



Couched in Death: Klinai and Identity in Anatolia and Beyond (Wisconsin Studies in Classics)

Elizabeth P. Baughan

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In *Couched in Death*, Elizabeth P. Baughan offers the first comprehensive look at the earliest funeral couches in the ancient Mediterranean world. These sixth- and fifth-century BCE *klinai* from Asia Minor were inspired by specialty luxury furnishings developed in Archaic Greece for reclining at elite symposia. It was in Anatolia, however—in the dynastic cultures of Lydia and Phrygia and their neighbors—that *klinai* first gained prominence not as banquet furniture but as burial receptacles. For tombs, wooden couches were replaced by more permanent media cut from bedrock, carved from marble or limestone, or even cast in bronze. The rich archaeological findings of funerary *klinai* throughout Asia Minor raise intriguing questions about the social and symbolic meanings of this burial furniture. Why did Anatolian elites want to bury their dead on replicas of Greek furniture? Do the *klinai* found in Anatolian tombs represent Persian influence after the conquest of Anatolia, as previous scholarship has suggested?

Bringing a diverse body of understudied and unpublished material together for the first time, Baughan investigates the origins and cultural significance of *kline*-burial and charts the stylistic development and distribution of funerary *klinai* throughout Anatolia. She contends that funeral couch burials and banqueter representations in funerary art helped construct hybridized Anatolian-Persian identities in Achaemenid Anatolia, and she reassesses the origins of the custom of the reclining banquet itself, a defining feature of ancient Mediterranean civilizations. Baughan explores the relationships of Anatolian funeral couches with similar traditions in Etruria and Macedonia as well as their "afterlife" in the modern era, and her study also includes a comprehensive survey of evidence for ancient *klinai* in general, based on analysis of more than three hundred *klinai* representations on Greek vases as well as archaeological and textual sources.



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