

NEW RESEARCH ON ART AND ITS HISTORY

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Kuhn argues that weavers worked on draw looms possibly as early as the Warring States period (475/463–221 BCE) and certainly by the Han era (206 BCE–222 CE). Although the structures of the looms cannot be located or conclusively identified in archaeological excavations in China dating to those times, fabrics that have been found provide evidence of their use. By the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE), paintings of the draw loom are extant, for example in the handscroll *Pictures of silkworms and weaving* (*Canzhitu*; 12th century; Heilongjiang Provincial Museum, Harbin). Not until the eighteenth century would the technical achievements of the Chinese draw loom be surpassed by the French Jacquard loom, the technology of which, as Kuhn argues, was inspired by the Chinese draw loom. Indeed, without the 'appropriation of Chinese inventions in textile technology, the start of Europe's Industrial Revolution would have certainly taken a different course' (p.13).

In chapter 6, Kuhn traces the history of the transfer of this technology from China to Europe, bringing together rich and disparate materials and discussing Sasanian, Sogdian, Byzantine, Arab and Jewish practices in silk production that relate to draw looms. He connects the Jacquard loom to Chinese technology via Italy, citing research that suggests that the weaving of complex patterned silk fabric in Europe first occurred in Italy in the late thirteenth century, during the Pax Mongolica. Kuhn argues that the stability that the Mongol empire promoted along the silk routes enabled the transfer of technological knowledge from China via West Asia to Italy. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, French monarchs encouraged the production of silk textiles and employed either Italian textile workers or others who had learned the trade there. This transmission equipped Joseph Marie Jacquard with the means to invent the Jacquard loom in 1804.

The complexity of the draw looms and the intricacy of the fabrics produced using them are reflected in the Chinese terms associated with them. Kuhn has meticulously scoured a variety of written documents for his detailed analysis of those terms, including technological texts and dictionaries. The making of fabrics entails complicated procedures involving a wide spectrum of mechanisms, which are difficult to describe in words. Moreover, the meaning of the terms evolved over time in various regions. There is an extensive body of surviving texts devoted to textile technology and its products, yet,

as Kuhn indicates, the authors were not necessarily practitioners. Kuhn evaluates the written evidence in the light of his knowledge of the material evidence of the textiles, of their production and the machines used in the process. For scholars who conduct research in this field, Kuhn's work establishes an authoritative standardisation of terms.

Given the scope of his study, Kuhn's use of imagery does not always match the meticulous attention that he pays to texts. For example, he does not reproduce the woodblock prints from one of the world's earliest and most encyclopaedic agricultural treatises, the *Book of Agriculture* (*Nong Shu*; 1313), by the official Wang Zhen (active 1290–1333). The book was the first to systematically include depictions of the tools and equipment used in the production of commodities. The original no longer exists, and the earliest extant version dates to 1520. Kuhn's publication reproduces more recent images that tidily recreate representations of the machinery, enabling modern readers to understand the images with a clarity that would not have been possible for sixteenth-century viewers of the woodblock prints. In the case of the image of a draw loom from the *Book of Agriculture*, Kuhn claims that it is 'labeled as *zhiji*' (織機), meaning weaving machine, but the original woodblocks have only the term '*ji*' (機), meaning machine. Finally, the representation of this draw loom in the book is produced by combining the images that are on either side of a folded page of the handscroll and would not have been seen as a single image by sixteenth-century readers. However, these quibbles do not detract from the volume's authoritative status in the global history of science, technology and material culture.

Memoria in Stein: Das römische Wandgrabmal der Frührenaissance

By Michael Kühnenthal. 2 vols, 894 pp. incl. 907 col. + b. & w. ill. (Hirmer Verlag, Munich, 2024), €285. ISBN 978-3-7774-3054-6.

by PHILIP MUIJTJENS

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the subject of funerary monuments of medieval and Renaissance Rome has been a fertile ground for scholarly research, covered in such publications as Gerald Stanley Davies's *Renaissance: The Sculptured Tombs of the Fifteenth Century in Rome* (1910).¹ The work of Davies and others is credited by Michael Kühnenthal,

whose two substantial volumes focus on wall tombs constructed in the Eternal City between 1447 and 1510. They are the fruit of a lifetime of research on the reception of antique artistic sources in Roman funerary monuments.² Like Davies, Kühnenthal dates the introduction of classicising elements to funerary art to the middle of the fifteenth century. His first volume sets out the political, liturgical and stylistic context; the second provides a catalogue of tombs that fall within his terms of enquiry.

The first volume is divided into thirteen chapters, which offer a broad survey of the most important developments in the Roman wall tomb in relation to their subject-matter, style, the integration of classicising elements and the practicalities of construction. In chapter 1 Kühnenthal discusses the political climate of Rome. Whereas under Martin V (1417–31) most important artistic and architectural commissions were concerned with repairing existing structures, under Nicholas V (1447–55) the funerary monuments in the basilicas and churches received new, more substantial impulses in the shape of artistic commissions and bequests 'for new chapels and elaborate commemorative masses' (I, p.15). Kühnenthal argues that with the construction of the tomb of Cardinal Antonio Martinez de Chávez (d.1447) in S. Giovanni in Laterano (cat. no.20; Fig.2) the approach to designing tombs in Rome changed. Although heavily altered during Francesco Borromini's renovations of the basilica in the seventeenth century, it is the founding work of early-Renaissance wall tombs in Rome and a break away from the artistic production of the Middle Ages. According to Kühnenthal, the monument, which was designed c.1447 by Antonio Filarete and sculpted in the following years by Isaia da Pisa, revived a relatively rare typology in which the tomb is placed directly above an altar block. The stylistic language is strongly classicising but also borrows elements from pre-existing Florentine and Neapolitan tombs, such as the elaborate monument of King Ladislaus I of Naples in S. Giovanni a Carbonara (1423–28). He therefore credits the tomb with paving the way for a new typology and stylistic vocabulary that were eagerly taken up in Rome in the following decades.

Chapters 2 and 3 discuss respectively burial rites for high ecclesiastics in Rome and the locations of these monuments within the churches. Kühnenthal suggests that the subject-matter chosen for wall tombs reflected

ephemeral funerary services, in particular the displaying of the deceased's corpse on a bier during a funeral mass, and that the structure of the wall tombs was often adapted to fit the space available in the preferred burial spots. Considerations of accessibility and visibility were often a defining factor in these choices. In chapters 4, 5 and 6 Kühnenthal maps the various formal and iconographic types of wall tombs in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Rome. Chapter 7 focuses on the reception of antique sources in Roman wall tombs. It provides a clear and detailed overview of all the notable cases and will appeal to not only scholars working on the reception of Antiquity in funerary sculpture, but also to those working on sculpture in Rome more generally. The volume then continues with five case studies of fifteenth-century sculptors: Isaia da Pisa, Paolo Romano, Mino da Fiesole, Andrea Bregno and Giovanni Dalmata, including brief discussions of their known sculpted tombs, as well as other works relevant to the Roman context. The chapters are complemented by a large section of illustrations of the funerary monuments under discussion, which belong to a corpus expanded significantly by the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome, in 1974–76.

The second volume presents the catalogue of seventy-one Roman wall tombs created between 1447 and 1510, located in twenty-two churches and basilicas. The entries are presented not in chronological order but according to location. Kühnenthal offers detailed discussions of the scholarship on the tombs as well as in-depth visual analyses of the tombs and their historical visual sources. The discussion of antique models begun in the first volume is developed further here. Kühnenthal provides compelling assessments of each wall tomb, as well as comparisons of their classicising elements with the possible antique antecedents in Rome and its surroundings. These stylistic comparisons are accompanied by generous photographic evidence of antique archaeological remains, which would otherwise not be available to most scholars of Renaissance funerary monuments. Attention is also paid to the development of distinctly Roman stylistic features, such as the depiction of fictive candelabras, notable examples of which are Dalmata's tomb for Cardinal Giacomo Tebaldi in S. Maria Sopra Minerva (c.1466–75, with later additions; no.37) and the tomb of Cardinal Alain de Coetivy in S. Prassede (1473–74; no.68). This is followed by a brief discussion of the influence that Roman wall tombs had on fifteenth- and sixteenth-

century funerary monuments in other parts of Italy. A comprehensive bibliography concludes the volume and will provide an immensely useful point of reference for future studies.

Kühnenthal's work stands out for its detailed use of archival material, extensive reference to and evaluation of previous scholarship, as well as its presentation of new visual material. Together with the abundance of excellent reproductions of the monuments and of their historic visual sources, some of

2. Tomb of Cardinal Antonio Martinez de Chávez, by Antonio Filarete and Isaia da Pisa, with later alterations by Francesco Borromini. After 1447. Marble. (S. Giovanni in Laterano, Rome).

them hitherto little-known, such as the wall tombs in the church of S. Maria di Monserrato (nos.39–45), *Memoria in Stein* will become a fundamental reference work for scholars of funerary monuments and their context of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Rome and for future research on the artistic reception of antique material culture in Renaissance Italy.

¹ See also T. von Blittersdorff, J. Garms and R. Juffinger, eds: *Die Grabplatten und Tafeln, Rome 1981*; and U. Knall-Brskovsky et al., eds: *Die Monumentalgräber, Rome 1994*.

² See recently, M. Kühnenthal: 'Andrea Bregno in Rom', *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 32 (1997/1998), pp.179–272; and *idem*: 'The Monument for Raffaele della Rovere in Santi Apostoli in Rome', in C. Crescentini and C. Strinati, eds: *Andrea Bregno: il senso della forma nella cultura artistica del Rinascimento*, Florence 2008, pp.209–25.

