

Northeastern Collections

ETRUSCAN MIRRORS

RICHARD D. DE PUMA



«L'ERMA» di BRETSCHNEIDER

CORPVS SPECVLORVM ETRVSCORVM

U.S.A. 4: Northeastern Collections

Amherst - Mead Art Museum, Amherst College
Bryn Athyn - Glencairn Museum, Academy of the New Church
Bryn Mawr - Ella Riegel Memorial Museum, Bryn Mawr College
Newark - Newark Museum
New Haven - Yale University Art Gallery
Northampton - Department of Classical Languages and Literatures, Smith College
Norton - Watson Gallery, Wheaton College
Philadelphia - University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania
Poughkeepsie - Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College
Princeton - Princeton University Art Museum
Providence - Rhode Island School of Design Museum
Worcester - Higgins Armory Museum; Worcester Art Museum

Text and Drawings by
RICHARD DANIEL DE PUMA

«L'ERMA» di BRETSCHNEIDER

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For Larissa Bonfante

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADAM	R. ADAM, <i>Recherches sur les miroirs pré-nestins</i> (Paris, 1980).	CSE Louvre III	D. REBUFFAT-EMMANUEL, <i>CSE France 1, Louvre III</i> (Rome, 1997).
ARV ²	J.D. BEAZLEY, <i>Attic Red-figure Vase-painters</i> ² (Oxford, 1963).	CSE Netherlands	L.B. VAN DER MEER, <i>CSE The Netherlands</i> (Leiden, 1983).
BATES 1911	W.N. BATES, <i>The Purification of Orestes</i> , in <i>AJA</i> 15 (1911) 459-464.	CSE Orvieto	M. PACETTI, <i>CSE Italia 4, Orvieto, Museo Claudio Faina</i> (Rome, 1998).
BEAZLEY, <i>EVP</i>	J.D. BEAZLEY, <i>Etruscan Vase Painting</i> (Oxford, 1947).	CSE Perugia I	A. FRASCARELLI, <i>CSE Italia 2, Perugia, Museo Archeologico Nazionale I</i> (Rome, 1995).
BRUNN-KÖRTE	H. BRUNN - G. KÖRTE, <i>I rilievi delle urne etrusche</i> (Berlin, 1870-1916).	CSE Schweiz 1	I. JUCKER, <i>CSE Schweiz 1, Basel, Schaffhausen, Bern, Lausanne</i> (Bern, 2001).
<i>CII, App.</i>	G.F. GAMURRINI, <i>Appendice al Corpus Inscriptionum Italicarum</i> (Florence, 1880).	CSE USA 1	R. DE PUMA, <i>CSE USA 1, Midwestern Collections</i> (Ames, 1987).
<i>CSE</i>	<i>Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum.</i>	CSE USA 2	R. DE PUMA, <i>CSE USA 2, Boston and Cambridge</i> (Ames, 1993).
CSE Belgique 1	R. LAMBRECHTS, <i>CSE Belgique 1</i> (Rome, 1987).	CSE USA 3	L. BONFANTE, <i>CSE USA 3, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art</i> (Rome, 1997).
CSE Bologna I	G. SASSATELLI, <i>CSE Italia 1, Bologna, Museo Civico, I</i> (Rome, 1981).	CSE Vaticano I	R. LAMBRECHTS, <i>CSE Stato della Città del Vaticano I</i> (Rome, 1995).
CSE Bologna II	G. SASSATELLI, <i>CSE Italia 1, Bologna, Museo Civico, II</i> (Rome, 1981).	CSE Viterbo	G. BARBIERI, <i>CSE Italia 5, Viterbo, Museo Archeologico Nazionale</i> (Rome, 1999).
CSE BRD 1	U. HÖCKMANN, <i>CSE Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1</i> (Munich, 1987).	CSE Volterra I	G. CATENI, <i>CSE Italia 3, Volterra, Museo Guarnacci I</i> (Rome, 1995).
CSE BRD 2	U. LIEPMANN, <i>CSE Bundesrepublik Deutschland 2</i> (Munich, 1988).	DA	C. DAREMBERG and E. SAGLIO, <i>Dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines. I-IX</i> (Paris, 1877-1919).
CSE BRD 3	B. VON FREYTAG gen. LÖRINGHOFF, <i>CSE Bundesrepublik Deutschland 3</i> (Munich, 1990).	DE GRUMMOND, <i>Guide</i>	N. DE GRUMMOND, editor, <i>A Guide to Etruscan Mirrors</i> (Tallahassee, 1982).
CSE BRD 4	G. ZIMMER, <i>CSE Bundesrepublik Deutschland 4</i> (Munich, 1995).	DE SIMONE, <i>Entleh.</i>	C. DE SIMONE, <i>Die griechischen Entlehnungen im Etruskischen, I-II</i> (Wiesbaden, 1968, 1970).
CSE DDR 1	G. HERES, <i>CSE Deutsche Demokratische Republik 1</i> (Berlin, 1986).	<i>DialArch</i>	<i>Dialoghi di Archeologia.</i>
CSE DDR 2	G. HERES, <i>CSE Deutsche Demokratische Republik 2</i> (Berlin, 1987).	EHCA	N. DE GRUMMOND, ed., <i>An Encyclopedia of the History of Classical Archaeology I-II</i> (Westport, Conn., 1996).
CSE Denmark 1	H. SALSBOV-ROBERTS, <i>CSE Denmark 1</i> (Odense, 1981).	ES	E. GERHARD, <i>Etruskische Spiegel I-IV</i> (Berlin, 1840-1867); A. Klügmann-G. Körte, <i>Etruskische Spiegel V</i> (Berlin, 1897).
CSE Great Britain 1	J. SWADDLING, <i>CSE Great Britain 1, British Museum I</i> (London, 2001).	<i>EtrSt</i>	<i>Etruscan Studies.</i>
CSE Great Britain 2	R. NICHOLLS, <i>CSE Great Britain 2, Cambridge</i> (Cambridge, 1993).	FISCHER-GRAF	U. FISCHER-GRAF, <i>Spiegelwerkstätten in Vulci</i> (Berlin, 1980).
CSE Hongrie-Tchécoslovaquie	J. G. SZILÁGYI and J. BOUZEK, <i>CSE Hongrie-Tchécoslovaquie</i> (Rome, 1992).	<i>Jdl</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts.</i>
CSE Louvre I	L.D. REBUFFAT-EMMANUEL, <i>CSE France 1, Louvre I</i> (Rome, 1988).		
CSE Louvre II	D. REBUFFAT-EMMANUEL, <i>CSE France 1, Louvre II</i> (Rome, 1991).		

- LAMBRECHTS, *Mir. Mus. Royaux*
LIMC
 LUCE
 MANSUELLI, *StEtr* 1946-47
 MANSUELLI, *StEtr* 1948-49
 MAYER-PROKOP
Griffspiegel
MonPiot
NRIE
NSc
 PFIFFIG, *Religio*
 PFISTER-ROESGEN
 RALLO, *Lasa*
 REBUFFAT, *Miroir*
 RISD
 RIX, *ET*
- R. LAMBRECHTS, *Les miroirs étrusques et prénestins des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire à Bruxelles* (Brussels, 1978).
Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (Zürich-München, 1981-1998).
 S.B. LUCE, *Catalogue of the Mediterranean Section* (Philadelphia, 1921).
 G. MANSUELLI, "Gli specchi figurati Etruschi" in *StEtr* 19 (1946-47) 9-137.
 G. MANSUELLI, "Studi sugli specchi etruschi IV. La mitologia figurata negli specchi etruschi", in *StEtr* 20 (1948-49) 59-98.
 I. MAYER-PROKOP, *Die gravierten etruskischen Griffspiegel archaischen Stils*, *RM*, Ergänzungsheft XIII (Heidelberg, 1967).
Monuments et Mémoires, Fondation E. Piot.
 M. BUFFA, *Nuova raccolta di iscrizioni etrusche* (Milan, 1935).
Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità.
 A.J. PFIFFIG, *Religio etrusca* (Graz, 1975).
 G. PFISTER - ROESGEN, *Die etruskischen Spiegel des 5. Jhs. v. Chr.* (Frankfurt, 1975).
 A. RALLO, *Lasa* (Florence, 1974).
 D. REBUFFAT - EMMANUEL, *Le miroir étrusque d'après la Collection du Cabinet des Médailles* (Rome, 1973).
 Rhode Island School of Design, Providence RI.
 H. RIX, *Etruskische Texte I-II* (Tübingen, 1991).
- RM*
 ROMANO and ROMANO
 RONCALLI and BONFANTE
 SHELTON
StEtr
 SWADDLING *et al.*
 VETTER
 WIMAN, *Malstria*
 ZÜCHNER, *Klappspiegel*
- Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung*.
 D.G. ROMANO and I.B. ROMANO, *Catalogue of the Classical Collections of the Glencairn Museum, Academy of the New Church, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania* (Bryn Athyn, 1999).
 F. RONCALLI and L. BONFANTE, eds., *Gens antiquissima Italiae: Antichità dall' Umbria a New York* (Perugia, 1991).
 K. SHELTON, "Etruscan Mirrors in the University Museum," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1989.
Studi Etruschi.
 J. SWADDLING, P. CRADDOCK, S. LA NIECE and M. HOCKEY, "Breaking the Mould: The Overwrought Mirrors of Etruria" in M. Pearce, D. Ridgway, F. Serra Ridgway, R. Whitehouse and J. Wilkins, eds., *Ancient Italy in its Mediterranean Setting: Studies in Honour of Ellen Macnamara*, IV (London, 2000) 117-140.
 E. VETTER, *Literaturbericht für das Jahr 1924, Etruskisch*, in *Glotta* 15 (1927) 229.
 I. WIMAN, *Malstria-Malena: Metals and Motifs in Etruscan Mirror Craft* (Göteborg, 1990).
 W. ZÜCHNER, *Griechische Klappspiegel = Jdl*, Ergänzungsheft XIV (Berlin, 1942).

NOTES ON CLASSIFICATION AND TERMINOLOGY

[These notes represent a slightly revised version of those published in my *CSE USA 2: Boston and Cambridge* (Ames, 1993) pp. 13-20].

The more than 3,000 extant Etruscan and Praenestine mirrors may be divided into a small number of standard types. The classification scheme presented here depends on physical appearance, moving from simple to more complex forms, rather than on an uncertain chronology. Although specific types are more common in some periods than others, at any given time a number of different types can occur in the same context. Almost all extant Etruscan mirrors are made of bronze; a few silver mirrors have survived (*e.g.*, *CSE USA 2*, nos. 15-18) and no doubt this material, and perhaps even gold or electrum, was a popular medium for mirrors in the Etruscan period. In any case, the extant silver mirrors represent the same mirror types as the much more common bronze examples.

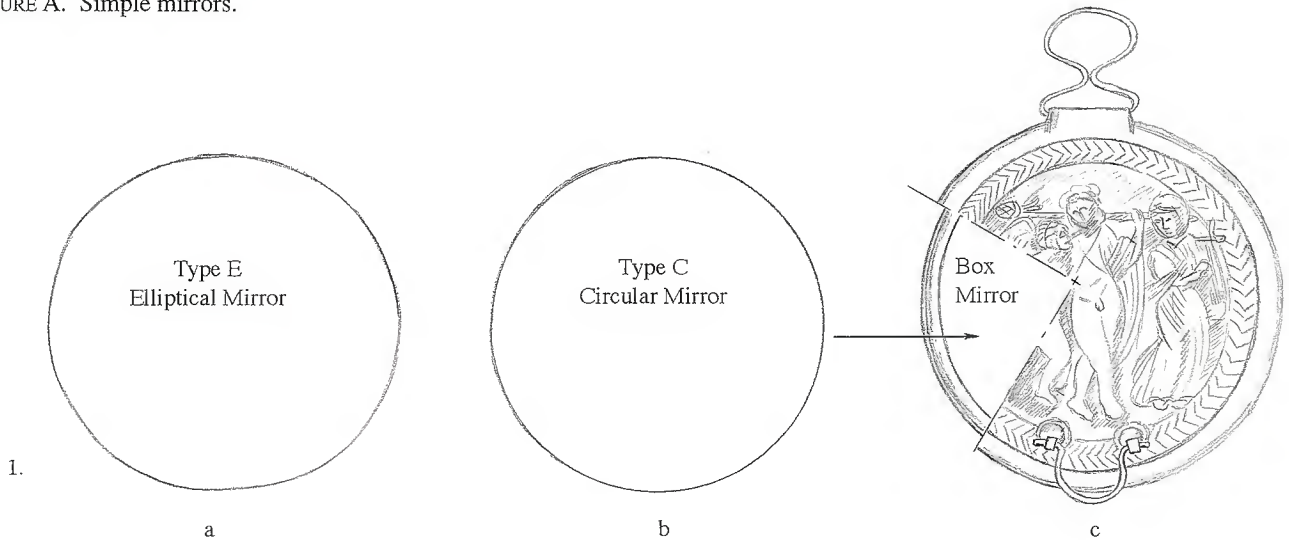
The simplest Etruscan mirrors are polished elliptical or circular discs (Fig. A.1a-b, Types E and C). Elliptical or “solar” mirrors (Type E) have slightly ovoid discs (*e.g.*, *CSE USA 2*, no. 19). They are among the earliest Etruscan mirrors and the shape may have been influenced by Egyptian mirrors which are typically elliptical. Type C discs (Nos. 16, 17) are nearly perfect circles. Several of these may have originally been retained inside a box, the ancient equivalent of a “compact” (Fig. A.1c). The extant box mirrors are circular (No. 29), but we know from representations on Etruscan sculpted cinerary urns that rectangular and square versions, perhaps made of more perishable materials like wood, also existed; there is some evidence that even these squarish boxes contained circular rather than rectangular or square mirrors. Both Type C and E mirrors could be furnished with different kinds of separately made tangs (Fig. A.2a-c) which could then be inserted into handles made of other materials. Most of the independent tangs which have survived show that

they were attached by means of two or three small rivets (*cf.* Nos. 1, 20, 22, 34).

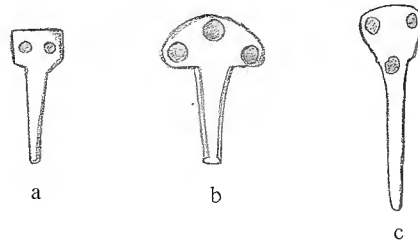
But Type C and E mirrors could also become hand mirrors by the attachment of a separately made handle. Figure A.3 depicts four varieties of these solid-cast bronze handles. They were attached directly to the mirror disc either with small rivets or, more commonly, with solder. The “palmette” type, named for the prominent device at the top (Fig. A.3a-b; Nos. 6, 41), is probably the most common type. Variant (a) is smaller and simpler than (b); they also differ in that (a) has a plain palmette base and (b) has a base shaped like an Ionic capital. Usually (a) has two knobs on the handle shaft. Both, as well as all handles in this category, have modeled deer heads at the handle end (or terminal). The third handle type (c) is often called the “little head” type because three small human heads appear at the top. Here the handle shaft is often very elaborate. The fourth type (d) is the “volute” form named for the large volute, similar to an Aeolic capital, at the top. In the nineteenth century, independent handles were often erroneously attached to alien circular discs (*e.g.*, *CSE DDR 1*, nos. 16-17). For some proper examples, see *CSE Belgique 1*, nos. 5, 7 and *CSE Louvre II*, no. 63.

The second major type of mirror is the tang mirror (Fig. B.1a-c). In this case, the same elliptical (Type ET) or circular (Type CT) discs have tangs cast in one piece with the discs, rather than tangs made separately (Fig. A.2) and later attached to the discs with rivets. Piriform mirrors (Fig. B.1c, Type PT), with their gracefully elongated discs, are a less common variant of the tang type. The tang itself either springs directly from the disc (Fig. B.1a) or, more commonly, appears at the bottom of a transitional element called the extension (Fig. B.1b-c). Both the use of extensions and the piriform shape itself were probably developed to strengthen the naturally weak juncture between disc and handle.

FIGURE A. Simple mirrors.



2. Independent Tangs



3. Independent Handles

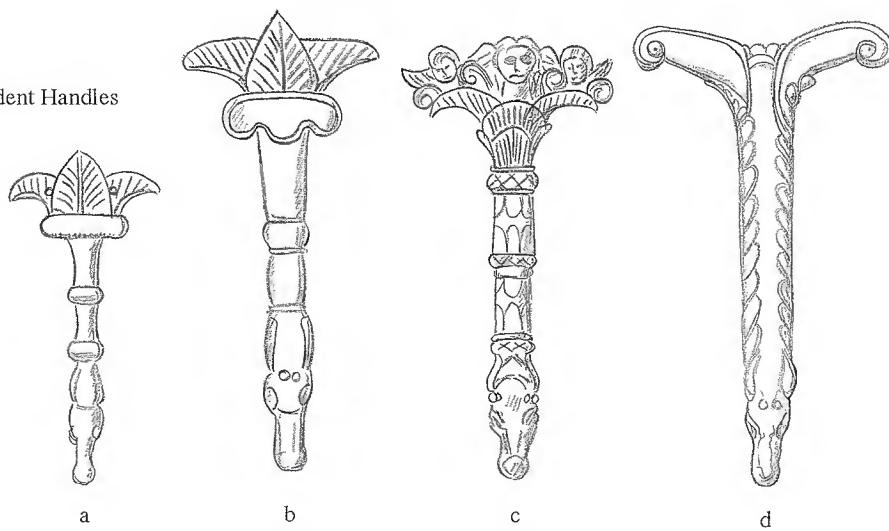
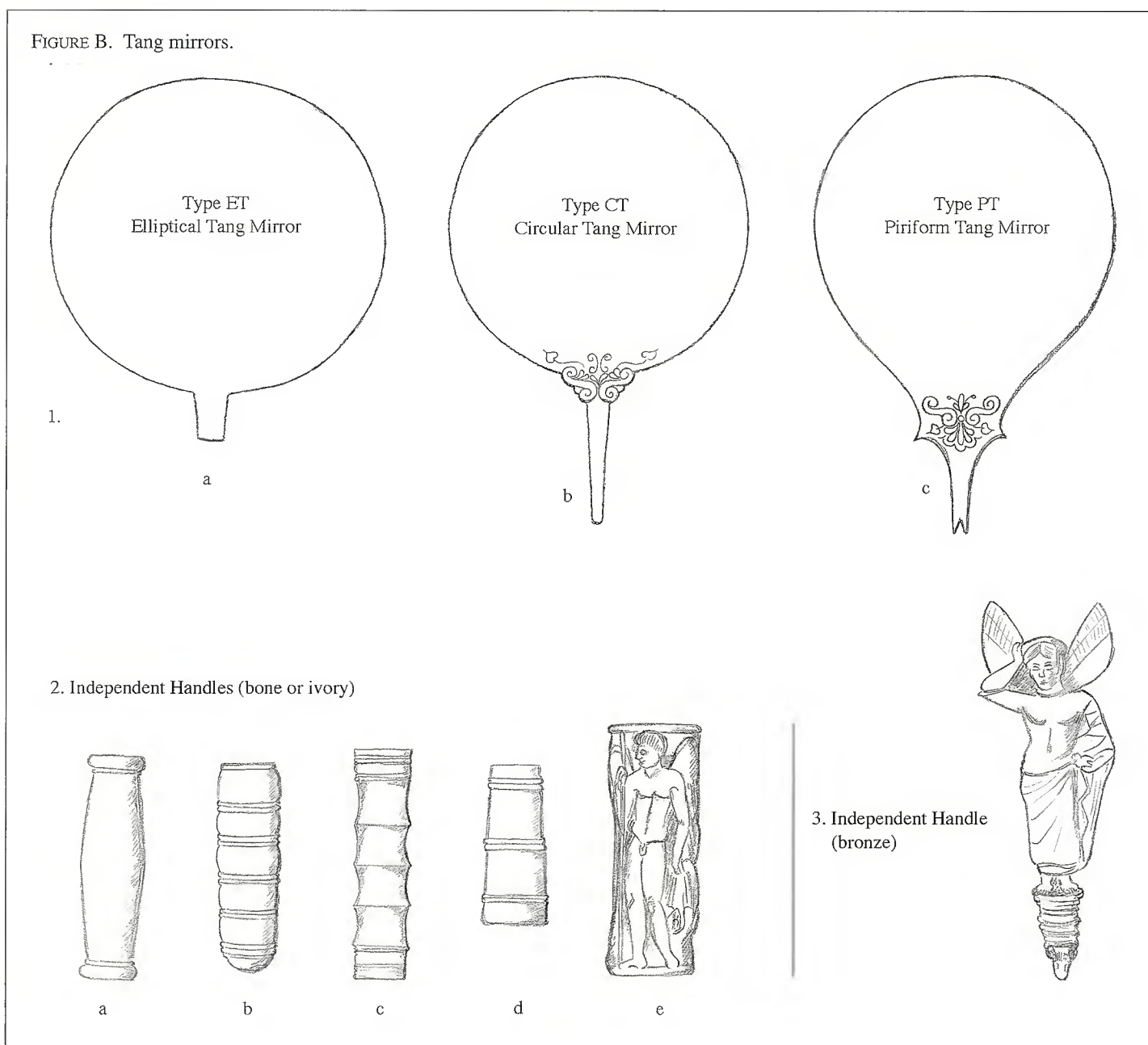


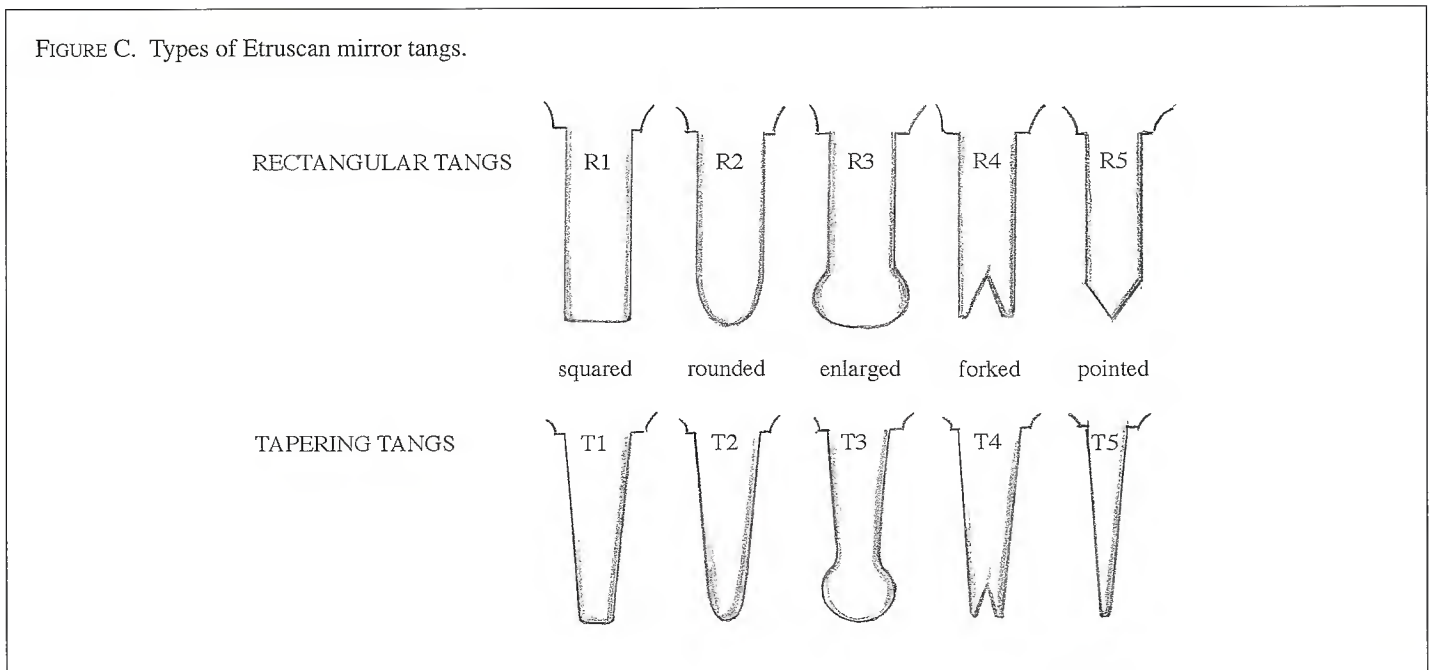
FIGURE B. Tang mirrors.



Tangs come in a wide variety of styles based on the standard forms represented in Figure D. Again, they make it possible to provide the mirror with a separate handle usually made of bone, horn or ivory (Fig. B.2). Some tangs are perforated so that a pin can be driven through the handle to secure it more firmly to the tang (No. 34). Most of the handles are simply turned on a lathe to produce characteristic decorative moldings (Fig. B.2a-d) but a few examples are elaborately carved with figures in low relief (Fig. B.2e) and some examples still preserve paint and gilding (e.g., CSE U.S.A. 1, no. 16). In this representative selection, the most functional example (Fig.

B.2.c) has four concave moldings designed to fit the four fingers of the hand. Very rarely, solid-cast bronze handles were designed for tang mirrors (Fig. B.3; cf. REBUFFAT, *Miroir*, no. 44; CSE Great Britain 1, no. 33 for recent discussion of problem pieces). Solid-cast statuette handles with a base that allows the mirror to stand upright on a table are common types in Greece but are almost unknown in ancient Etruria (cf. REBUFFAT in *MonPiot* 60 (1976) 56-57, figs. 13-14).

The third type of mirror may be called a grip or hand mirror because the handle is made in one piece with the disc (Fig. C). Until recently, most investigators believed



that such mirrors were cast in one piece. An important study (SWADDLING *et al.*) has convincingly argued that such was not the case. Instead hand mirrors of this type were hammered to shape, not cast. In its outward appearance a circular hand mirror (Type CH) looks very much like a circular mirror (Type C) with separate handle attached by solder or rivets (Fig. A.3), except for the extension element. The piriform variety (Type PH), usually associated with ancient Praeneste, is very common in this one-piece design but the elliptical mirror is rare. The cast handle designs for this class of mirror are numerous but most share one decorative detail: the terminal is frequently enlivened by a modeled deer or ram's head. For realistic and stylized versions of the terminal animal head, see Nos. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and others listed under "handles" in the Typological Index. For additional classifications of hand mirrors, see D. REBUFFAT in *RA* (1984) 195-226; U. HÖCKMANN in *Jdl* 102 (1987) 247-289; *CSE Louvre II*, 9-11.

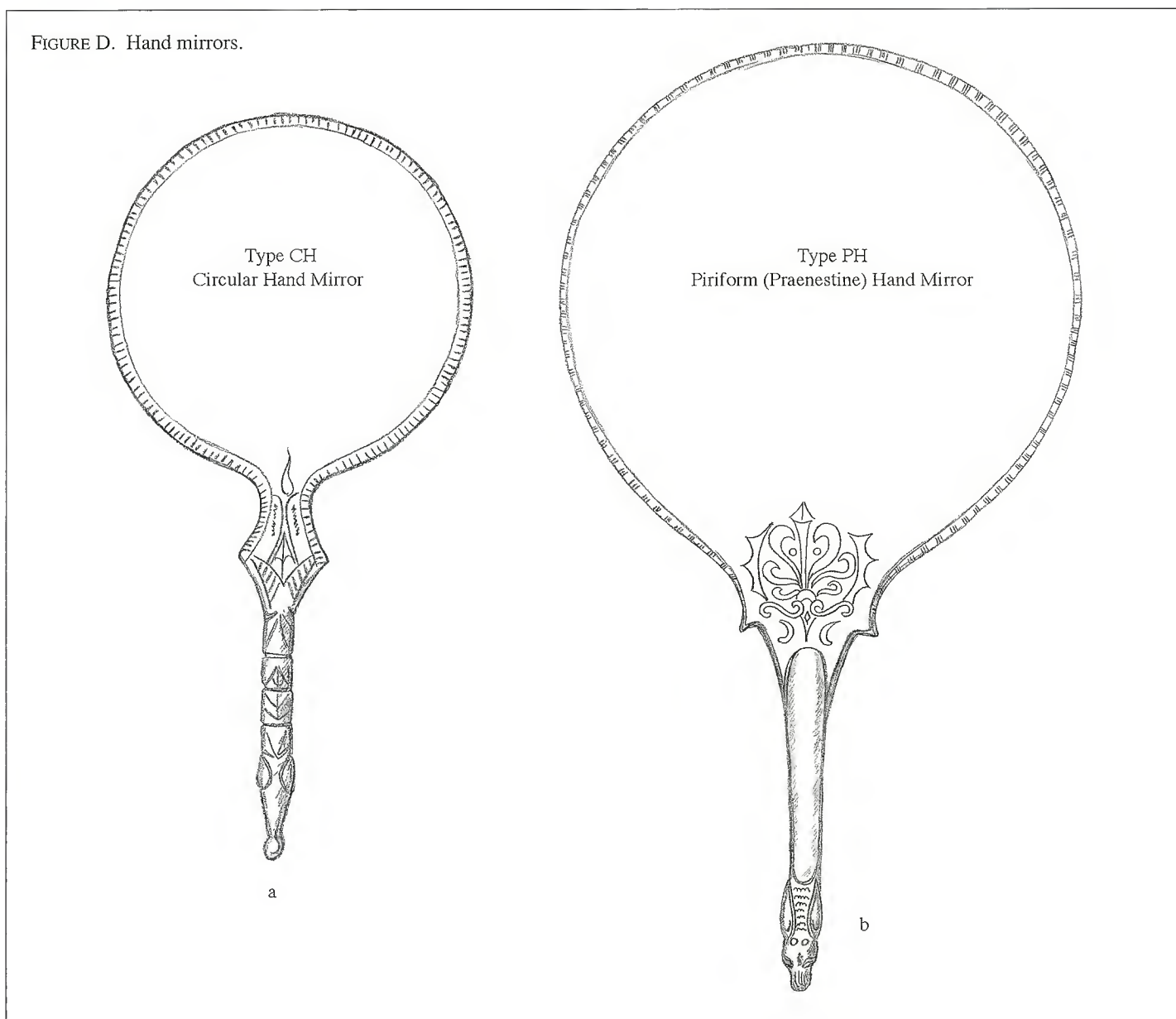
Most of the technical terms used to describe accurately the many features of Etruscan mirrors have been developed in recent years by scholars working on the *CSE* and related publications. Because a variety of languages is being used there has tended to be some confusion on many of these terms. The following tentative outline attempts to standardize the English terminology but it is certain that improvements will occur as the study of Etruscan mirrors continues. For the French terminology, see REBUFFAT, *Miroir*; ADAM; *CSE Louvre I*, 19-24; *CSE Louvre II*, 9-11. For the German terminology, see *CSE*

BRD 1, 14; *CSE BRD 2*, 16; *CSE BRD 3*, 15. A brief listing of the Italian terminology is recorded in *CSE Volterra I*, 10.

The obverse or reflecting side on Etruscan mirrors usually is relatively unobstructed by engraved ornament and, therefore, most terms are needed to describe the features of the far more complex reverse or non-reflecting side of the mirror. Figures A-C show the obverses of mirrors because there we are primarily interested in shape rather than decoration. Figure E illustrates schematically the reverses of two basic kinds of mirrors, Types CT and CH; the same terms would, of course, apply to Type PT and PH as well as Types C, E, and ET if they were decorated, although often these last three types are not. Very few "relief" mirrors have survived (See now, A. CARPINO, *Discs of Splendor: The Relief Mirrors of the Etruscans* [Madison, 2003]) but they too fit into these general shape categories despite their different decorative technique. Obviously, every mirror does not possess all of the features defined by the terms in Figure E.

On most mirrors, the disc is divided into two basic parts: the medallion is the tondo or circular picture field; the border is the ornamental frame that surrounds the medallion. Most borders are stylized plant scrolls or leafy vines (*e.g.*, Nos. 2, 7, 28, 49, 55). Other common types are the cable or guilloche border (Nos. 4, 29) and the spiky garland border (Nos. 8, 43). Figures in the medallion may interact with the border (*e.g.*, *CSE USA 2*, no. 13) or overlap it (Nos. 13, 34, 49). Some mirrors have multiple borders and consequently a small medallion

FIGURE D. Hand mirrors.



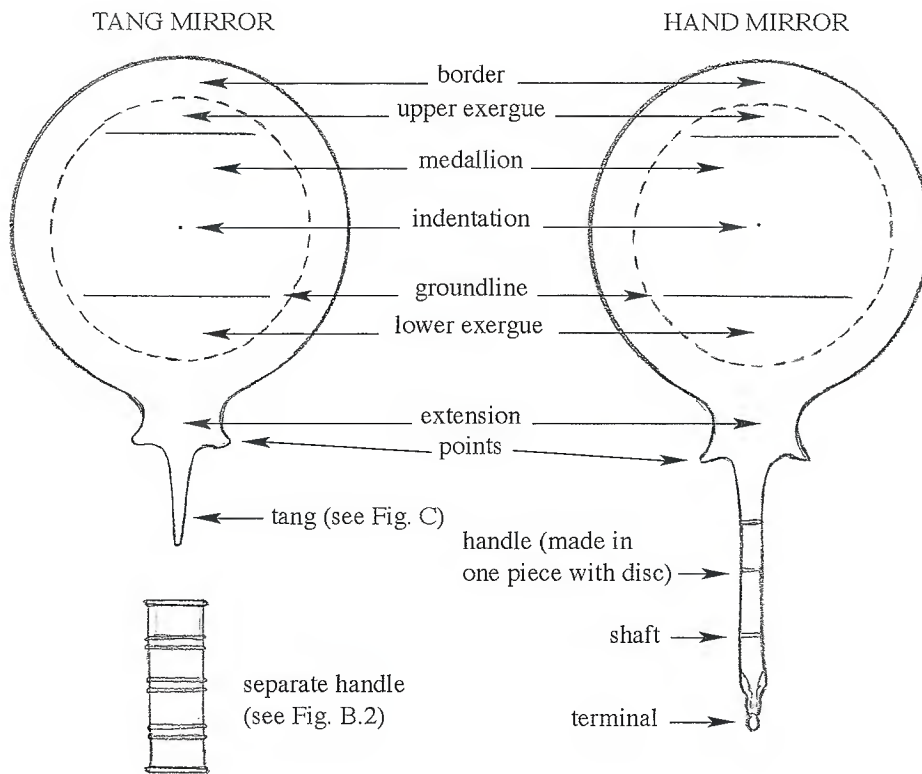
(e.g., CSE USA 2, no. 4), while many others have no border at all (Nos. 9, 12, 15, 21, 23, 24, 32, 35, etc.). Early mirrors sometimes have borders on both sides (e.g., MAYER-PROKOP, *Griffspiegel*, S37; REBUFFAT, *Miroir*, no. 62). For more information on types of borders, see FISCHER-GRAF, 86-89, 110-112; ADAM, 64-67.

The medallion may be subdivided on some mirrors when figures stand on a ground line (Nos. 2, 34). This horizontal line often creates a semicircular segment or exergue at the bottom of the medallion and may contain additional decoration (No. 50). Some mirrors have a comparable area at the top of the medallion called an upper exergue, tympanum or lunette (No. 45). On mirrors with extensions (Types ET, CT, PT, CH and PH), the

extension offers another area suitable for decoration on both sides of the mirror. These extension ornaments, often called vignettes, usually take the form of stylized palmettes and other plant forms. Some depict small figures (No. 45). The study of extension ornaments, almost completely ignored by scholars until recently, holds much promise for our better understanding of Etruscan engravers and their workshop organization. In fact, the varying shapes of extensions themselves may prove a useful factor in assigning mirrors to specific workshops or areas of production (see ADAM, 52-63).

Many of the same terms may be applied to the parts of a box mirror (Fig. F). Here it is the container which requires the most attention. This consists of two circular

FIGURE E. Terminology for tang and hand mirrors.



valves joined by a hinge. The upper valve (or lid) is slightly larger than the lower valve (or mirror case) allowing a snug fit. The lid usually has a loop handle at the hinge for suspension and often a smaller handle

directly opposite for lifting the lid. The medallion is usually decorated with figures in high relief rather than engraved and there is almost always a border surrounding this appliqué design (No. 29).

The study of mirror sections (Fig. G), similar to profile drawings used in ceramic analyses, is another important factor in helping to assign a date and provenance to a mirror. This study is also relatively new; the first large collection of mirror sections was published in REBUFFAT, *Miroir*, pls. 94-110, in 1973. A section illustrates the shape of the mirror along a line through the center of the disc at right angles to the handle or tang. In general, there appears to be an evolution of Etruscan mirrors from thick, flat sections with plain or simple edges to thin, curved sections with elaborate edges (see R. DE PUMA in *RM* 87 [1980] 25-26). As more mirrors, especially those with secure archaeological contexts, are published carefully in the *CSE*, it should be possible to refine this basic evolutionary principle so that mirror sections will become even more useful indicators of date and provenance for that significant majority of mirrors without archaeological context and for undecorated mirrors (Nos. 1, 6, 11, 16-18, etc.).

FIGURE F. Terminology for box mirrors.

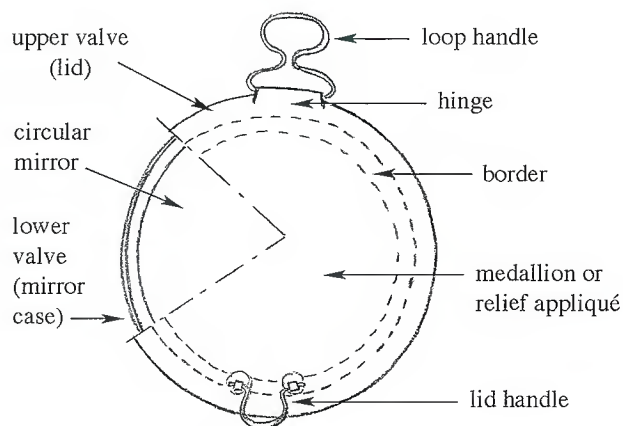
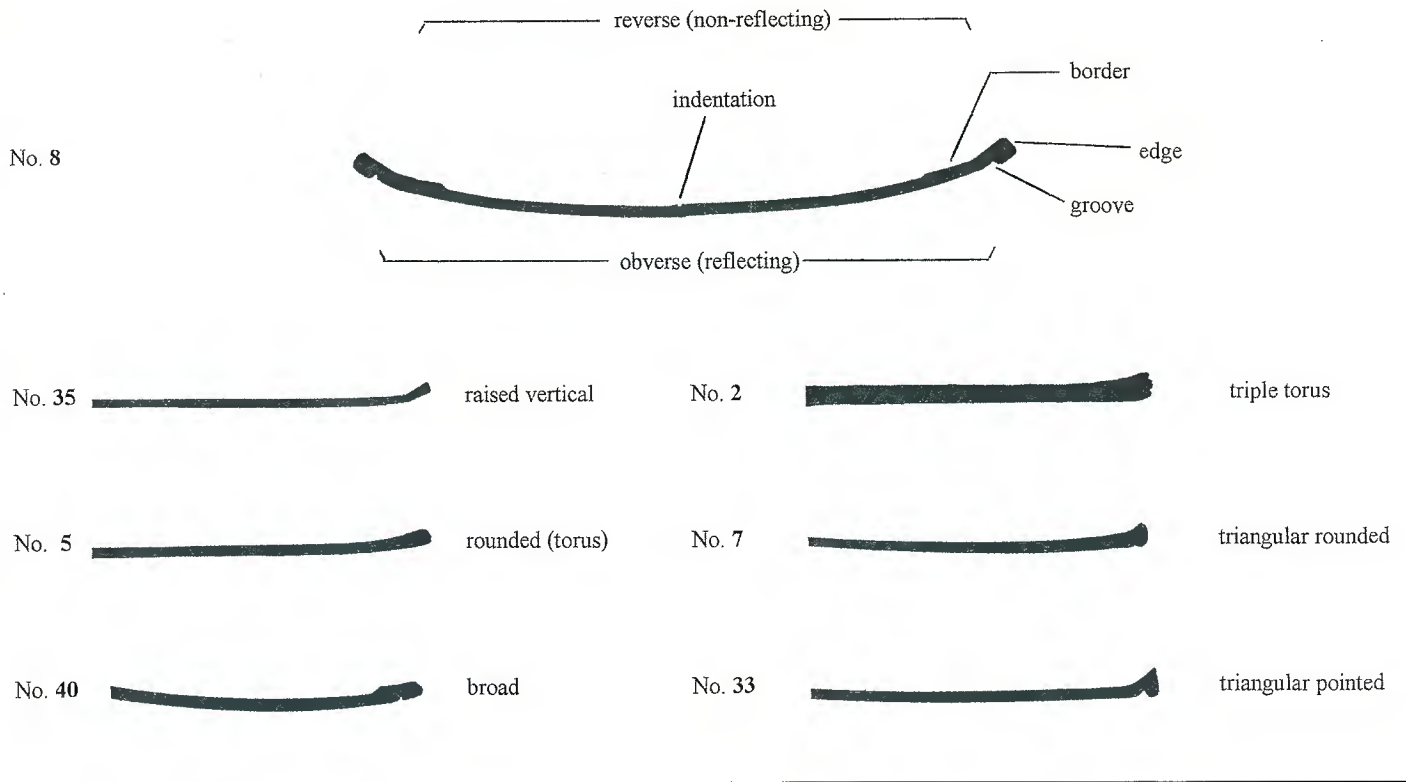


FIGURE G. Etruscan mirror sections (examples drawn from mirrors treated in this fascicule).



CATALOGUE OF ETRUSCAN MIRRORS
AND HANDLES IN NORTHEASTERN COLLECTIONS