379.

⁵ Detroit, Institute of Arts 1927.281. E. Mangani, ‘Due anfore

Thus the direction in which the viewer's eyes move to follow the action in a scene determines its classification. In other words, one *can* read pictures in the same way that one reads printed text. The emphasis here is very much on the "can"; for writing almost invariably runs in only one direction, while artists with equanimity can choose any of the possibilities. Nonetheless, Etruscans, accustomed to begin writing on the right, would naturally have more scenes composed with a right-to-left movement than Greeks whose writing starts on the left and proceeds to the right. The thesis proposed here, then, is that the same direction writing takes also dominates in artistic composition.⁶

Minor exceptions to the principal direction exist for both Greek and Etruscan writing. Greek and Etruscan artists might inscribe the names of their figures in the direction which suited their, rather than the language's, dictates.⁷ On the Attic François vase in the scene with the Calydonian boar hunt, for example, Peleus and Meleagros are written to the right, but the names of the Dioskouroi, Kastor and Polydeukes, to the left.⁸ Secondly, early Greek was frequently written boustrophedon with each line beginning at the point where the last ended by reversing the direction of the previous lines; although it should be noted that, according to Jeffery,⁹ the Greeks did not any time write totally retrograde—that is, backwards like the Etruscans. In any case, by the time of the archaic period in the sixth century B.C. the Greeks and the Etruscans were firmly headed in their own independent and opposite directions.

To test the hypothesis, the orientation of both Greek and Etruscan scenes must be established in a more or less scientific manner. A core group of objects suffices for analysis, as long as its members meet the following requirements. Too great a range in time of manufacture does not produce a meaningful comparison, since styles and tastes changed over the six-to-seven hundred years of the Etruscans' existence. Similarly the objects have to be of the same type and function, because different media may obey different rules. Architectural sculpture and wall painting, for example, adapt their compositions to the buildings and walls they decorate. The numbers cannot be overwhelming, but must be sufficient unto the task and roughly equivalent for the two cultures. Archaic black-figure vase painting of the sixth century fits these requirements, provided that even here selectivity is imposed. In particular, Attic black-figure, the dominant Greek fabric found in Etruria in that period, works well as a point of departure; for the Greek practices need to be determined first in order to have criteria against which to assess the Etruscan vases. The decoration of different shapes, and even of the same shape by different painters, varies. Moreover, a sufficient number of objects either are incomplete today or are not fully published. Therefore scenes, not objects, form the basis of the percentages presented here.

For an efficient, but accurate, survey John Boardman's *Athenian Black Figure Vases*¹⁰ was used because of its copious illustrations. Since he presents an overview, only 283 scenes of his 380 illustrations applied to this study. Of these some were easy to classify, like the examples at the beginning of this discussion, and others were real eyeball benders. The absolutely impossible cases were discarded from considera-

Group	Left	Right	Sym- metrical	Number of scenes
Boardman	12%	61%	27%	283
to ca. 530 B.C.	12%	55%	32%	148
to ca. 480 B.C.	11%	67%	21%	135
The Affecter embedded directions distri- buted	3%	44%	54%	226
	3%	92%	6%	226
Schefold, <i>SBArch</i> II	22%	77%	1%	174
Exekias	14%	53%	33%	57

Fig. 1. Direction in Attic black-figure.

tion; the nearly impossible ones were categorized according to rules, which will be expounded when and as they apply. While not everyone will agree with all of my decisions, there are two compelling reasons in their favor: I was consistent; and the percentages that were derived are strikingly different enough to be significant, even if all the close calls are put into their contending categories. The results were that 61% of the scenes ran to the right, 27% were symmetrical, and 12% went to the left. (Fig. 1) In other words, instead of dividing their scenes evenly among the left, the right, and the symmetrical, as would be expected from the "law of averages", Attic vase painters demonstrably favored the rightward direction they used for their writing.

When these global figures are broken down into earlier and later Attic black-figure, certain trends become apparent. Interestingly, the proportion of scenes to the left remained the same throughout the sixth century, while that of scenes to the right increased from 55% to 67% at the expense of the symmetrical. The explanation for the change lies in differing preferences in choice of subject.

della scuola del Pittore di Micali a Orbetello', *Prospettiva* 11, 1977, 44 no. 6 (incorrectly given as Worcester); R.S. Teitz, *Masterpieces of Etruscan art*, Worcester 1967, 33 and 126 no. 18.

⁶ Please note that a causal relationship between writing and pictures is not necessarily being suggested, although it may be true, but rather more simply that the two phenomena are related. Thus representations in East Asian painting (Chinese, Korean, and Japanese) also correlate with the right-to-left direction in which the columns of writing are generally arranged. There are a few exceptions, such as wall painting, on which see the discussion in the text below. I thank Ann Yonemura of the Freer Gallery in Washington, D.C. for this information.

⁷ A.G. Woodhead, *The study of Greek inscriptions*, Cambridge 1967, 25.

⁸ Florence 4209; from Chiusi; Kleitias; volute-krater. Beazley, *ABV*, 77 no. 1; *Para*, 29—30; Beazley *Add*, 7—8; E. Simon, *Die griechischen Vasen*, Munich 1981, pl. 55.

⁹ L.H. Jeffery, *The local scripts of Archaic Greece*, Oxford 1961, 43—49.

¹⁰ See note 1 above for reference. Boardman illustrates the range of subjects (from decorative to genre to mythological), but not necessarily the range in quality on Attic vases. That is, generally only the best examples are presented. The Etruscan vases, to be discussed below, are fully comparable to the Greek set, because they are of equivalent quality. Lesser pieces from both cultures tend to emphasize the dominant direction of their culture.

Like a civilization encroaching on the surrounding wilds by killing off the local fauna, narratives gradually and inevitably edged out the animals and monsters favored by earlier artists. Such congregations of beasts function decoratively, and hence are often arranged symmetrically, as on a Tyrrhenian amphora in Cerveteri.¹¹ All three animal/monster bands consist of two balanced groups confronting each other in the center along an imaginary vertical line; even the sphinx in the top frieze offsets the rightward direction of her body by looking back left. The cumulative effect of this stacking is to draw the viewer to the middle of the scene on the shoulder where Herakles rightly, in all senses of the word, takes center stage in his conflict with Andromache the Amazon. He lunges forward from the left to grab her with his left hand, as he prepares to stab her with his rather large sword. She looks back almost nose-to-nose at her attacker, while desperately attempting to flee right. Although it is of interest for this study that the action proceeds to the right, even more important is the fact that an action, the smallest narrative unit, can only be represented visually by movement, be it to the left or to the right. A symmetrical composition would have the effect of a play's cast assembled for a group portrait—an entirely different phenomenon.¹²

Even those scenes which are symmetrical in their overall design must embed a sense of direction to relate a story. For example, consider an amphora in Oxford by the Affecter Painter, whose name identifies his style.¹³ The main scene on the shoulder comprises six statically arranged figures. Two groups of two standing men form a symmetrical enclosure for the main subject, Zeus and Hermes. While Zeus sits stolidly facing right, Hermes, in the midst of taking his leave of Zeus to whom he waves, is definitely in motion, as he goes off right. Of the Affecter's 226 scenes, 54% are symmetrical, 44% to the right, and only 3%, and this figure includes two close calls, to the left; but if the symmetrical scenes with rightward tendencies are given to the purely right group, then the symmetrical shrinks to 6% and those to the right grow to an overwhelming 92%. In defense of the Affecter it should be mentioned that the Greeks delighted in enclosing their scenes with strong, end verticals.

Corroboration for the specific left/right orientation of narratives comes from Karl Schefold's *Götter- und Helden-sagen der Griechen in der spätarchaischen Kunst*,¹⁴ which treats only mythological subjects. For the 174 scenes, only 4% are symmetrical with the embedded directions redistributed, 73% go to the right, and 22% to the left. Despite the 10% increase over Boardman in representations to the left, the spread between the categories of left and right remains constant at 50%.

An examination of the works of Exekias, considered the greatest painter of Attic black-figure, is instructive for the types of scenes the Greek artist would portray to the left. Eight scenes or fourteen percent of his representations—well within the “Boardman-Schefold” range—have a leftward orientation. His only extant Panathenaic amphora, following archaic convention, portrays Athena facing left to display her shield with its device of two dolphins, now barely discernible.¹⁵ A badly restored amphora in the Louvre has a fight with two horses in which the action moves to the left.¹⁶ The

majority, however, concerns Achilles. On a fragmentary amphora in Philadelphia,¹⁷ Achilles with Euphorbos chases two Ethiopians off to the left to prevent them from stripping the fallen Greek, Antilochos, of his armor. On the other side, Menelaos similarly pursues Amasos, as Ajax bends down to pick up the now dead Achilles. The other three instances show Ajax carrying Achilles over his shoulder.¹⁸ Exekias has reversed the usual orientation, as depicted on the earlier François Vase.¹⁹ Woodford and Loudon²⁰ suggest that the desire to display Ajax's elaborate shield like that of the Panathenaic Athena prompted the switch; while Beazley and Bothmer believe that the leftward movement indicates that Ajax is leaving the field of battle to return to the Greek camp.²¹

Neither reason is mutually exclusive, and together they explain the last of these representations, the kylix in Munich showing Dionysos after he has defeated the pirates who had captured him by transforming them into dolphins.²² As with Ajax and Achilles, Exekias has transposed the directions of earlier depictions, such as on an amphora in Tarquinia where

¹¹ Museo Archeologico, on display 1983; from Cerveteri MA T 207. M. Moretti, *Cerveteri*, Novara 1977, 58, fig. 80. The names of the figures in the main scene on the shoulder are inscribed, on which compare Schefold, *SBarCh* II, 106.

¹² Irene J. Winter ('Royal rhetoric and the development of historical narrative in Neo-Assyrian reliefs', *Studies in visual communication* 7, No. 2, 1981, 2) presents a similar analysis for Neo-Assyrian reliefs, and rightly observes that action inevitably implies figures in profile to convey movement. She also discusses (10 and 32 n. 4) the psychological effects of symmetrical arrangements and their basis in physiological perception.

¹³ Oxford G.268 (V.509). Beazley, *ABV*, 239 no. 5; *Para*, 110; *Beazley Add*, 28; H. Mommsen, *Der Affecter* (Kerameus 1), Mainz 1975, pl. 44 top, no. 38 (dated to 540—525 B.C.).

¹⁴ See note 1 above for reference. Obviously only the Attic scenes were counted.

¹⁵ Karlsruhe 65.45. Beazley, *Para*, 144 no. 8bis; *Beazley Add*, 17; E. Petrasch, *Badisches Landesmuseum Karlsruhe—Bildkatalog*, Karlsruhe 1976, fig. 45.

¹⁶ Louvre F 206. Beazley, *ABV* 144 no. 12; *CVA Louvre* 3, III He pl. 21:4 (= France 4, pl. 158); W. Technau, *Exekias* (Bilder griechischer Vasen 9), Leipzig 1936, pl. 22.

¹⁷ Philadelphia, University Museum 3442. Beazley, *ABV*, 145 no. 14; *Para*, 60; *Beazley Add*, 17; Schefold, *SBarCh* II, 243, figs. 326—327.

¹⁸ The three scenes appear on two amphoras. Berlin 1718, with the single occurrence: Beazley, *ABV*, 144 no. 5; *Beazley Add*, 17. Munich 1470: Beazley, *ABV*, 144 no. 6; *Beazley Add*, 17. All three are illustrated in M. Moore, 'Exekias and Telamonian Ajax', *AJA* 84, 1980, pl. 51, figs. 7 (Berlin 1718), 8—9 (Munich 1470).

¹⁹ Simon (supra n. 8), pl. 51. Also see note 8 for full information about this vase.

²⁰ S. Woodford and M. Loudon, 'Two Trojan themes: The iconography of Ajax carrying the body of Achilles and of Aeneas carrying Anchises in black figure vase painting', *AJA* 84, 1980, 39—40.

²¹ Cited in Moore (supra n. 18), 425 n. 68. The left side is considered to be the position of the figure who will prevail, on which see, among others, K. Schefold, *Myth and legend in early Greek art*, New York 1966, 9. Thus Ajax fittingly retrieves the body of Achilles from the right to return to the side of the ultimate victors, the Greeks, on the left.

²² Munich 2044. Beazley, *ABV*, 146 and 686 no. 21; *Para*, 60; *Beazley Add*, 18; Simon (supra n. 8), pl. XXIV.

an oversized Dionysos sits in a boat moving right.²³ In the Exekian arrangement Dionysos can assume the customary Greek position of reclining at a table. At the same time the outward form reinforces the meaning, for Dionysos sails triumphantly back home to the left—the side of Greek victors. Thus a master artist like Exekias generally has an explicit purpose when he composes scenes reading to the left. The fight on the Louvre vase lacks such an explanation; because either the full meaning of the representation is not known to us, or Exekias, like any artist, would sometimes choose variety for its own sake.

The results of this survey of Attic black-figure may be briefly summarized. Symmetrical scenes tend to function decoratively, and, as compositions of last resort for narrative scenes, yield even to the left, as their one percent figure from Schefold demonstrates. Overall, however, the symmetrical ranges from about a quarter to a third of the total production. The majority of the representations reads from left to right. In this movement they obey de la Coste-Messelière's "principe de dexteralité", which emphasizes the superiority and good fortune of the figure on the left.²⁴ Basically any subject may be chosen for the right; it is in today's terms the direction of default. Unless there is a compelling reason, the Attic painters tend not to orient scenes to the left. In fact, throughout the course of Attic black-figure the proportion of leftward scenes remains remarkably stable at around 12%, while symmetrical scenes diminish in frequency.

With the Greek practices on this side of the mirror established, it is now time to step through the looking glass to explore Etruria. Etruscan black-figure begins around the middle of the sixth century with the appearance of Pontic vases, which continued to be produced until 510 B.C. To produce a working group of a reasonable size, the study was limited to vases attributed to specific painters by Lise Hænstad in her two monographs on this class for a total of 116 out of a possible 200 objects.²⁵ (Fig. 2) Of the 216 classifiable scenes, 62% went to the left, 11% to the right, and 26% symmetrically. The agreement with the overall results from Boardman is remarkable. The proportions are virtually the same for both the Etruscan and the Greek, except that, of course, the majority of the Pontic scenes move to the left rather than the right.

Less dramatic, but still consistent, are the results obtained from 152 vases made by the Micali Painter and his workshop, the pre-eminent group of the late archaic period from 525 to 490 B.C.²⁶ Typical is an amphora in Würzburg²⁷ with a hungry lioness chasing a bird on each shoulder and with pairs of exuberant satyrs and maenads dancing around the body. For the Micali Painter's 238 scenes, leftward scenes decrease to 56% from the Pontic 62%. The 6% difference is divided nearly evenly between symmetrical scenes, now 30% and scenes to the right, up to 14% and comparable to Exekias' usage of the left. Together the Pontic and the Micali Painter vases portray 58% of their scenes of the left, 28% symmetrically, and 13% to the right. This last figure is especially important, because the percentage for the retrograde direction of both Greek and Etruscan not only agree but also are the least susceptible to change over time.

These correspondences of Etruscan black-figure to Attic

Group	Left	Right	Sym- metrical	Number of scenes
Pontic	62%	11%	26%	216
Micali Painter	56%	14%	30%	239
Pontic/Micali Painter	58%	13%	28%	455
Boardman	12%	61%	27%	283

Fig. 2. Direction in Etruscan black-figure.

black-figure imply that the Etruscan artists followed similar compositional principles. A study of specific Etruscan practices will help clarify not just what the Etruscans did but their relationship to the Greeks. As the analysis of Attic black-figure has shown, certain factors, such as narrative considerations, can override natural preferences for the right or the left. Before a look at Etruscan choice of subject, however, the effect of the location of a scene on an object needs to be examined.

Like a building a vase has a particular structure which determines the areas to be decorated, the subjects appropriate to each, and their composition. The Würzburg amphora, for example, has seven major sections, from top to bottom: mouth, handles, neck, shoulder, body, predella, and foot. The parts are not treated equally. While basic black suffices for the smaller, more oddly shaped areas, the shoulder and the body carry figured scenes, set off by groundlines and bands analogous to architectural mouldings. The choice and the manner of depicting the subject, together with the amount of space allotted, make the body more important than the shoulder. Because of its routine repetition on both sides the encounter between the lioness and the bird, though curious, is of less interest than the humanlike satyrs and maenads.

²³ Tarquinia 678. Not in Beazley, *ABV*, etc. F. Brommer, *Göttersagen in Vasenlisten*³ Marburg 1980, 21 A 6; *CVA Tarquinia* 1, III H pl. 5: 1, 3 (= Italia 25, pl. 1137); *JHS* 78, 1958, pl. 15, fig. b.

²⁴ P. de la Coste-Messelière, 'Nouvelles remarques sur les frises Siphniennes', *BCH* 68/69, 1944/45, 20—23.

²⁵ See references in note 1 above. Although I have attempted to do the entire vase (be it through publications or examination in museums), there are unavoidable gaps—another reason for the scene remaining the basic unit of comparison and also the explanation for the small number of scenes in relation to the number of objects studied.

²⁶ Uggeri (supra n. 1) co-ordinated and added to the vases attributed to the Micali Painter by Beazley (*RG*, 77—80 and *EVP*, 12—15) and T. Dohrn (*SFV*, 151—156 where under the listings for the Siren or Palaestra Painter). His list has in turn been added to by E. Mangani ('Due anfore della scuola del Pittore di Micali a Orbetello', *Prospettiva* 11, 1977, 44—45), C. Scheffer ('Sirens and sphinxes from the Micali Painter's workshop', *MedelhavsMusB* 14, 1979, 35—49), and S.J. Schwarz ('Etruscan black-figure vases in the U.S. National Museum of Natural History', *RM* 91, 1984, 73—74). See Appendix for corrections and additions to Schwarz, the most recent list.

²⁷ Würzburg L 796. Dohrn, *SFV*, 152 no. 183; Beazley, *RG*, 77 no. 3; Uggeri, no. 3; *CVA Würzburg* 3, pp. 58—59, pls. 41:1, 42:1—3, 44:1, and 45:4 (= Deutschland 51, pls. 2506, 2507, 2509, and 2510).

Group	Left	Right	Sym- metrical	Number of scenes
Pontic/Micali Painter	63%	11%	27%	259
Main Scenes	51%	86%	35%	130
Decorative Scenes	49%	14%	65%	129

Fig. 3. Direction on Etruscan black-figure amphoras.

A vase of the same shape in the Bibliothèque Nationale²⁸ by the Paris Painter, the founder of the Pontic class, produces a different effect despite the same basic structural divisions. The vertical elongation of the form aids the process behind the scenes, so-to-speak, by increasing the heights of the shoulder and the body with the result that the shoulder now takes precedence, as the location for the narrative subject. The body is treated decoratively by being subdivided into two bands, the topmost of which for this painter generally carries ornamental motifs, such as these sideways palmettes, naturally running to the left. The lower register, like the neck, usually contains animals, monsters, or birds.

Thus the actual use of each shape by each painter must be considered when determining similarities in composition. For the present study the crucial distinction is not so much the location of a scene as the category to which it belongs. That is, since these artists do agree on the types of subject matter appropriate to a particular kind of area, main scenes should be compared to main scenes and decorative to decorative. For amphoras the friezes on the bodies of the Micali Painter's vases match the shoulders of the Pontic class, except on a small number of later Pontic vases which follow the Micali format. (Fig. 3) The overall figures for the 104 Pontic and Micali Painter amphoras, 62% of their total production, closely match those for Pontic alone: 62% go left, 11% right, and 27% symmetrically. Looking especially at the Pontic vases, one would expect more decorative than main scenes, yet the two types are split nearly evenly due to the number of incomplete pots. Consequently this analysis must be limited to aspects which have either a sufficiency of members or such a deficiency thereof as to be noteworthy.

The divisions between main and subsidiary scenes for the three directions reveal the same pattern seen in Attic black-figure. The symmetrical representations are primarily decorative at 65% of the total; the left, as the natural choice, are almost evenly divided between main and decorative friezes; and the right are predominately major themes with only 14% in decorative positions. In fact, all of the Micali Painter's rightward scenes are main ones, although it should be mentioned that there are only eight.

The subjects chosen help explain these proportions. The representations may be divided into three broad classifications: animal/monster, Greek, and Etruscan themes. The first encompasses the entire ancient bestiary—real and imaginary. Scenes with Greek divinities and heroes belong to the second category. The third group consists of depictions of local Etruscan topics, as well as those illustrating daily life. When the scenes are correlated according to their classification and their position on the amphoras, the animals and monsters are found to inhabit decorative locations 72% of

Group	Animal/ Monster	Greek	"Etruscan"	Number of scenes
Main Scenes	28%	91%	78%	130
Decorative Scenes	72%	9%	22%	129

Fig. 4. Subjects on Etruscan black-figure amphoras.

the time, the Etruscan only 22%, and the Greek just 9%. (Fig. 4) Two conclusions are clear. First, the scenes with narrative content, the Greek and the Etruscan classes, are generally accorded the most prominent positions in contrast to the picturesque assemblies of animals and monsters who can parade equally well and equally monotonously anywhere. In other words, particular locations on an object imply particular subjects which in turn may require particular directions. The second implication of these figures is that only Greek scenes nearly always occupy a position of honor. The 9% that are decorative comprise four out of the 46 Greek representations. They are by the Micali Painter, and actually consist of only two scenes, for each occurs twice on its pot.²⁹

The Etruscan use of Greek subjects needs to be further explored, because it is the best means for establishing the relationship between Greek models and Etruscan adaptations. Even though the animals and monsters have a motley collection of Greek parents, on the Pontic and Micali Painter vases they have become too interbred to straighten out their genealogies, as indicated by the fact that only 5% of their scenes on all Pontic and Micali Painter vases run to the right.³⁰ Similarly the Etruscan representations are not a good group for determining interdependencies, since by definition they will be new creations, even if only rearrangements of existing types. Greek subjects, on the other hand, are most likely to be taken over as is by the Etruscans. It certainly is far less trouble to copy exactly than to alter a model, and the sheer quantity of Greek vases found in Etruria means that there was no dearth of readymade Greek scenes available to the Etruscan artist.

Only 17% of the scenes on all Pontic and Micali Painter vases have Greek subjects. Nor is this figure an average for the two classes of pottery; both groups have the same proportion of Greek themes. While 77 representations hardly form a sizable collection, its very smallness is significant; because the 455 scenes have been sorted into only three subject classifications. The lack of popularity may, of course, be explained by the fact that possession of the real thing quenched any desire for imitations, but more likely is simply due to a

²⁸ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale 172. Hannestad, *PP*, 46–47 no. 19; P. Ducati, *Pontische Vasen*, Berlin 1932, III 7, pls. 14–15; T. Dohrn, 'Originale etruskische Vasenbilder?', *BonnJbb* 166, 1966, 124, fig. 12.

²⁹ Würzburg L 798, with dancing satyrs on both shoulders: Beazley, *RG*, 78 no. 20; Dohrn, *SFV*, 152 no. 196; *CVA Würzburg* 3, pp. 59–61, pls. 41:2 and 43 (= Deutschland 51, pls. 2506 and 2508). Ticino, private collection, with Herakles and Apollo fighting over the hind under each handle: Uggeri, 39 no. 2 and 33, pl. VI.

³⁰ The figures for the 276 scenes with animals and monsters are as follows: 13 (5%) go to the right; 88 (32%) are symmetrical; and 175 (63%) go the left.

Group			Sym-	Number of scenes
	Left	Right	metrical	
Pontic/Micali Painter	46%	31%	23%	77
Pontic without Dionysiac	63%	27%	10%	30

Fig. 5. Greek subjects in Etruscan black-figure.

want of interest. The few imitations that the Etruscans did make, however, are curious. From the analysis of direction in Attic black-figure one would expect the majority of the scenes to go to the right, the next largest group to be the symmetrical, and the left barely to hold its own. (Fig. 5) Yet for Greek scenes on the Pontic and Micali Painter vases, only the symmetrical at 23% more or less agrees with the Greek figures. Rightward representations have shrunk to less than a third of the total with the leftward growing to a plurality of 46%. Evidently the Etruscan artists are not following their models.

Of the 77 scenes 29 are Dionysiac in the broad sense that they represent satyrs and maenads. Although they charm and they divert, like those on the Würzburg amphora, they have become stock types stripped of true narrative content or at least of Greek narrative content. The Micali Painter's remaining 17 vases with Greek scenes are also not terribly helpful, because they tend to be either unique or too Etruscanized or both. Consider a hydria in Toledo with the pirates who captured Dionysos.³¹ Six pirates are seen in various stages of transformation into dolphins, as they plunge into the billowy waters below. Dionysos is present only as a branch of ivy on the far left. The decidedly rightward movement of the scene might seem to imply a Greek model, even though none is extant. Yet the interpretation presented here of the same story on the Exekias cup in Munich raises a doubt. Exekias has chosen a later moment in the story—Dionysos sailing home to the left after his victory. The Micali Painter has instead naturally focussed on the pirates—naturally because according to the Homeric Hymn to Dionysos (7.8) the god was captured by Tyrsenian, or as they are called today Etruscan, pirates. If the Etruscans decided to take advantage of their new form to swim back home, the scene, as an Etruscan representation, should indeed move to the right as it does. Furthermore, the fact that the Micali Painter inverted the pot in order to paint the figures in a normal, upright position means that the scene also obeys the rule of an Etruscan artist composing a scene from right to left.³²

The Micali Painter puts a common enough subject, the recently divinized Herakles in Olympus, on the belly of an elaborately patterned hydria in Florence.³³ Yet only three of the divinities can be readily identified. On the far left stands Herakles with all his paraphernalia; to the left of center Poseidon holds his trident; and second from the right Ares wears full armor and carries a shield with Herakles considerably as its device. The four divinities without distinguishing attributes can be identified only by comparison with other representations of the same story, such as on an Attic amphora by Group E in Basel.³⁴ Athena, as might be expected on an Attic vase, takes center stage with her protégé, Herakles, behind her on the right. Poseidon, again with trident, follows behind the hero, and Ares with a spear, but no

other armor, takes up the rear. On the far left stand Zeus with his thunderbolt and Hera, hospitably by him, ready to receive the entourage being led to them by Hermes in his usual regalia. The dog is apparently a supernumerary.

By analogy the three look-alike women on the Micali Painter vase should be Athena on the left by Herakles, Hera in the center conversing with Zeus, and, on the far right instead of Hermes and the dog, Aphrodite behind her paramour Ares. The Micali Painter has not just mixed up the order of his figures; he has ignored his main subject. Each figure is actively engaged in talking to another except for Herakles who is isolated on the far left. Either as a disguise for his discomfiture or in hopes of a new arrival he turns his head away from his highly placed, but very impolite, associates. At the same time his leftward glance breaks the compositional balance of the Greek scene by drawing the viewer's eye entirely off the pot.

Even more curious is the direction of both the Greek and the Etruscan scenes. The action on the Greek amphora clearly moves to the left, as it does on a number of other Greek representations of this subject, perhaps because an early pediment on the Acropolis in Athens depicted Herakles' introduction into Olympus with that orientation.³⁵ On the other hand, the Micali Painter hydria may be given to either the symmetrical or the right, but not the left. If the scene is divided visually in the middle of the front of the vase, then the scene is symmetrical despite the extra figure, presumably Herakles, on the left. The four left figures, however, by sheer number may outweigh the leftward impulse of those coming from the right. Whichever direction is preferred—here it was given to the right which needed support—the Micali Painter has taken an ordinary Greek subject for which a sufficiency of models exist, and so rearranged it that the overall effect is very "un-Greek" and very much his own like all his representations of Greek themes.

Fortunately for this study the 36 Greek scenes on the Pontic vases adhere more closely to their Greek models than those by the Micali Painter. If the Dionysiac scenes are excluded from the count, then 19 or 63% move to the left and 8 or 27% to the right with the remainder being symmetrical. Six of the scenes to the right portray variations on stock themes that do not have specifically recognizable Greek forebears, such as

³¹ Toledo, Museum of Art 1982.134. H.C. Ebertshäuser and M. Waltz, *Antiken 1. Vasen-Bronzen-Terrakotten des klassischen Altertums*, Munich 1981, 139, fig. 159; *CVA Toledo 2*, pl. 90 (= USA 20, pl. 973).

³² For this observation I thank Dr. Kurt Luckner, the Curator of Ancient Art at the Toledo Museum of Art, who reported that it was Dr. Dietrich von Bothmer who first noticed the phenomenon.

³³ Florence, Museo Archeologico 4139. Beazley, *RG*, 78 no. 38; Dohrn, *SFV*, 156 no. 286 (as the Palaestra Painter); *Prima Italia—L'Arte italiana del I millennio a.C.*, Exhibition at the Museo Luigi Pigorini, March 18—April 30, 1981, Rome 1981, 139—140 no. 91; M. Cristofani, ed., *Civiltà degli etruschi*, Milan 1985, 169 no. 6.42—5 and 169 (color photograph).

³⁴ Basel 103.4, ca. 550 B.C. Not in Beazley, *ABV*, etc. Schefold, *SBArch* II, 39, fig. 37.

³⁵ Athens, Acropolis Museum, limestone, ca. 560 B.C. Schefold, *SBArch* II, 36, fig. 32.

a shoulder frieze on an amphora in Munich with Herakles fighting centaurs.³⁶

The remaining two scenes appear on the shoulders of one vase by the Silen Painter in the Louvre.³⁷ The side with the warrior threatening a woman fleeing for safety to an altar may be Achilles and Polyxena by analogy with the other side with the death of her brother, Troilos, which is similar to a representation of that subject on a cup by the C Painter in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.³⁸ In both cases Achilles has left his hiding place behind the fountain house in fast pursuit of Troilos trying to escape with his and Polyxena's horses. The Silen Painter, however, has chosen a slightly later moment in the episode: Achilles yanking Troilos by his hair off his horse, a motif that does not occur in Greek art.³⁹ At the same time Achilles in full armor contrasts starkly with the Pontic Troilos in heroic, but highly vulnerable, nudity, as customary in Etruscan, but not Greek, representations. Despite the same physical order of figures and elements for both scenes, these two changes produce an effect rather different from the Greek, for the viewer now sympathizes with Troilos. Such alterations are understandable, because they permit new interpretations.

As another example, compare the Paris Painter's Judgement of Paris⁴⁰ with a representation also by the C Painter on a tripod-pyxis in the Louvre.⁴¹ The Attic version puts all the participants in one scene with the addition of a fourth woman, Eris, to the right of Hermes;⁴² while the Paris Painter has replaced her with a second herald—an obvious eminence grise. He has also moved Paris with his cattle and faithful hound to the other shoulder of the vase. No longer does Paris try to escape his Judgement, as on the far right of the pyxis; instead, he stands with his right hand raised waiting the arrival of the contestants, who, unlike the virtual triplets of the C Painter, are carefully differentiated from each other by dress and gesture. In particular look at Aphrodite, content to walk in the rear, but with a knowing smirk—produced simply by adding a vertical line at the corner of her mouth.

With the stylistic changes, such as the bumptious Etruscan bodies, omitted from consideration, the Paris Painter made only one other major alteration in the model: he switched the direction of the procession from the right to the left. Why? Surely all of the modifications of the C Painter prototype could have just as effectively been accomplished if the Greek physical order had been retained, as his colleague, the Silen Painter, did in his version of the ambush of Troilos. It is not that such seemingly unmotivated switches in orientation do not occur in Greek art. There is, for instance, an Attic red-figure version of the Judgement of Paris by Makron with the goddesses proceeding left.⁴³ It is rather that the Etruscan artists flip the direction of Greek subjects earlier, more often, and more consistently than do the Greek artists. Moreover the Etruscan artists' innate need to compose scenes in their own natural forward direction led them to reverse the directions of even Greek subjects. The Etruscans were not striving faithfully to reproduce Greek art, but were consciously transforming Greek representations into fully Etruscan—not merely Etruscanized—works.

Thus it is more useful to examine Etruscan art not for its similarities to Greek art, but for its differences; for it is these

Group	Left	Right	Symmetrical	Number of scenes
Boardman	12%	61%	27%	283
Pontic/Micali Painter	58%	13%	28%	455
Caeretan	39%	11%	50%	66

Fig. 6. Direction in Caeretan black-figure.

very differences which produce the commonality. In both cultures the dominant orientation takes the same direction, as the local writing does, while the retrograde direction remains virtually static at less than 15% of total production. Since these overall proportions are so uniform, they can be applied in analysis to other problems.

The style and high quality of Caeretan ware, another black-figure fabric produced from about 530 to 500 B.C., have led scholars to attribute it to Greek craftsmanship, in particular to Ionian immigrants working in the Etruscan city of Caere where many have been found.⁴⁴ Only thirty-seven "complete" figured vases, all hydrias, are known. On one in the Louvre⁴⁵ Herakles has brought his latest labor, Cerberus the watchdog of the Underworld, to his taskmaster, Eurystheus, who has leapt understandably with fright into a nearby pithos. The action moves to the left. Typically for the group the scene on the back of the vase is symmetrically arranged with two birds zeroing in on a rabbit hopping to the left.

Again stylistic characteristics, be it the colorful palette or the comic liveliness of the figures, are not a concern here. The proportions for the three directions, however, are very curious. (Fig. 6) For the 66 classified scenes 39% proceed to the left, 11% to the right, and 50% symmetrically. Although the Caeretan group has been divided into two artists, all the hydrias follow a standard design that accounts for the unusually high number of symmetrical scenes which occur on 73% of the backs of the whole vases, but in only 11% of the main scenes. As has been demonstrated with both Attic and Etruscan black-figure, the percentage of retrograde scenes is the crucial figure, since it is the only proportion both to agree and to remain constant for both cultures. The Caeretan 11%

³⁶ Munich, Antikensammlungen 838 (Jahn 151). Hannestad, *FPP*, 55 no. 1, pl. 3; Dohrn, *SFV* 149 no. 134.

³⁷ See supra n. 3.

³⁸ New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art 1901.8.6, ca. 575 B.C. Beazley, *ABV* 51 no. 4; *Para*, 523; *Beazley Add*, 5; Schefold, *SBArch* II 206, fig. 282.

³⁹ Krauskopf (supra n. 3), 32.

⁴⁰ See supra n. 4.

⁴¹ Paris, Louvre CA 616. Beazley, *ABV*, 58 no. 122; *Para*, 23; *Beazley Add*, 5; Simon (supra n. 8), pl. 59 top.

⁴² On the convincing identification of the "extra" woman as Eris rather than Iris or a nymph of Mt. Ida, see J. de La Genière, 'À propos d'un vase grec du Musée de Lille—Une divinité oubliée', *MonPiot* 63, 1980, 44–56.

⁴³ Berlin F 2291. Beazley, *ARV*², 459 no. 4; *Para*, 377; *Beazley Add*, 120; *LIMC* I, Alexandros 499 no. 10 and pl. 377 bottom.

⁴⁴ The basic study of the group is J.M. Hemelrijk, *Caeretan hydriae* (Kerameus 5), Mainz/Rhein 1984. For a summary of the scholarship on the artists' origin, see 160–164.

⁴⁵ Paris, Louvre E 701. Hemelrijk (supra n. 44) I, 14 no. 4 and II, pls. 32 and 34a; Simon (supra n. 8), pls. XX and 41.

Group	Caeretan	Pontic	Micali painter
Herakles	34%	34%	31%
Greek Gods	32%	37%	32%
Dionysiac	17%	17%	67%

Fig. 7. Subjects in Etruscan and Caeretan black-figure.

ratio for rightward orientations fits the pattern for Etruscan. Furthermore the Caeretan choice of Greek subjects strikingly coincides with that of the Pontic class and the Micali Painter. (Fig. 7) Stories about Herakles and about Greek divinities each account for approximately a third of the Greek representations for all three groups. If the gods are subdivided into two types, Dionysiac and all the rest, the Dionysiac appear in 67% of the Micali Painter's scenes, but in only 17% of the Pontic and in only 17% of the Caeretan.

For a final example of Caeretan's Etruscan proclivities consider the representations of Tityos, a lusty monster enamored of Leto's charms. Just as he was about to succeed in his object, the timely arrival of her children, Apollo and Artemis, ended his attempt in death. On a Tyrrhenian amphora in the Louvre,⁴⁶ Artemis and Apollo, on the left, have already drawn their bows, as Tityos vainly flees right. Separating him from his pursuers stands Leto helpless and perhaps worried about being in the line of fire. Two on-lookers frame the action which moves to the right. The Caeretan version, also in the Louvre,⁴⁷ without the stage extras keeps the essential cast of characters in the same order except that Leto, free of her captor, swiftly runs to her children and safety. The Pontic version by the Silen Painter on an amphora in Brussels⁴⁸ transposes Tityos and Leto, who, more practical than in the other depictions, picks up her skirt to speed her escape. A ferocious dog adds to Tityos' plight. More important than the variations in iconography is the Caeretan and Pontic reversal of the orientation of the Greek scene to read from right to left. Of the nineteen representations of this subject in all Greek and Etruscan vase painting, only three conduct the attack to the left. Two of these have just been discussed; the third is on another Pontic amphora.⁴⁹

Thus on the basis of direction and subjects chosen Caeretan hydrias should be Etruscan.⁵⁰ Furthermore, this conclusion does not contradict those espousing a theory of Greek craftsmen, for Hemelrijk⁵¹ suggests that the artists "emigrated from Phocaea in the forties, not fully trained, I should say, more likely as children of East Greek artists, with little or no training behind them but with a sound background." The question then becomes one of the degree of assimilation of the children to their new culture and whether it is not truly begging the question to call them "East Greeks".⁵² The analysis of the orientation of scenes on Chalcidian ware, another disputed fabric, indirectly supports this conclusion. Like Caeretan pottery, Chalcidian vases have been attributed to Greek artists working abroad, and specifically at Reggio in South Italy.⁵³ 22% of the scenes go to the right and 67% are symmetrical which leaves 11% for those that move to the left.⁵⁴ Again, the percentage for the retrograde direction precisely and consistently matches that

for retrograde directions in all fabrics, and makes Chalcidian of Greek workmanship, as it should be for a South Italian workshop. In other words, the orientation of scenes provides a remarkably reliable test of cultural origin.⁵⁵

The study of direction in Greek and Etruscan art has so far been limited to vases. The results may be applied equally well to Etruscan representations in other media. An Attic black-figure amphora by the Camtar Painter in Boston⁵⁶ illustrates Achilles, on the left, receiving his quiver and his shield from his mother, Thetis, accompanied by her sisters, the Nereids, to help carry the rest of the weighty panoply. The Etruscan version, on the front panel of a mid-sixth century Etruscan bronze chariot from Monteleone in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,⁵⁷ focusses on the two main participants and their exchange of the shield. Of minor importance is the substitution of the helmet for the quiver which also occurs on an Attic amphora in the Louvre.⁵⁸ The transposi-

⁴⁶ Paris, Louvre E 864. Beazley, *ABV*, 97 no. 33; *Para*, 37; *Beazley Add*, 10; A. Greifenhagen, 'Tityos', *JbBerlMus* 1, 1959, 13, fig. 7; Schefold, *SBArch* II, 67, fig. 78.

⁴⁷ Paris, Louvre CA 10227. Hemelrijk (supra n. 44) I, 25 no. 12 and II, pl. 57a; Schefold, *SBArch* II, 70, fig. 83.

⁴⁸ Brussels R 223. Hannestad, *FPP*, 62 no. 57; Hampe and Simon (supra n. 4), pl. 6, fig. 2.

⁴⁹ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Tityos Painter. Hannestad, *FPP*, 59 no. 35; Hampe and Simon (supra n. 4), 32—33, figs. 6—7.

⁵⁰ In the discussions after my lecture in both Pittsburgh and Stockholm the issue was raised of whether the high proportion of leftward scenes could be due to the artists being lefthanded. Such an explanation could only apply to the Caeretan group which consists of a small enough number of artists (two) to make the possibility viable. Moreover, Pliny (*Natural History* 35.7 [20]) finds using the left hand so noteworthy that he specifically mentions a certain Turpilius as painting with his left hand, which no one had ever done before ("Laeva is manu pinxit, quod de nullo ante memoratur."). Finally the parallel evidence from Japanese art (see supra n. 6), the overwhelming proportion of righties to lefties today, and the consistency of the evidence from all black-figure make that explanation unlikely.

⁵¹ Hemelrijk (supra n. 44), 160.

⁵² They, or at least one of them, certainly knew Greek or knew someone who knew Greek, for one vase carries Greek inscriptions labelling the participants. The subject is naturally a Greek one, the embassy to Achilles. Paris, Louvre C 321. Hemelrijk (supra n. 44) I, 46—47 no. 30 and II, pls. 106—108; Schefold, *SBArch* II, 220, fig. 299.

⁵³ J. Boardman, *The Greeks overseas*, London 1980, 194—195; F. Canciani, 'Eine neue Amphora aus Vulci und das Problem der pseudochalkidischen Vasen', *JdI* 95, 1980, 161.

⁵⁴ The basic compendium for Chalcidian vases remains A. Rumpf, *Chalkidische Vasen*, Berlin 1927. The raw figures are 22 scenes to the left, 45 to the right, and 136 symmetrically for a total of 203 scenes in all.

⁵⁵ Rather tantalizing are the figures for pseudo-Chalcidian, which Canciani (supra n. 53, 162) suggests was made by a Greek painter of partly Euboean, partly Ionian-Cycladic origin, working in Etruria. From his list (146—147) of vases, the following figures result: 30% (6 scenes) go the left, 10% (2 scenes) to the right, and 60% (12 scenes) symmetrically. Unfortunately twenty scenes are insufficient for drawing any conclusion; they only hint that the artist, with right as the retrograde direction, has Etruscan leanings.

⁵⁶ Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 1921.21. Beazley, *ABV*, 84 no. 3; *Para*, 31; *Beazley Add*, 8; *LIMC* I, pl. 77, s.v. Achilles 191 (A).

⁵⁷ New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art GR 471. Hampe and Simon (supra n. 4), pl. 23. *LIMC* I, 206 no. 100 and pl. 152.

⁵⁸ Paris, Louvre E 869, attributed to the Archippe Group within the Tyrrhenian Group. Beazley, *ABV*, 106 no. 2; *Para*, 43; *Beazley Add*, 11—12; *LIMC* I, pl. 77, s.v. Achilles 200.

tion of main actors from the Greek model, however, can now be seen as a commonplace Etruscan characteristic rather than as an indication of inexperience in working with bronze.

An Etrusco-Corinthian oinochoe from Tragliatella near Caere demonstrates that the Etruscan bias to the left is already present in the late seventh century Orientalizing period.⁵⁹ Although the frequently published nineteenth century drawing is accurate in its rendering of the main scene, which wraps continuously around the belly of the vase, its divisions reveal two problems specifically related to orientation. Giglioli, when he reproduced it, misarranged its parts. As someone accustomed to beginning on the left and working from top to bottom, he naturally put the drawing of the neck of the vase at the top, the two segments of the body frieze in the middle, and the hare and the hound from the predella at the bottom. Yet if the main scene runs from right to left, as the two horsemen, the nude man, and the seven shield-bearers clearly demonstrate, then the two strips must be interchanged to view the action in sequence. The matter is not minor, for the orientation has to be known to interpret a difficult representation, which this is.

Once it is evident that the figures move to the left, it should be possible to ascertain the beginning of the action by following them backwards until the first figure facing to the left is reached. The situation, however, is not so simple. According to the drawing the two horsemen are connected physically to the maze behind which are two couples engaged in symplegmata, a vertical line, four oddly shaped objects, and a gesticulating woman. If the figures are examined in their positions on the pot, the woman stands back-to-back with a second and more imposing woman on the far left in the first strip of the drawing of this band. At the same time this second woman appears directly below the center of the mouth of the vase—the view scholars consider to be the front of an oinochoe.

The vertical line just to the left of center is crucial. It does not form the right post of the “bunk bed” which then lacks the necessary left post. Instead, if one looks at the vase from the side, that line precisely marks the point which gives a complete profile. That is, a common Greek shape has been decorated in an uncommon, but entirely logical, manner. The principal view for the Etruscan artist is not the Greek front beneath the lip, but the side which gives a full understanding of the shape and which is likely to be displayed when pouring. The vertical line, then, functions structurally to define the shape and decoratively to punctuate the beginning of the band from its end. Therefore the scene begins on the far right with the symplegmata and continues left until the last woman in the plaid dress, who looks away from the action of the main scene like Herakles on the Micali Painter hydria in Florence. The drawing errs in its arrangement of the participants thereby increasing the difficulties of achieving a correct interpretation. Although what it all means is the subject of another article,⁶⁰ the conclusion for this one is plain: to know where you are coming from, you have to know where you are going.

The Etruscan preference for the left continues after the archaic period. One of the best known Etruscan wall paintings is the Sacrifice of the Trojan Captives from the fourth cen-

tury François Tomb in Vulci.⁶¹ In the center, Achilles plunges his sword into the neck of a Trojan seated on the ground, as, from the left, Agamemnon, the shade of Patroclus, in whose honor the grim event is held, and two Etruscan demons—the winged Vanth and the blue Charun—watch. From the right, two Greeks escort two more prisoners, one of whom is on the short wall that abuts this scene to the right.

The theme appears on seven other Etruscan objects⁶² and on a South Italian vase by the Apulian Darius Painter.⁶³ The latter has made a sufficient number of alterations in the Etruscan version for Beazley to postulate two separate models.⁶⁴ The changes in moment, Achilles has not yet begun to sever the Trojan's head; in poses, the victims sit or kneel; and in setting, the presence of an elaborate pyre; divert one's attention from the repositioning of these elements. Although Achilles still stands on the left, the by-standers, Agamemnon and two women, have been moved to the right of the pyre and the prisoners to the left with the result that the scene no longer reads from right to left, as do all the Etruscan examples, but from left to right, as do most Greek scenes. In other words, in the fourth century the Etruscans and the Greeks persist in moving in their opposite directions.

The tendency to the left lessens with time, as the Etruscans have to cope with a world dominated more and more by the might and the right of not just the Greeks, but of the similarly directed Romans. In the Hellenistic period late Etruscan funerary urns typify the mingling of the two directional poles. An alabaster example in Volterra is typical.⁶⁵ The form is

⁵⁹ Rome, Museo Conservatori. G.Q. Giglioli, ‘L’oinochoe di Tragliatella’, *StEtr* 3, 1929, pl. 26, which reproduces and rearranges the original drawing published by W. Deecke, ‘Le iscrizioni etrusche del vaso di Tragliatella’, *AdI* 53, 1881, pls. L and M. Helbig⁴ II, 341—343 no. 1528.

⁶⁰ J.P. Small, ‘The Tragliatella oinochoe’, *RM* 93, 1986, 63—96.

⁶¹ F. Messerschmidt, ‘Probleme der etruskischen Malerei des Hellenismus’, *JdI* 45, 1930, 65, fig. 2, with an extended discussion and illustrations of most of the representations on pp. 64—75. *LIMC* I, 206 no. 87. Most recently, see F. Coarelli, ‘Le pitture della Tomba François a Vulci: una proposta di lettura’, *DdA* s. 3, vol. 1 no. 2, 1983, 52—53, figs. 5—6.

⁶² For the list, see *LIMC* I, 205—206 nos. 85—94, with discussion on 211 and illustrations on pls. 150—151. Two of these objects (nos. 91 and 92) are possibly of dubious authenticity, and were not included in my examination. To the bibliography on the painted sarcophagus of the priest in Tarquinia (Museo Archeologico 9871; *LIMC*, no. 88) add: H. Blanck, ‘Le pitture del ‘sarcophago del sacerdote’ nel Museo Nazionale di Tarquinia’, *DdA* s. 3, vol. 1 no. 2, 1983, 83—84; fig. 10 (p. 83) differs in details from that published by Messerschmidt (supra n. 61), 67, fig. 4, but in none that affect the discussion here.

⁶³ Naples 3254. *RVAp* II, 495 no. 39; Messerschmidt (supra n. 61), 69, fig. 7; M. Schmidt, *Der Dareiosmaler und sein Umkreis*, Munster 1960, pl. 10; *LIMC* I, 118 no. 487 and pl. 108. Note that *LIMC* (I, 118—119) gives only four other examples of this subject, of which the gems (no. 488) are excerpts with just the sacrifice; the other items are all Roman in date.

⁶⁴ Beazley, *EVP*, 89—90.

⁶⁵ Volterra 376. H. Brunn, *I rilievi delle urne etrusche* I, Berlin 1870, pl. 51 no. 8; C. Laviosa, *Scultura tardo-etrusca di Volterra*, Milan 1965, 162—165; F.-H. Pairault, *Recherches sur quelques séries d’urnes de Volterra à représentations mythologiques*, Rome 1972, pl. 56; *LIMC* I, 203 no. 33.

Etruscan; the decoration is increasingly symmetrical and rightward. Because the deceased reclines on the lid, as if at a meal, his head is on the right. Directly below on the mattress his name, Something Caecina LX Selcia, is inscribed in Etruscan from right to left.⁶⁶ Despite the fact that the lid prompts the viewer to begin looking on the right, the cask with its relief starts in the Graeco-Roman manner on the left. The scene is familiar: the death of Troilos. Instead of making major changes in the two protagonists of the archaic version, the artist has added five Trojans to produce a rather symmetrical composition with Achilles and his restraining Trojan balancing the two entering from the right.

Still, the natural impulse to the left has not entirely died. It tends to be reserved, as might be expected, most often for representations of local Etrusco-Roman legends. For instance, a Volterranean urn in Verona with the aftermath of the duel between Aeneas and Turnus works in the traditional Etruscan manner.⁶⁷ Turnus lies collapsed in death on his shield on the far right, as an august kingly figure, perhaps Evander, and a warrior look on. In the center and definitely facing to the left, Latinus raises his right hand to hail the crouching Aeneas victor. On the far left, Vanth-Aphrodite, an Etruscan deity, imparts an impression of overall symmetry as the vertical counterpart to the soldier vainly supporting Turnus.

By the end of the production of urns in the last third of the first century B.C. the Etruscans have become so assimilated to the right way of life that one urn⁶⁸ not only carries a cart moving to the right on its cask, but also has inscribed the boy's name in Latin beginning on the left. It reads "A. Caecina Selcia in his twelfth year".⁶⁹ He was a relative of and buried in the same tomb as the other Caecina Selcia.

Because of this last urn it is not necessary for you to be guided back to the right side of the Looking Glass. You are already there. It is hoped that you have not been bombarded with too many numbers, for it is far better for you to leave with a sense of proportion. The backwards direction, whether chosen specifically by an Exekias or selected for variety by a Micali Painter, remains consistently unpopular for both the Greeks and the Etruscans. Even so it cannot be assumed that Attic principles of design are the same as Etruscan principles—similar or maybe parallel—but certainly not the same. Examination of works in isolation produces not just false pictures, but false museums. Taken singly, individual Etruscan pieces seem to be striving woefully to reproduce Greek ideals; observed as a whole their aims seem otherwise. By focussing on just one aspect of composition, the law of sinistrality, I have tried to indicate how the use of Greek mirrors distorts our understanding of Etruscan art. For Etruscan art is not "only pretence". Like Alice on her arrival on the other side of the looking glass, I hope that it is clear that "what could be seen from the old room was quite common and uninteresting, but that all the rest was as different as possible".⁷⁰

APPENDIX

Corrections and Additions to the Micali Painter

NOTE: See note 26 in text for full references to the standard lists for the Micali Painter. These comments apply to the latest: Schwarz, *RM* 91, 1984, 73—74.

Corrections

The numbers used by Schwarz are used here.

2. Detroit, Institute of Arts 1927.81 is the same as Mangani 44 no. 6, where it was incorrectly listed as Worcester, because it appeared in an exhibition there. Compare note 5 above.

5. The Hague, Meermann-Westreenianum Museum, inv. 628/904. Sphinxes, not griffins, appear on the body.

7. and 10. are not in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg, but in private collections.

9. The inventory number is Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 1901.8062.

11. The inventory number is Toledo, Museum of Art 1982.134. See also note 31 above.

14. The olpe is in the Rijksmuseum, Leiden, not a private collection, and its inventory number is K 1956/8.1. It is also the same vase as Uggeri 43 no. 96bis. The scene is actually two warriors flanking a nude man, carrying a spear and wearing a high-crested hat. All move to the left.

16. The Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri is in Columbia, Missouri not Kansas City.

Additions

A. Basel, Art Market. Kyathos with a continuous frieze of a ram, wolf, young male sphinx, panther, and lion to the right. The top of the handle ends in a plastic woman's head; the sides each carry a dolphin; and the front has a youth to the right. *Italische Keramik*, Münzen und Medaillen AG Sonderliste U (November 1984), 15—16 no. 22. This is the same piece as in the MuM Auktion Katalog no. 63 (June 29, 1983), 10 no. 12 and pl. 4.

⁶⁶ M. Cristofani et al., *Urne volterrane 1: I complessi tombali (Corpus delle urne etrusche di età ellenistica 1)*, Florence 1975, 34—35 no. 25. The inscription specifically is: [- - -] u. ceicna. lx. selcia. cp. r. l [- - -]. Note that the cask does not appear in this volume.

⁶⁷ Verona, Museo Lapidario. H. Brunn and G. Körte, *I rilievi delle urne etrusche II*, Berlin 1890, pl. 19 no. 5; J.P. Small, 'Aeneas and Turnus on Late Etruscan funerary urns', *AJA* 78, 1974, pl. 12, fig. 2.

⁶⁸ Volterra 141. Cristofani et al. (supra n. 66), 28—30 no. 9.

⁶⁹ *CIE* 24: "A. CAECINA. SELCIA. ANNOS XII".

⁷⁰ Carroll, *Through the looking glass* (supra n. 2), 196.

B. Basel, Art Market. Amphora with an undecorated neck, two sirens to the left on each shoulder, and winged horses to the left on the body. Sonderliste U (see A above), 16—17 no. 23.

C. Basel, Art Market. Stamnos with a four-winged swan to the left between upright wings on each side. Sonderliste U (see A above), 16—17 no. 24.

D. Basel, Robert Hess (Private Collection in the Hotel Jura). Oinochoe with a figure (winged at the waist) running right. R. Hess, *Raccolta R.H.—Aus einer privaten Antikensammlung*, Basel 1963, no. 38.

E. Basel, Robert Hess. Hydria with two birds confronted on the shoulder, and with a duel over a fallen body on the body. Hess (see D above), no. 40.

F. Bern, Historisches Museum 12306. Kyathos with a maenad dancing on the handle and heraldic sphinxes on the

body. I. Jucker, *Aus der Antikensammlung des Bernischen Historischen Museums*, 1970, no. 52.

G. Iowa City, University of Iowa Museum of Art 1983.53. Oinochoe with a battle scene consisting of six warriors, all moving left, except for the first figure on the right. To be published by Richard De Puma.

H. Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum 82/347. Amphora with griffin and bird on both shoulders and on the body, one scene, continuous to the left, of a bird, female rabbit, male rabbit, and two dogs. *JdI* 20, 1983, 199—200, fig. 3; M. Maass, *Wege zur Klassik*, Karlsruhe 1985, 164, fig. 132.

Jocelyn Penny Small

U.S. Center

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Rutgers University

New Brunswick, NJ 08903