

# From Sacrilege to Violence

The Rape of Cassandra on Attic Vases c. 575-400 BCE

by

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## **Declaration**

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## Abstract

*The Sack of Troy* or *Ilioupersis*, is a lost epic of ancient Greek literature which tells of the violent and ruthless Greeks that pillaged the city of Troy. It was a prevalent theme in ancient Attic art, and in the fifth century BCE evolved onto the platform of Athenian drama. The Rape of Cassandra episode is one of the most recurring scenes in Attic vase-painting. The iconography, however, dramatically changes between 575-400 BCE. Both Archaic black-figure and Classical red-figure examples show Cassandra, in a vulnerable position, being attacked by Ajax. However, there are significant differences between the iconography of scenes from these two periods.

In Archaic black-figure vase-painting the figure of Cassandra appears small, insignificant and in some instances completely hidden from view as she is obscured by the huge shield of Athena. In contrast, in Classical red-figure scenes the figure of Cassandra becomes more conspicuous and commands more attention from the viewer. In red-figure versions the figure of Cassandra also appears far more sensual in comparison to the black-figure examples, as her undressed, or even naked body is explicitly exposed, suggesting not only an attack, but, more specifically, a rape. Athena, on the other hand, is now portrayed smaller in relation to her black-figure counterpart, and in the form of a cult statue, rather than the goddess herself. These differing portrayals of Cassandra and the goddess in Attic black-figure and red-figure vase-painting suggest a change in emphasis in the subtext of this scene-type. While the narrative details that emerge are similar, the iconographic details – including gesture, clothing (or the lack thereof), weaponry, relative positions and sizes of the figures – suggest the change in emphasis from the attack as sacrilege to one that includes sacrilege but foregrounds rape and violence. Therefore, in this regard, although violence and sacrilege are two fundamental themes in both periods, the changing iconography suggests a noticeable shift in focus. Using the iconographic approach, 46 black-figured vases and 26 red-figured vases representing the Rape of Cassandra scenes from the Beazley Archive and LIMC encyclopedic collection are catalogued, studied and contextualized during the course of this thesis. Studying the iconography of these vase images in their appropriate contexts illustrates the changing perceptions of the suffering and violated woman in a violent and patriarchal society.

## Opsomming

*Die Verwoesting van Troje of Ilioupersis*, is 'n verlore epos in die antieke Griekse literatuur wat die narratief van gewelddadige en genadelose Grieke wat die stad Troje geplunder het, lewer. Dit was 'n algemene tema in antieke Attiese kuns, en het in die vyfde eeu v.C. op die platform van Atheense drama ontwikkel. Die episode van die verkragting van Cassandra is een van die mees herhalende tonele in die Attiese vaas. Die ikonografie verander egter dramaties tussen 575-400 v.C. Beide Argaïese swart-figuur- en Klassieke voorbeelde van rooi-figuur wys waar Cassandra in 'n weerlose toestand deur Ajax aangeval word, maar daar is beduidende verskille tussen die ikonografie van tonele uit hierdie twee periodes.

In die Argaïese vaas met swart-figure is die figuur van Cassandra klein, onbeduidend en soms heeltemal vir die oog verborge terwyl sy verberg word deur die groot skild van Athena. In Klassieke tonele met 'n rooi-figuur vertoon die figuur van Cassandra egter meer opvallend en eis dus meer aandag van die kyker. In voorbeelde met die rooi-figure lyk die figuur van Cassandra ook veel meer sensueel in vergelyking met dié van die swart-figuur. Haar ontklede, of selfs naakte liggaam word eksplisiet ontbloot en dus suggereer dit nie net 'n aanval nie, maar meer spesifiek verkragting. Verder word Athena kleiner uitgebeeld in verhouding tot haar eweknie in die swart-figuur, en in die vorm van 'n kultusbeeld, eerder as die godin self. Hierdie uiteenlopende voorstellings van Cassandra en die godin in die Attiese swartfiguur- en rooifiguur vaas dui op 'n verandering van die klem in die subteks van hierdie toneeltype. Die narratiefbesonderhede wat na vore kom, is dieselfde. Die ikonografiese besonderhede - insluitend gebare, kleredrag (of die gebrek daaraan), wapens, relatiewe posisies en groottes van die figure - dui op 'n onderliggende klemverandering van die aanval as ontheiliging na 'n tentoonstelling wat verkragting en geweld insluit. Alhoewel geweld en heiligs kennis beide twee fundamentele temas in hierdie periodes is, toon die veranderende ikonografie 'n merkbare verskuiwing in fokus.

Deur die loop van hierdie tesis is 46 swart -figuurvase en 26 rooi-figuurvase uit die Beazley-Argief en die LIMC-ensiklopediese versameling, wat die verkragting van Cassandra-tonele, verteenwoordig, gekatalogiseer, bestudeer en gekontekstualiseer. Die bestudering van die ikonografie van hierdie vaasbeelde in hul toepaslike kontekste, illustreer veranderende persepsies van die lydende en geskonde vrou in 'n gewelddadige en patriargale samelewing.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Several stories from the *Ilioupersis* regularly occur on ancient Greek vases during the Archaic and Classical periods. These include the murder of Priam, the sacrifice of Polyxena, the death of Astyanax and the recovery of Helen. One of the most common scenes on Attic vases is the Rape of Cassandra episode. All these episodes form part of the *Ilioupersis* cycle therefore evoking themes of war, destruction, capture, death and the general notion of human suffering. The figure of Cassandra in Attic drama of the fifth century BCE is both contentious and interesting, as is her depiction on Attic vases. The episode of her rape by Ajax, in particular, is intriguing because of the kind of questions it asks of the viewer, such as: What were the prevailing ideas about women and violence in ancient Athenian society? Was the narrative intent to emphasize the sacrilegious rape or a woman's individual suffering? Did a change develop of collective consciousness from one period to the next? Was this episode from myth received differently over time?

In this thesis, I will look at the 'Rape of Cassandra' scene in ancient Attic black-figure and red-figure vase-painting dating from c. 575-400 BCE. Within this particular time frame, (the Archaic and Classical periods) there is a significant shift in focus and changes in iconography in the representations of this event. Thus, using an iconographic approach, I aim to investigate these vase images and the changes in the imagery of these vase scenes. Furthermore, I will investigate the differing contexts in which these vase images were created in order to determine the possible subtexts pertaining to women and violence in ancient Athenian society.

### 1.1 Background/Rationale

Ancient Greek sources, both literary and visual, often represent Cassandra, the Trojan princess and priestess of Apollo, as a vulnerable, despairing and often frantic woman, although her beauty is also emphasized. In the *Iliad* Homer refers to her as "the most beautiful" of Priam's daughters (Hom. *Il.* 13.365)<sup>1</sup> and when Priam returns to Troy after retrieving Hector's body, he sees Cassandra first, and describes her as looking like "golden Aphrodite" (Hom. *Il.* 24.698). Aeschylus' Clytemnestra likens Cassandra's corpse to that of a dead swan (Aesch. *Ag.* 1445) in a reference

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<sup>1</sup> The standard abbreviations from Perseus will be used throughout this thesis.

that combines Cassandra's beauty, fragility and victimhood. Furthermore, her frenzied state and vulnerability is presented in Euripides' *The Women of Troy* where her attempts at rational speech are undercut in various ways (Bahun-Radunovic & Rajan 2011:3).

Cassandra's rape by Ajax during the fall of Troy is a subject that denotes her suffering and vulnerability as a woman in the context of war. It was told in the lost epic, the *Ilioupersis*, where Cassandra is described as being violently dragged away by Ajax from the statue of Athena, where she had sought refuge. As noted by Connelly (1993:88) this version is retold in Proclus' summary of the *Ilioupersis* by Arctinus of Miletus which forms part of the Epic Cycle (*Chrestomathy*, 3). There is also a reference made to this episode in a fragmentary poem by the lyric poet Alcaeus of Mytilene (298.4-24) (Jackson 1997:59). Furthermore, this narrative scene is a popular and recurring theme on Attic vases of the Archaic and Classical periods. In these images, Cassandra is shown clinging to the statue of Athena or often reaching out to it/her, desperately seeking protection from the goddess. There are, however, some significant differences between the iconography of the middle and late Archaic black-figure scenes and the red-figure examples from the Classical period.

These differences appear in Cassandra's size, demeanour, clothes and overall placement in the picture field. The representation of Athena also changes dramatically, and certain features such as her size, clothes and overall behaviour suggests a new perspective of the overall narrative scene. The goddess's vigorous and dynamic pose transforms into a lifeless and disengaged one, resembling that of a statue. There are also significant changes in Ajax's overall approach towards Cassandra, which can be identified in his clothes, weaponry, pose and overall demeanour. Although a few scholars have identified the differences between the black-figure and red-figure scenes, the subtexts of these vase images need further exploration. In addition, I intend to look at the Rape of Cassandra scene from a more socio-historical perspective by investigating the differing contexts of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. As a result, this may reveal certain social norms and ideals which are reflected on these vase images and may therefore provide possible motivations, for this dramatic change in the iconography between the two periods.

### 1.1.2 The Rape of Cassandra on Attic Vases: Literature Review

The scholarship relevant to this topic can be grouped into the following areas: Scholarship that describes and analyses the Rape of Cassandra episode in Attic black-figure and red-figure vase-painting and key subtexts and contexts which the story evokes. These include rape and violence; sacrilege; the context of war; and the literary context, especially the *Ilioupersis* in fifth-century Athenian tragedy.

#### The Rape of Cassandra

A key contribution to the study of the Rape of Cassandra in vase painting is Connelly's chapter *Narrative and Image in Attic Vase Painting: Ajax and Cassandra at the Trojan Palladion* (1993) in Peter J. Holliday's *Narrative and Event in Ancient Art*. Connelly conducts a detailed study of the nature of the iconography of the Rape of Cassandra scene. She discusses various aspects of black-figure and red-figure examples, such as the composition of the scenes, the importance of vase shape, iconography and narrative context. This source particularly focuses on the notion of a "revised iconography" that occurs over a period of time and she gives a few possible reasons for these changes. Connelly's study therefore not only recognizes this particular development in the iconography, but provides a detailed examination of it, which in turn, helps us to understand the "role of narrative intent in the image-creation process" better (Connelly 1993:88).

Connelly (1993) documents the shift in focus from Athena in black figure to Cassandra in red figure and provides a brief discussion of the context in each case. In black figure, she establishes a potential link between the rule of Peisistratos in the sixth century and the popularity and repetition of the image of Athena on black-figured vases (Connelly 1993:108). This in turn, suggests a more religious undertone in black figure. Connelly (1993) emphasizes the combative quality in the code and gesture of Ajax and Athena as well, thus evoking a single battle scene. In red figure, Connelly (1993:118) states that the Rape of Cassandra scene takes on newly adopted codes that denote the role of Ajax as a "hunter" and Cassandra as a "wild girl." The Rape of Cassandra scene in red figure, then, shares qualities with other pursuit scenes, and therefore suggests a more sexual/erotic connotation. This article is an important source for this thesis and provides a good and comprehensive framework regarding the development in the iconography of both black-figure and red-figure scenes. However, being a chapter in a book and therefore limited in scope, the chapter

does not provide a comprehensive investigation of the corpus or of the vases' subtexts and contexts. Her work provides avenues of research that will further elucidate how the contexts may account for the iconography and it is in this broadening of scope and deeper analysis of context that my thesis makes a contribution to the field.

Another valuable source that contributes to the discussion is Jackson's (1997) study of a particular neck amphora in Melbourne, the Melbourne Geddes vase. This article focuses on the significance of Cassandra's added white flesh, which implies her uncovered physique, which is unusual for the black-figure scenes. This is therefore an interesting discussion of an example that departs from the norm. The majority of Archaic black-figure vase images show Cassandra semi or fully dressed, and more importantly, with a child's physique. Jackson also highlights important aspects of the portrayal of Ajax in Archaic black-figure vase scenes. A few references are also made to Classical red-figure vases to compare and differentiate between some of the iconographical indicators. In this sense, the article gives the reader a broad overview of the iconography of this specific scene in vase-painting. The focus on the nudity and size of Cassandra leads to a table that categorizes 48 vase scenes based on the degrees of 'nudity/dress of Cassandra'. This catalogue is therefore able to provide information on how consistently the figure of Cassandra is portrayed as an exposed or concealed figure and consequently what this can mean. The relevance of Cassandra's size, which is relatively child-like is also a focus of the article; Jackson groups vase images depicting Cassandra as a child, as near-adult size and as a full adult (Jackson 1997:60).

Jackson therefore offers relevant categories regarding certain iconographic features of Cassandra, especially focusing on size and nudity, and more importantly draws a comparison between other mythological figures, such as Troilos and Astyanax, who are both "young victims of Greek brutality" (Jackson 1997:60). Jackson also suggests that Cassandra's nudity may be a possible link to prophetic powers and Apollo. According to Jackson (1997:62), this potential connection between nudity and supernatural powers is echoed in some representations of Circe by Attic vase-painters. Jackson in this regard explores an in-depth iconographical analysis ranging from Ajax's gesticulation to Cassandra's anatomy and dress which provides significant and helpful information. Jackson's article is therefore especially beneficial to this thesis, since it provides two useful catalogues of relevant iconographic indicators and physical qualities of Cassandra. However, although Jackson (1997) broadens the study to include comparanda, the article

ultimately focuses on one example, which is an anomaly in the iconography, and does not fully contextualise the full range of vase images.

Since this thesis's main contribution is to conduct a more thorough examination of the Rape of Cassandra on Attic vases, the contextualisation of the scenes involves investigating various aspects of Athenian society in the Archaic and Classical periods. The themes that recur are violence, rape, and sacrifice, as well as the general treatment of women. The secondary literature related to these issues can be grouped into key areas.

### **Rape and Violence in Athenian Society**

In addition to violence, and connected with it, is the sexual assault or rape of Cassandra. The topic of rape in Athenian society, both in the context of war or in general is discussed by a number of scholars such as Deacy and McHardy (2015), Vikman (2005), and Robson (2013) which all contribute towards the process of investigating the implications of representing (or implying) a rape in these vase scenes. This topic is one that is discussed at length by scholars such as Ogden (1997), Cohen (1993) and Harris (2006). In addition, these sources provide valuable insight regarding the concept of rape in ancient Athenian society and its surrounding connotations.

In some red-figure vases, rape is strongly suggested as Ajax is shown physically grabbing Cassandra by her hair, neck or arm. This forceful form of physical bodily contact therefore evokes the idea of sexual assault more strongly in red-figure than in black-figure examples. In this regard, focus shifts from an overall war-ravaged and sacrilegious scenario to a more specific type of violence-rape and physical abuse. In most of the Classical red-figure vase-painting scenes, the figure of Cassandra also becomes more conspicuous and commands more attention from the viewer. Beth Cohen (1993) raises some important points regarding Cassandra's nude/naked body and discusses some of the possible underlying themes in these vase images.

Cohen's article, *The Anatomy of Cassandra's Rape: Female Nudity Comes of Age in Greek Art* (1993) mainly focuses on the change in the typology from early Archaic black-figure to late Archaic and early Classical red-figure vase-painting. Cohen, in this regard discusses how the fully developed female nude enters the "aristocratic mythological context" in Attic pottery and thus places overall emphasis on Cassandra's conspicuous nude body (Cohen 1993:37). The figure of Cassandra therefore evolves from a rather pathetic to erotic or sexual figure in vase-painting



(Cohen, 1993:37). Jackson (1997:57) maintains that Archaic black-figure vase-painters perhaps did not wish to suppress certain aspects surrounding female nudity when considering her exposed body on the Geddes vase which is enhanced with added white paint. Cohen (1993:39), however, argues that there may have been some reluctance to show a sexually developed female figure and that nudity is therefore still ‘played down’ in Archaic black-figure vase-painting. She describes and discusses some of the significant and gradual iconographical changes the figure of Cassandra undergoes in vase-painting, and briefly mentions the increasing naturalism of Greek art as a relevant factor regarding the development in the iconography of the Rape of Cassandra scene.

Like Jackson (1997), Cohen (1993:37) mentions the aspect of nudity regarding mortal woman and its association with vulnerability and physical violence. Despite Cohen’s focus on the iconography of the Rape of Cassandra scene, there appears to be no information about the differing contexts that are able to provide possible reasons for these changes in the iconography between the Archaic and Classical period. Deacy & McHardy’s (2015) *Ajax, Cassandra and Athena: Retaliatory Warfare and Gender Violence at the Sack of Troy* specifically talks about Ajax’s role as a wartime rapist. Certain behaviours and gestures of Ajax that can be seen in the red-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes are elaborated on. This conspicuous violent encounter between Ajax and Cassandra in red figure is therefore considered as a response to a developing interest in human suffering and the brutality of warfare (Deacy & McHardy 2015:263). This source overall, therefore, contextualises Ajax’s violent behaviour in a general war setting but does not focus on any particular historical events which may have influenced the gradual change in the iconography between the black figure and red-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes.

The Classical emphasis on violence and, more importantly, rape is discussed by Koloski-Ostrow and Lyons in *Naked Truths: Women, Sexuality and Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology* (1997:5). They point to the structural oppositions “contained in the formulation of male-violence-power and female-beauty-dependency” and how this is significantly echoed in the art of the Classical period. Cohen’s *Divesting the Female Breast of Clothes in Classical Sculpture*, a chapter in Koloski-Ostrow and Lyons (1997), thoroughly discusses the ‘nude’ female body in the ancient world. She maintains that Cassandra is one of the first mythological figures to be represented consistently as fully or semi-nude in both Archaic and Classical vase-painting (Cohen 1997:80). However, due to the increasing naturalism of Greek art, the female body only became considerably

conspicuous in late Archaic and early Classical red-figure vase images. Koloski-Ostrow and Lyons (1997:3) refer to two different scholars, John Berger and Laura Mulvey, who both suggest that the female form became “posed, objectified, dehumanized and idealized as an erotic sight for male pleasure” (in Koloski-Ostrow & Lyons 1997:3).

An iconographical and semiotic approach to this dynamic relationship between the male and female scheme in vase-painting is found in Sourvinou-Inwood’s *A Series of Erotic Pursuits: Images and Meanings* (1987), in which she explores the theme of ‘erotic pursuit’ in vase-painting and its implications. The semantic facets of this theme comprise ‘ephebes and parthenoi’, ‘male-female relationships’ and ‘marriage’ which according to Sourvinou-Inwood (1987:152) are intertwined and interdependent. This article also focuses more specifically on the iconographic indicators of the pursuer/attacker, for example, whether he is carrying a weapon or not and what kind of weapon. This also provides some perspective on the intention of the attacker towards his victim and therefore it is useful in assessing the body language of Ajax as pursuer/attacker. Pursuits in which the youths (ephebes) are carrying spears are known as ‘type 1’ and scenes with no spear are known as ‘type 2.’ Sourvinou-Inwood (1987:131), in this regard, suggests that type 1 erotic pursuit scenes carry “implicit, muted, connotations of violence and menace” and that type 1 and 2 scenes are in fact connected in some form in which the meanings are only different due to emphasis. According to Sourvinou-Inwood (1987:132), although representations of a youth pursuing a girl are almost certainly regarded as an erotic pursuit, it essentially depends on the similarity between the iconographical scheme observed and those of others. Regardless of Ajax’s violent attempt to either rape or kill Cassandra, one underlying aspect of the Rape of Cassandra scene is sacrilege.

## Sacrilege

Shapiro’s *Art and Cult under the Tyrants in Athens* (1989) provides a comprehensive overview of the Archaic cultic context in which the majority of black-figure vases were created. The source especially focuses on the origin and development of the Panathenaia and Greater Panathenaia, as well as the underlying propagandistic intentions behind these celebratory events. In addition, Shapiro discusses Peisistratos’s significant role during this time as a tyrant, and how his devotion to the goddess Athena influenced his position in the political sphere of ancient Athens. What made this source useful is Shapiro’s references to several ancient literary sources and items of material

culture to support his argument. More importantly, it establishes the significance of a cultic religion which was embedded in ancient Athenian life and the importance of sacred spaces. Shapiro (1989) therefore offers an extensive overview on the religious and cultural aspects of sixth-century Athens in which the black-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes were created.

Pedley's *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek world* (2005) explores the significance of sanctuaries in ancient Greece and therefore provides insight on the practice of ancient Greek religion. The first part of Pedley's book addresses important themes related to ancient Greek religion such as: the location of sanctuaries, the defining features of these sanctuaries, rituals, the experiences an individual would have at a sacred space and the subsequent transformations. With reference to the Rape of Cassandra, which is evidently set in a sacred space, this source is helpful during the contextualization of these vases as it emphasizes the sanctuary's inviolability. Petrovic and Petrovic's *Inner Purity and Pollution in Greek Religion: Volume I: Early Greek Religion* (2016) provides further insight into the implications of the violation of these sacred spaces. It also provides insight into how people in ancient Greek society were thought to have interacted with the divine in a ritual context and what was permitted and what was not permitted in a sacred space. More importantly, it focuses on sacrilege. Both sources therefore provide useful and insightful information concerning notions of inviolability and sacrilege, themes which are both implicit in the Rape of Cassandra narrative.

## The Context of War

Although the iconography in the vase-paintings may evoke different subtexts in different periods, the theme of violence is a key theme that emerges in the study. Van Wees's iconic study of violence, *Status Warriors: War, Violence and Society in Homer and History* (1992) offers a relevant discussion of this violent and warlike society, especially focussing on the causes of violent conflict within the Homeric world and afterwards. There is an ongoing scholarly debate about whether ancient literary texts like the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* can be regarded as historical sources (Van Wees 1992:1). In this book, Van Wees explores how these ancient texts may help reconstruct early Greek history in a consistent and coherent manner. In the very first chapter of the book 'History in Poetry: On Reconstructing the Homeric World', Van Wees discusses, for example 'The case of the big round shield' (Van Wees 1992:17). Here the actual shape and size of hoplite shields is debated and whether the shield described in the Homeric epics/ vase images represents the actual

shield of real-life military soldiers is discussed. This section was of use, since Athena's gigantic shield is a key iconographical feature in the Archaic black-figures scenes. There is, however, only one example in black-figure scenes which shows Ajax holding a shield. In most black-figured examples, Ajax is depicted with a brandished weapon about to attack Athena. Both Athena and Ajax therefore evoke two hoplites fighting in battle. Therefore, since Ajax (as an iconographical figure in vase-painting) has not received that much scholarly attention, Van Wees' chapter was able to provide a framework within which to discuss the perspectives and values of a generic ancient status warrior and hoplite soldier.

Overall Van Wees discusses important aspects regarding the context of war, for example he dedicates an entire section in a chapter to 'the attraction of hybris' and an entire chapter to 'the ethics of anger' which are significant elements relevant to the analysis and contextualization of the Archaic black-figure scenes. This source provides helpful material in an attempt to understand the perceptions and ideals of ancient Greek warriors concerning violence and war, and more importantly the treatment of helpless women in a male-dominated and warlike society. Van Wees (1992:19) therefore overall provides significant help to the 'viewer' or 'reader' to reconstruct the context of the archetypal hoplite and the different perspectives to consider when attempting to analyse and contextualize the subject(s).

Schaps' *The Women of Greece in Wartime* (1982) is another useful source about warfare in ancient Greek society, with a special emphasis on the treatment of women in such a context. Moreover, the consequences of the conquered men and women in the context of war are also discussed in great depth. Since Cassandra is a prominent female war captive in the *Ilioupersis*, this source is quite useful in determining the potential circumstances surrounding her fate. Schaps continuously refers to ancient sources such as Herodotus and Thucydides, which provides an ancient perspective on warfare.

### **Ilioupersis in Fifth-Century Athenian Tragedy**

Du  's *The Captive Woman's Lament in Greek Tragedy* (2006) explores the female perspective on war in depth by focusing on the female captives in ancient Athenian tragedy. Du   therefore refers to fifth-century Athens' most renowned war plays such as Euripides' *Trojan Women*, *Andromache* and *Hecuba*, focusing on the laments and plight of captive women in the context of war, a theme

which can be recognized in the red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes. Chapter three, ‘Athenians and Trojans’, in particular is very insightful as it examines the fifth-century Athenians’ associations with the theme of the Trojan War and its representation in Athenian art and literature. As a result, Dué provides a comprehensive study of Athenian tragedy by exploring various themes and possible subtexts related to women, war and conflict.

Therefore, although the iconography of the Rape of Cassandra scene in black figure and red figure Attic vase-painting have been relatively well studied, there appears to be a gap in the existing scholarship regarding a comprehensive account of this shift in focus, and consequently the overall contextualization of these vase images. In this regard, attempting to read these vase images more thoroughly in context may shed some light, from a more socio-historical perspective, on potential reasons for the development in iconography and the change in emphasis.

## 1.2 Research Problem/Questions

In the depiction of the Rape of Cassandra, then, clear changes in iconography and emphasis can be observed from the late Archaic black-figure vase-paintings to the early and middle red-figured versions. Although scholars such as Connelly (1993), Cohen (1993) and Jackson (1997) have investigated the iconography and noticed differences between the black-figure and red-figure iconography, this study aims to contextualize it more fully in order to determine the potential motives for these changes. The depiction of this episode in Attic vase-painting may reveal much about how the ancient Athenians viewed the story of Cassandra’s rape and how they thought about violence in general. For this project, I have collected and catalogued extant examples depicting Cassandra’s rape on ancient Athenian black-figure and red-figure vases from c. 575-400 BCE in order to examine how the story is represented and try to account for these changes over time. In the course of this investigation, this thesis will address the following questions:

1. How is the Rape of Cassandra depicted in Attic vase-painting of the sixth and fifth centuries BCE?
2. What differences are there between the depictions and how can we attempt to understand these differences through investigating their differing contexts?

3. Are the social norms and ideals of a patriarchal society reflected in these artistic representations? In other words, what are the social views or subtexts that may operate in these images?

## 1.3 Hypothesis

This thesis will use the differing portrayals of the Rape of Cassandra in Attic vase-painting to investigate how the changes in emphasis in the scenes reflect the views on and perceptions of the suffering and vulnerable woman in an ancient patriarchal society. After a thorough investigation of these vase-paintings in context, the changes in the iconography will show the shift in focus from the attack on Cassandra as sacrilege in Archaic black figure to a more specific focus on rape and violence in Classical red-figure vase-painting. As a result, by attempting to place these vase images in their original context, I hope to be able to reveal the different subtexts which operate in these images. For example, in Archaic black-figure examples, the recurrent portrayal of cultic themes suggests a period in which cultic religion was highly valued in ancient Athenian society. Sacrilege forms a distinctive part of this as well. Furthermore, the frequent representation of Trojan scenes in Classical red-figure examples emphasize the effects of war and the treatment of war captives, especially female captives in warfare. During this investigation it is important to consider that both violence and sacrilege are two enduring themes on the vases in both centuries, however there is a conspicuous shift in focus from the Archaic to Classical examples. Overall, it is my argument that changes in emphasis, iconography, gestures and scene composition suggest changing perceptions towards women, rape and violence in ancient Athenian society.

## 1.4 Theory

### 1.4.1 Theoretical Framework

‘Reading’ images on ancient Attic vases requires a methodological approach that enables the ‘viewer’ or ‘reader’ to interpret the iconography in a nuanced way. According to Mary Beard, a “scene on a vase is not a picture of, but a statement about the subject it represents” (Beard 1991:20). Visual depictions on ancient Greek vases not only depict narratives then, but also provide the modern reader/viewer with information that can shed light on a range of aspects regarding the subject’s social and cultural life. It can be argued that visual images are an analogue to language,

which therefore provides a whole conceptual framework in which these ‘subjects’ lived and functioned (Topper 2012:142). The linguistic complexity of a language and a visual image can, therefore, both be regarded as forms of ‘communication’ which allow an exchange of information between an addresser (artist) and an addressee (viewer) (Jakobson 1960:353). The recipient, in this instance, can create meaning(s) from the information provided by the vessel. However, in order for the image to offer meaning(s), the recipient has to actively engage with it; “Words on a page do not communicate their meaning without the active engagement of the recipient or reader. In a similar way, images do not offer meanings to their audience unless the audience actively engages with them” (Masters 2012:20).

The vessel itself and the image depicted on it must therefore be appropriately contextualized in order for the modern interpreter of the scenes to be able to ‘read’ them and uncover the most likely meanings that ancient viewers would construct. As a contemporary reader/viewer who is completely removed from the subject’s original context, it is essential to consider the interplay between the form, function and imagery of a vase in context, since many vases are connected visually and thematically (Topper 2012:142). In order to investigate the interaction between these elements, certain methodological approaches need to be followed. During the course of this thesis, sources such as Stansbury-O’Donnell’s *Pictorial Narrative in Ancient Greek Art* (1999) as well as *Looking at Greek Art* (2011) are useful in relation to some of these approaches applicable to vase-painting. Stansbury-O’Donnell (2011) offers a clear and comprehensive study regarding the various methodological approaches applicable when ‘viewing’ or ‘reading’ ancient Greek art. Since this thesis mainly applies the iconographic approach and, to some extent draws from semiotics, this source provides useful information regarding both methodological approaches. Stansbury-O’Donnell (2011:58), introduces Erwin Panofsky’s method of iconographic analysis accompanied with a well-structured table setting out the different stages of interpretation through this approach.

### 1.4.2 An Iconographical Approach

Attempting to understand the meaning of ancient images can be challenging, as ‘we’, the modern readers/viewers are completely removed from this context. Therefore, the meaning of ancient visual depictions can seem ambiguous and can only be recovered through systematic study



(Stansbury-O'Donnell 2011:58). For this study an iconographical analysis, developed by Panofsky (1939), has been selected as the most appropriate method with which to examine the imagery on the vases. Panofsky divided his approach into three stages of description and analysis; pre-iconographical description, iconographical analysis and finally, iconographical interpretation (Weingarden 1998:51).

Although the first stage is only descriptive, the second stage entails an iconographic analysis of the imagery and requires consultation of primary literary sources to obtain more insight about the context in which the images were produced. In this regard, an iconographic study suggests the manner in which visual elements are identified and interpreted by “establishing a correlation between the image and what it represents” (Stansbury-O'Donnell 1999:92). According to Panofsky, this approach allows the viewer to place visual depictions in context and to decipher the personal and cultural ideas and meanings they represent (Holly 1984:15). The portrayal of Cassandra in vase-painting must thus be read/viewed within the changing contexts, which can be accessed through a study of literary sources and other cultural material from the time periods selected for this study.

According to Weingarden (1998:51), iconographical interpretation, which is the third and final stage of Panofsky's method, can be regarded as a “synthetic process of restoring the painting and its iconographic content to its cultural context, to reveal its conformity with the worldview in which it was produced.” As a result, the reader is able to make sense of the entire scene and draw a variety of possible conclusions, by linking together the literary sources and contextual indicators within the scene.

Stansbury-O'Donnell (2011:66), however, maintains that visual images are ‘acts of narration in their own right’ as well. This suggests that even though the *Ilioupersis* by Arctinus of Miletus may have informed the Rape of Cassandra scene depicted on ancient Attic pottery, the story was circulating in a variety of other discourses, including artistic ones. Iconography, then, should be regarded as a language on its own and an image should not be interpreted as necessarily aligned with any specific literary version. Stansbury-O'Donnell (2011:73) also draws from Sourvinou-Inwood's work regarding the interpretation of meaning in Greek art through semiotics and discusses the possible different types of meanings one scene may evoke. This source, therefore,



not only appears to be very useful in providing the various technicalities of this theoretical approach, but also refers to various examples, including material culture and ancient texts, to infer its possible shortcomings.

In *Reading Greek Culture: Texts and Images, Rituals and Myths* (1991), Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, like Stansbury-O'Donnell (2011), provides a useful perspective on the methodological aspects of reading ancient Greek art. In particular she emphasizes the significance of context and the idea that all vase images – and especially mythological scenes – should be regarded as polysemic. In the first chapter, Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:5) discusses the technique involved when attempting to read ancient Greek texts and images and focuses especially on the idea of reconstructing an ancient reading or artwork. This, however, can only be achieved when placing the text or object in its full context, therefore in its social, cultural, economic, political, and religious context, which can be challenging for a contemporary 'reader' or 'viewer' completely removed from the original context. Although Stansbury-O'Donnell focuses a great deal on the technical aspects of these methodological approaches, Sourvinou-Inwood provides fundamental guidelines to consider when applying these approaches to one's analysis. When looking at the Rape of Cassandra scene on Attic pottery, there may be different subtexts which can only be determined once the 'viewer' or 'reader' attempts to reconstruct the context of the subject(s), thus the assumptions and expectations of that time. Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:10) refers to the need to consider the 'perceptual filters' of our own context when attempting to view the images through ancient Athenian eyes.

In this regard, when looking at the Rape of Cassandra scene in Archaic and Classical vase-painting it is necessary to consider the values and ideologies related to women and violence in sixth- and fifth-century BCE Athens. It is of course important to identify what these values and ideologies are and determine the method by which 'meaning' is created (Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:10). In addition, Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:10-11) points to the process of signification from a rather 'modified' post-structuralist perspective and refers to some significant factors to consider when attempting to infer meaning from these images. She asserts that "...no sign has a fixed meaning...signs are polysemic...not all the meanings produced by the signifying elements in a signifier contribute to the production of one unified coherent meaning" (Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:10-11). When applying this approach in the study and analysis of the mythological scene of

the Rape of Cassandra it is useful to follow these ‘guidelines’ as closely as possible. Sourvinou-Inwood provides a comprehensive study regarding methods of creating ‘meaning’ and various possible shortcomings. Her book also provides various useful perspectives about possible subtexts and especially looks at the differences and similarities in the iconography. Together these two sources provided fundamental ‘guidelines’ relevant to the theoretical approach used in this thesis.

Thus, by using the iconographic approach, and informed by semiotics, the Rape of Cassandra scene in Attic vase-painting will be described, analysed and interpreted in context. I will therefore look at the iconographic indicators such as gesture, posture, dress and other contextual elements and attempt to make sense of the possible intended meaning(s) communicated by them.

### 1.4.3 Limitations in an Iconographic Approach

There are, however, a few possible shortcomings which need to be taken into consideration when attempting to read vase images. Relying entirely on literary sources when looking at vase-paintings may deter the reader/viewer from treating these vase images as works of their own. A modern audience may therefore already have presupposed ideas about the image due to its correlation with written texts. Another shortcoming concerning this approach is that the contemporary reader/viewer may draw their own conclusions about ancient vase images, while being removed from the subject’s original context. When looking at vase images from the ancient world, it is not immediately clear whether constructive relationships do in fact exist between these images and actual “lived experiences” or the texts (Topper 2012:142). Although the Rape of Cassandra scene is a mythological episode, the iconography provides relevant insights into ancient Athenian society. More importantly, regarding scenes of myths and scenes of everyday life as two separate entities suggests another problem. According to Beard (1991:19) mythological beings did not live in a separate world, but were part of human experience in ancient Greek society, she further elaborates: “they intervened directly in human life; they were a necessary means of *re-presenting* and of making sense of the world.”

In this regard, granting the fact that literary sources are useful in obtaining context, it is important to acknowledge images on vases as having a visual language which cannot function as a “neutral mirror of poetic narration” (Giuliani 2013: xvii). Thus, as a reader/viewer of ancient Attic vase images it is important to keep in mind how these representations of the *Ilioupersis* cycle seem

more “influenced by its own long pictorial tradition than by changes in Iliadic recitation” (Connelly 1993:120).

Principles of a semiotic approach will also be used when investigating the vases, since semiotics allows the reader/viewer of visual depictions to understand encoded meaning(s) through coming to terms with their visual language (Stansbury-O’Donnell 2011:72-73). In this regard, if there are certain difficulties which cannot be answered through an iconographic investigation, semiotic analysis can provide helpful insight (Connelly 1993:106). Connelly further elaborates on some of the difficulties that a “literal-minded reader” of the Rape of Cassandra scene can experience and how the process of semiotic analysis is able to make these difficulties seem less important:

The cases of the diminutive Kassandra and the Panathenaic Athena are troubling for the literal-minded reader who wishes to understand how Kassandra can be at once a child and a woman, or Athena can be at once a statue and a living adversary [...] Gombrich<sup>2</sup> maintains that the purpose of narrative in the visual arts is ‘not to tell a story but to allow those who already know the story to re-experience it.’

(Connelly 1993:106)

Therefore, some reservations that cannot be solved or answered through traditional iconographic investigation can be clarified through semiotic analysis for these reservations appear less significant when they are “read in terms of code” (Connelly 1993:106).

## 1.5 Methodology

In order to conduct this study, both red-figure and black-figure vases from the late Archaic and Classical Periods (575-400 BCE) showing the Rape of Cassandra have been collected and catalogued.

The *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (LIMC) is one of the main sources of imagery used in this thesis. Two articles have been used: LIMC I AIAS II (1981) and LIMC VII KASSANDRA I (1994). Both provide a catalogue and a summary/synopsis of the imagery as well

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<sup>2</sup> Gombrich 1982: 88

as a brief description of each artefact, and in the case of the material relevant to this thesis, vase images. The LIMC source material has proven useful in that the catalogues identify the different iconographical figures in the scenes, and the articles help the ‘viewer’ or ‘reader’ to contextualize each object. In the LIMC I, the AIAS II article focuses specifically on artefacts or images involving Ajax. In the introductory paragraph of the AIAS II article Touchefeu (1981:336) deliberates Ajax’s possible act of sacrilege against the Virgin Goddess, as demonstrated by the following passage:

*A.<sup>3</sup>s’est-il alors rendu coupable d’un sacrilège envers la déesse, d’une violation du droit des suppliants, d’un viol délibéré qui aurait associé l’outrage fait à la virginité de la prophétesse et la profanation d’un lieu consacré à la Déesse Vierge?*

This translates to:

(Did A. then commit a sacrilege to the goddess, a violation of the right of the supplicants, a deliberate rape which would have combined the outrage made to the virginity of the Prophetess and the desecration of a place dedicated to the Virgin Goddess?)<sup>4</sup>

The overall violent treatment of Cassandra is therefore considered as a direct violation against the goddess Athena, therefore evoking an act of sacrilege, rather than the victimization of a woman by a dominant male figure. This line of thought has been important to my analysis of the images and my interpretation of the subtexts. These iconographic indicators in black-figure vase images therefore suggest a clear sacrilegious aspect, and one which is not as evident in red figure.

In the LIMC VII, the KASSANDRA I (Paoletti 1994) entry occurs as an addendum, which illustrates more scenes/images of Cassandra. In this regard, the LIMC as a multivolume catalogue provides enough information to recognize the ‘basic’ meaning of each vase image and which is therefore a good place to start for contextualization purposes. Another useful element of the LIMC is that where images were lacking in the Beazley Archive, some images were available in the LIMC catalogue. One limitation to this source was that some of the images provided had no date allocated to them, which made the cataloguing procedure quite difficult, and little attention is paid to other features of each vase, including other images in other picture fields.

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<sup>3</sup> A= Ajax

<sup>4</sup> Translation author’s own

The black-figure (Cat. 1) and red-figure (Cat. 2) vase images have been catalogued separately. In addition, a third catalogue (Comp. Cat.) consists of comparanda: this includes other representations, not belonging to the Rape of Cassandra scheme, but important to the study for comparative purposes. A total of 74 black-figured and red-figured Attic vase-paintings (excluding those in the comparanda catalogue) have been collected from the Beazley Archive and *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologia Classicae* (LIMC) ‘Ajax’ and ‘Kassandra’ articles which amounts to the total number of representations of the scene of which I am aware.

Although I have included all vases in my catalogue, 11 images are not illustrated in either source and are therefore inaccessible to me. As I would have to rely on descriptions only, they therefore cannot constructively be used in this thesis. Two further examples of the vase images which are visually accessible have been excluded due to the images being too fragmentary to be useful.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the total number of vase-paintings included in Catalogue 1 and 2 have been narrowed down to 72. It is these then that will be studied, analysed and contextualised. Furthermore, due to the popularity of Greek vases and their demand for exportation, several of these extant vases were found in Etruscan tombs, however, the imagery of these vases “remained emphatically Athenian” (Masters 2012:30). In this regard, the iconography of these vase images should be read/viewed as reflective of Athenian society.

Firstly, I will look at the iconography of the Rape of Cassandra scene in both Archaic and Classical vase-painting and consider, for example, the differences in composition, placement in the picture field, gesticulation and other indicators such as posture, clothing and various contextual indicators that may carry meaning. Secondly, I will identify these differences in iconography and look at the differing contexts in which these images were represented by consulting various ancient literary sources that provide insight about the social, cultural, religious and political ethos of each period.

## 1.6 Terminology

### 1.6.1 The ‘Rape’ of Cassandra

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<sup>5</sup> While the figure of Cassandra can be identified within some of these fragmentary images, significant detail, such as gesticulation and contextual objects are missing.

In any contemporary definition of rape, emphasis is placed on consent, and more importantly, its absence (Robson 2013:102). The notion of rape or any kind of sexual violence therefore suggests a forceful and violent sexual act made against a victim's will. However, the unwillingness of the victim in ancient sources is hardly mentioned (Robson 2013:102). The term "rape" in a modern sense, therefore, does not necessarily qualify as an act of sexual assault in the context of the ancient Greek world (Robson 2013:102). According to Athenian law, men accused of rape were treated in a very similar way to men who were accused of adultery, this also applied to the women in each scenario (Ogden 1997:27). From a modern western perspective, this concept might seem very peculiar since rape and adultery are two entirely different conducts in our current ideological framework. Rape suggests a forceful act while adultery refers to an act in which the involved parties are in mutual agreement with each other. Consent, or its lack thereof, is therefore pivotal to the modern definitions and may alter the entire meaning in each case. Although the ancient Greek language had no explicit term for rape in the modern sense, it did have a few verbs which were used to suggest "an act of violence" and could have applied to a sexual assault especially if the object was female (Jackson 1997:59). Although considered a violent act, the nature of Ajax's exact action remains uncertain in early literary sources such as in Proclus' summary who uses words such as *πρὸς βίαν ... συνεφέλκεται*, in which the latter can be open to more than one interpretation when referring to the main crime (Jackson 1997:59). Jackson provides further information on these ancient Greek verbs in a general sense: "The most violent is *βιάζεσθαι*, but more 'moral' terms are *ὑβρίζειν* and *αἰσχύνειν*. The verb *ἁρπάζειν* can be used in conjunction with the other verbs, but only refers to abduction" (Jackson 1997:59).

In Alcaeus' fragment (298.8-9), Cassandra is not mentioned by name, but she is certainly the daughter of Priam who is described embracing the statue of Athena (Johnson & Ryan 2005:137). There are, however, two syllables missing from the single word which describes Ajax's action at the beginning of the sentence in this fragment which obscures Ajax's overall intention in the plot. Jackson elaborates: "It may have been 'dragged', 'seized', 'shamed', 'drew forth', 'outraged', but fortunately the two syllables are not as crucial as they might seem, for it is not the act of rape but the act of sacrilege that the singer means to portray" (Jackson 1997:59).

In order to remain consistent and coherent during the course of this study, the term "rape" will be used when referring to Ajax's sexual assault against Cassandra. Furthermore, it is also essential to

question whether the ancient Greeks considered sexual violence just as offensive as in modern society. Harris (2006:50) elaborates:

[...] there is no reason to make such an assumption: the Athenians held very different views from ours about a wide range of topics such as war, slavery, and infanticide. Is it not also possible that they held a different view of sexual violence?

In ancient Athens the main concern revolved around the humiliation and shame imposed on the victim and more importantly on the victim's *kyrios*<sup>6</sup> and *oikos* (Robson 2013:103). In ancient Athenian society, the term *hybris*<sup>7</sup> was often used which also had a "broader semantic range" (Harris 2006:42). The term, however, did often imply similar acts to what we know as rape. For example, Pausanias (9.13.5: cf. Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.7)<sup>8</sup> uses the term *hybris* when referring to the two Boetian women who were sexually violated by two Spartan soldiers. As a result, the two young women as well as their father committed suicide because of the shame that was inflicted on their honour (Harris 2006:41).

According to Ogden (1997:35), the consequences for rape of both sexes were rationalized differently, for instance, the female penalty concerned the protection of the bloodline and the male penalty concerned the protection of personal dignity. Robson (2013:103) states that a woman's *kyrios* was ultimately responsible for her chastity. In this regard, one can deduce that rape was a punishable crime in the ancient world, since it was seen as an act of *hybris* or insolence against the victim and in the case of a woman, it was a great offence against her *kyrios* (Robson 2013:104). The notion that rape was an insult made by one man against another, suggests that the woman who had been wronged is not considered to be the primary victim. This suggests that although "rape" was seen as a crime in ancient Athenian society and was punishable by law, the severity of the punishment depended on the intention of the aggressor. Robson (2013:105) further explains:

If a rape is committed with no aim to insult the girl's *kyrios* or clan, then the attack is judged far more favourably than an unprovoked assault designed to bring harm and

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<sup>6</sup> "The head of a household i.e. the adult male owner and custodian of the family's estate who also acted as the legal protector of the household's children and womenfolk" (Robson 2013:283).

<sup>7</sup> Outrageous and insolent behaviour (Robson 2013:282)

<sup>8</sup> In Harris 2006:41

humiliation to the woman's family [...] some rapes are 'merely' pardonable misdemeanours in Greek eyes ...

This renders the question whether the physical harm inflicted on women had any broader significance. Although a woman's chastity was at stake, as well as her honour, even so, rape did not pose a threat to a patriarchal citizen household, unless the aggressor intended to cause harm.

According to some ancient logographers, orators and politicians, adultery was considered a worse crime than rape since it involved the "penetration into an *oikos*" (Ogden 1997:34).

Xenophon, advocates that:

Many cities have the custom of permitting adulterers alone to be killed with impunity, obviously because they consider them to be corrupters of the love of women towards their husbands.

(Xen. *Hiero* 3.3)<sup>9</sup>

Adultery also required state intervention, since marital infidelity introduced the possibility of illegitimate children (*nothoi*) being born into citizen households, especially in a time when citizenship was fundamental in ancient Athenian society (Robson 2013:99). Women were also legally regarded as minors and therefore in certain respects could not be held accountable for their own actions or decisions. According to Ogden (1997:31), this may well be the very reason why women who were raped and those who were involved in adultery received overall similar treatment. Therefore, a woman who is *persuaded* by a man to have sexual relations with him is committing a crime which is "morally indistinguishable" from a man who *coerces* a woman to have sex with him (Ogden 1997:31).

However, according to some ancient literary sources, an act of sexual violence only seemed to have been deemed entirely unacceptable in the context of a sacred space. There are several examples in Greek drama as well. One reference to the Rape of Cassandra episode itself is in Euripides' *Trojan Women* when Athena punishes the Greeks for Ajax's sacrilegious act when he raped Cassandra in the sanctuary of Athena at Troy. The following passage from Don Taylor's

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<sup>9</sup> In Ogden 1997:34



translation of the *Trojan Women* (2007:8) presents a dialogue between Athena and Poseidon after the events of the Trojan War:

**Athene:** Haven't you heard. I've been insulted, my temple desecrated!

**Poseidon:** Yes, I know. When Ajax dragged Cassandra from sanctuary.

**Athene:** The Greeks didn't punish him. Not even a reprimand.

**Poseidon:** When your power had enabled them to bring Troy to its knees!

**Athene:** I shall punish them for that. With your help.

(Eur. *Tro.* 69-73))

This incident in drama suggests the gravity of committing a sacrilegious act in both Archaic and Classical Athenian society and how serious the act of rape could have been when committed in a particular setting, such as a sacred space. In this regard, being able to define “rape” or recognize the concept of sexual violence in its appropriate context will allow the modern reader to attempt to engage with the narratives and subtexts of these vases and minimize the distortion of anachronism.

### 1.6.2 A ‘rape’ scene?

One of the most controversial debates, however, regarding this mythological scene is whether Cassandra was actually “raped” or suffered sexual violence. Some scholars argue that Proclus’ summary of the myth only says that Cassandra was forcefully dragged by Ajax considering that there is no mention of any sort of a sexual attack. It is argued by some scholars that the story of the rape only developed in the Hellenistic period (Hughes 2013:173). However, according to Hughes (2013:173) the extensive amount of material culture, such as representations on vases and bronze reliefs dating back to the sixth century BCE, suggests otherwise.

The various iconographic indicators such as gesture, pose, attire and other contextual cues can therefore provide some idea of what is about to happen in this particular scene and how it develops over time. Cassandra’s nudity/semi-nudity in some examples does strengthen the argument that she was raped. Furtwängler (1885:185) notes that other women in Trojan scenes are represented

fully dressed, while Cassandra in most examples appears nude or semi-nude, thus suggesting this notion of rape or attempted rape.

### 1.6.3 Nucleus

According to Stansbury-O'Donnell (2011:79) in order to understand “narrative” and “action” on a vase image it is important to consider how the signs of a picture operates in a similar way to parts of speech, such as the “subject-action-recipient or noun-verb-object combination.” More importantly, it shows how these clusters in a narrative scene are connected and have the ability to steer the action of the story in a particular direction. These clusters are called “syntagmatic functions” and take two forms: nucleus and catalyst. The term nucleus refers to a climactic action which is able to alter or define the course of an action and the catalyst contributes to this particular action (Stansbury-O'Donnell 2011:79). With regards to the Rape of Cassandra scene in most black-figure scenes, the three main figures of Ajax-Cassandra-Athena form the nucleus of the narrative scene and the onlookers/fleeing figures represent the catalyst. Furthermore, some narrative scenes contain more than one nucleus and catalyst. The idea of more than one nucleus is prevalent in the red-figured examples of the Rape of Cassandra scene, rendering the different Trojan episodes in one vase field.

### 1.6.4 Naked and Nude

The terms ‘naked’ and ‘nude’ evoke two different meanings pertaining to the representation of Cassandra in Attic vase-painting. The naked Cassandra in Archaic black-figure vase images suggests a pitiful and vulnerable figure whereas the nude Cassandra in Classical red-figure scenes evokes an erotic figure. Although Cassandra appears vulnerable in red-figure scenes as well, her nude physique contains an aesthetic quality which is lacking in black-figure examples. This distinction between the ‘naked’ and the ‘nude’ is initially made by Kenneth Clark (1956:3), who maintains that:

To be naked is to be deprived of our clothes and the word implies some of the embarrassment which most of us feel in that condition. The word nude, on the other hand, carries, in educated usage, no

uncomfortable overtone. The vague image it projects into the mind is not of a huddled and defenceless body but of a balanced, confident and prosperous body: The body re-formed.

According to Cohen (1993:38), this suggests that in the ‘Archaic visualization’ of Cassandra’s ‘rape’, that she was perceived as naked rather than nude. This therefore implies that although the iconography indicates a ‘revealing’ quality to Cassandra’s dress and body in both periods, it may indicate two different meanings; Cassandra as ‘naked’ in Archaic black-figure and ‘nude’ in Classical red-figure, which is an important distinction that I will make in this thesis.

## 1.7 Research Design

Chapter one has provided a brief introduction to the thesis, including some background information regarding the mythological scene depicted on the selected corpus of vase images. The aims and research objectives of the study have also been introduced here. It entails a literature review as well, in which all the relevant secondary sources regarding the Rape of Cassandra scene in Attic pottery will be discussed. Chapter two is a close study of the iconography in Archaic black-figure examples of the Rape of Cassandra scene. These vase images will then be contextualized in chapter three. Chapter four focuses on the iconography in the Classical red-figure examples, which will then be contextualized in chapter five. In chapter six, I will discuss the results of both black-figure and red-figure vase images in order to determine how and why the iconography has changed and what this might say about the worldviews implied. In addition, this final chapter will raise possible motives concerning the shift in focus in the iconography between these two periods. The three catalogues; black figure, red figure and comparanda are included as appendices.

## 1.8 Summary

A close reading of the iconography of both Archaic black-figure and Classical red-figure vase images of the Rape of Cassandra scene, and then attempting to contextualize them, will allow insightful notions as to why some images evoke the ideas of rape and violence more conspicuously, and why others suggest a more sacrilegious context. Furthermore, studying and contextualising these ancient Attic vase images which were created between c 575-400 BCE, illustrates how iconographic indicators, such as gesture, clothing (or its lack) and the spatial positions of the

subjects are able to provide some insight into ideas and perspectives of ancient Athenian society and how these may have changed over the course of time.

## Chapter 2

### **The Rape of Cassandra in Black-figure Vase-painting: Description and Iconography**

This chapter examines the iconography of Attic black-figure Rape of Cassandra vase scenes from c. 575-480 BCE. During this analysis, different iconographic indicators such as clothing, weapons or objects, as well as pose, stance, gesture and other contextual cues within the narrative scene are explored. There are three main figures represented in these black-figures scenes; Ajax, Cassandra, and Athena, with occasional additional onlookers in some of the examples. Firstly, the shape and function of these vases will be discussed briefly in order to elaborate on the different historical and cultural context(s) in which these vases may have been used. This also provides some insight on whether there was any significant connection between the shape and decoration of these vessels. Secondly, certain key iconographic figures/features in the Rape of Cassandra narrative will be described and explored through the corpus of black-figure scenes. Finally, aspects of these scenes are compared with two other key vase scenes, since the Rape of Cassandra amphora scenes in particular share a resemblance with two other narrative series on amphorae. The first is the Gigantomachy series and the second, the Panathenaic prize amphorae, specifically the scenes of Athena (Connelly 1993:97). These comparanda will contribute to the discussion around the vase scenes in context, through exploring these notable parallels.

#### **2.1 Vase: Shape and Function**

In order to conduct an all-encompassing study of the Rape of Cassandra scene in black-figure vase images, it is necessary to consider a variety of aspects of this group of vessels. The shape of the vase itself, its possible function and the cultural and historical context within which it was created and viewed are all relevant to the interpretation of these scenes. This allows the modern viewer to consider certain patterns that may suggest connections between the shape of the vase and the pictorial narrative. While pottery in ancient Greece was developed for everyday use, some shapes were designed for rituals, which affects both shape and decoration (Boardman 2001:244).

The Archaic black-figure vases collected and used in this thesis comprise various shapes, however, the amphora shape is the most common shape of choice for this scene in the extant examples. According to Connelly (1993:95) the amphora shape amounts to 60 percent of the total number of black-figure vase images which represent the Rape of Cassandra: “Twenty-five amphorae carry the Palladion scene,<sup>10</sup> as opposed to five cups, four lekythoi, three olpai, two kraters, one hydria, and one plate” (Connelly 1993: 95).

More importantly, the amphora-shaped vases are used very early in the Rape of Cassandra sequence, dating back to c. 550-540 BCE and this shape continued to be used longer than the other shapes (Connelly 1993:95). The other 40 percent which become more common later in the century include shapes such as the cup, lekythos, olpe, krater, hydria and oinochoe. The black-figure catalogue (Cat. 1) in this thesis comprises 27 amphorae, one hydria, five cups, three olpai, two kraters, five lekythoi, one oinochoe, one pelike and a fragment from an indistinguishable shape. Although Connelly’s list of findings does not completely match the number of vase shapes catalogued in this thesis, the overall notion that a more varied choice of vase shape appears later in the century does concur with Connelly’s previous statement. Therefore, according to the Rape of Cassandra black-figure catalogue there is a departure from the predominant use of amphora-shaped vessels at c.530 BCE towards a more varied range of vase shapes in the fifth century BCE.

The Gigantomachy and Panathenaic scenes presented as comparanda to the Rape of Cassandra scenes are also on amphorae (Connelly 1993:97). These vessels therefore have the same shape as well as sharing various similarities in iconography which will be discussed later in this chapter.

## 2.2 Scene Synopsis

The black-figure scenes can be described according to a typical formula, with certain differences in the details. The purpose of this section is not to discuss each of the 46 black-figure vases in the corpus individually but to analyse typical iconographic features and schemes in groups. Some vases, however, will be pointed out specifically in order to demonstrate the significant iconographic indicators and contextual cues. Exceptions that do not follow the standard

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<sup>10</sup> The Rape of Cassandra scene is referred to as the “Palladion” scene by some scholars due to the presence of a statue of Athena. This is not to be confused with scenes where Odysseus and Diomedes try to steal the Palladion (cult statue of Athena) at Troy.

iconographic configuration, but which can still be regarded relevant to this thesis will also be discussed.

The typical scene contains three main figures; this trio can be regarded as the nucleus of this particular narrative scene. Ajax is depicted on the left side of the picture field, facing right and Athena is shown on the right side, facing left. The figure of Cassandra appears in the middle between these two opposing figures. Ajax and Athena therefore evoke a battle scene as both figures face each other in an aggressive manner often holding or brandishing a weapon. Cassandra is shown either in a kneeling, crouching, standing or running pose, which suggests that she is caught between these two violent and opposing forces. On the whole, Cassandra's presence in the black-figure scenes appears insignificant and unemphatic compared to the towering and powerful figures of Ajax and Athena. In some of these black-figure scenes, additional onlookers or hoplite warriors are depicted either on the right or left side of the picture frame. Often these figures appear on both sides of the main narrative scene therefore framing the central action. These additional figures can be regarded as a catalyst to the nucleus in their reaction to the main action of the scene either by fleeing or behaving in an observant/pensive manner.

## 2.3 Iconography and Scene Description/Analysis

The remainder of the chapter will describe the iconographical indicators for each figure, as well as scene composition and dynamics. This includes elements such as Cassandra's clothing (and often its lack thereof), pose, gesture and her overall compositional placement in the pictorial frame. Similarly, the two dominant figures of Athena and Ajax will be analysed and discussed. Other additional and contextual indicators, (altars, serpent, bystanders, etc.) will also be investigated and discussed.

### 2.3.1 Cassandra

The figure of Cassandra is depicted in various sizes in the Archaic black-figure images ranging from a small childlike physique to a fully-grown adult. These differing portrayals of Cassandra's size in Attic black-figure vase images may as a result shed some light on the painter's narrative intent as well as the subtext of this particular mythological scene, for example whether the figure of Cassandra was intended to be portrayed as child or as young adult woman has implications on

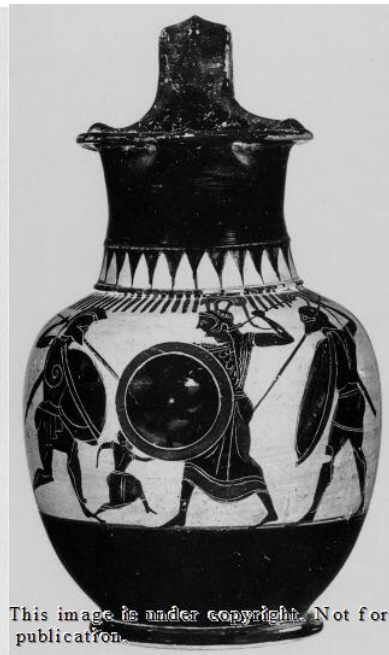
how one ‘reads’ the scene. One key approach represents the figure of Cassandra as small, insignificant and in some instances partially hidden from view as she often kneels, squats or crouches in front of her attacker. In some instances, she is also partially obscured by the large round shield of Athena, from whom she is seeking sanctuary. Twenty-four out of 40 examples represent a diminutive Cassandra. In the other examples, (16 out of 40) the figure of Cassandra is larger, portrayed as a fully-grown adult, therefore matching Athena and Ajax in scale, the two most dominant figures in the black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes. However, even where the configuration of these vase images suggests that the figures are equivalent in size, Cassandra is still portrayed as a vulnerable and trivial figure compared to the dominating and powerful figures of Ajax and Athena.

### *Child-Sized Cassandra*

There are many early examples in black figure that illustrate Cassandra’s diminutive body. She appears small and insignificant, and what appears to some scholars as a rather pitiful representation. Cohen (1993:37) maintains that Cassandra’s diminutive scale in these Archaic black-figure examples suggests a pathetic and vulnerable Cassandra.



**Figure 2.1**  
c. 550-500 BCE



**Figure 2.2**  
c. 525-475 BCE



A scene on an olpe in Leiden (Bf cat. no 6; figure 2.1), shows how Cassandra's figure takes up less than half the space of either the figures of Ajax or Athena. Her head and shoulders are entirely hidden by Athena's large shield which is centrally placed in the picture field. An oinochoe from Malibu shows another diminutive Cassandra figure represented with an even smaller scale (Bf cat. no 30; figure 2.2). Her head is partially obscured by the shield of Athena. In these examples, Cassandra's form is therefore often partially obscured by the painter and when she is visible to the viewer, her physique is similar to that of a child. The figure of Cassandra is therefore, in many examples in Archaic black figure, smaller in scale than the other figures on the vase, and consequently also appears under-developed. It seems that for the most part, the iconography of Cassandra in black-figure examples gives emphasis to Cassandra's youth and minimises her importance in the overall scene configuration.

A useful comparison can be drawn between Cassandra and the two infants, Astyanax and Troilos, and their defencelessness evoked in other black-figure vase scenes. In many of the black-figure Rape of Cassandra examples, Cassandra is child-like and her childlike 'nakedness' signifies her vulnerability. The element of Cassandra's dress/undress is also a sign of her vulnerability and will be elaborated on later in this chapter. According to Jackson (1997:60), many examples of the representation of naked children suggest that 'nakedness' is an indication of childhood and is generally shown by examples of naked children in domestic vase images. The context in which these figures are represented, however, suggests that they are young victims of brutality.

In Homer's *Iliad*, Cassandra is represented as a young, beautiful and unwedded daughter of Priam (Cohen 1993:37). A reference is made to Cassandra's unmarried status in the text when a Cretan leader, Idomeneus, asks Priam "for the hand of Cassandra, the most beautiful of his daughters" (*Il.*13.365-366). In this regard, she does not appear to be an infant, but rather a pubescent girl just about to reach the prime of her life. The same applies to Troilos, Cassandra's brother, who is briefly mentioned by Homer in the *Iliad*, as among Priam's dead sons "now unable to yoke his chariot" (*Il.* 24:257) when he is lamented by his father. Homer is therefore implying that Troilos must have reached a mature stage just before his death (Jackson 1997:1960). This is a very different portrayal to how Troilos is depicted in several vase images, both black-figure and red-figure.

According to Jackson (1997:60), these much younger and child-like representations of both Cassandra and Troilos may “belong to an early convention of child/youth victims, stemming from another epic source.” Two representations on hydriai, one in the Antikensammlung, Munich (Comp cat. no 6; figure 2.3) and the other in Boston (Comp cat. no 7; figure 2.4), show black-figure examples of Astyanax and Troilos as young and vulnerable victims of war, therefore echoing similar iconographical characteristics to those of Cassandra in Archaic black-figure examples.



**Figure 2.3,**  
**Sack of Troy, murder of Astyanax**  
**c. 520-500 BCE**



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**Figure 2.4**  
**Achilles and Troilos**  
**c. 550-500 BCE**

According to Connelly (1993:105), although feminine nudity is quite rare in black figure, the combination of her “running pose” and “diminutive scale” suggests a possible correspondence between Cassandra and the Brauron girls in the context of initiation rites.

A small Cassandra, then, may carry multiple associations, however it is necessary to take into consideration the technical aspects of the vase-painter’s oeuvre. Therefore, although Cassandra’s small scale might be based on certain conceptual elements, the compositional aspects should also be taken into consideration (Connelly 1993:104). In this regard, the smallness of the figure may have been compositionally more suitable, particularly in relation to the large shield of Athena which is centrally placed. In other words, her size may simply be a case of ‘trying to fit everything into’ the picture field. As a result, the limitations of space therefore may have only allowed the figure of Cassandra enough room below the shield of Athena, therefore restricting her size. Nevertheless, this is still a conscious choice of the artist, to prioritise the shield over the figure of Cassandra.

According to Connelly (1993:104), there are certain compositional considerations which still therefore apply. These technical aspects may thus provide more insight about Cassandra’s obscured figure in many black-figure examples. For instance, when Cassandra is depicted with a diminutive scale, she is usually placed below Athena’s shield and therefore often hidden from the viewer’s gaze or easy to overlook. In other examples, as illustrated by the two amphorae below, Cassandra remains entirely visible to the viewer in spite of being represented below the shield. The neck-amphora in Berlin (Bf cat. no 19; figure 2.5) shows Cassandra with an even smaller scale and another neck-amphora in Vulci (Bf cat. no 22; figure 2.6) shows Cassandra leaning backwards while kneeling down. The painter(s) therefore adjusted Cassandra’s position so that she still appears below Athena’s shield, but without obscuring her body.



**Figure 2.5**  
c. 550-500 BCE



**Figure 2.6**  
c. 530-520 BCE

In these black-figure examples, Athena's shield is almost always placed in the centre of the picture frame which dominates the scene, leaving only a limited amount of space for the figure of Cassandra.

This placement of a figure in a vase scene is also dependent on the shape of the vase. When referring to an olpe-shaped Paris vase (Bf cat. no 31; figure 2.24), which is a much taller and more slender vessel than the amphora shape, the shield of Athena is moved to the centre of the picture frame, therefore confining the figure of Cassandra to the bottom of the vessel and as a diminutive figure. The olpe-shaped vessel, unlike the series of amphorae, only includes the three principal characters due to the limited picture frame. Not all amphora images of this scene include additional figures, but there are numerous examples that do. Such technicalities regarding vase images may therefore manipulate the overall 'narrative intent' of the painter.

Connelly (1993:104) suggests that in the vase images which show Cassandra as a running figure, she occupies more space than with the kneeling pose, and are therefore in most instances portrayed with a diminutive scale. This iconographic pattern of a running child-sized Cassandra in black-figure examples may in this way also be influenced by certain compositional factors. However, according to Connelly (1993:104), Cassandra's small scale may be dependent on other less technical aspects.



**Figure 2.7**  
**c. 530-520 BCE**

On a fragment in Orvieto (Bf cat. no 33; figure 2.7), Cassandra is portrayed with childlike proportions similar to other black-figure examples and is completely naked. However, here she is represented in front of Athena's shield, making her entirely visible to the viewer, which according to Connelly (1993:104), is a "rare position" for her in black figure. This particular representation of Cassandra may therefore allude to similar iconographical features used in a different narrative context in vase-painting: the 'little bears' at Brauron. According to Connelly:

Diminutive scale, combined with the spread arms and legs of her running pose, and the added white used to accentuate nudity cause this Cassandra figure to resemble the running nude or semiclad girls on the krateriskoi found at Artemis' sanctuaries in Attica. These votive vessels, which show the "bears" participating in girls' initiation rites, have been found at Brauron, Mounychia, Halai, and Athens [...]

(Connelly, 1993:104)

Connelly argues that the figure of Cassandra in black-figure vase images evokes a kind of 'nakedness' which alludes to youth, vulnerability and piety. This has a very different implication compared to the 'nude' Cassandra in red-figure examples, which will be discussed and analysed in chapters five and six. Jackson (1997:61), however, makes an interesting observation based on Connelly's comparison of Cassandra and the Brauron girls' iconography, by maintaining that if "Kassandra's nudity signifies only her virginal, premarital status, why are no other maidens about to be raped, or initiated, or tamed portrayed as nude?"



The image on the krater from London, Market (Bf cat. no 26. figure 2.8) is another example that suggests that Cassandra's small scale could be based on factors other than compositional.



**Figure 2.8**  
c. 530-520 BCE

Unlike the other black-figure vase images in which Athena's shield is depicted in frontal view, this example shows Athena turning her shield "sideways" therefore taking up less space, and yet the figure of Cassandra is still much smaller than both Ajax and Athena. This suggests that although the technical aspects are relevant to the iconography and placement of the picture field, other factors may influence the image creation process. There may be several possibilities, such as the effects of social and religious events, historical developments, the influence of literature and theatre, changes in the pictorial tradition and certain developing narrative techniques (Connelly (1993:88). The most important approach during this investigation process is therefore to consider all of these possible nuances of meaning, in order to obtain a clearer approximation of how the ancient viewer/s would have viewed this figure in this scene.

According to Connelly (1993:104), the original reason for Cassandra's diminutive scale may have been forgotten over time after the compositional motives were introduced and maintained as a convention. Jackson (1997:60) provides a list that refers to vase images representing the Rape of Cassandra scene, in which she observes that of 45 images [37 black-figure and 8 red-figure] 19 show a child-size Cassandra, 18 being black-figure and one red-figure. Some of these images are

not accessible for viewing or are simply not illustrated in the source material, such as the *LIMC* and Beazley Archive and therefore have not been studied in detail in this thesis.

Jackson's list, however, illustrates the recurring figure of the child-sized Cassandra in black-figure vase-painting. Cassandra's 'diminutive scale' and 'childlike physique' in Archaic black-figure vase-painting are therefore two very significant iconographic attributes. It is also important to remark that some of these vase images were created in a period of transition between black figure and red figure as some painters started using the red-figure technique from the late Archaic period and onwards.

While Cassandra's diminutive body may figure her as a trivial figure, one that almost seems detached from the narrative scene in many cases, warfare and violence remain two important themes within these black-figure examples. The iconography of Ajax and Athena, which will be discussed later in this chapter, evokes a warlike setting which resonates with other battle scenes in vase-painting. Therefore, despite Cassandra's apparent insignificance in the overall scene in the black-figure Rape of Cassandra examples, she is still caught in the middle of battle between two adversaries. The violence and her small size communicate her vulnerability in these black-figure representations.

### *Adult-Sized Cassandra*

The vulnerability of Cassandra as an adult-sized figure is recognized in her various stances within the picture frame as she is often shown running, crouching, kneeling or squatting. These are all poses that show fear, panic, conveying that the scene is set in a threatening context. In certain examples <sup>11</sup>where she is portrayed with in a larger scale than the diminutive Cassandra, she is often shown kneeling on one knee or crouching beneath Athena's shield, and consequently taking up less space than if she were standing and full size. In these adult or near-adult size representations of Cassandra, and in which she appears more conspicuous to the viewer, Athena's shield is moved slightly to the right, thereby allowing more space for Cassandra.

Similarities between the black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes and black-figure Gigantomachy scenes can be seen, first of all, in the position and postures of Cassandra which she shares with the

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<sup>11</sup> Bf cat. no 3; figure 2.10, Bf cat. no 4; figure 2.12 & Bf cat. no 5; figure 2.11

giant. The giant on the amphora in Madrid (Comp cat. no 5; figure 2.9) is shown kneeling or squatting and completely at the mercy of the goddess Athena. On the amphora in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (Bf cat. no 3; figure 2.10), the figure of Cassandra is portrayed in a similar pose as she kneels or squats between the two opposing figures, Ajax and Athena. The giant in the Gigantomachy scene and Cassandra in these examples of the Rape of Cassandra scene both point their knees toward Athena, who appears on the right side of the picture frame.

Connelly provides a rough count for all the Gigantomachy vases which can be gathered from the catalogue compiled in the *LIMC*:

For the period between 560-500, representations of Athena fighting a giant or giants are listed for at least thirty-four amphorae as opposed to ten lekythoi; nine cups and hydriai; three each for skyphoi, olpai, and pelikai; and a scattering of one or two examples for other shapes.

(Connelly 1993:97)

The overwhelming display of the Gigantomachy episode on the amphora shape bares significance and emphasizes the potential connection between the shape and iconography of the vase. Figures 2.9 and 2.10 show the likeness in both vase shape and iconography between the Gigantomachy and Rape of Cassandra scenes; the adult-size giant/Cassandra kneels or squats between Ajax/warrior (god), who appears on the left side of the picture field, and Athena on the right.





**Figure 2.9**  
**Gigantomachy Scene**  
 c. 550-500 BCE

**Figure 2.10**  
**Rape of Cassandra Scene**  
 c. 575-525 BCE

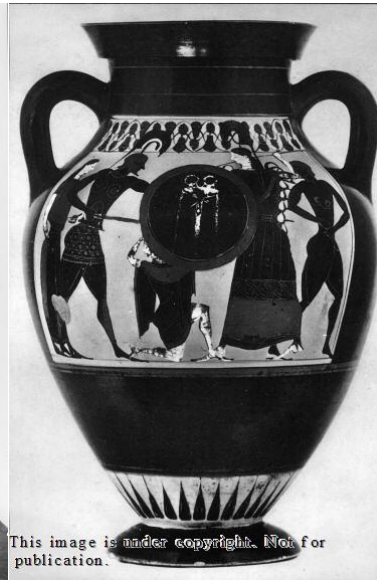
The amphora in Berlin (Bf cat. no 5; figure 2.11) and the amphora in Munich (Bf cat. no 4; figure 2.12) both show a similar representation of the Rape of Cassandra scene, which reveals once more this generic pattern. However, the latter, shows the figure of Cassandra slightly more distinguished than the giant and some of the other adult-sized Cassandras, her body enlivened with added white paint. In both illustrations, Cassandra's head is partially hidden by Athena's large round shield. Like the giant in the Gigantomachy scenes, Cassandra is portrayed as the subjugated figure, who also appears to be caught in the middle of a clash between two adversaries. Five out of 16 adult-size black-figure Cassandras in my black-figure catalogue are portrayed in a similar manner. Her head is turned towards Ajax, her attacker and her knee(s) pointed to Athena, who is shown on the right side of the picture frame. This type of iconographic narrative scheme therefore seems very similar to and possibly borrowed from the Gigantomachy formula, as Connelly (1993:92) describes the "defeated squatting giant with knees pointed toward Athena and head averted" (Connelly 1993:92).

Other examples show Cassandra in a running pose, and in this regard, she is shown running towards Athena, however with her head still turned towards Ajax. An amphora in Vatican City (Bf cat. no 7; figure 2.13) and another in the British Museum, London (Bf cat. no 8; figure 2.14)

illustrate this particular running pose. Similar to figure 2.12, both Cassandra and Athena's skin is painted with added white paint. The use of added white paint in Archaic black-figure vase-painting suggests the striking difference between the black glaze of the male figure and the added white paint of the female figure, thus emphasizing a woman's female flesh and drawing attention to these two figures as well (Eaverly 2013:110).



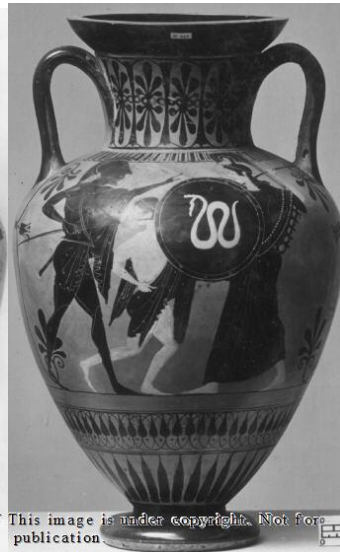
**Figure 2.11,**  
c. 575-525 BCE



**Figure 2.12,**  
c. 575-525 BCE



**Figure 2.13**  
c. 550-500 BCE



**Figure 2.14**  
c. 550-500 BCE

These adult-size Cassandra vase images evoke the figure of a young woman, but without any clear indication of a sexually matured body. In examples where she is portrayed with a disrobed body, she takes on a rather masculine physique therefore underscoring her complete lack of femininity. Two vase images clearly illustrate this masculine portrayal of Cassandra. The portrayal of Cassandra on the Geddes vase in Melbourne (Bf cat. no 9; figure 2.15) gives the impression at first that she could be a boy or immature girl, however, the added white paint suggests that this is a female body, and the display of pubic hair suggests that she rather represents a pubescent girl/young woman (Jackson 1997:64).



**Figure 2.15**  
**c. 550-500 BCE**

A lekythos in Copenhagen (Bf cat. no 34; figure 2.16), depicts Cassandra with the same scale as both Ajax and Athena, however she (Cassandra) possesses no feminine characteristics. On the lekythos, Cassandra is also represented with short hair, which is often regarded as a distinct feature of a prepubescent girl in ancient Athenian society (Beaumont 2013:30). Cassandra's large scale, however, suggests that she portrays an adult-size female and her short hair may evoke a ritual context such as marriage, in which girls had to cut their hair short for the occasion (Beaumont 2013:30). Another ritual occurrence in which adult women are often depicted with short hair is the act of mourning: Beaumont explains that "in iconographical terms, therefore, we must stay alert to the possibility that a juvenile or adult woman engaged in the act of mourning may be represented with short hair in order to indicate not her age status but rather her participation in the central ritual" (Beaumont 2013: 30). The figure of Cassandra, however, in this instance is not necessarily

intended to be represented as a mourning figure as other additional female onlookers in the same narrative scene are not depicted with short hair.

In this regard, Cassandra's short hair is more likely to reference a symbolic ritual, such as a marriage ritual or a rite of passage ceremony, recently enacted. The figure of Cassandra's naked pubescent or anomalous adult female figure may also be the Archaic black-figure painter's early attempt to portray the adult female form (Jackson 1997:64).



**Figure 2.16**  
c. 500-450 BCE

The iconography in some of these adult-sized Cassandra scenes deviates from the typical battle scene narrative. In two of these examples, Cassandra still appears between the figures of Ajax and Athena, however, some iconographical indicators clearly signify a sacred space.





**Figure 2.17**  
c. 525-475 BCE

On the lekythos in Gela (Bf cat. no 35; figure 2.17), unlike most other black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes, Cassandra does not appear insignificant at all. Instead of kneeling or squatting, Cassandra is standing between Ajax and Athena in supplication. A serpent rises from the ground, its head beneath Ajax's raised left thigh. Ogden suggests that the aggressive serpent may in this regard be a reference to "the healing licking of the sanctuary snakes" which according to myth "applied by the serpent-pair of Apollo Thymbraeus to the ears of Helenus and Cassandra...to bestow the gift of prophecy" (Ogden 2013:368). The image of the serpent could therefore allude to Cassandra as a seer. Its aggressiveness (about to attack/bite Ajax?) perhaps further suggests the condemnation of this sacrilegious act. Another possibility could be that the serpent image may provide a cultic undertone because of its connection to the Cult of Athena. According to Collins (1991:93), Athena was associated with the image of a serpent as some ancient sources<sup>12</sup> maintain that her temple on the Acropolis housed a snake which could have been interpreted as having a tutelary relation with the shrine. Herodotus (8.41.2-3) elaborates on this:

[...] the Athenians say that a great snake lives in the sacred precinct guarding the acropolis. They say this and even put out monthly offerings for it as if it really existed. The monthly offering was a honey-cake. In all the time before this the honey-cake had been consumed, but this time it was untouched. When the priestess interpreted the significance of this, the Athenians were all the more

<sup>12</sup> A reference is also made in Homer's *Iliad* (Hom.*Il.*II.546).

eager to abandon the city since the goddess had deserted the acropolis. When they had removed everything to safety, they returned to the camp.

(Hdt.8.41.2-3. trans, Godley:1920)

## Cassandra's Dress and Nakedness

### *Naked/nude Cassandra*

Whether Cassandra is clothed or unclothed is another significant aspect of her iconography. Cassandra's 'nakedness' in Archaic black-figure vase-painting is rare when compared to the red-figure scenes, however, there are examples in black figure in which she is depicted with an exposed body. According to Cohen (1993:38) the figure of Cassandra in Archaic art should rather be perceived as 'naked' than 'nude'; the former suggesting a pitiful figure and the latter more sexual. Jackson (1997:59) elaborates on Cohen's remark:

Cohen in a wider context than the blatant nudity of Archaic red-figure scenes, talks of the 'pathetic, rather than erotic or sexual, significance of Archaic Cassandra's nudity'. She argues that the Archaic portrayal of Cassandra presented her as naked/vulnerable rather than nude/sexual, but that the Late Archaic red-figure painters consciously invested her with the ripe sexuality of the hetairai they painted.

According to Bonfante (1989:544), 'nudity' or 'nakedness' in Greek art can be regarded as a 'costume' which may suggest different subtexts. Although Bonfante (1989:544) uses both terms (nudity and nakedness) interchangeably at first, like Cohen (1993:38) she does acknowledge Kenneth Clark's notion that 'nudity' evokes the erotic and aesthetic aspect of 'nakedness'.

Cassandra's overall lack of feminine or erotic qualities in these images therefore suggests a 'naked body', evoking a different meaning from her 'nude' red-figure counterpart in the Classical period. Cassandra's exposed body in vase-painting over time could therefore evoke at least two different meanings. In general, such exposure, especially in a mythological context, can be an indication of a woman's weakness and vulnerability (Bonfante 1989:560). Therefore, although many scholars may automatically regard a disrobed or exposed female body as erotic, it is more likely that Cassandra's nakedness in black-figure vase-painting rather suggests vulnerability (Bonfante 1989:560). However, this weakness and vulnerability may also be implied in erotic scenes in other ways. Bonfante (1989:560) points out that just as female nakedness in a mythological context

evoked a woman's vulnerability and defencelessness so could the representation of naked hetairai imply similar connotations. Hetairai were not citizens and were therefore susceptible to violent treatment and humiliation by the men who hired them (Bonfante 1989:560).

Another possible meaning of female nakedness in Archaic black-figure vase-painting suggests a religious context in which Cassandra's lack of clothing may represent the "ritual nudity of a prophetess" (Jackson 1997:62). According to Jackson (1997:62), Cassandra's Archaic nakedness may signify her prophetic abilities and, to an extent, differentiate her from other abducted or raped maidens in mythological scenes in vase-painting. In this regard, Jackson (1997:58) refers to Dummler and Robert<sup>13</sup> who argue that Cassandra's exposed body in Archaic black-figure examples could be a reference to her as a prophetess "in a prophetic frenzy". This might have been a more familiar aspect of Cassandra in early written sources as well, since there is a reference to her foretelling in Proclus' summary of Stasinus' *Cypria* (Jackson 1997:61).

The association between nakedness and prophetic abilities is echoed in the occasional representation of Circe in black-figure vase images (Jackson 1997:62). This particular scene only occurs in black-figure examples between 560-530 BCE, in which Odysseus approaches or threatens Circe after she transforms his men into animals (Jackson 1997:62-63); the Siana cup in Boston (Comp cat. no 8; figure 2.18) is one such example.



**Figure 2. 18**  
**Circe with cup**  
**575-525 BCE**

<sup>13</sup> Dummler, F. 1901. *Kleine Schriften*; Robert, C. 1923. *Die griechische Heldensage*.

Circe is depicted entirely naked and with a dilute black glaze, which could suggest that it had been painted over with added white which has now worn off. Her skin tone therefore appears slightly lighter which distinguishes her as a female amongst the other dark male figures. Marinatos (2000:39) states that the “vase paintings concentrate on two moments: either on Circe’s triumph, as she turns men into animals, or her terror as she confronts Odysseus threatening her with a drawn sword”. The naked figure of Circe on Archaic vases, then, suggests two important aspects: firstly, her supernatural abilities, and secondly her vulnerability. Although these are two different scenes, Cassandra’s ‘nakedness’ in this regard, can imply similar notions of vulnerability and her supernatural abilities. This correlation regarding nakedness and the numinous is also mentioned by Boardman (1991:83), who states that Circe is “naked as becomes a witch”. Bonfante (1989:544) also emphasizes the sacred or supernatural aspect of nakedness: “Because of the powerful emotions of shame, shock, lust, admiration, violation, pity, and disgust aroused by the sight of the naked human body, the most frequent associations are with taboo, magic and ritual”.

Cassandra’s nakedness becomes even more relevant since other aristocratic female figures from the Trojan context, such as Helen and Polyxena, are not depicted naked or even semi-naked in black-figure vase images. The reverse side of the krater from London, Market (Bf cat. no 26; figure 2.8) shows a scene representing the ‘Recovery of Helen’ (Comp cat. no 9; figure 2.19). As opposed to Cassandra’s semi-naked body, Helen is completely draped in a long chiton and cloak.



**Figure 2. 19**  
**Recovery of Helen**  
**530-520 BCE**



The figure of Cassandra in black-figure vase-painting therefore shares more iconographic similarities with Circe than with Helen and Polyxena regarding costume. Her nakedness is one of the most conspicuous iconographical indicators which distinguishes her from the other aristocratic females in black-figure vase-painting, apart from her diminutive scale in some examples. Cassandra's nakedness therefore could suggest different possible meanings, ranging from vulnerability and youth to her supernatural character and priestesshood.

### *(Semi-)Clothed Cassandra*

In most early black-figure examples, the adult-sized Cassandra is depicted wearing only a cloak and sometimes a short chiton with a cloak, however, the examples in which she is shown with a short chiton are usually of the child-size Cassandra. According to Jackson (1997:62), other women in early black-figure examples do not generally wear a cloak in black-figure scenes. Since female nudity was not that common in black-figure vases images, examples in which she was portrayed with only a cloak were considered almost as eccentric as an entirely naked female figure (Jackson 1997:62). There are many examples of child-size Cassandras which are portrayed with a short chiton or a short chiton and a cloak, therefore revealing her legs. According to Jackson (1997:62), because female nudity was such a rare feature in black-figure vase-painting, Cassandra's revealing legs can be regarded as a degree of nudity. However, Cohen (1993:39) maintains that there was an overall reluctance in portraying Cassandra with a completely disrobed and sexually matured body especially in the early and mid-Achaic periods.

Despite Cassandra's nakedness and partial nakedness in black-figure examples, there are four late black-figure adult-size Cassandras which are shown fully dressed.<sup>14</sup> Only two of these vase images from Jackson's list were visually accessible to me. The lekythos in the Archaeological Museum in Gela, already mentioned, demonstrates one of these fully dressed figures of Cassandra. She is depicted with a long chiton and draped himation and is comparable in size to Ajax and Athena (Bf cat. no 35; figure 2.17). The overall scene configuration is very different from the other black-

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<sup>14</sup> Bf cat. no 22; figure 2.6  
 Bf cat. no 41  
 Bf cat. no 35; figure 2.17  
 Bf cat. no 43

figure Rape of Cassandra scenes. In this scene, Cassandra is not depicted in a running, squatting or kneeling position, but instead is standing upright in supplication between the figures of Ajax and Athena. Therefore, just like Cassandra's nakedness suggested a ritualistic context so can her fully clothed body too evoke various subtexts, especially in combination with other contextual indicators and gestures.

Cassandra's type of dress as an iconographic indicator is therefore significant. In most black-figure examples where she is not naked, Cassandra is shown wearing a short chiton, mantle or cloak. According to Jackson (1997:62), in earlier examples the cloak is Cassandra's most common garment. However, a cloak can be used to conceal or reveal nakedness. Table 1 below, compiled by Jackson (1997:58) provides a useful list of both Attic black- and red-figure vase images representing Cassandra's state of dress. She divides the Cassandras into the following five useful categories: as nude, with a revealing cloak, a concealing cloak, a short chiton and a long chiton.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> K = Cassandra

Nude	Cloak-revealing	Cloak-concealing	Short Chiton	Long Chiton
K1	K2	K12	K3	K26
K15	K5	K13	K4	K27
K16 A/B	K8	K21	K6 A/B	K37
K24?	K11	K29	K7	K43
K30	K14		K9	K47
K31 (rf.)	K19		K10	
K33	K25		K17	
K44	K28		K18	
K45	K32		K20	
	K34		K22 A/B	
	K35		K23	
	K36			
	K38			
	K39 (rf.)			
	K40 (rf.)			
	K41 (rf.)			
	K42 (rf.)			
	K46 (rf.)			
	K48 (rf.)			

**Table 1. The nudity/dress of Cassandra**

In some black-figured examples, Cassandra is shown wearing a chiton as well as a cloak, however, when referring to Jackson's table, there at least 17 occurrences in which she is depicted with only a cloak, and with only four being concealing. According to Jackson's table, only four out of a total of 41 black-figured vase images represent Cassandra with a cloak which is concealing, and five vases show Cassandra with a long chiton. The majority of these representations of Cassandra in Archaic black-figure examples therefore show her as either completely or partially nude. However, when comparing the red-figure and black-figure vase images, the iconography suggests that there remains a distinct difference between the type of nudity (naked vs nude). Cohen (1993:37) argues that although some painters used added white to accentuate Cassandra's nudity in certain black-figure examples, her nudity in others is 'played down' and therefore is not as conspicuous as in red-figure examples.

This overwhelming list of examples that show Cassandra as a naked or semi-naked figure may suggest that her exposed body is not an entirely insignificant feature, however, her overall lack of

feminine and erotic qualities disregards her position as a vulnerable female figure within a violent and masculine context. The Geddes vase in Melbourne (Bf cat. no 9; figure 2.15), to some extent, provides a subtle indication of Cassandra's femininity although she is depicted with a rather masculine physique and her chest is underdeveloped. Cassandra is depicted with only a cloak draped over her outstretched arm. Jackson describes this iconography and gesture in this vase image:

The cloak draped over her outstretched arms tends to emphasize her nudity, as it swings at a diagonal away from her body, in the direction of her movement. Her fully-exposed body has the anatomy markings of a boy: shallow chest curves rather than breasts, ribcage markings (on one side only) and well-muscled legs. However, a single black stroke in the groin indicates her pubic hair and her femininity.

(Jackson 1997:54)

The Geddes vase image is the only extant black-figure example that I am aware of in which Cassandra is portrayed with pubic hair, and which therefore indicates a noticeably feminine bodily feature. Jackson (1997:57), in turn, argues that in spite of the pubic hair which the painter included in this representation of Cassandra, there is still an overall lack of female anatomy and sensuality. These images suggest that in the few examples in which Cassandra is depicted entirely naked or partially naked, her body appears either masculine or childlike. According to Jackson (1997:57), there is no chronological progression in Archaic black-figure examples regarding Cassandra's nudity, as she appears nude in early and late black-figure scenes. There are many child-sized and adult-sized Cassandra examples portrayed with either a revealing or concealing cloak and a few that are very well-dressed. There is consequently also no consistent pattern between Cassandra's size and her dress/lack thereof in Archaic black-figure vase images. There is, however, some correlation between the representation of a child-size Cassandra and a short chiton. According to Jackson (1997: 60) "[a]ll Kassandras wearing a short chiton are small, yet not all small Kassandras are chiton-clad".

Another possible connotation of Cassandra's nakedness in black figure is that of supplication. Cassandra's nakedness could therefore also be an attribute that signifies her as a suppliant, which Bonfante maintains demonstrates "a service to the gods" (Bonfante 1989:546). Cassandra is also

depicted with a supplicatory gesture in both Attic black-figure and red-figure examples, which will be discussed further in this chapter.

### 2.2.2 The Figures of Ajax and Athena

In the Rape of Cassandra black-figure vase scenes, Ajax and Athena follow a strict pictorial formula, with Cassandra being the only one of the main three figures depicted with various poses and stances (Connelly 1993: 92). She often seems incidental to the Ajax and Athena altercation, presented as a rather detached and even trivial figure as discussed above. The figures of Ajax and Athena, on the other hand, dominate the black-figure scenes. Both take on very belligerent roles, presented as if in a single battle against each other. The striding, aggressive Athena in her helmet, aegis and shield is dramatic and magnificent, and Ajax is extremely hostile (helmet on, hoplite attire, and holding his sword).

#### *Ajax*

In almost all the black-figure vase scenes, Ajax aggressively brandishes his weapon (sword, spear, or club) towards Cassandra. Athena, who is a redoubtable opponent, is shown holding a large shield, which can be interpreted as an attempt to protect Cassandra, her suppliant. The configuration of these black-figure Rape of Cassandra vase scenes is therefore very similar to combatant scenes in which two hoplites usually face off against each other in battle, for example the scene on an amphora in Munich (Comp cat. no 10; figure 2.20); one of many Archaic black-figure vase images demonstrating this type of encounter.



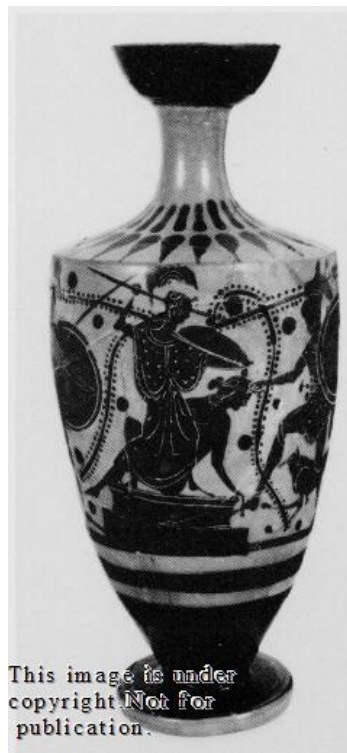
**Figure 2. 20**  
**Two hoplites in battle**  
**550-500 BCE**

Just like Ajax, the warrior on the left of the pictorial frame is shown aggressively brandishing his spear towards his opponent on the right, who resembles the retaliatory figure of Athena. The combatant on the right is holding a large shield similarly to Athena, who is also centrally placed, or right of centre in the picture frame in the Cassandra scenes. Two injured or fatally wounded soldiers are depicted on the ground or crouching between the two combatant opponents. In this way they would assume the position of Cassandra in the black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes. This fight scene-type in black figure therefore strongly evokes the context of war and iconographically shares many similarities with the black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes.

The weapon Ajax brandishes varies between a sword, spear or club, however, the sword is the most recurrent weapon that features in the black-figure examples. There are four vase images in which the type of weapon – or even the presence of one at all – could not be seen, due to the vase image being too fragmentary.<sup>16</sup> The earlier examples show a clearly aggressive Ajax approaching

<sup>16</sup> Bf cat.no.2; figure 2.26, Bf cat.no.7; figure 2.13, Bf cat.no.33; figure 2.7, Bf cat.no.37; figure 2.32.

Cassandra with a weapon, often pointing it directly towards her neck, head or body. In some of these depictions the tip of the sword is close to her neck, suggesting the prospect of an immediate execution (Gantz 1993:655). Physical contact between the figures of Ajax and Cassandra in the Archaic black-figure rape scenes is more overt in the later examples and is most prominent in Classical red-figure examples: where Ajax is shown physically grabbing Cassandra by the hair, neck, or arm. The lekythos from the Antikensammlung Museum in Kiel (Bf cat. no 38; figure 2.21) is one of only a few black-figure examples in which this is demonstrated. The figure shows Ajax, who is now placed on the right side of the picture frame grabbing a kneeling Cassandra by her hair.



**Figure 2.21**  
c. 500-450 BCE

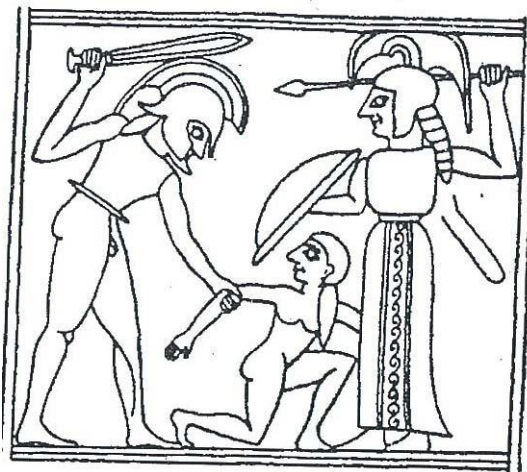
The configuration and iconography of these black-figured examples therefore gradually develops over time in the late Archaic and early Classical period. There are seven examples of ‘physical contact’ in the black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes out of a total of 40 vessels.<sup>17</sup> These vase images start from about 525 BCE with only one example which may date back much earlier to c.

<sup>17</sup> Vase images which are not available are not included.

575 BCE. The Siana cup in London (Bf cat. no 1; figure 2.22), regarded as one of the earliest illustrations of the Rape of Cassandra in black figure, also shows Ajax physically holding or grabbing Cassandra.



**Figure 2.22**  
c. 575 -525 BCE

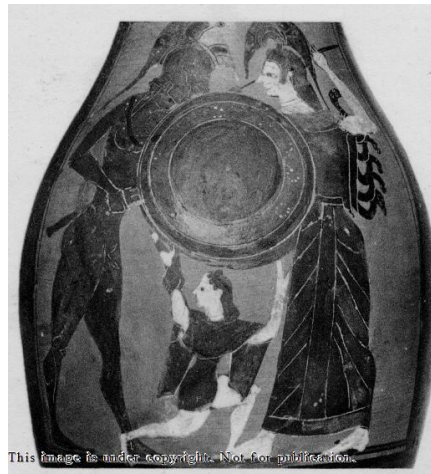


**Figure 2.23**  
**Shield strap, Olympia**  
c. 590-580 BCE

Similar to the Siana cup, the bronze shield strap from Olympia (Comp. cat. no 11; figure 2.23) dating to c. 590-580 BCE shows Ajax grabbing Cassandra by the arm and Athena appearing quite



passive with her feet together. Shapiro (1989:36) refers to the hydria in Paris (Bf cat. no 2; figure 2.26) dating to c.560 BCE, that like the Siana cup depicts Athena with similar features to the Promachos statue from the Acropolis and a possible indication of ‘physical contact.’ This, however, remains uncertain due to the vase being too fragmentary to see the iconography and gestures clearly. An olpe in the Cabinet des Medailles in Paris (Bf cat. no 31; figure 2.24), is one of seven examples<sup>18</sup> in black figure which shows Ajax grabbing Cassandra either by the wrist, arm or hair prominently.



**Figure 3.24**  
**c. 525-475 BCE**

According to Connelly (1993:107), this gesture of ‘grabbing’ shown on the shield strap and in the early sequence of black-figure examples, conforms to a code of domination/submission which can allude to scenes of Achilles/Troilos, Menelaos/Helen and Paris/Helen – which have been compared to the Rape scene earlier in the chapter. Connelly (1993:103) argues that the image matrix of the Rape of Cassandra scene is therefore, to some extent, similar to other well-known ‘pursuit scenes’ such as ‘Achilles pursuing Troilos’ and ‘Menelaos pursuing Helen’. However, there is one important difference setting the Rape of Cassandra scene apart from the others: Ajax focusses his attack on Athena, not Cassandra (Connelly 1993:103).

In later black-figure examples, this gesture of ‘grabbing’ may therefore evoke an abduction scene and the notion of erotic intent (Connelly 1993:107). According to Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:34),

<sup>18</sup> Bf cat. no 1; figure 2.22; Bf cat. no 38; figure 2.21; Bf cat. no 22; figure 2.6; Bf cat. no 23; Bf cat. no 24; Bf cat. no 25

the motif of grabbing the woman suggests capture which becomes a common theme in Classical red-figure pursuit scenes. Physical contact and more importantly, any erotic content, however, remain rare in Archaic black-figure examples, as Ajax neither looks at nor touches Cassandra in the vast majority of black-figure examples (Connelly 1993:107). Again, the lekythos in Gela (Bf cat. no 35; figure 2.17) clearly shows that the conflict which exists in the scene is mainly between Ajax and Athena. This is indicated through their stance and gesture. Cassandra is standing between these opposing figures with a supplicatory gesture directed towards both as one hand appears behind Ajax's upper arm and the other behind Athena's shield.

Other than the variation in weapons, the figure of Ajax follows a strict iconographic formula in black-figure examples. He is depicted wearing a Corinthian helmet which covers his face and is usually shown holding or brandishing a weapon in his right hand while advancing towards the goddess Athena. The Trieste amphora (Bf cat. no 14; figure 2.25), however, slightly differs from the standard representation of Ajax in black-figure scenes.



**Figure 2.25**  
**c. 550-500 BCE**

Firstly, unlike in other examples in which he wears a conventional helmet, the Trieste amphora shows him wearing an unconventional head covering which reveals his facial features (Connelly 1993:103). The figure is shown carrying a spear rather awkwardly in his right hand and has a panther's skin draped over his left arm. The panther skin, in this regard, may appear rather out of place, but could evoke a possible visual connection to the reverse side of the vase, which shows Heracles wearing a lion's skin while fighting the hydra. Connelly (1993:103) elaborates: "Herakles

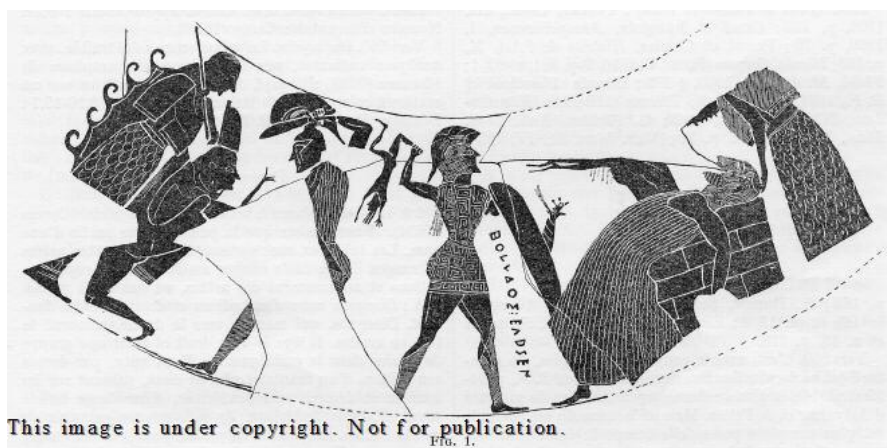
and Ajax are thus associated by animal skin and scythe/spear, just as their opponents, the hydra and Athena, are connected by the shared scale pattern of skin and skirt.”

In most of these black-figured examples, Ajax is dressed as a typical hoplite with a Corinthian helmet, cuirass, belt corselet and a tunic. As mentioned earlier, there is one example (Bf cat. no 14; figure 2.25) which shows Ajax wearing a tattered piece of garment covering only his genital area and the skin of a panther draped over his left arm. Ajax’s lack of warrior attire, however, does not reduce the overall combative quality of the scene, as both figures are depicted with weaponry and a retaliatory pose.

### *Athena*

The portrayal of Athena in Archaic black-figure examples is quite consistent, with only some deviations from the standard formula. The majority of black-figure examples show Athena on the right side of the picture field and in profile view. The figure is depicted with a large shield, high-crested helmet and often holding or brandishing a spear in her right hand. The rest of her attire includes a long chiton or peplos and, in most instances, an aegis.

There are 30 examples out of 40 in which her aegis is visible. The remaining images are either too fragmented or the area of Athena where the aegis would normally appear is obscured by another object, such as the giant shield, which is shown in frontal view in most black-figure examples. The bronze shield straps from Olympia (Comp. cat. no 11; figure 2.23), however, represent the shield of Athena in profile view. This composition is also followed by one of the earliest black-figure examples, an amphora from Paris (Bf cat. no 2; figure 2.26).



**Figure 2.26**  
c. 575-525 BCE

The majority of black-figure examples therefore do not conform to the composition of the shield straps regarding Athena's shield, with only three exceptions.<sup>19</sup>

Shapiro (1989:36) assigns the Siana cup with a more specific date of c.560 BCE, and also considers it to be one of the earliest examples attributing Athena with features similar to the sixth-century Promachos statue in a non-Panathenaic context. These attributes refer to her life-sized figure, stiffness, feet placed together and prominent gorgoneion on the shield (Shapiro 1989:36). More importantly, Shapiro (1989:36) maintains that of the several narrative scenes depicted in Attic vase-painting in the 560s BCE, the influence of the sixth-century Promachos statue is most evident in the Rape of Cassandra narrative scene. According to Connelly (1993:100), the Siana cup therefore reflects this transition between the shield straps from Olympia (Comp. cat. no 11; figure 2.23) and Delphi and the new "Attic mode of representation".

Another inconsistent aspect in the iconography of Athena is the placement of her feet. Similar to the shield straps from Olympia and the early examples<sup>20</sup> in black figure, the image of Athena is represented with her feet placed together thus evoking a static pose similar to that of a statue. Most Archaic black-figure examples, however, depict Athena in a striding and therefore active pose, which implies movement. This particular striding pose mirrors the image of Athena depicted on the Panathenaic prize amphorae (Connelly 1993:100). The two amphorae in New York (Comp.

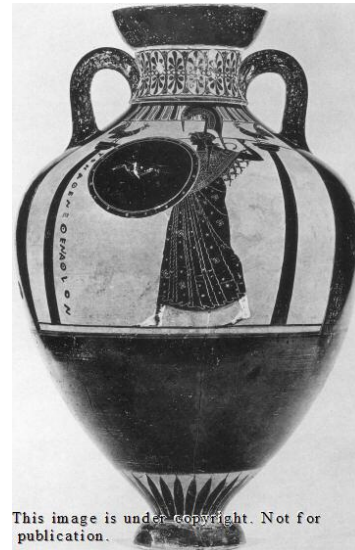
<sup>19</sup> Bf cat no 26; figure 2.8 & Bf cat. no 38; figure 2.21

<sup>20</sup> Bf cat. no 1; figure 2.22, Bf cat. no 2; figure 2.26, Bf cat. no 23 & Bf cat. no. 24

cat. no 1; figure 2.27 & Comp.cat.no 2; figure 2.28) demonstrate this type of generic Athena on the Panathenaic amphora.



**Figure 2.27**  
Athena, Panathenaic Amphora  
c. 550-500 BCE



**Figure 2.28**  
Athena, Panathenaic Amphora  
c. 575-525 BCE

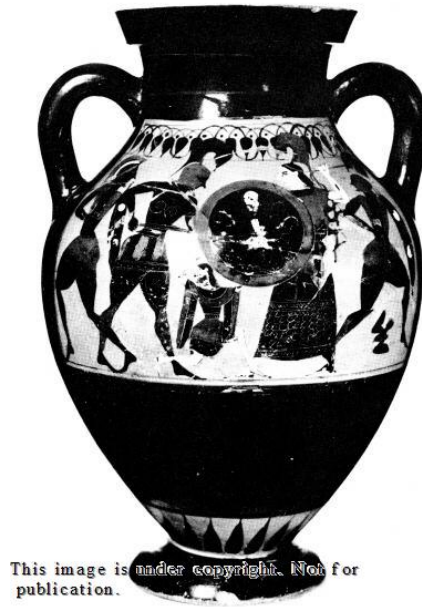
Similar to the Gigantomachy scheme, the Panathenaic amphorae are decorated according to a strict and conservative formula which echoes the similar striding Athena in the black-figure Rape of Cassandra narrative scenes. The iconography of the Athena on the Panathenaic prize amphorae shows the goddess striding from right to left. She is always fully armed, wearing an Attic helmet with tall crest, an aegis on top of her peplos, and holding a spear in the upraised right hand, and shield in the left (Shapiro 1989:27). The image of Athena, in this regard, is portrayed in a combative pose, as if the goddess is about to attack an opponent. According to Shapiro (1989:32), with regards to various cult scenes, the image of Athena can take on varying poses and attributes and as a result echo different guises and cult aspects. There has been some scholarly debate on whether the image of the Panathenaic Athena in vase-painting is a portrayal of a statue (even a particular statue from the Acropolis) or whether it is a representation of the goddess herself. There is a prevalent view that the image is connected with a new cult statue which was dedicated on the Acropolis in relation to the reformation of the Panathenaic festival in 566 BCE under the rule of Peisistratos (Connelly 1993:101). The exact identity of the statue represented remains uncertain, and scholars have proposed possible candidates, which include: “Athena Polias, Athena Promachos, Athena Nike, and Pallas Athena” (Connelly 1993:101).

The Panathenaic Athena therefore represents a ‘Promachos type’ (Shapiro 1989:32). Athena Promachos was the armed cult statue of the goddess Athena sculpted by Pheidias. This colossal bronze statue stood between the Propylaea and the Parthenon facing the entrance of the Acropolis in Athens. It was regarded as a dedicatory statue over the victory of the Persians (Mikalson 2005:73).

Irrespective of the precise identity of the statue and as proposed by Connelly (1993:101), the image in the black-figure images will be referred to as the ‘Panathenaic Athena’, in order to avoid any confusion with the fifth-century Promachos statue which was crafted by Pheidias. The Promachos statue’s similarity regarding pose and overall warrior-like appearance to the ‘Panathenaic Athena’ on black-figure vases is clear, however, the dates do not align. The ‘Panathenaic Athena’ in vase-painting is dated to the sixth century BCE, whereas the Promachos statue was only made in the fifth century BCE so it could not have influenced the imagery. The significance of the image of the Panathenaic Athena will be discussed in chapter four, when referring to certain contextual aspects such as the Cult of Athena which was celebrated in ancient Athenian society, the Panathenaia, a religious festival held in honour of the goddess, and the function of the Panathenaic vase in such a context.

The Panathenaic amphora in New York (Comp. cat no 1; figure 2.27) distinctively shows the towering and striding figure of Athena. The reverse side of the same vase shows male athletes competing in a horse racing competition, which links the two scenes thematically with one another and to the events held at the Panathenaia. And even though this armed and striding figure of Athena is generally represented on Panathenaic amphorae, it is also depicted in other vase images, which are not prize amphorae but share similar features in shape and iconography. The amphora in Krefeld (Bf cat. no 12; figure 2.29) is one of many Archaic black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes which shows such a recurrent and consistent use of the Panathenaic Athena image in vase-painting.





**Figure 2.29**  
c. 550-500 BCE

### 2.3.3 Gesture of Supplication

Gesticulation is a very important indicator of meaning in Attic vase-painting and can be considered to be a sophisticated language which allows figures in a scene to communicate with each other (McNiven 2007:85) as well as allowing the scene to communicate with the viewer. It presents certain emotional characteristics of the figures, as well as their interpersonal behaviour towards other figures in the scene. More importantly, it helps differentiate the iconographical figures ideologically. Since behaviour is linked to status, gesture could determine a figure's social class, especially between adult citizen males and other class groups (McNiven 2007:85).

Cassandra's supplicatory gesture emphasizes her victimhood and vulnerability in the context of war. According to McNiven (2007:77), women who are usually depicted with the gesture of supplication, suggest a "terrible admission of powerlessness". The gesture of supplication is significant in both black-figure and red-figure representations. Many scholars consider the Rape of Cassandra scene on vase-painting as a 'sacrilegious rape', while others lean more towards a pursuit scene for the sake of marriage (Jackson 1997:65-66). However, according to Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:44), although the combination of violent signs such as menacing weapons and physical contact in pursuit scenes may not usually suggest the kind of pursuit that ends in rape, it

also does not eradicate the overall idea of rape. It could potentially even enhance it (Jackson 1997:67). The difference between the Rape of Cassandra scene and other ‘pursuit’ scenes will be discussed in chapter five when looking at the iconography of the red-figured vase images of this particular scene.

Regardless of the type of violence represented in the Rape of Cassandra scene in black-figure vase images, Cassandra is always depicted as a victim, whether she is running away from her attacker/pursuer, kneeling in front him or raising her hand(s) in supplication. The gesture of supplication is very striking in some of the black-figure examples, however, Cassandra’s gesture of supplication towards Ajax is much more consistent in red-figure vase-painting.

In total, there are five black-figure examples<sup>21</sup> in which Cassandra is depicted with a clear supplicatory gesture, as she raises her one outstretched arm towards Ajax, her attacker/pursuer. The lekythos in Gela (Bf cat. no 35; Figure 2.17), shows Cassandra with both hands in supplication, one towards Ajax and the other to the goddess Athena. It is also a gesture which suggests a lack of courage and is therefore almost never associated with men, but only with those deemed inferior or weak: in vase images “[d]espondent women, terrified children, defeated monsters, and barbarians make the gesture” (McNiven 2007:92). Cassandra falls into three of these categories. Firstly, she is a Trojan and not an Athenian, therefore a foreigner. Secondly, she is a vulnerable woman in a masculine and violent context. Lastly, according to Jackson’s list regarding Cassandra’s size, she is represented in several examples as child-like, for example the olpe in Paris, Cabinet de Medailles (Bf cat. no 31; figure 2.24) and the neck-amphora in Berlin (Bf cat. no 19; figure 2.5) demonstrate this (Jackson 1997:60).

There are, however, seven<sup>22</sup> black-figure vase images which show Ajax, a respectable Greek male, using this gesture. The first vase, which is in the Vatican (Bf cat. no 7; figure 2.13), shows Ajax holding a sword in his left hand which is not directed towards Cassandra or the goddess Athena. His right hand, however, stretches out in supplication towards the goddess. The second vase, in the British Museum (Bf cat. no 8; figure 2.14), differs slightly from the previous one as Ajax now holds a spear in his left hand. The spear, like the sword in the previous example, is not aggressively

<sup>21</sup> Bf cat. no 2; figure 2.26, Bf cat. no 9; figure 2.15, Bf cat. no 25, Bf cat. no 27, Bf cat. no 35; figure 2.17,

<sup>22</sup> Bf cat. no 7; figure 2.13, Bf cat. no 8; figure 2.14, Bf cat. no 19; figure 2.5, Bf cat. no 20, Bf cat. no 21, Bf cat. no 28; figure 2.30, Bf cat. no 29.



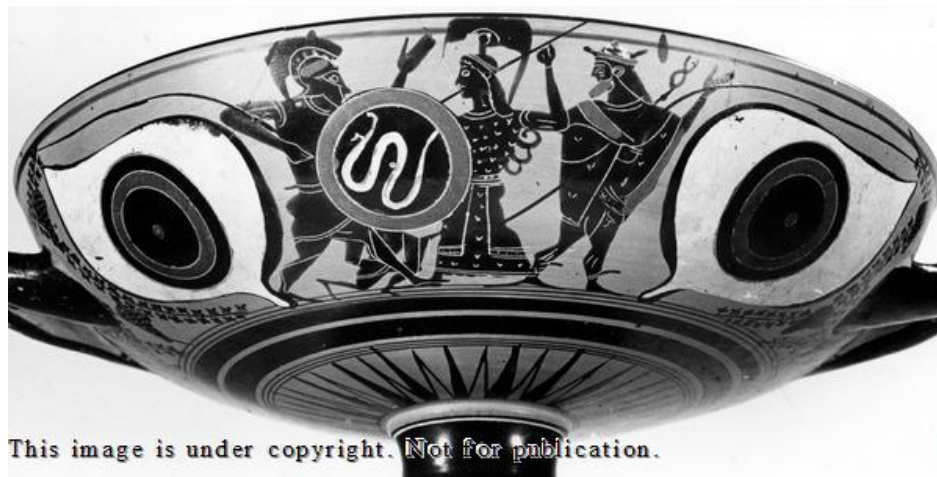
brandished towards Cassandra. Again, Ajax raises his right arm in supplication to the goddess Athena, therefore, making an unusual gesture for a Greek male. This evokes a strong religious connotation, especially within the narrative context of the scene which takes place in a sanctuary.

According to Connelly (1993:105), Cassandra's arbitrary pose, dress and overall placement into a pre-existing compositional formula in black figure, to a certain extent, negate her role in the pictorial narrative. Cassandra could therefore be included in the scene, simply to differentiate the conflict between Athena vs. Ajax from the conflict between Athena vs. a giant (Connelly 1993:105).

### 2.3.4 Additional Figures and Contextual Indicators

Apart from the three main figures depicted in the Rape of Cassandra scene on Archaic black-figure vases (the nucleus of the narrative scene), some examples include additional figures. These figures can serve as catalysts to the nucleus depending on the iconography and dynamics which can consequently 'amplify' and 'elaborate' on the action (Stansbury-O'Donnell 2011:80). The iconography of most of these examples follows a pattern as well, with only a few exceptions. These figures can either be regarded as bystanders, victims or warriors, when considering the indicators such as pose, gesture and attire. These figures are either portrayed in a fleeing pose, combative pose or as an observer. The 'fleeing' figure is mainly depicted on the right-hand side of the picture frame, whereas the more static observer(s) appear on the left-hand side. The fleeing figures vary from warriors, who can be identified by their hoplite attire, to youths, who are shown completely naked. The fleeing figure's head is also turned back towards Ajax and Cassandra, although his lower body and feet are pointed away from the nucleus. The figure's feet are also shown far apart, suggesting rapid movement. The figures who appear as bystanders or onlookers are in most instances old men wearing a draped garment and holding a sceptre, thus evoking an aristocratic or religious character. In other examples, these onlookers vary between youths, who are either nude or wearing a long garment and occasionally a fully dressed woman with long hair is included in the scene as well.

Four<sup>23</sup> of these vase images show the god Hermes on the right-hand side, identifiable by his winged helmet and shoes and shown carrying a caduceus. He appears to be moving away from Ajax and Cassandra, although his head is still ‘turned’ in profile view to the left, thus indicating the motion of ‘looking back’. On a cup in Madison (Bf cat. no 28; figure 2.30) Hermes is included in this way. Ajax raises his hand in supplication towards the goddess Athena, however, although Hermes is turned away from the main action in the scene, he too raises his right hand in supplication. Unlike the other additional figures in this scene, Hermes is presented as a significant figure, due to his size and overall iconography. He is depicted on the same plane level as Athena and Ajax and shares similar iconographical features. Hermes, in this case can be considered part of the nucleus, whereas the figure of Cassandra is almost completely hidden from view.



**Figure 2.30**  
c.525-475 BCE

When extra combatant figures appear in the scenes, they are wearing hoplite attire, therefore evoking the sort of conflict in battle between warriors. An amphora in Warsaw (Bf cat. no 13; figure 2.31) emphasizes this warlike undertone, in which three warriors, apart from the figure of Ajax, are included in the scene. Two warriors appear behind Athena, one in a kneeling pose and the other in combative pose. Another warrior is portrayed in a fleeing pose behind Ajax on the left-hand side.

<sup>23</sup> Bf cat. no 19; figure 2.5, Bf cat. no 26; figure 2.8, Bf cat. no 28; figure 2.30, Bf cat. no 29 (reverse)



**Figure 2.31**  
**c. 550-500 BCE**

There are only two examples in black figure which place this particular narrative scene in the context of the *Ilioupersis* quite conspicuously. The amphora in Paris (Bf cat. no 2; figure 2.26) shows the Rape of Cassandra scene on the left which is depicted alongside the murder of Astyanax and Priam by Neoptolemus. A hydria in Vatican City (Bf cat. no 36; figure 2.32) is another example that shows an episode in which Aeneas carries his father Anchises on his shoulders when escaping the fallen city of Troy. In this illustration Anchises is raising his right hand in supplication towards the statue of Athena, who is also on the same plane level as the image of the goddess. The figures of Ajax and Cassandra are placed on another plane level, and this is one of the few examples in which Ajax's violence is clearly directed towards Cassandra, and not Athena. The other additional figures cannot be identified clearly due to some of the inscriptions being illegible. The iconographic configuration of this particular black-figure hydria is similar to later red-figure examples, as a more conspicuous Cassandra appears in front of Athena's shield rather than behind or beneath it.



**Figure 2.32**  
c. 525-475 BCE

Apart from the additional figures who are able to amplify or elaborate on the nucleus in a vase image, some painters include contextual cues which provide the viewer with even more information about the presumed context of a scene. The Rape of Cassandra scene in these black-figure examples do not offer an extensive number of contextual elements, but only a few specific ones. These include an altar, a siren and in one example, a serpent (Bf cat. no 35; figure 2.17).

The lekythos in Kiel (Bf cat. no 38; figure 2.21) also shows the base of the supposed statue of Athena very prominently. The lekythos in Copenhagen (Bf cat. no 34; figure 2.16), the lekythos in Gela (Bf cat. no 35; figure 2.17) and amphora in Paris (Bf cat. no 2; figure 2.26) all show an obvious altar. The iconography on the Gela lekythos is a bit unclear, however, the size and shape of the structure itself suggest that it could be regarded as an altar.

An altar was a significant physical component of Greek cult and therefore was considered the most important installation for religious purposes (Ekroth 2009:89). In ancient Athenian society, the presence of an altar therefore legitimized a cult of a particular god, thereby distinguishing what was real and what was folklore. Mikalson (2005:5) maintains that “an altar may, in fact, serve as the litmus test for religious cult: if a deity had one, we can be sure that he or she was worshipped and was a part of a practiced Greek religion.” The image of an altar accompanied by an image of Athena in the Rape of Cassandra narrative scene, therefore emphasizes a religious context, particularly relating to a sanctuary of the goddess Athena.

The Siana cup in London (Bf cat. no 1; figure 2.22) is the only black-figure vase image, of which I am aware, that includes the image of a siren in the Rape of Cassandra episode. According to Tsiafakis (2001:7) sirens symbolically evoked chthonic and demonic powers which were often closely associated with music and the netherworld. This to some extent, may suggest a cultic context in the vase scene itself. However, because the image of a siren is not a consistent feature in these black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes, it may also only serve a decorative purpose.

## 2.4 Reverse Sides

Even though it was not possible to gain visual access to all of the reverse sides of these black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes (one of the difficulties in using the *LIMC* as a source), the majority do share a similar epic element and combative quality. Some of these vase images show well-known mythological scenes, such as Theseus and the Minotaur, or Heracles who is depicted among some of the gods. On one vessel, Heracles is shown slaying the nine-headed Lernaean Hydra, and in another, fighting an Amazon. Some examples comprise warriors departing for battle or who are already in battle. One of these scenes shows a hoplite battling an Amazon as well. One example portrays a Trojan scene, which shows the god Hermes leading Aeneas and Ascanius from Troy. Some other non-combative examples include the god Dionysus with a drinking horn and dancing between satyrs, therefore evoking a more cultic context. The reverse sides of most of these black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes therefore share both its epic or cultic thematic element.

According to Connelly (1993:92), the standard black-figured Rape of Cassandra scene therefore shares similar compositional models, suggesting narrative themes of “attack, escape, and

counterattack.” The amphora-shaped vessel therefore not only reinforces the visual association of the Panathenaic festival, but it also underlines the power of the goddess Athena (Connelly 1993:98).

The various iconographic indicators of these black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes therefore suggest a cultic context in which violence and sacrilege can be regarded as the main subtexts within these vase images. After doing a close examination of the black-figure iconography, it will now be contextualized in the next chapter.

## 2.5 Summary

The Rape of Cassandra scene in Archaic black-figure examples represents a diminutive and often obscured figure of Cassandra as opposed to the gigantic and powerful figures of Ajax and Athena. In view of the iconography and structural elements within the narrative scene, the main focus is on the hostility and conflict between Ajax and Athena, who appear to confront each other in battle. Cassandra, in most instances, appears detached from the main action. The Rape of Cassandra scene shares similar iconographic features with other scenes that evoke both notions of cult and myth. The child-sized Cassandra often bears a resemblance to the ‘running bears’ in the Arkteia and the adult-sized Cassandra shares similar elements to that of the defeated giants of the Gigantomachy. More importantly, both themes are connected with ancient Greek religion and cult. The context of a sacred space/sanctuary becomes more conspicuous in the scenes, especially in examples in which Cassandra is represented as an adult where indicators such as an altar and a base of a cultic statue are more explicit. The themes of war and sacrilege are therefore both implicit in the Archaic black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes.

## Chapter 3

### Black-figure Scenes in Context

This chapter contextualizes and analyses the Rape of Cassandra scene in Attic black-figure vase images within the ancient Athenian society in which they were made (mid-sixth century to the early fifth century BCE). Significant iconographic indicators and themes which were identified in chapter three will be discussed in order to shed some light on possible subtexts regarding this particular scene in vase-painting. This will suggest other potential readings, in addition to the narrative reading, of this recurring scene.

The recurrent image of the Panathenaic Athena figure-type in these black-figure examples will therefore be further investigated by looking at the cult of Athena under the rule of the tyrant Peisistratos, recognizing a potential link between politics and art. The image of Athena became an intrinsic part of ancient Athenian society, especially during a time when great care was owed to deities, temples and shrines. Therefore, by placing these vessels in their social context, the significance of this image of Athena in the Rape of Cassandra scene consequently evokes a strong sacrilegious undertone. Other iconographic indicators, which can be regarded as more subtle, suggest a ritualistic setting associated with other religious cults such as that of Artemis at Brauron (and the Brauronia festival). The iconography therefore overall may indicate the significance of ritual pertaining to a cultic religion in ancient Athenian society and its possible relation to contemporary political affairs.

Violence and warfare are other themes which can be recognized in these black-figure examples and which are mirrored in the figures of Ajax and the goddess Athena. Due to this strong militaristic undertone in the black-figure examples, it is necessary to look at how the ancient Athenians perceived violence and warfare in the Archaic period. Relevant ancient literary sources will be consulted in an attempt to contextualise the Rape of Cassandra episode on vases in ancient Greek society.



### 3.1 Peisistratos and the Cult of Athena

Ancient written sources which refer to the time when Athens was under the reign of the tyrants are inconsistent, especially during the two decades after Solon's retirement between c. 580-560 BCE (Shapiro 1989:1). The few references Herodotus does make to Peisistratos and his sons appear rather scattered, although Thucydides and the Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia* do offer a more continuous account, but one which still fails to offer a clear sense of the man, Peisistratos himself (Shapiro 1989:1). This remains highly unanticipated since, according to Shapiro, he (Peisistratos) "guided the destiny of Athens for a longer time" than his predecessor, Solon, and other later political figures such as Themistocles, Cimon, or Pericles (Shapiro 1989:1). Of the most contentious problems in Athenian history of this period is the chronology of Peisistratos' three tyrannies and two exiles, which scholars cannot seem to resolve. However, apart from these chronological inconsistencies, the facts which are known do provide significant information and reveal some historic moments of relevance.

#### 3.1.1 The Greater Panathenaia

Although the evidence is inconclusive, it is argued that one of Peisistratos' most essential contributions was the initiation of the pan-Hellenic contests of the expanded Panathenaia (Rose 2012:344). However, having only become tyrant for the first time in 560 BCE, thus six years after the reinvention of the Panathenaia, Shapiro (1989:2) argues that it would not be impossible to believe that this initiative was suggested by Peisistratos when he was a private citizen. A scholiast on Aelius Aristides' *Panathenaicus* is one ancient source who credits the introduction of the Panathenaia festival to Peisistratos: claiming '*ta de megala Peisistratos epoiese*'<sup>24</sup> (Shapiro 1989:20). This testimonium, however, has been questioned over time, due to the scholiast's vague wording and more importantly the five-year gap between the institution of the Panathenaia and Peisistratos' first seizure of power (Shapiro 1989:20). Shapiro (1989:20) nevertheless argues that there may be an indirect link which could possibly support the credibility of this ancient source. Firstly, the growth of the production and exportation of ceramics indicated an improved economy in the earlier years of the sixth century which were followed by the first minted Athenian coins (Shapiro 1989:20). In this way, Peisistratos continued to strengthen his association with Athena

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<sup>24</sup> Sch. Ael. Arist. 13.189.4-5 (3, 323 Dindorf).

by minting coins with an image of Athena on the obverse and the owl, Athena's symbol as well as that of the city, on the reverse of the coin (Tangian 2014:12)

Another indication is Peisistratos' military success against Megara in 565 BCE which consequently provided Athens with security and affluence for a while (Morgan 1990:210). Krentz (2009:184)<sup>25</sup> describes one of Peisistratos' bold and skilful war strategies: "After defeating the Megarian fleet that tried to kidnap Athenian women at Eleusis, Peisistratos put Athenian soldiers on the Megarian ship together with Athenian women dressed as captives. The Megarians rushed out to meet them and were defeated a second time." This suggests that Peisistratos was not only an eloquent political speaker, but a military leader who could defeat his enemy with great skill. Peisistratos, however, continued to invest in politics and religion, and more importantly had the ability to form an inextricable link between them.

The institution and participation in religious cults therefore grew under the reign of the tyrants, since they believed that being under the protection of one or more of the Olympian gods would legitimize the power they had initially seized illegally (Van der Vliet 1987:74). Evidence surrounding the reorganization of the Panathenaia, such as material culture from the middle of the sixth century, shows Peisistratos' dedication to Athena.

The Panathenaia was a cult and festival dedicated to the patron goddess Athena which occurred every four years. However, before discussing the various aspects of the Panathenaia, it is necessary to determine what the supposed 'reinvention' by Peisistratos in 566 BCE entailed. According to Shapiro (1989:19), although there is evidence suggesting that a dedicatory temple to Athena already stood in Homer's time, it does not provide enough information of a celebratory festival or that it included any sort of competitive games. Evidence suggesting the existence of such events only reaches to the sixth century which remains quite vague. Shapiro (1989:19) refers to Jerome's Latin version (*Ol.53.3-4*) of Eusebius' *Chronicon* on Olympiad for the year 566/5 BCE which may suggest that an older festival was reorganized and expanded in which contests such as the gymnastics were added: "*Agon gymnicus, quem Panathenaeon vocant, actus.*" Consequently, it is because of this particular reinvention that the festival was officially given the name Panathenaia. This, however, implies that other contests did already exist. Shapiro (1989:19), nonetheless, argues

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<sup>25</sup> Ain.Takt. 4.8-11.

that the earliest evidence of prize amphoras independently dating to the decade 570/60 BCE, may suggest that the idea of competitive games as a primary element of the festival was new at this time.

The manufacture of these large numbers of prize amphorae every four years therefore suggests an inextricable link for more than two centuries between the pottery industry and the cult of Athena Polias (Shapiro 1989:18). Since the Panathenaia is a dedicatory event to the cult of Athena, a goddess also associated with warfare and crafts, the festival's reinvention in 566 BCE would have increased Athens' commercial and military power (Shapiro 1989:20).

### *The Panathenaic amphora*

The Panathenaic amphorae were prizes awarded at the Panathenaia, a festival held in celebration of the cult of Athena in Athens. Various activities, such as athletic competitions, music contests and sacrifices took place during the festival during which victors received prize amphorae. Although these Panathenaic amphorae were known for their visual aesthetics, these vessels were also designed to store olive oil. The Panathenaic amphora was not regarded as the prize itself but as the container of the prize: the 'sacred' olive oil inside (Tiverios 2007:1).

Considering the practicalities of such a vessel, it had to have the appropriate form and capacity. According to Tyrrell (2004:146) the Panathenaic amphora was one-third taller than the standard transport Athenian amphorae, and while retaining the same broad body, narrow neck and foot. The "SOS" type amphora, known for containing and transporting Athenian olive oil therefore shared many similar features with the Panathenaic amphora, and is thought to have had a greater influence on its shape (Tiverios 2007:2). The Panathenaic amphora's bulging belly, small handles, short neck and relatively narrow and unstable base were therefore practical in order to hold the olive oil awarded to the Panathenaic victors, and which most likely would have been transported (Tiverios 2007:2).

### **3.1.2 The Image of the Panathenaic Athena**

The increased number of images of Athena on Attic black-figure vases in the middle of the sixth century BCE has been linked to the intensification of her cult under the rule of Peisistratos (Connelly 1993:108). According to Connelly (1993:108), the Rape of Cassandra episode which

was only represented until c. 566 BCE on the shield straps of Olympia and Delphi, both international festival sites, had now entered the new Attic vase-painting repertoire. Consequently, the ‘Attic form’ of the image of Athena became a recurrent and signature aspect of the Panathenaic prize amphorae (Connelly 1993:108). However, whether this armed and striding figure of Athena on these vessels is intended to evoke a statue or the goddess herself continues to remain contentious (Shapiro 1989:27). Scholars such as Beazley<sup>26</sup> maintain that the figure of Athena in the Rape of Cassandra black-figure scenes should always be regarded as a statue, while Davreux<sup>27</sup> and Touchefeu<sup>28</sup> distinguish two types of representations (Matheson 1986:105). They maintain that the image in most black-figure examples shows the goddess Athena herself who is in the process of defending the figure of Cassandra from Ajax (Matheson 1986:105). In addition, Davreux’s distinction implies that the passive pose of Athena on black figure, whether represented in frontal or profile view, evokes a statue and the striding militant pose suggests the goddess herself (Matheson 1986:105). The fragments of a red-figure cup in Rome, (Rf cat. no 2; figure 5.2), however, shows an image of a striding Athena on a conspicuous base suggesting that the striding pose could be considered as a statue as well (Matheson 1986:105-106).

Another example which could suggest that the striding figure of Athena represents a statue is a black-figure hydria in Vatican City (Bf cat. no 36; figure 3.32). The militant striding figure of Athena is depicted in profile view and with a reduced scale compared to the other life-size black-figure representations, therefore giving a statue-like impression (Matheson 1986:106). However, due to the image being too fragmented, it is difficult to see whether the figure of Athena is depicted upon a base or not. What does make it more likely that she is represented upon a statue base, is that she is placed higher in the picture frame than the other figures of Ajax, Cassandra and the onlookers, apart from Anchises who is carried by his son, Aeneas. Moret (in Matheson 1986:107), who supports Beazley’s theory that “all the Athenas are statues” maintains that the confrontational composition of Ajax and Athena in these black-figure examples, may be the main reason for identifying the figure of Athena as a life-like representation instead of a statue. Matheson (1986:107) elaborates:

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<sup>26</sup> CB 3, 64.

<sup>27</sup> Davreux, *Cassandra*, 140-141, 157.

<sup>28</sup> LIMC, “Aias II,” 350.

This idea has merit. In versions where other characters or other episodes in the Sack of Troy are included, the artists have explicitly shown a statue; in the black-figure extracts from the larger story, the artists have eliminated the visual distinctions in an effort to streamline the scene.

Therefore, although the notion of whether this recurrent image of the Panathenaic Athena is based on a mid-sixth century cult statue is highly debated, it is to a certain extent also attested. Dinsmoor (1947:110-111), states that between 570-566 BCE, a temple was erected in honour of Athena on the Acropolis which acquired the name 'Hekatompedon', meaning hundred-footer due to its dimensions. The time of erection of the Hekatompedon corresponds more or less with the time of the reorganization of the Panathenaia and the emergence of the prize amphorae. Shapiro (1989:27) refers to Herington's theory<sup>29</sup> which suggests that a cult statue and the model of the Panathenaic image might have stood in the Hekatompedon. However, the existence of the Hekatompedon faces several objections which, in turn, lead Herington to later doubt this idea as well.

The image on these Panathenaic vases (and many non-Panathenaic vases), does resemble the famous Promachos statue which was made in the fifth century BCE. According to Lundgreen (1997:191) a generally accepted date of construction is between c.460-450 BCE and believed to have occurred over a period of nine years. Shapiro (1989:28) however maintains that the 'Panathenaic Athena' portrayed in vase-painting should only be regarded as a 'Promachos type', since it shares similar attributes and pose to that of the fifth-century Promachos statue but implies no direct relationship with it. Connelly (1993:108) suggests that:

It is possible that the Panathenaic Athena represents a new cult statue set up on the Akropolis in the mid sixth century, perhaps the ancestor of the fifth-century Promachos.

However, the image's variation in its stylistic representation complicates the theory of whether it is a portrayal of a cult statue or an epiphany of the goddess herself. This 'Promachos type' image of Athena in vase-painting is divided into two subtypes, supporting Davreux's theory: the passive pose (feet together) and the striding pose (feet apart). Shapiro (1989:28) refers to Harrison<sup>30</sup> who rejects the notion of the striding Panathenaic Athena as a cult statue type, arguing that the striding pose of the figure of Athena is inconceivable for an early Archaic statue and rather accepts the notion that it evokes a 'modified' version of the fully armed but passive cult statue type. This

<sup>29</sup> Herington 41-42: "Athena in Athenian Literature and Cult," G&RSuppl 10 [1963] 62, n.1.

<sup>30</sup> E.B. Harrison, in AJA 61 (1957) 209.

suggests that the Panathenaic Athena (striding figure) should be regarded as a development from the ostensible passive pose, which may be traced back to the Bronze Age (Luyster 1965:157). A small bronze statue which can be regarded as an example dating back to the first half of the sixth century assumes this particular pose (Comp. cat. no 12; figure 4.1) (Shapiro 1989:28).



**Figure 4.1**  
**Bronze statue**  
**c. 550 BCE**

This suggests that despite the differences in the representation of the Promachos pose, it does not refute the existence of an early model statue but rather indicates development in the iconography in vase-painting. One significant reason for such a modification can therefore be based on stylistic grounds due to the differing conventions between sculpture and vase-painting (Shapiro 1989:28). Since three-dimensional sculptures are usually viewed from the front, the painter(s) had to provide similar visible attributes for the figures in vase-painting. The striding pose therefore gives a clear indication that the figure has two legs and two feet, providing a two-dimensional representation in profile view (Shapiro 1989:28). Early examples of the Panathenaic Athena are shown with her feet placed firmly on the ground and only in 540 BCE is the back of the heel raised slightly which may consequently have spurred the notion of a 'striding' Athena (Shapiro 1989:28).

Thus the notion that Athena strides may, for the early vases, be a misreading, and the figure the result of a painter's attempt to translate a three-dimensional sculpture meant to be seen from the front into a two-dimensional profile.

(Shapiro 1989:28)

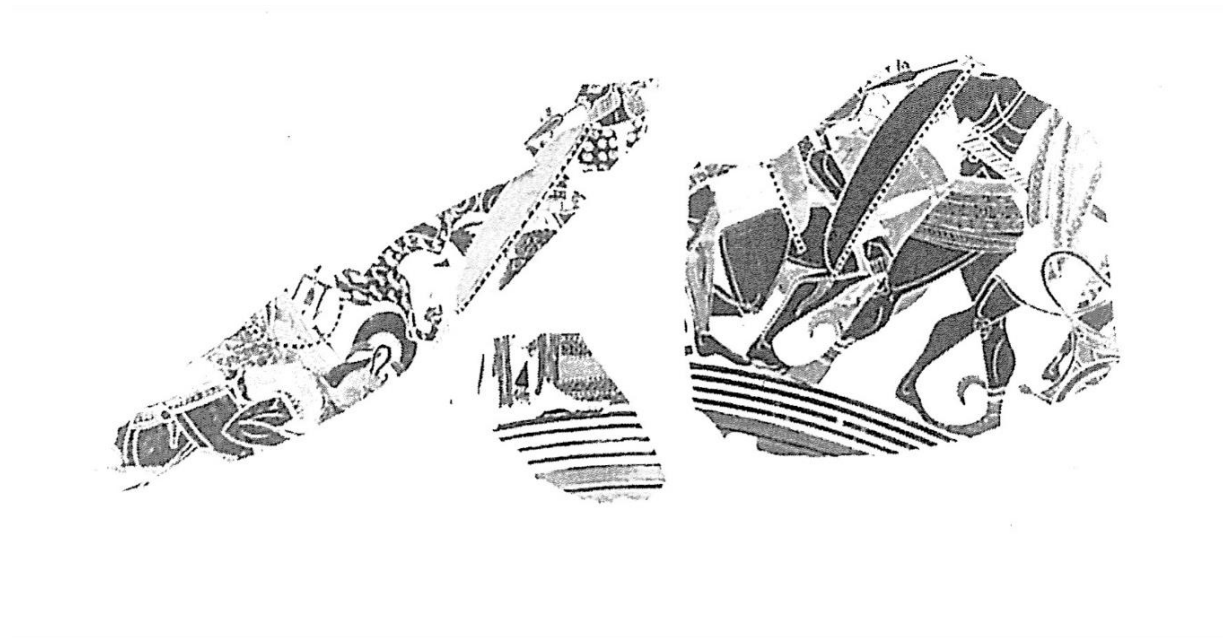
The development of the Panathenaic image of Athena in the sixth century, however, does evoke potential movement which is not only implied by the raised heel but by the upraised spear, which Shapiro (1989:28) maintains may have been influenced by “contemporary narrative subjects”, such as the Gigantomachy. According to Connelly (1993:101), whether the Panathenaic Athena in vase-painting is a representation of a cult statue or the goddess herself is not as important as the motives for being portrayed as a living protagonist. In this regard, it would not be entirely incredible to recognize the figure both as a statue and a living goddess, and more importantly as a “living opponent to Ajax” (Connelly 1993:101). In addition, to the ancient Athenian audience this distinction was perhaps not regarded as critical; emphasis should rather be on the fact that it is intended to represent a “purely Attic Athena” according to Connelly (1993:101). This suggests that the most important aspect of the image of Athena was to emphasize the goddess as Athens’ patroness and warrior.

### *The Panathenaia and Gigantomachy*

The Gigantomachy or battle of the gods against the giants is one of Greek mythology’s greatest divine struggles between the Olympian gods and the giants and serves as the foundation myth of the Panathenaia (Ferrari 2000:120). The Gigantomachy vase scenes, similarly to the Panathenaic amphorae, portray the might of Athena. Tiverios (2007:3) suggests that there is a definite link between the Panathenaia and the Gigantomachy according to ancient literature. The giants are however depicted as man-sized figures with spears, helmets and breastplates, similar to the armour of hoplites (Hildebrandt 2014:74). In both the Panathenaia and Gigantomachy the goddess Athena occupies a leading role. The connection between these two events can be recognized in the iconography of the vase images discussed in chapter three. For example, on some Panathenaic amphorae, Athena's peplos – which the Athenians offered to the goddess during the course of the Panathenaia – is decorated with scenes from the Gigantomachy (Tiverios 2007:4). An idea of the composition of scenes on the peplos is given by various representations of the Gigantomachy



which are contemporary with the Greater Panathenaia but are unfortunately fragmented (Tiverios 2007:4). A fragmented amphora in Athens (Comp. cat. no 3; figure 3.2) and sherds of a kantharos also in Athens (Comp cat. no 4; figure 3.3) illustrate these images on the peplos.



**Figure 4.2**  
**Gigantomachy scene<sup>31</sup>**  
**c. 575-525 BCE**

<sup>31</sup> 'Photo after B. Graef and G. Langlotz, *Die antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athen I* (1925-1933) pl. 94'



**Figure 3.3**  
**Gigantomachy Scene**  
**c. 550-500 BCE**

This shows the Panathenaic festival's thematic connection with the Gigantomachy which is thought to have originated in the commemoration of Athena's victory over one of the giants (Larson 2016:88). The Panathenaic and Gigantomachy black-figure vases therefore not only share a resemblance in the shape and size of the vessel, but also in terms of the iconography of Athena. These similarities can also be recognized in the Archaic black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes.

According to Tiverios (2007:3), both the Panathenaic and Gigantomachy Athena depict a warlike goddess, which appropriately signifies the competitive spirit of both contexts and can thus be considered the ancestor of the Athena Promachos. The connection between the shape of the vessel and its visual image is significant and can as a result reveal certain cultural, religious and political ideas about the context in which it was created. In ancient Athenian society, vases had more than one function, and although the practical aspect of these vessels was very important, the vase images themselves may have served as a platform to evoke political, cultural or religious associations. This striding and powerful representation of Athena in these vase images, not only suggests the importance of a religious cult in ancient Athenian society, but also the influence and power of the Athenian populace in a warlike society (Connelly 1993:97). More importantly, both the content

and adornment of these prize amphoras conveyed the city-state of Athens' prosperity, as well as one of its main export goods: olive oil (Marx 2003:16).

### 3.2 Pottery and Politics (Propaganda?)

The time under Peisistratos' rule is often referred to as a 'Golden Age' due to certain successes of his third tyranny of nearly eighteen years (Dillon & Garland 2010:319). Not only did he manage to keep Solon's laws intact, but he provided financial aid to the poor and limited the access to political power of the old noble clans (Shapiro 1989:14). One of his most significant contributions while in power was his publicized devotion to the Athenian cults, especially to the patron goddess Athena, which not only consolidated his own power, but also provided a strong identity for the *polis* (Shapiro 1989:15). After returning from his first exile, Peisistratos openly claimed that he was under the patronage of the goddess Athena, and in order to consolidate this idea, he entered Athens in a chariot with a woman, known as Phye, who was dressed as Athena (Stansbury-O'Donnell 2006:102). Herodotus describes this particular event and comments on the Athenians' gullibility for falling for Peisistratos' attempt to restore and secure his position in the polis:

[...] the Greeks have long been distinguished from other people by their intelligence and general lack of gullibility, just as the Athenians, who were the victims of the trick, are widely acknowledged to be the most intelligent of the Greeks. In the village of Paeania there was a woman called Phya, who combined stature – she was almost 6 feet tall – with great beauty. The conspirators dressed her up in full armour; then they put her in a chariot, showed her how to hold a striking pose and drove her off to town. Runners were sent ahead, serving her as heralds and broadcasting all the way to the Athenians a carefully scripted proclamation. 'Athenians,' they cried out, once they had arrived in the city, 'take Peisistratos back into your hearts! For Athena herself has chosen to honour him above all mankind!

Hdt.1.60 (trans, Holland 2013: 28)

This occurrence, in turn, is mirrored by certain iconographic innovations of Heracles' introduction to Olympus by Athena on vases: the hero is first depicted on foot which then shifts to a version in which he is represented with the goddess in a chariot (Boardman 1975:1). Although there is no extant literary evidence suggesting this association between the hero Heracles and Peisistratos, the overwhelming number of Heracles scenes on black-figure vases of the Peisistratos period may

support this theory (Boardman 1975:1). Because of this divine association with Heracles, Peisistratos was able to reinforce his own political importance and manifest his authority (Sinos 1998:82). Boardman (1975:1) provides a list which shows the proportion of Heracles scenes on Attic black-figure vases compared to vases from other parts of ancient Greece. The proportions are as follows: Athenian black-figure vases dating to 510 BCE 44%; Peloponnesian shield-bands 27.5%; Corinthian vases 27%; Spartan vases 27.5%; and Chalcidian vases 23%.

The concept of ritual impersonation was thus not unfamiliar to the Athenians in the middle of the sixth century and was in turn regarded as a significant aspect in ancient Athenian religious cults. The repertoire of narratives involving the gods in vase-painting suggests the importance of religious cult and, more importantly, the role it played in ancient Athenian politics. The rapid growth of the production and exportation of pottery itself during the reign of Peisistratos may therefore suggest a much greater purpose than only for its commercial value. The notion that the growth in the production and transportation of pottery in the sixth century occurred mainly due to a great demand for storage containers for olive oil etc., can therefore seem misleading (Shapiro 1989:10).

Firstly, as stated in Solon's legislation, olive oil was once the only agricultural export product allowed to be sold abroad as the exportation of other products was forbidden (Plutarch *Solon* 24.1). Secondly, although the exportation of oil appeared to decline during the sixth century, the amount of exported pottery increased dramatically (Shapiro 1989:10). Thirdly, Shapiro argues (1989:10), that although the number of amphorae had increased during the mid-sixth century which suggests a need for containers, many other shapes which could not be used for storage purposes were exported in large numbers as well. These include the Siana cups and Little Master cups, which were exported in large numbers during the second quarter of the sixth century (Shapiro 1989:10). Finally, it was found that most exported vases were discovered in wealthy tombs as grave goods in places such as Etruria (Shapiro:1989:10). This suggests that although ancient Attic vases, such as the Panathenaic-shaped amphorae and numerous other vessels were used for storage purposes and were regarded as useful in the commercial trade industry, many were also highly valued for their aesthetic and religious appeal. Shapiro (1989:10) elaborates: "Painted pottery has been referred to already as an indicator of Athens' economic prosperity in the sixth century, but it may rightly be adduced as evidence for a flourishing artistic tradition as well."

The reinvention of the Panathenaia under the governance of Peisistratos not only increased the production and exportation of pottery in ancient Athens, but it also spurred innovations in technique (Shapiro 1989:12). New subject matter drawing from mythology started to develop and grow. These include a variety of Heracleian expeditions and labors, Dionysos and his circle of devotees, and tales drawn from the Epic Cycle (Shapiro 1989:12). Although there were already mythological narrative scenes on Attic black-figure vases, it was only after c. 560 BCE that vase painters became familiar with what scholars today believe to be references to Homeric poems and the lost Heracles epics (Shapiro 1989:12). On the other hand, it remains a bit contentious, since this was a time when most of these legends and stories were passed on orally. These performed or recited myths which formed a significant part of a religious festival in ancient Athenian society and “comprised the logos of this religion” were now translated by artists into visual images (Shapiro 1989:12). More importantly, Peisistratos and his son, Hipparchus, were believed to have been responsible for the documentation and arrangement of the Homeric poems (Bury 2015:198). Thus, during the reign of the tyrants, especially under the Peisistratids, political power was maintained, to an extent, by means of ‘controlling’ poetry (Nagy 1992:42). According to Herodotus (5.90.2), the Peisistratids were in possession of manuscripts of oracular poetry which were kept on the acropolis of Athens (Nagy 1992:42). According to Nagy (1990:158) “the possession of poetry was a primary sign of the tyrant’s wealth, power, and prestige.” These mythological events thus became dominant themes in both literary and visual sources.

It was through these visual illustrations, especially in vase-painting, that most people’s visual conception of these epic accounts and myths were shaped, thus paving the way for the iconographic repertory of Attic vase-painters (Shapiro 1989:12). The recurring and overwhelming display of Athena in Attic black-figure vase images therefore not only upholds the might of the patron goddess herself, but in turn could be argued to legitimize and endorse Peisistratos’ power in Athens. The tyrant’s association with and devotion to the cult of Athena may therefore reaffirm his own political position. Shapiro says that “seeming diligent in the preservation of ancient religious traditions and the fostering of public cults” benefited Peisistratos considerably (Shapiro 1989:14). The significance of ritual impersonation in ancient Athenian cult can therefore be recognized in non-Panathenaic narrative scenes such as in the Rape of Cassandra narrative scene. As noted in the previous chapter regarding the black-figure iconography of this mythological scene, certain iconographic indicators and contextual cues emphasize a cultic context, or more

specifically a sacred space, the figure of the Panathenaic Athena being the most significant indicator.

In addition, the significance of cult and ritual in ancient Athenian society evokes the theme of sacrilege, which becomes a prominent aspect in the Rape of Cassandra episode in black-figure scenes. Therefore, placing the figure of the Panathenaic Athena in a mythological narrative scene, especially one that is considered so violent, may possibly convey warnings. According to Connelly (1993:108), including the religious cult statue in the context of this story may serve as a warning against sacrilege. However, due to the importance of ritual impersonation and the overall symbolic use of visual images in art of the Archaic period, it may also serve as warning to whoever detests Peisistratos.

### *Artemis Brauronia and the 'running bears'*

Although the iconography of the Rape of Cassandra scene in Attic black-figure vase-painting contains a strong political and therefore propagandistic undertone, it also suggests significant cultural and ritualistic practices performed in ancient Athenian society. One of these rituals refers to the initiation rites of Athenian girls between the ages of 10 and 14 performed every four years at the festival of Artemis Brauronia (Mikalson 2005:62). This ritual is represented on votive vessels, known as *krateriskoi*, and many were discovered at the sanctuaries which were dedicated to the goddess Artemis (Connelly 1993:104). On many of these vase images young girls were shown dancing and racing, often naked. Mikalson provides a brief description of what the festival and this ritual entailed:

They lived in the sanctuary during the festival, performed sacrifices to Artemis, and, as part of the ritual of the festival, wore saffron-colored dresses and “played the bear,” a ritual called the *Arkteia* (*arktos*= “bear” in Greek).

(Mikalson 2005:62)

In black-figure vase-painting the girls are represented with a small scale, spread arms and legs, i.e. a running pose, and are often shown semi-clad or entirely naked (Connelly 1993:104). The iconography suggests a strong correspondence with the diminutive scale and pose of Cassandra in many black-figure representations.

Lilly Kahil, who in 1961 and 1965, published many fragments of small black-figured vases found at Brauron, Piraeus and the Athenian Agora, first introduced the notion of the *krateriskoi* due to the vessels' distinctive iconography, fabric and 'archaic' or 'archaizing' shape (Hamilton 1989: 449). What sets these vessels apart from other ancient Greek vases are their cultic connection to the goddess Artemis and repeated representations of running or dancing girls. Hamilton further elaborates (1989:449): "[...] processing near an altar and a palm tree has led scholars to agree that the vases are cult objects and that the representations depict the ritual of the *arkteia* [...]". Over the course of time, the number of published *krateriskoi* grew extensively which included red-figured vases with a similar shape and sharing similar iconographic features (Hamilton 1989:449).

The following two figures of *krateriskoi* show a typical event that took place in the context of Artemis' Brauronia. The first figure<sup>32</sup> (Comp cat. no 13; fig 3.4) shows young girls participating in a sacred race wearing short chitons and the second (Comp cat. no 14, fig 3.5) shows similar running figures with slightly older girls who are completely naked. This suggests that like the naked Archaic black-figure Cassandra, this representation of nudity contains a more religious/cultic connotation than an erotic one. According to Connelly (1993: 104 & 105), many of these votive vessels date from the late sixth century to the beginning of the fifth century BCE, thus placing them in a similar time frame, perhaps slightly earlier than the Rape of Cassandra episode. Similar to some of the black-figure Rape of Cassandra examples, the altar is also a prominent iconographic indicator suggesting a ritualistic and cultic setting.

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<sup>32</sup> L. Kahil. 1983, "Mythological repertoire of Brauron," in Ancient Greek Art and Iconography, W.G. Moon, ed., Madison 1983, pp.231- 241).





**Figure 3.4**  
**Arkteia, running girls on krateriskos**  
**c. 500 BCE**



**Figure 3.5**  
**Arkteia, older girls running/dancing**  
**c. 525-475 BCE**

More importantly, in this particular context, the “ritual nakedness” of girls suggests that they are preparing for marriage and the private life (Bonfante 1989:554). Overall feminine nudity is rare in

black-figure vase-painting, however, when combined with the diminutive scale and running pose, the resemblance between Cassandra as the Brauron girls is very prominent (Connelly 1993:105).

### 3.3 An Epic Theme

The combative pose of the figures of Ajax and Athena in the Rape of Cassandra scene in Archaic black-figure vase-painting demonstrates an overall warlike undertone. These vase images similarly evoke a strong epic theme, which is often communicated by contextual indicators in the iconography alluding to epic narratives such as the *Ilioupersis*. Apart from the well-known Panathenaic image of Athena, some painters include the god Hermes in the pictorial narrative which may, in an emblematic sense, emphasize the presence of the gods. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the reverse sides of some of these black-figure vase images show representations of gods and heroes, which to an extent, connects the black-figure vase images thematically. In other examples, hoplites are shown either departing for battle or are already in combat, which connects to the combative figures of Ajax and Athena. Although the theme of violence in the context of war is clearly communicated in these black-figure representations, this generic use of hoplites and deities in this regard evokes a strong epic undertone. More importantly, since these vase images were created in the sixth century, and therefore during the time of expansion of the cult of Athena, a general interest may have developed for certain themes regarding “crime and punishment” (Connelly 1993:109). Consequently, these kinds of themes became relatively common on Attic vases. Connelly elaborates:

The Kassandra episode may also have held special interest for a contemporary society increasingly concerned with the individual’s responsibility to the community. Ajax, the soldier who brings ruin on his army by virtue of a personal crime, illustrates the Solonian precept that the suffering of man is caused by his own presumption.

(Connelly 1993:109)

In this regard, although the might of Athena is clearly conveyed in these representations it also evokes the theme of sacrilege. According to Connelly (1993:109), within these vase images are warnings against “individual hubris”, “impiety” and “sacrilege”; the Rape of Cassandra scene could be seen as a vehicle to communicate these crimes and the wrath of the gods that may follow.

In the following section, violence and sacrilege, as two significant themes identified in Archaic black-figure vase-painting, are contextualized and discussed.

### 3.3.1 Violence and Sacrilege

The earliest documented account of the Rape of Cassandra episode is initially told in the lost epic, the *Ilioupersis*, by Arctinus of Miletus, as retold by Proclus (Connelly 1993:88). It is also regarded as one of the earlier poems belonging to the Epic Cycle which may have extended over a period of almost two centuries (Wiencke 1954:287). It is believed that Proclus' summary of the lost *Ilioupersis* of Arctinus, in turn, may have inspired the lyric poet, Alcaeus of Mytilene's poem (Connelly 1993:88). The Rape of Cassandra account has therefore been retold by many later poets<sup>33</sup> and mythographers<sup>34</sup> who provided various and perhaps more detailed versions often resulting in conflicting details (Connelly 1993:88). A rather contentious issue is whether Cassandra was in fact raped by the Locrian warrior. The following excerpt from Proclus' summary of the *Ilioupersis* specifically refers to the Rape of Cassandra episode:

Ajax, son of Oileus, in attempting to bear off Cassandra by force, drags with her the image of Athena. At this, the Greeks in a fit of rage take counsel to make an end of Ajax; but he flees instead to Athena's altar and is thus saved from imminent peril.<sup>35</sup>

(Wiencke 1954:287)

In this summary, there is no indication of rape or sexual abuse; the rape seems to be an aspect which may only be created by later poets. According to Connelly (1993:88) the notion that Ajax raped Cassandra was an invention of Odysseus who intended to discredit Ajax and please Agamemnon. Kennedy (2009:68) maintains that this alternate version can be pieced together from Pausanias (10.31.2) combined with Philostratus's *Heroicus*. 9 and a scholiast on Lycophron 326. Certain elements of the narrative recur in a range of sources over time, however, the most significant being the offence committed by Ajax in the sanctuary of Athena (Deacy & McHardy 2015:257). This offence could either refer to the possible rape of Cassandra, who was at that stage

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<sup>33</sup> Lycophron, *Alex.* V. 357; Propertius *Eleg.* IV (V) c. I, 118; Ovid *Ars Amatoria* I, 7, 17, *Metamorph.* XIV, 468; Tryphiodorus, *Sack of Troy* 647; Quintus of Smyrna *Posthomerica* XIII, 422 (Connelly 1993:124).

<sup>34</sup> Apollodoros, *Epitome* V 22; Hyginus *Fabula* CXVI, 20 (Connelly 1993:124).

<sup>35</sup> "The poems of the Epic Cycle," JHS [1884] 33.

attributed with a suppliant status in a sacred space, or the physical damage to the image of Athena itself. It could also possibly refer to both, since both acts can be considered as sacrilege.

Various other mythological scenes in vase-painting which derive from the Epic Cycle, evoke similar themes of heroes, valour, warfare, sacrilege and the often-impetuous actions of the gods. Archaic black-figure vase-painting in this regard provided its viewers with many legendary motives and adaptations, which cannot be found in literature and are “the faithful reflex of the fluidity of Greek mythology” (Wiencke 1954:291). In this regard, ancient Attic vase-painters should therefore be regarded as narrators, drawing from their own inspiration and appealing to the interest of their viewers (Stansbury-O’Donnell 2015:205).

The following extract from *The Iliad* suggests how violence formed part of ancient Athenian society, and how vulnerable women were deemed to be, especially in the context of war:

If I approach Achilles as a suppliant, he’ll show me no pity, no respect. He’ll kill me out of hand, exposed as I will be when I take off my armour, like a woman.

*Il.* 22.124-125 (trans, Jones 2003:384)

This suggests that Ajax’s ill-treatment of Cassandra, who is the enemy female, should not be deemed inappropriate and is rather to be expected of a warrior (Deacy & McHardy 2015:252). The Archaic black-figure Rape of Cassandra scene, however, has a strong sacrilegious undertone purely because of the location: in the sanctuary of Athena (Deacy & McHardy 2015:252).

Ritual purity was considered essential in ancient Greek religion. This applied to sacred spaces, the objects within the sacred space and sacred time (Petrovic & Petrovic 2016:27). Anything which was considered ‘impure’ – and therefore contaminating in religious terms – was known as *miasma* (Petrovic & Petrovic 2016:27). This could originate from corporeal sources, and especially in bodily fluids such as blood (as well menstrual blood), in events of birth and death, and in acts such as sex (Petrovic & Petrovic 2016:28). *Miasma* in an ancient Greek context was regarded as very dangerous as it could compromise communication between mortal and divine, render religious rituals futile, and sacrilege in the worst case (Petrovic & Petrovic 2016:27). With reference to the Rape of Cassandra scene, a lot of emphasis is placed on Ajax’s sacrilegious act against the goddess Athena.

Firstly, according to Lanni (2008:477) in ancient Greece sacred buildings such as temples and sanctuaries were not to be disturbed, even in a time of war. Another strong religious norm which especially applied in the context of war is the immunity of priests and other religious entities. Lanni (2008:477) states: “An invader who decided to enslave or kill inhabitants of a sacked city was expected to spare the religious officials.” It appears that Ajax violated both norms, since he disturbed and caused damage to the sacred temple of Athena and captured and possibly raped the priestess of Apollo within a sacred space. Herodotus (2.64) talks about the severity of contaminating a sacred space through certain actions:

Furthermore, it was the Egyptians who first made it a matter of religious observance not to have intercourse with women in temples or to enter a temple after such intercourse without washing. Nearly all other peoples are less careful in this matter than are the Egyptians and Greeks, and consider a man to be like any other animal; for beasts and birds (they say) are seen to mate both in the temples and in the sacred precincts; now were this displeasing to the god, the beasts would not do so. This is the reason given by others for practices which I, for my part, dislike

Hdt.2.64 (trans, Godley 1920)

More importantly, sacred spaces in the context of ancient Athenian society, became places of asylum in which nothing and no one might be harmed with impunity (Pedley 2005:57). As represented in many red-figured examples, fugitives like Cassandra only had to sit at the base of a statue or altar to receive protection from the god(s). Additionally, the boundaries of a sacred space could have been either visible or invisible and once someone crossed into it, it was regarded as completely inviolable (Pedley 2005:57). In the case of invisible boundaries, prominent trees or rocks would mark the boundary of a sacred space and low-lying walls would often indicate a visible one (Pedley 2005:57). This suggest that the boundary of a sacred space was regarded as more emblematic than practical. Moreover, it implies that all individuals, including esteemed Greek warriors on the battlefield, had to comply with certain rules pertaining to conquered cities, including its sacred spaces.

Van Wees (1992) provides a more comprehensive study regarding this archetypal warrior behaviour by referring to the Homeric epics. Some scholars, however, argue that the Homeric epics cannot be relied on as historical sources and should merely be regarded as good literature (Van Wees 1992:1). Van Wees (1992:1), however, counter-argues that disregarding texts such as the

*Iliad* and *Odyssey* may, in turn, discard evidence which makes a significant contribution to views of the social, economic, political and military organization of the Dark Age. In this regard, certain behaviours or actions portrayed in the Homeric epics can provide useful and insightful information regarding the behaviour and actions of warriors in warfare.

According to Van Wees (1992:64), violence was an integral part of Homeric and Archaic society as it formed part of a warrior's honour and excellence. For warriors to show their status, they had to follow certain 'codes' of behaviour. According to Deacy & McHardy (2015:254), the warriors would kill the male enemy, which was only considered as the first phase of war, and, in the second phase they would subjugate the non-combat population:

Once the attacking males kill most of the grown males among the opposition, they then consider it their right and even their obligation to exact additional punishment by sexually mauling the women.<sup>36</sup>

(Deacy & McHardy 2015: 254).

The idea of gender violence or sexual violence is however not explicitly communicated in the Archaic black-figure vase images, and only appears significant and conspicuous in the Classical red-figure examples of the Rape of Cassandra scene.

In Attic black-figure representations, the depiction of this mythological scene places the emphasis of the pictorial narrative mainly on the image of Athena than Cassandra. As suggested by Connelly (1993:108), placing the image of Athena so prominently in the Rape of Cassandra episode may convey a warning against an act of sacrilege, impiety and hubris against the gods. According to Deacy and McHardy (2015:258), the ancient Athenians' preoccupation with the concept of *asebeia*<sup>37</sup> in the sixth century may have been spurred on after Megacles trapped Cylon's men in Athena's sanctuary on the Acropolis when they sought refuge. Although Cylon and his brother escaped, the rest of his men were left to starve to death in the sanctuary, and those who did survive were eventually murdered (Connelly 1993:108). Ancient sources such as Herodotus refer to

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<sup>36</sup> Gaca 2011, 85. On the killing of adult males, see Rosivach 1999.

<sup>37</sup> Godlessness; Wickedness (Barclay & Newman. 1993. *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

Cylon's refuge at Athena's statue and Thucydides mentions the impious act which followed (Connelly 1993:108).

This man put on the air of one who aimed at tyranny, and gathering a company of men of like age, he attempted to seize the citadel. When he could not win it, he took sanctuary by the goddess' statue.

Hdt.5.71 (trans, Godley 1920)

But the rest, when they were pressed and some of them dead with famine, sat down as suppliants by the altar that is in the citadel. And the Athenians, to whose charge was committed the guard of the place, raising them upon promise to do them no harm, put them all to the sword...And from this the Athenians, both themselves and their posterity, were called accursed and sacrilegious persons.

Thuc.1.126 (trans, Hobbes 1823:61)

These events occurred just before Peisistratos became tyrant of Athens and therefore before the cult of Athena became more prominent in ancient Athenian society. According to Connelly (1993:108), the Rape of Cassandra scene in black-figure vase-painting may therefore be heeded as a warning to the Alcmeonids. However, when considering what was expected of a warrior in warfare then, Ajax's actions towards Cassandra, regardless of his intentions, could be deemed appropriate for the context of war. According to Deacy and McHardy (2015:260), it is not necessarily Ajax's violent behaviour towards a woman which is offensive, but rather whom the offense is made against.

Proclus' summary states clearly that Ajax carries off Cassandra with the image of Athena, thereby implying that he dislodged the statue from its base with the suppliant still holding on to it (Deacy & McHardy 2015:257). And in the context of a cultic religious society, one of the most serious violations against the gods was to physically damage the property and sanctuaries which were dedicated to deities (Mikalson 2005:158). Like Cylon and his men, who sought refuge at the sanctuary of Athena, so does Cassandra seek protection from the goddess. According to Deacy and McHardy (2015:264), Athena takes on the role of Cassandra's *kyrios*, which suggests Cassandra's insignificance in the overall scene configuration. Ajax's violent behaviour towards



Cassandra as a woman in the context of war therefore correlates with what was considered acceptable and may have even been anticipated.

In some of the black-figure representations of the Rape of Cassandra episode, Ajax is shown grabbing Cassandra's elbow or wrist and holding her upper arm, thus demonstrating archetypal warrior behaviour (Deacy & McHardy 2015:262). This is nevertheless more consistently demonstrated in late Archaic and Classical red-figure representations. In many of the black-figure examples, the iconography of the two most prominent figures, Ajax and Athena, emphasize this encounter as a standoff between two powerful warriors, and the figure of Cassandra appears almost detached from the pictorial narrative (Deacy & McHardy 2015:264). Ajax's gesture of supplication in several black-figure examples, which is very unusual for a warrior, also evokes his offence against the goddess and more importantly, communicates the notion of sacrilege.

## 4.4 Summary

Attempting to place these black-figure vase images in their original context, therefore potentially provides greater insight into Athenian ideas about violence and sacrilege. It also suggests the significance of cult in Archaic Athenian society and a connection between art and politics. The Panathenaic Athena on black-figure examples of the Rape of Cassandra scene evokes a purely Attic Athena and, more importantly, the might of the goddess. Therefore, whether the image of Athena in black figure is a representation of a sixth-century cult statue or an illustration of the goddess herself, it does suggest Athena as a living protagonist and is associated with the Panathenaia under Peisistratos. During the sixth century, Peisistratos publicized his devotion to Athenian cults, especially the cult of Athena, which politically enhanced his position as a tyrant. As a result, the production of Attic pottery dramatically increased during the sixth century with many scenes representing the Panathenaic Athena. These cultic notions contained in these black-figured vase images also evoked the theme of sacrilege. The religious cult statue of Athena (or an epiphany of the goddess) in the context of the Rape of Cassandra scene, could have served as a warning against sacrilege.

## Chapter 4

### The Rape of Cassandra in Red-Figure Vase-Painting: Description and Iconography

The Rape of Cassandra scene in the red-figure repertory departs from the black-figure template and becomes a more dynamic and emotive narrative scene. Like in chapter three, in this chapter the protagonists Cassandra, Ajax and Athena are examined as well as various iconographic indicators such as pose, stance, gesture, clothing, and contextual elements of the Attic red-figure examples. The shape and function of these vessels are also discussed which, to a certain extent, distinguishes them/the imagery from the social context(s) of the black-figure repertory.

#### 4.1 Vase: Shape and Function

Departing from the predominant use of the amphora shape for Archaic black-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes, it is the cup shape which takes prominence in Classical red figure. Connelly (1993:111) provides a list of 24 red-figure vases, which show the dramatic increase in the repertory of shapes representing this particular scene:

For the period 520-425, twenty-four vases survive, including ten cups, seven craters, two amphorae, one plate, one hydria, one kantharos, one oinochoe, and one fragment. Cups are the dominant shape for the period 510-480 (representing roughly 40 percent of all vases carrying the subject), with larger shapes (kalpis, krater, and amphora) clustered in the 480-450 range.

(Connelly 1993:111)

The variation in red-figure vase shapes allowed for new developments in the compositional arrangement. The Rape of Cassandra scene which was depicted on early black-figure amphorae, was in most instances limited to the “trapezoidal picture panel” (Connelly 1993:112). This generates a generic pattern in the representation of the Rape of Cassandra episode in black figure by showing the three main figures often with supporting characters framing the central action. The variation of new red-figure vase shapes, however, allowed new spatial dimensions for this narrative scene. In various examples, a series of images represents a sequence of events from the *Ilioupersis*, therefore creating a clear and well-known narrative context. Certain features, such as

the tondo of the plate and cup, the kylix wall's curving field, the kalpis shoulder and the wide belly of the krater allowed painters a new platform to represent the compositional arrangement of these episodic narratives from the *Ilioupersis* (Connelly 1993:112).

There is a clear shift in the composition of the Rape of Cassandra scene from black-figure to red-figure, which allows vase-painters to adopt more than one compositional arrangement. The variety of shapes means that there are more potential contexts in which these vessels were used: krater, hydria, oinochoe and kylix are all vessels used, for example, in the context of the symposium. The hydria, used for carrying and pouring water, was often used in the process of diluting wine (White 1975:152). Once the wine had been diluted, it was poured into individual cups using an oinochoe. Although there were different types of drinking cups, the kylix is known to be the most commonly represented, especially in sympotic scenes (Lynch 2011:80).

These vessels are adorned with scenes that could be either mythological or from 'everyday life', however, as Beard (1991:21) points out and scholars now mostly agree, the scenes are not necessarily one or the other, as they communicate – and were likely read – on both registers. From the mid-sixth century homoerotic courtship scenes became very popular on vases, which frequently showed older men courting youths (Robson 2013:40). In this regard, just as the representation of nude youths often evoked homoerotic notions, so did the female nude eventually become a popular representation on vase images, which according to Koloski-Ostrow and Lyons (1997:7) encouraged heterosexual desire and regulated female eroticism. This was especially achieved in the context of the symposium, the male-dominated social setting, in which the nude female figure was also considered an object of desire.

## 4.2. Scene Synopsis

Even though the red-figured examples are more dynamic in their iconography and composition than the black-figured examples, Connelly (1993:109) identifies two basic compositional arrangements which most follow. One imitates the black-figure formula: Ajax on the left, a central Cassandra and Athena on the right, and the other placing Athena at the left, Cassandra at the centre, and Ajax on the right (Connelly 1993:109). The first arrangement was already represented on red-figure cups and hydriai in c.510-480 BCE whereas the latter was only adopted as a conventional form in the middle of the fifth century BCE (Connelly 1993:109). The second compositional

arrangement, however, first appears in the scene on a plate by Paseas in c.520-510 BCE. Paseas' plate from Yale University (Rf cat. no 1; figure 4.1) is also considered to be the very first example in red figure which depicts the Rape of Cassandra episode (Cohen 1993:38). Like the black-figure examples, this scene is limited to the three main figures in which the figure of Cassandra appears smaller in scale compared to the figures of Ajax and Athena. There are therefore very familiar elements in this particular red-figure scene which may suggest that the image was created during a time of transition between the black-figure and red-figure techniques. The development, however, is very clear as it signifies a significant change in the composition as well as the viewer's perspective.



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**Figure 4.1**  
c. 525-475 BCE

This reversal of the Ajax/Cassandra/Athena formula emphasizes the figure of Cassandra as she now appears in front of the shield, rather than behind it as in black figure, leaving her completely visible both to Ajax and the viewer. Cassandra, who is no longer hidden by the shield of Athena, therefore assumes a conspicuous role which she was previously denied in black-figure representations. We can think, then, of Paseas' portrayal of the Rape of Cassandra episode as representing the traditional black-figure scene from behind (Matheson 1986:105). According to

Matheson (1986:105), this abrupt change in the composition of the narrative scene creates a dramatic effect. Certain iconographic indicators such as pose, and gesture appear more noticeable as they are represented from the opposite perspective. This refocuses the viewer's gaze. Matheson (1986:105) elaborates on this significant change in the composition and technique:

The conjunction of Ajax's hand, Cassandra's elbow, and Athena's arm, which focuses the eye on the dramatic as well as the pictorial center of the scene, could not have been executed in black-figure; Peseas has clearly understood the potential of the new red-figure technique and has exploited it for dramatic effect.

### 4.3 Iconography and Scene Description/Analysis

The compositional arrangement in these late Archaic and Classical red-figure Rape of Cassandra scenes gradually deviates from the strict Ajax/Cassandra/Athena formula, with only a few exceptions. More importantly, the iconography itself transforms drastically therefore changing the overall conception of these vase images. Cassandra in red figure is now represented as a young adult female and assumes a feminine and voluptuous physique. She is no longer a diminutive figure and is depicted larger, on a scale matching that of her pursuer/attacker Ajax. Unlike her black-figure counterpart, she now dominates the scene and demands attention from the viewer with her sexuality.

Connelly (1993:116) refers to this compelling emergence of Cassandra onto the red-figure platform as a liberation from the black-figured iconography. In this regard, Cassandra finally reflects her "primary Homeric characteristic": that is as an exceptionally beautiful woman (Cohen 1993:42).

#### 4.3.1 Cassandra

Like her black-figure counterpart, in red figure Cassandra is represented in various poses by either kneeling, squatting, sitting or running. She is often depicted kneeling or sitting at the base of the statue of Athena or running towards the statue in an attempt to embrace it. In addition, her victimhood and vulnerability are clearly emphasized by her gesture of supplication towards Ajax. The figure of Cassandra therefore becomes more poignant in these red-figure scenes as she is now

actively taking part in the narrative scene and moving away from her previously detached position in black-figure examples.

Cassandra's gaze is also often directed towards Ajax whose eyes and outstretched arm match hers as he often physically grabs her by her hair (Connelly 1993:117). The fragmented Onesimos cup from Rome (Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2) is an early example in red figure which demonstrates this configuration. Cassandra is shown in a squatting pose with her left arm around the statue of Athena and her right arm extended towards Ajax. Her torso is exposed to the viewer and her body is positioned in front of the inanimate statue of Athena. In addition, Athena's shield no longer hides the figure of Cassandra, and instead emphasizes her like a halo from behind (Connelly 1993:109).

According to Connelly (1993:117), the iconographic configuration refocuses the immediate conflict between Ajax and Cassandra, and more importantly between man and woman in its full physical and psychological capacity.



**Figure 4.2**  
c. 525-475 BCE

This direct confrontation between the figures of Ajax and Cassandra is consistently portrayed in early red-figure examples. The assailant/victim dynamic is emphasized by both Cassandra and Ajax's stance in the pictorial narrative, as the "victor left/victim right formula" is reversed (Connelly 1993:117). As a result, this de-emphasizes the combative relationship between the



figures of Ajax and Athena and redirects the focus onto a newly developed Ajax/Cassandra story (Connelly 1993:117). In several examples<sup>38</sup> Cassandra faces the aggressive figure of Ajax and answers him with a supplicatory gesture. In two other examples,<sup>39</sup> Cassandra flees from Ajax, however her head is still turned back towards her attacker. This particular representation which shows Cassandra's gaze fixed on Ajax is very similar to the late Archaic and early Classical black-figure examples. However, by mid-century Cassandra no longer directly engages with Ajax but looks at the statue of Athena or at the ground (Connelly 1993:117).

The Paseas' plate (Rf cat. no 1; figure 4.1) shows Cassandra looking directly at the statue of Athena. Thereafter, nine<sup>40</sup> examples illustrate a similar pose where Cassandra faces the image of Athena instead of Ajax. Ajax's attention, however, is always directed towards Cassandra. Unlike various black-figured representations which show Athena and Ajax mutually engaging/confronting one another, the figure of Athena does not return Cassandra's supplicatory gesture in red-figured examples.

One exception by the Altamura Painter on a krater in Boston (Rf cat. no 12; figure 4.3) shows Cassandra looking at her father Priam instead of Athena. In this regard, showing the Rape of Cassandra alongside the death of Priam, the Altamura Painter therefore integrates different narrative components of the *Ilioupersis* into a compositional whole (Connelly 1993:110). The figure of Priam is represented in the right side of the picture frame and on the same plane level as Cassandra. In addition, the composition shows that the figures of Ajax and Cassandra appear on a different plane level, showing Cassandra in the foreground and Ajax in the background. The two episodes are visually connected through the dramatic supplicatory gestures of Cassandra and Priam (Connelly 1993:110).

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<sup>38</sup> Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2, Rf cat. no 7; figure 4.5, Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no 6

<sup>39</sup> Rf cat. no 8; figure 4.13, Rf cat. no 11; figure 4.25

<sup>40</sup> Rf cat. no 4, Rf cat. no 9; figure 4.10, Rf cat. no 10; figure 4.8, Rf cat. no 13; figure 4.9, Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no 16; figure 4.15, Rf cat. no 17; figure 4.23, Rf cat. no 19, Rf cat. no 21





Figure 4.3



Figure 4.4

c.475-425 BCE

Cairns (2005:128) argues that the direct gaze between iconographic figures is both complex and situational and may signify both a negative or positive meaning. It can either be considered invasive and offensive or reverential. Taking into consideration the context of the Rape of Cassandra scene, Ajax's gaze towards Cassandra can therefore be interpreted as aggressive and the direct gaze shared between Cassandra and her father Priam more emotional yet respectful.

There are a few examples which show Cassandra facing Ajax but not making direct eye contact with him. In two of these scenes<sup>41</sup> her eyes are slightly averted and instead match the direction of her own outstretched supplicating hand which is directed towards Ajax's waist. A cup in Malibu (Rf cat. no 3; figure 4.16) shows Cassandra with her gaze directed towards Ajax's waist as well, however, the cup itself is too fragmented to determine the exact direction of Ajax's gaze. While Greek women should usually avert their eyes in relation to adult males to indicate their modesty, in the context of war, Cassandra's lack of direct eye-contact may also denote her vulnerability. There are four examples<sup>42</sup> in which Cassandra and Ajax do meet each other's gaze and considering

<sup>41</sup> Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2, Rf cat. no 7; figure 4.5

<sup>42</sup> Rf cat. no 6, Rf cat. no 8; figure 4.13, Rf cat. no 11; figure 4.25, Rf cat. no 18

Cassandra's defenceless and panicked stance in the scene, it is likely not a look shared between two lovers, but rather one which suggests fear and perhaps to a certain extent, shame.

The previously detached and "pathetic" figure of Cassandra in black figure now assumes a new dynamic role in red-figure representations. The portrayal of Cassandra in ancient literary sources as a beautiful yet tragic victim will be discussed in chapter six where these red-figure vase images will be contextualized. Unlike most examples in black figure, the figure of Cassandra is now conspicuously placed in the context of the *Ilioupersis*.

### 4.3.2 Gesture of Supplication

The gesture of supplication is used much more consistently in the red-figure scenes than in the black-figure scenes, specifically by the figure of Cassandra as she is often shown stretching out her hand towards Ajax. This immediately places Cassandra in a vulnerable position as a pleading victim. There is not one example in red figure, of which I am aware, that shows Cassandra supplicating the cult statue of Athena. Naiden (2006:7) argues that one significant quality of the gesture of supplication is that the addressee should be present: "For this reason, supplication of a god is possible only if the god responds by an epiphany."

Although Cassandra's supplicatory gesture is mainly directed towards Ajax in red figure, she does commit herself to the statue of Athena, either by clasping it or attempting to embrace it. According to Naiden (2006:49), Cassandra regards the cult statue as a place of refuge and therefore an alternative form of seeking protection. The famous *Ilioupersis* hydria in Naples by the Kleophrades Painter (Rf cat. no 7; figure 4.5) demonstrates this particular action in which Cassandra supplicates her attacker while seeking safety at a holy sanctuary. Cassandra in this regard chooses to go to or remain at the statue of Athena by clasping its knees while simultaneously extending her hand towards Ajax, her attacker. Therefore, instead of making one appeal, Cassandra makes two. Naiden (2006:50) describes the possible narrative intent behind this vase image:

In making the first appeal, she acts as a suppliant at an altar, but with a twist, which is that her gesture is suitable for a person as well as a god. In making her second appeal, she acts as a suppliant addressing a person, but with another twist: Ajax cannot help but notice where she is. If he wishes to remove her, he will be virtually attacking the goddess. Her improvisation puts him on the defensive.

Sacrilege, then, remains an underlying theme in red-figure representations of the Rape of Cassandra scene.



**Figure 4.5**  
c. 525-475 BCE

This consistent portrayal of the gesture of supplication in the red-figure scenes reveals Cassandra's vulnerable suppliant status and depicts her as a victim of violence. This type of violent pursuit in which the victim supplicates her attacker can also be recognized in the Recovery of Helen episode on some red-figured vase scenes. Like Ajax, Menelaos is shown with a drawn sword while grabbing Helen by her wrist. Although Helen flees from Menelaos, she looks back at her attacker with a supplicatory gesture. The Nikosthenic amphora in the Louvre (Comp. cat. no 15; figure 4.6) represents this scene on its belly. Pursuit scenes on Attic red-figure vases are relatively common and may reveal some significant aspects such as the level of violence and the possible intention behind a certain action, such as whether it can be considered an act of rape or an attack with the intention to kill.



**Figure 4.6**  
**Menelaos and Helen**  
**c. 525-475 BCE**

The different iconographical aspects of a pursuer/attacker's stance and use of weapon(s) in red-figure vase-painting, as well as the iconography of 'pursuit scenes' are elaborated on later in this chapter.

### **4.3.3 Cassandra's Dress/ Nudity**

Cassandra's nude and partially nude physique in the red-figure sequence explicitly evokes her sexuality. Her pose and gesture combined with her nudity may therefore suggest that she is being subjected to an act of sexual violence or rape (Cohen 1993:41). Early red-figure examples portray the figure of Cassandra completely nude or with a mantle over her shoulders which therefore accentuates her "shapeliness" (Connelly 1993:117). However, from the mid-century Cassandra's dress/undress is depicted in various ways, ranging from only wearing a mantle, or a disheveled garment or a fully concealing peplos or chiton.

Examples in which Cassandra appears semi-nude/nude portray her with only a mantle, a loose and revealing garment or without any form of dress. She is often portrayed wearing a typical peplos or chiton and although these garments offer formality and concealment, they can also easily be loosened and thus revealing. This is recognized in a few red-figure examples,<sup>43</sup> such as on the fragments of a cup in Rome (Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2) and on an amphora in New York (Rf cat. no 10; figure 4.8) in which a loose garment, being either a peplos or chiton, is draped over Cassandra's back and shoulders, and similar to the mantle, "frames" her nudity. The idea of a loose or disheveled garment surely evokes the drama and urgency of the narrative scene as well as emphasizing Cassandra's attempt to resist a forceful and violent pursuer.

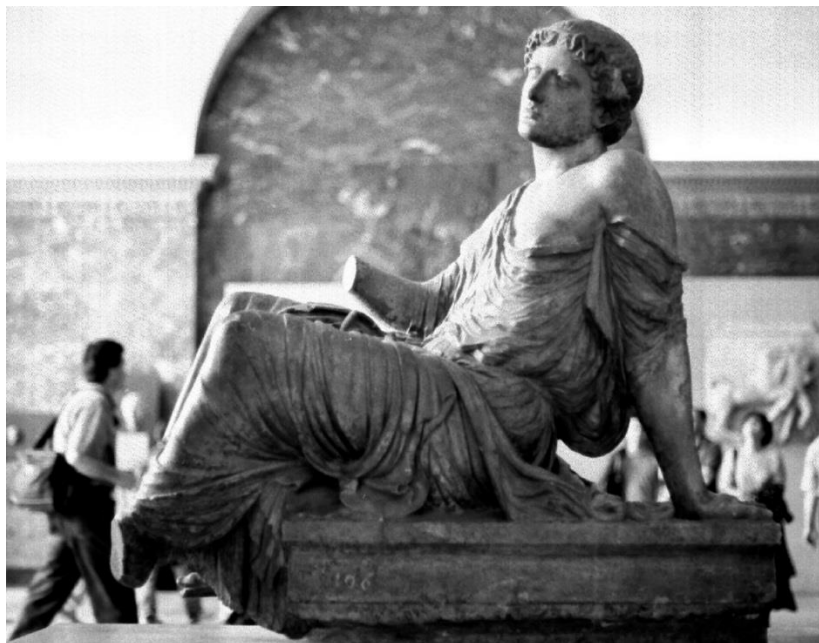
Although there are some other red-figured examples of women in myth that are depicted nude, such as Helen, Cassandra is the first female mythological character who consistently appears nude in vase-painting (Cohen 1997:80). In some red-figure examples her loose and disheveled garment often reveals her breast(s). The representation of exposed female breast(s) in Attic art was considered a popular motif in the Classical period and became a compelling visual convention denoting women as victims of physical violence (Cohen 1997:77). This vulnerable portrayal of women with exposed breasts in Greek art therefore evokes the tragic representation of women in Classical Athenian tragedy (Cohen 1997:77). The representation of female nudity on an Attic vase, nevertheless, should not be disregarded considering the male-dominated context in which it was created as well as social protocols around naked or nude women. It therefore is to be considered as an important iconographic choice (Cohen 1997:68).

Cohen (1997:67) refers to the Barberini Suppliant in the Louvre, a Roman marble copy of a fifth-century BCE Greek statue (Comp. cat. no 16; figure 5.7), as an example of a woman with one breast divested of clothes. The Barberini Suppliant's clothes are set in complete disarray, and her loose chiton cups the underside of her breast thus accentuating its form. Similar to the Barberini Suppliant, in red-figured vase scenes Cassandra's breast(s) are often exposed, however, it is not only her breast(s) which is emphasized but her entire nude physique.

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<sup>43</sup> Rf cat. no 5; figure 4.12, Rf cat. no 11; figure 4.25, Rf cat. no 16; figure 4.15, Rf cat. no 18





**Figure 4.7**  
**The Barberini Suppliant**  
**c. 430-425**

An amphora in New York (Rf cat. no 10; figure 4.8) is one of several examples which shows Cassandra with a loose garment that frames her nudity. Although many of these vase images are too fragmented to determine the full extent of Cassandra's nudity, in the extant examples, her exposed breast(s) never seem to be revealed without focusing on her entire nude physique. Cassandra's supplicatory gesture, vulnerable pose, semi-nude/nude physique and often disheveled garments therefore evoke a female victim of violence.

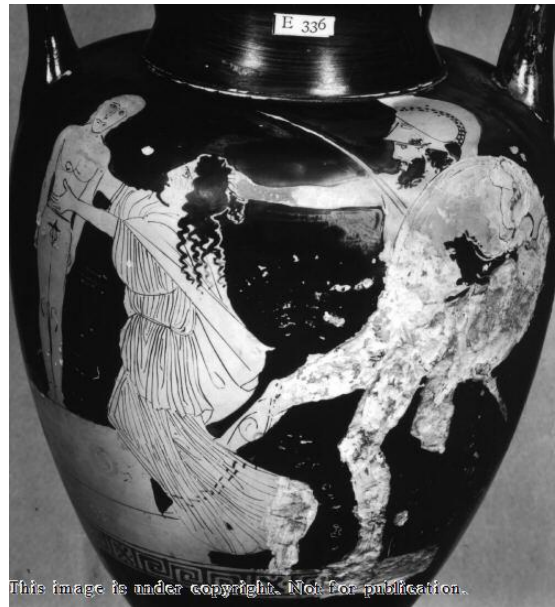


**Figure 4.8**  
c. 475-425 BCE

Despite these nude representations of Cassandra, there are several examples where she is fully dressed in either a peplos or chiton, therefore appearing entirely concealed. An amphora in the British Museum (Rf cat. no 13; figure 4.9) is one of five red-figured examples<sup>44</sup> which illustrates this. In Beazley's description of this particular vase image, he refers to it as either being Menelaos and Helen or Ajax and Cassandra. However, considering that this image shares various similar iconographic qualities to the other Rape of Cassandra vase images, it is included in my catalogue as a Rape of Cassandra episode. This fully dressed figure of Cassandra now corresponds with the bodies of the *korai* who are often shown wearing multiple layers of cloth (Lee 2015:46). One exception is a volute krater in Bologna (Rf cat. no 9; figure 4.10) in which part of the figure of Cassandra's upper leg is revealed.

<sup>44</sup> Rf cat. no 8; figure 4.13, Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no 17; figure 4.23, Rf cat. no 19





**Figure 4.9**  
**Ajax and Kassandra/Menelaos and Helen**  
**c. 475-425 BCE**



**Figure 4.10**  
**c.475-425 BCE**



**Figure 4.11**  
**Thracian Woman**  
**c. 470 BCE**

This particular representation of Cassandra can be compared to that of a Thracian woman in a red-figure column krater in Munich (Comp. cat. no 17; figure 4.11). Both women are non-Greek and are shown with an open garment revealing one leg and hair flying wildly (Lee 2015:51). This sort of disheveled appearance could suggest an archetypal representation of a female “barbarian body” which would not have been appropriate in an ancient Greek context, especially for “proper Greek” women and men (Lee 2015:51).

This nude/semi-nude and dynamic portrayal of Cassandra in red-figure vase images is significant considering the time in which it was created. The realistic representation of the female nude was relatively rare and, according to Boardman, was “... not yet a proper subject for Greek art” (Cohen 1997:66). However, Boardman mainly refers to large scale public art; painters did begin to explore mastering the portrayal of the nude female body in the private context of Athenian vase-painting (Cohen 1997:66).

Although the figure of Cassandra in red figure moves away from her pathetic and diminutive representation in black figure, certain aspects from black figure are still echoed in the late Archaic and early Classical red-figure vase images. According to Connelly (1993:118), the possible reference made to the “racing nude figures” of the Brauronia in black-figure examples are to a

certain extent reinforced in some of the red-figure examples. These racing figures are depicted on Athena's peplos which can be seen on a fragment of the Onesimos cup in Rome (Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2) as well as on a cup fragment from Athens (Rf cat. no 5; figure 4.12).



**Figure 4.12**  
c. 500-450 BCE

As discussed in the previous chapter, this representation of the diminutive Cassandras wearing a short chiton (similar to the 'running bears') in Archaic black-figure vase images may allude to girls' initiation rites. In red figure, however, Cassandra's nude or disrobed body may evoke a visual reference to the "shedding of the *krokotos*" thus concluding the rite of passage to womanhood (Connelly 1993:118). Connelly (1993:118) elaborates on the possible intentional connection between the nude/semi-nude running diminutive Cassandra in black-figure and the running figures on Athena's peplos in red-figure: "Though Kassandra's image may recall that of a girl participating in initiation rites, her nude race is an involuntary one that may result in an unwanted initiation into womanhood through rape."

### *Cassandra's Hair*

Just like certain garments evoked significant social and ethnic group identities, so did hair make certain statements regarding an individual's social and ethnic identity. According to Lee (2015:69), the maintenance of head hair was a significant part of an individual's *kosmos* and could also reveal one's status in society. Lee (2015:69) elaborates: "Disheveled hair was a sign that one was outside

the proper order of things, for example, the disaffected, philosophers, persons in mourning, and old people. Properly arranged hair reflected proper social order.” In red-figure examples, Cassandra is depicted with different kinds of hair styles ranging from long loose hair, to a ponytail, and the majority of examples show her with a proper coiffed arrangement or bound hair. The oinochoe from Oslo (Rf cat.no 8; figure 4.13) shows her with bound hair.



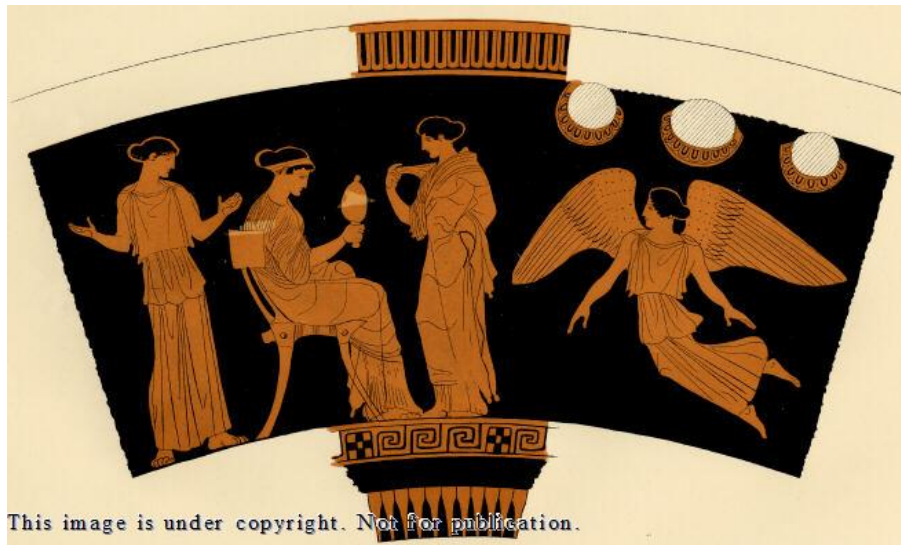
**Figure 4. 13**  
c. 475-425 BCE

Only two<sup>45</sup> examples represent her with short hair. According to Lee (2015:74), women depicted with short hair in Attic iconography are generally identified as slaves. Five<sup>46</sup> examples show her with wild and loose hair, which to a certain extent, corresponds with this “manic image” of Cassandra often reflected in fifth-century Athenian drama. The cup in Malibu (Rf cat. no 3; figure 4.16) is the only vase image which shows Cassandra with a ‘ponytail’. The most common hair arrangement in red figure shows Cassandra with bound hair, which according to Lee (2015:72) can also be recognized in nuptial scenes. This is illustrated on the lebes in Mississippi (Comp. cat. no 18; figure 4.14) that shows a bride preparing for her wedding. Moreover, Ajax’s overall pursuit of Cassandra in most red-figure examples can be likened to erotic pursuit scenes which often

<sup>45</sup> Rf cat. no 18; Rf cat. no 19

<sup>46</sup> Rf cat. no 9; figure 4.10, Rf cat. no 12; figure 4.3, Rf cat. no 13; figure 4.9; Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no.21

contain significant nuptial references. The idea of marriage as an underlying theme in red-figure examples will be elaborated on later in this chapter.



**Figure 4.14**  
**Wedding (Domestic)**  
**475 -425 BCE**

#### 4.3.4 The Figures of Ajax and Athena

##### *Ajax*

Like the figure of Cassandra, the representation of Ajax in red-figure vase-painting undergoes some significant changes, therefore evoking a much more erotic undertone than in the black-figure scenes. In some examples, his hoplite iconography is altered into that of an ephebe through changes in pose, gesture and attire. For the most part, Ajax's hoplite appearance, however, remains a distinctive element in red figure, and continues to evoke a context of war. The overall scene configuration has also changed: Ajax is now shown moving from right to left across the picture field, as in Paseas' plate at Yale (Rf cat. no 1; figure 4.1). This, however, only becomes consistent from the middle of the fifth century BCE. In addition, Ajax no longer confronts Athena as his main opponent, but instead directs his full attention to Cassandra, the helpless victim. Connelly (1993:116) comments on this particular change in the iconography and scene composition: "Changes in Ajax's pose and equipment can be read in response to the diminished threat of the aggressive 'living' Athena, now replaced by a statue".



Ajax's pose and overall conduct towards Cassandra in red figure seems much more aggressive than in black figure due to the various examples in which Ajax physically grabs Cassandra. Paseas' plate (Rf cat. no 1; figure 4.1), introduces this relatively new aspect of physical contact as Ajax is shown grabbing Cassandra with both hands for the first time. Most of these examples<sup>47</sup> show Ajax violently grabbing Cassandra by her hair, head, wrist, arm or neck with his right hand and is also often shown stretching out his arm in an attempt to forcefully grab or pull her towards him.

In early examples, as shown on the cup fragments from Rome (Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2) Ajax grabs Cassandra with his left hand and holds his brandished sword in his right. However, by mid-century, he uses his right hand to grab her hair while holding his spear and shield in his left unthreateningly. The tondo of a cup from Paris (Rf cat. no 16; figure 4.15) illustrates this.



**Figure 4.15**  
c. 450-400 BCE

Although certain iconographical indicators such as physical grabbing and the inclusion of an unthreatening spear in the red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes are quite consistent, there are a few examples<sup>48</sup> in which Ajax is represented with a brandished weapon, a pose similar to his black-

<sup>47</sup> Rf cat. no 1; figure 4.1, Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2, Rf cat. no 7; figure 4.5, Rf cat. no 8; figure 4.13, Rf cat. no 9; figure 4.10, Rf cat. no 10; figure 4.8, Rf cat. no 11; figure 4.25, Rf cat. no 12; figure 4.3, Rf cat. no 13; figure 4.9, Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no 15; figure 4.21, Rf cat. no 16; figure 4.15, Rf cat. no 17; figure 4.23, Rf cat. no 19

<sup>48</sup> Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2, Rf cat. no 3; figure 4.16, Rf cat. no 6, Rf cat. no 7; figure 4.5, Rf cat. no 18

figure counterpart. Some of these examples are, however, too fragmented to identify precisely what type of weapon Ajax uses. Due to its size and the way it is held it could potentially be identified as a sword. The cup in Malibu (Rf cat. no 3; figure 4.16) however shows Ajax striking down Cassandra with a weapon bearing resemblance to a club.



**Figure 4.16**  
c. 525-475 BCE

Although Ajax, to some extent, keeps his hoplite identity, he does resemble an ephebe in some examples as he abandons his cuirass from black-figure representations and is now often portrayed nude with only a chlamys.<sup>49</sup>

Apart from two examples<sup>50</sup> Ajax's Corinthian helmet is now pushed up onto his head and therefore he is able to look more freely on Cassandra. The viewer is now able to recognize his predatory gaze which suggests that the overall focus shifts from a general battle scene to a more personal attack.

In three examples<sup>51</sup> Ajax appears beardless, which again denotes an ephebe's appearance. The volute krater in the British Museum (Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17) demonstrates this beardless Ajax who is approaching Cassandra while holding a spear held slightly more diagonally in his left hand and grabbing her by the hair with his right. The soldier of the Homeric epics in black figure therefore gradually transforms into an ephebe-like youth in red figure (Connelly 1993:118). The

<sup>49</sup> Rf cat. no 16; figure 4.15, Rf cat. no. 10; figure 4.8, Rf cat. no 13; figure 4.9, Rf cat. no 15; figure 4.21

<sup>50</sup> Rf cat no 1; figure 4.1 & Rf cat. no 9; figure 4.10

<sup>51</sup> Rf cat. no 8; figure 4.13, Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no 16; figure 4.15



Rape of Cassandra scene in red figure, therefore, share a few distinctive iconographic similarities with erotic pursuit scenes in vase-painting.



**Figure 4.17**  
c. 475-425 BCE

### *Erotic Pursuit Scenes*

This element of chasing and physically grabbing or attempting to grab a young woman can be recognized in many red-figured erotic pursuit scenes. A youth, who is characterized as an ephebe, is often shown pursuing a girl while carrying a spear, such as on the bell krater in St. Petersburg (Comp. cat. no 19; figure 4.18), or often no spear at all (Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:32).<sup>52</sup> Several red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes therefore share this similar iconographic theme with other typical erotic pursuit scenes, as Ajax is often depicted holding his spear in an “unthreatening” manner<sup>53</sup> (Connelly 1993:116).

<sup>52</sup> With Spear- Type 1; Without Spear- Type 2 (Sourvinou-Inwood 1991).

<sup>53</sup> Rf cat. no 8; figure 4.13, Rf cat. no 9; figure 4.10, Rf cat. no 10; figure 4.8, Rf cat. no 11; figure 4.25, Rf cat. no 12; figure 4.3, Rf cat. no 13; figure 4.9, Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no 16; figure 4.15, Rf cat. no 17; figure 4.23, Rf cat. no 19



**Figure 4.18**  
**Pursuit Scene**  
**c. 500-450 BCE**

Most red-figured erotic pursuit scenes show a beardless ephebe with a chlamys which is sometimes combined with a petasos and holding a spear in his right hand while grabbing the girl with his left hand. The erotic intentions of the ephebe are clear as the spear evokes an element of capture/abduction which can be compared to the capturing of animals and which is also generally associated with the erotic sphere (Sourvinou-Inwood 1987:137). The capturing of animals can be compared to the idea of capturing or rather, taming, women, especially *parthenoi*, who were believed to have possessed some animal traits (Sourvinou-Inwood 1987:138). The taming or capturing of a wild girl was typically attained through marriage, which is another significant theme in red-figure erotic pursuit scenes.

Many of these erotic pursuit scenes are not inscribed which often makes it difficult to identify the pursuer and/or the pursued girl. According to Sourvinou-Inwood (1987:135), Theseus could be a likely candidate as the pursuer in many of these fifth-century Athenian vase images because of his erotic relationships with many women in myth, and he was also regarded as the “Athenian ephebe par excellence.” The pursuit scene on the reverse side of the bell krater in St. Petersburg (Comp. cat. no 20; figure 4.19) shows an ephebe with a sword, possibly Theseus, pursuing a woman. According to Sourvinou-Inwood (1987:133) the sword is a weapon which is often closely

associated with Theseus. This suggests that both weapons (spear and sword) are common signs in the iconography of erotic pursuit scenes, however with different emphases.



**Figure 4.19**  
**Youth with sword ('Theseus and Aithra')**  
**c. 500-450 BCE.**

Sourvinou-Inwood (1991) discusses the significance of the pursuer's weapon(s) in erotic pursuit scenes and how the manner in which it is held/used can generate different meanings. Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:32) maintains that erotic pursuit scenes in which the pursuer carries a spear are less menacing than a pursuer depicted with a drawn sword. She elaborates: "... meanings produced by the spears are not denotative of attack, but connotative of hints of violence" (Sourvinou-Inwood 1991). The motif of "grabbing the girl" therefore suggests a scene of capture/abduction which emphasizes the sexual character of that violence, however, when combined with other iconographic indicators may reinforce the severity of the attack (Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:44).

According to Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:44), in some versions of Theseus with a sword, the grabbing element can denote the intention to do grievous bodily harm, which evokes a relatively different meaning than a typical pursuit scene. She continues to discuss a distinct similarity between the two scenes<sup>54</sup> regarding the iconography of the drawn sword:

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<sup>54</sup> Between a typical Rape of Cassandra scene and Theseus with a Sword

The basic stance and the position of the drawn sword in the theme ‘Theseus with a sword’ resemble in a general way those seen in some scenes depicting Ajax attacking Cassandra, representing sacrilegious rape. It may be argued that this weakens my case, since here it is rape that is involved, and is rape not just a stronger version of ‘erotic pursuit’?

(Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:31).

There are instances in which certain gestural codes and iconographic indicators, such as the sign of a sword, can have polysemic value, and can consequently evoke more than one meaning. Therefore, although the sword may denote a serious attack, it can also possess an erotic quality. Masters (2012:52) suggests that the sign of the drawn sword on red-figure Archaic Attic examples of the recovery of Helen by her husband Menelaos may have a phallic overtone.

However, even though the intention behind Ajax’s action in red figure is more erotic than in black figure, the overall warlike context of the scene itself contains certain signifying elements which denote a violent and emphatic sexual act of rape. Furthermore, the acts of looting possessions and raping women in the context of war were regarded as “socially acceptable behaviour” in ancient Athenian society (Askin 1997:21). This suggests that although the Rape of Cassandra scene in black figure evokes a scene of attack, the iconography in red figure refocuses the emphasis on another element of violence which is based on a more sexual nature. The context of war thus sets the red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes apart from the other erotic pursuit scenes and they share more similarities with the Helen and Menelaos scenes.

Like the Rape of Cassandra episode in red-figure vase images, the red-figured examples of the recovery of Helen scenes become more dynamic and dramatic. Menelaos is now often shown grabbing Helen by the wrist and simultaneously threatening her with his sword (Masters 2012:72). Like in the red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes, physical contact becomes relatively prominent in red-figure iconography. Although both episodes can be regarded as scenes of pursuit, both are clearly set in the context of war which therefore set them apart from the other typical erotic pursuit scenes. The element of warfare evokes a more emotive narrative scene, particularly emphasizing the aspect of violence and vulnerability. The skyphos in Berlin (Rf Comp cat. no 21; figure 4.20) shows a distressed Helen desperately fleeing from her aggressive attacker. Like Cassandra, Helen seeks refuge in a sanctuary which emphasizes her suppliant status. Athena appears in profile view behind one of the four Doric columns on the left side of the picture frame.



**Figure 4.20**  
**Menelaos and Helen**  
 c. 480 BCE

The Rape of Cassandra and Recovery of Helen scenes in red figure, then, contain similar contextual information and iconographic indicators. Without inscriptions, this often makes it difficult to identify the characters in these narrative scenes – they could be Helen and Menelaos or Cassandra and Ajax. Both women are depicted in a defenceless and often distressed manner, threatened by a hostile and violent pursuer. In many of these examples of both episodes, certain contextual signs, such as an altar, temple column or palladion convey the context of a sanctuary, which is an indicator that both victims are in a desperate attempt to seek refuge.

The iconography in both scenes therefore evokes an emotionally charged narrative scene which conveys the power dynamic between male and female relationships especially in war. In addition, the theme of sexual violence is an explicit and continuous element in red-figured examples of the Rape of Cassandra scene. Therefore, the presupposed context of the Rape of Cassandra episode, which in turn, “guides the reading of the individual elements”, accentuates Ajax’s explicit intention in red-figure vase-painting as a violent rape (Sourvinou-Inwood 1991:44).

More importantly, unlike most other erotic pursuit scenes the context of war remains a significant theme in these red-figured scenes. As a result, the emotive quality of these red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes become more clear which, in turn, emphasizes the human element of war itself as the viewer is immediately confronted by the intensity of violence and Cassandra’s vulnerability.

## *Athena*

Early red-figure examples of the Rape of Cassandra continue to show the figure of Athena in profile view. Similar to black-figured examples, Athena is depicted in a striding pose with a raised spear and a shield. Athena's shield is either shown in frontal or profile view, which departs from the predominant frontal view in black-figure examples. However, despite some of these similarities to her black-figured counterpart, Athena is clearly represented as a statue and not as the goddess herself because of her stationary and completely disengaged pose.

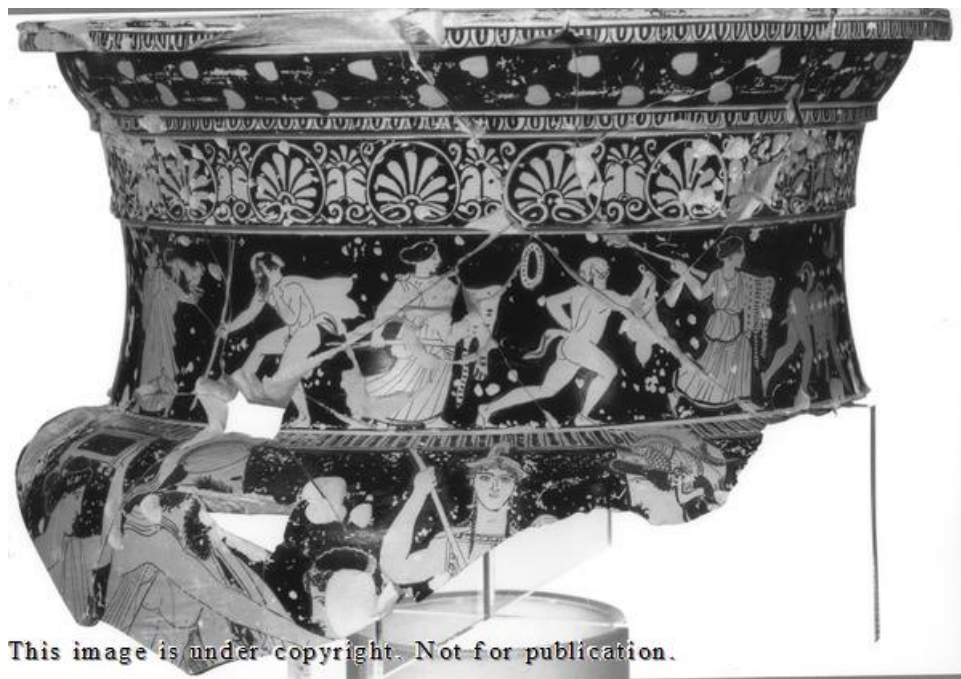
This change in the iconography can already be identified in Paseas' plate (Rf cat. no 1; figure 4.1), in which Athena appears more static as she is represented with her feet together. Although the figure of Athena in red figure is armed with the weapons of the Panathenaic Athena, she is not shown wearing her traditional peplos any longer and instead is wearing a chiton and himation without an aegis, apart from one example (Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2). The Onesimos cup from Rome (Rf cat. no 2; figure 4.2), leads the way in representing the figure of Athena on a smaller scale and as a striding statue upon a base (Connelly 1993:115).

From the middle of the fifth century, a significant change occurs as Athena is depicted in frontal view and, nearly always represented on a base, and thus appearing more static. This is initially represented on the hydria from Naples by the Kleophrades painter which shows Athena on a base and feet placed together. Kleophrades' Athena is clearly represented as a statue with a sculptural style which Connelly maintains is at least a century out of date and therefore emphasizes its identity as the Palladion of Athena at Troy (Connelly 1993:115). Like the majority of red-figure examples, Kleophrades' Athena wears an "archaizing smile", which may therefore evoke the cult statue. According to Connelly (1993:110) Athena's depiction in frontal view distinctly emphasizes her new role as a statue which can be regarded as inanimate, a stage prop-like element, which is disconnected from the central action.

This motionless figure of Athena in the Classical red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes is also often portrayed with a mask-like frontal face, which precludes any form of visual interaction with either Cassandra or Ajax (Connelly 1993:115). Athena's inanimacy is further signified on Polygnotos' fragmented volute krater in Malibu (Rf cat. no 15; figure 4.21). In this particular



example, Athena appears as herself on the far-right side of the picture field similar to black-figured examples and adopts a similar striding and retaliatory pose. She wears an elaborately adorned type of Attic helmet and is represented with coiled hair neatly arranged across her forehead and in front of her ear, which according to Matheson (1986:101) was considered rather elaborate for this period. The figure of Athena is depicted with her mouth slightly open, as she appears to watch with some distress how Ajax is in the process of seizing Cassandra (Matheson 1986:101). The goddess is therefore clearly represented as herself and appears to be completely engaged in the central action. However, occupying the centre of the composition, is a second figure of Athena represented in frontal view and with a static pose.



**Figure 4.21**  
c. 450-400 BCE

The inanimate figure of Athena is represented with an Attic helmet and holding a spear and shield. Even though the vase image is slightly fragmented, part of her richly decorated peplos is still visible. The arrangement of her hair in long coiled curls across the forehead suggests that this is an Archaic image. In addition, the toning of her hair with the dilute glaze sets the statue apart from the other figures in the narrative scene.

As a result, the representation of the goddess herself standing beside her own statue emphasizes the reduction in Athena's role from chief protagonist of Archaic black-figured examples to the



detached setting element in Classical red figure (Connelly 1993:116). Fragments of a kylix krater in Wurzburg (Rf cat. no 20; figure 4.22) can be regarded as the only red-figured example of the Rape of Cassandra episode which shows the statue of Athena in a more animated pose. The striding figure of Athena is shown with a scaly aegis decorated with two snakes, a symbol which is usually associated with the Panathenaic Athena. Therefore, although the iconography evokes a living Athena, who shares similar qualities to her black-figure counterpart, certain contextual indicators suggest otherwise. The figure of Athena is depicted on the left side of the picture frame next to the column of a building, which could be an indication of the temple of Athena. The idea of a temple as well as an olive tree in this particular vase image, places the scene in the context of a sanctuary, particularly the sanctuary of Athena. This particular figure of Athena echoes the liveliness of her black-figure counterpart, however, the inclusion of certain iconographic indicators such as the temple column and olive tree may instead evoke a cult statue.



**Figure 4.22**  
c. 425-375 BCE

#### 4.3.5 Additional Figures and Contextual Indicators

The majority of Attic red-figured examples place the Rape of Cassandra episode within the context of related episodes from the *Ilioupersis*. Well known mythological episodes, such as the death of Priam, the recovery of Helen, and the escape of Aeneas, often appear in the same picture field with the Rape of Cassandra episode therefore evoking an extended “episodic” narrative. Some examples represent other episodes from the *Ilioupersis* on the reverse side(s) of the vessel. According to

Connelly (1993:120), the aspect of episodic narrative as a development in visual storytelling became a popular and effective method of telling the whole story by often comparing independent episodes. Nine examples,<sup>55</sup> however, only represent the three main characters of the Rape of Cassandra story, similar to most black-figure examples, and often with a few unidentified supporting characters. Like in the black-figure examples, these supporting characters in red figure may be regarded as catalysts to the central action, therefore evoking an overall alarmed or frightened response to Ajax's act of seizing Cassandra. The gestures and poses of these supporting characters in red figure appear more emotionally charged than some of the additional figures in black figure who often appear unemotional and unresponsive. Compared to the supporting characters in black-figure examples in the Rape of Cassandra scene, who are both male and female, the supporting characters shown reacting to the central action in red figure are mainly female.

The amphora in New York (Rf cat. no 10; figure 4.8) shows a woman desperately clinging onto the statue of Athena. However, unlike the striking figure of Cassandra in the scene, the woman appears rather inconspicuous with her small and partially hidden body, who can be easily overlooked by the viewer. The volute krater in the British Museum (Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17) shows two supporting characters, both raising their hands in supplication towards the cult statue of Athena. The one figure who appears to have fallen down in the act of fleeing to the left (away from the central action), now sits at the base of the palladion and extends both arms. The other figure is also in the process of fleeing from the central action while looking back. There are however no inscriptions which may help to identify these characters. According to the British Museum's description of the vase image, these two additional figures may possibly be identified as Medesicaste and Polyxena (British Museum Online 2019). This kind of distressed and panicked response to the central action is also clearly demonstrated on an amphora in Cambridge (Rf cat. no 17; figure 4.23).

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<sup>55</sup> Rf cat. no 1; figure 4.1, Rf cat. no 6, Rf cat. no 8; figure 4.13, Rf cat. no 10; figure 4.8, Rf cat. no 13; figure 4.9, Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no 16; figure 4.15, Rf cat. no 17; figure 4.23, Rf cat. no 19



**Figure 4.23**  
**c.475-425 BCE**

The woman on the right is shown moving away from the central action while looking back, whereas the woman on the left watches how Ajax seizes Cassandra and raises her right hand towards a kneeling Cassandra. Through their gestures and placement in the picture field, both women appear emotive; fear and distress are the emotions evoked by these bystanders. The emotive quality in these red-figure examples therefore seems to intensify.

The majority of these red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes, however, can be regarded as episodic narratives, as they all form part of a bigger story, the *Ilioupersis*. A cup in Ferrara (Comp. cat. no 22; figure 4.24), however, is the only example of a true cyclic narrative<sup>56</sup> which shows the Rape of Cassandra on the exterior of the cup and the murder of Cassandra by Clytemnestra on the tondo. According to Connelly (1993:120), the emergence of the death of Cassandra scene in the red-figure sequence may be a response to dramatic theatre performances.

<sup>56</sup> The repetition of a certain character, comic-strip fashion (Connelly 1993:119)



**Figure 4.24**  
c. 450-400 BCE

The figure of Cassandra's overall response to violence becomes more conspicuous in red-figure vase images. And just as her pose and gesture become more dynamic, so do the supporting characters' reactions to Cassandra's suffering become more vigorous, thus rendering the scene more theatrical.

Although the context of the *Ilioupersis* is clear in many red-figure examples, the insertion of certain spatial indicators such as an altar, palm tree, olive tree and the column of a temple, all set the Rape of Cassandra episode in a sanctuary. For example, a cup in St. Petersburg (Rf cat. no 11; figure 4.25) has completely omitted the figure of Athena. However, the temple column between the figure of Cassandra and Ajax could suggest that this act took place in a sanctuary, most likely the sanctuary of Athena. According to Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:100-101), although iconographic indicators such as altars and palm trees often denote any type of sanctuary, the "altar + palm tree" motif may also especially evoke the altar of Artemis. Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:101) further elaborates:

...there is a wider association between the sign 'altar + palm tree' and a very important aspect of the persona of Attic Artemis which comprises her involvement with the *arkteia*: Artemis as protector of *parthenoi* and of their preparation for marriage and transition into womanhood.



**Figure 4.25**  
c. 475-425 BCE

## 4.4 Summary

The Rape of Cassandra episode on Attic red-figure vases represents the figure of Cassandra with various iconographic indicators, and therefore departs from her more generic counterpart in black figure. Cassandra's nudity, however, remains a significant quality in the red-figure repertoire. The red-figure scenes therefore become more emotive revealing subtexts of human suffering, especially the suffering of women, in the context of war.

These Classical red-figure scenes thus break with the black-figure tradition in significant ways. Not only does the compositional arrangement of the iconography drastically change, but the figure of Cassandra emerges into the repertoire of Attic red-figure vase images as a prominent figure. More importantly, the eminent and vigorous image of Athena in the black-figure examples is now mostly reduced to a lifeless statue, often diminutive and giving the impression that she/it is now detached from the central action. The roles of Cassandra and Athena are now effectively reversed in red-figure vase-painting. The focus shifts significantly from an antagonistic and combative encounter between Ajax and Athena to a violent and dramatic one between Ajax and Cassandra. The context of the scene within the *Ilioupersis* also becomes clearer in red figure as the Rape of

Cassandra episode often forms part of a larger story, among other episodes, such as the death of Priam, the escape of Aeneas and the recovery of Helen. The choice of shape of these red-figure vases is also more varied, ranging from cups to volute kraters; this is a significant departure from the overwhelming majority of black-figure scenes on the amphora shape. The variety of red-figure vase shapes cause the overall composition of the scene to change and consequently suggests a shift in focus regarding the Rape of Cassandra episode in vase-painting.

## Chapter 5

### Red-figure Scenes in Context

In this chapter, the late Archaic and early Classical red-figured vase images of the Rape of Cassandra scene are contextualized in order to understand what readings they may have implied in their context of use. As discussed in chapter four, the iconography in red-figure versions of the scene changes and the vase shape on which the scene is depicted becomes more varied in the fifth century. According to my own red-figure catalogue (Cat. 2) as well as Connelly's list (Connelly 1993:111), the cup is the dominant shape for this scene during this period, followed by the krater and other shapes: the drinking cup is the most typical shape between 510-480 BCE and the larger shapes, such as the krater and kalpis, are dominant between 480-450 BCE (Connelly 1993:112). The increase in variety of vase shapes, including those related to domestic settings and weddings in the fifth century may also suggest that women were increasingly regarded as a target audience. However, since the cup and the krater are the equipment of the symposium, this scene will be examined largely in that primary context, though of course there are other contexts in which these vessels would be used or handled.

From the discussion in the previous chapter on the red-figure iconography and scene dynamics, two specific points emerge that will warrant more detailed examination in this contextual chapter. First, the observation that the scenes are composed as 'sexual pursuit' type scenes, which scholars like Sourvinou-Inwood (1987:138) and Stansbury-O'Donnell (2009:343) suggest can be interpreted as a metaphor or euphemism for marriage. Therefore the concept of marriage and its perception in the fifth century will be explored. The second is the emergence of the nude (rather than naked) and voluptuous Cassandra, along with the emergence of the nude female on Greek vases in general.

The remarkable development of a new female nude in Attic red-figure vase-painting may suggest a change in a new bodily consciousness, in which ancient Athenians become more aware of the female nude, rendering new possible meanings. As a result, this provides some insight on Cassandra's nudity in red-figure vase-painting. This is especially significant since Cassandra is a



respectable woman from a noble family, a Trojan princess, which suggests that her nudity therefore may have appeared inappropriate in a patriarchal context. This does, to some extent, discard the popular scholarly belief that it was only slaves or hetairai that were represented naked on ancient Athenian vase-painting (Bonfante 1989:559). On the other hand, Cassandra's foreign identity could be a good motive for her nude portrayals in red figure, but as deliberated in chapter five, other noble Greek women such as Helen were sometimes represented in a state of undress in red-figure vase-painting as well. Despite their cultural differences, they are thematically and emotionally connected by being represented in the context of war.

In addition, due to this dramatic change in the iconography of the Rape of Cassandra scene from the Archaic black-figure to the Classical red-figure vase images, I will look at important contextual events which may have triggered certain psychological changes, or rather a change in a collective consciousness in ancient Athenian society. One of the most significant historical developments include the Persian massacres in the wake of the Ionian revolt of 499/98 BCE and Persian Wars, which may consequently have had an impact on art in general (Connelly 1993:121).

Finally, the representation of the *Sack of Troy* in Classical Athenian tragedy is also discussed, which not only mirrors the dynamic and emotive portrayal of the Trojan scenes in fifth-century red-figure vase images, but especially highlights the plight of women in the context of war (Connelly 199:121). More importantly, this new emotive element in fifth-century Athenian society suggests how an Athenian audience may have come to develop a more sympathetic response towards the Trojans and confront the legendary Achaean conquerors that sacked Troy (Dué 2006:109). Furthermore, since the Athenians were in a war of their own during the time in which these tragedies were produced, these Troy-related stories may have possibly served as a guiding principle rendering their own wartime policies. Hall suggests that Troy could have “functioned as a mythical prism through which the fifth century refracted its own preoccupation with military conflict” (in Morwood 2000:ix).

## 5.1 Attic Pottery in Fifth century Athens

### 5.1.1 The Targeted Audience?

The idea that women in ancient Athenian society were passive and secluded is not only based on modern feminist perspectives but is supported by various ancient literary sources. It is, however, important to consider a narrow focus of analysis of women in fifth-century Athens and their approach or relationship regarding the pottery industry. This suggests that if women were actively involved in trade markets, thus buying and using these vases either ceremonially or on an everyday basis, would it not provide some useful insight as to how they may have perceived the images on Attic vases? (Tetlow 2005:72). More importantly, although these vase images were mainly authored by men, the notion that women were considered as marketed viewers for certain types of vases, especially those related to weddings is not a new concept (Bennett 2019:2).

According to Bérard (1989:89)<sup>57</sup> painted vase images in ancient Athenian society conveyed a much more complex idea of female realities, even though pottery were primarily produced by men. Thus, while the means of production of these vases were masculine, women became important customers who needed to fulfil their daily tasks as well as prescribed rituals. The vase-painters therefore may have spoken to these women directly in these images by addressing certain feminine sensibilities (Bérard 1989:89).

Therefore, because women were possibly perceived as an audience, especially in fifth-century Athens, vase-painters seem to emphasize certain social cues in vase images by representing tasks and activities pertaining to the *oikos* (Bennett 2019:2). Two of the most popular household tasks represented on Attic vases included spinning and weaving, which marked Athenian women as both female and virtuous social figures (Lewis 2002:62). Therefore, just as the battlefield predominantly belonged to men, so did women have a domain of their own. The iconography on these vase images also gives the impression that activities such as spinning and weaving were quintessential feminine activities (Lee 2015:91). These images consequently evoked a sense of familiarity and belonging which are concepts Athenian women could easily relate to. Moreover, it

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<sup>57</sup> in Bennett 2019:2.

provided women in ancient Athens with a “perceptible recognition” regarding their valued position in society (Bennett 2019:2).

Although Attic pottery had a multitude of practical functions and aesthetic value, the vase images themselves may have affected a potential consumer to buy certain ceramics. One collective idea, with which most women in ancient Athens possibly could have identified, was that of marriage, since this was possibly the most respected social construct in Classical Athens (Peterson 1997:42). It was an essential part of ancient Athenian society for it was through the marriage of Athenian citizens that a legitimate heir, if possible, male heir could be produced for the *polis* (Peterson 1997:42). Nuptial imagery on Attic red-figure vases therefore served as another significant source of ancient Athenian social ideology. With reference to the dramatic iconographical change in the Rape of Cassandra scene, so did vase images representing nuptial scenes in fifth-century Athens too change significantly.

According to Sutton (1998:28) vase-painters in Classical Athens started to employ iconographic themes that “present an internal view manifesting the physical, emotional, and spiritual bonds that bind husband and wife in marriage.” Classical vase-painters therefore started to move away from the typical Archaic chariot procession, which represented a wedding from the outside to a more intimate and sensual scheme (Sutton 1998:28). The loutrophoros fragment in Florida (Comp. cat. no 23; figure 5.1) shows a bride and bridegroom during a wedding ceremony. The groom takes his bride by her hand and wrist which may suggest that he literally takes possession of her (Peterson 1997:43). Other nuptial imagery often shows the bride preparing herself for the wedding ceremony and is then escorted to the bridal chamber. According to Sutton (1992:24) these illustrations can be regarded as visual images of persuasion, in which “female sensuality has been domesticated and brought in as a kind of Peitho to persuade the Athenian bride, and possibly her groom as well, of her proper sexuality.” In this regard, because a legitimate marriage was considered a crucial part of ancient Athenian life for both the *oikos* and *polis*, these idealized images on Attic pottery may have appealed to Athenian women as they were reminded of their own experience while they completed their various tasks and activities (Peterson 1997:44).



**Figure 5.1**  
**Wedding, bride and bridegroom**  
**425-375 BCE**

Due to this shift in emotional content, women became more important and active customers in the potters' market, which consequently had a great influence on vase shapes produced in the fifth century (Bennett 2019:10). Shapes, especially relating to weddings and domestic settings, such as loutrophoroi, lebetes gamikoi, pyxides, aryballoi, kalathoi, and epinetra increased dramatically (Bennett 2019:10).

In turn, just as Attic pottery appealed to a female audience in Classical Athens, so did they cater for a male clientele. As discussed in chapter five, the representation of female nudity in Classical red-figure vase images developed and became more prevalent. According to Bennett (2019:17), these representations, however, occurred on limited shapes, such as the kylix, which were mainly used in the context of the symposium. Connelly, however, does not distinguish the type of cup shape, but according to Boardman (2001:247) kylix was a generic term used in antiquity. Scholars today, however, assign the term kylix to the 'finer, stemmed cups.' Although the production of some of these typical 'male' vase shapes, such as cups and kraters declined after a while during the fifth century at the expense of this new demand for 'female' vase shapes, other 'male' shapes continued to remain in production. Boardman (1991:120) mentions some of these: "cups are rare, but bell-kraters and pelikai were popular into the fourth century, as was the finest of the larger late

fifth-century shapes, the hydria or kalpis, which attained an extreme degree of elegance at this time.”

### 5.1.2 The Symposium

The symposium in Classical Athens was a male aristocratic gathering in which men conversed and drank together. Most modern perceptions of the symposia in Classical Athens are shaped by what is recorded on Classical vase images. Plato’s *Symposium* and Xenophon’s *Symposium* are two ancient texts which too provide some insight into this ostentatious, pleasurable as well as political affair that occurred between ancient Athenian males (Akmenkalns & Sneed:2018).

As represented on Attic pottery, it was an activity in which only men participated and were often accompanied by hetairai (courtesans) who provided “sex and music, and no doubt conversation” (Robertson 1992:27). Although the ancient Athenian male was perceived as a rational being who possessed willpower and self-restraint as opposed to a woman, this decorous behaviour therefore seemed to have been set aside on two different occasions; in the context of war and in that of the symposium. For example, a cup in Berlin shows a youth assisting a vomiting man (Comp. cat. no 24; figure 5.2).



**Figure 5.2**  
**Draped man vomiting, youth**  
**500-450 BCE**

Another cup in Malibu (Comp. cat. no 25 figure 5.3) shows *komasts* (revellers) wearing what appears to be women's clothing participating in the *komos*, a ritualistic drunken parade (Akmenkalns & Sneed:2018)



**Figure 5.3**  
**Komasts participating in the komos**  
**500-450 BCE**

The symposium was also a sexual environment in which men engaged in both heterosexual and homosexual actions. It therefore provided a space in which citizen men could defer to the irrepressible desires and pleasures of what was perhaps expected from a male-dominated and aristocratic ancient Greek society.

Although citizen women were not permitted to participate in the symposia, they were not necessarily secluded in other occasions of commensality, but rather separated. Corner (2012:34) states:

the participation of women in the history of Greek commensality does not depend solely on female presence at male-defined symposia. Just as men had a wide range of venues in which they might socialize with one another, including public banquets (many of them religious), so too women.

However, many representations of what appears to be nude courtesans on sympotic scenes do imply that some women, especially non-citizen women were part of this male-defined symposium

and more importantly evoked an erotic nature. The female nude body, in this regard, may serve as a distinguishing factor between courtesans and citizen women in Classical Attic vase images. However, when considering the wider theme of female nudity, such as bathing or nuptial scenes, it has remained a contentious topic among modern scholarship to simply identify nude female bodies as hetairai. For example, while scholars such as Williams (1983), Keuls (1985), and Bonfante (1989) support this notion, more recent scholars such as Ferrari (2000) and Lewis (2002) argue against it (Sutton 2009:270-271). This suggests that female nudity in vase-painting can evoke different meanings when bearing in mind the different contextual cues implicit in the iconography. The Rape of Cassandra scene in red figure is set in the context of war, and although it has a strong erotic undertone, compared to its black-figure counterpart, significant themes of violence and vulnerability are evoked as well (Kilmer 1993:158-159). Moreover, as mentioned before, the various shapes of these red-figured vessels could also determine the type of context in which it was possibly used and the intended audience. The vast amount of Attic pottery with images of women in the fifth century therefore existed and were used in many different settings and had different functions. More importantly these illustrations allowed a viewer, whether male or female, to construct a type of narrative based on the image (Peterson 1997:50).

Regardless of the various possible contexts which female nudity may have evoked in fifth-century vase images, the new and conspicuous nude female body suggests a fundamental change in the iconography from Archaic black figure to Classical red figure. However, before discussing the possible motives for such a dramatic development in art, I will first discuss the concept of marriage in ancient Athens and, more importantly whether the Rape of Cassandra scene, like so many other pursuit/abduction scenes, may imply a nuptial connotation. In addition, this will provide some insight into Cassandra's symbolic bridal status, which is often evoked in Classical literature. Cassandra's emblematic violent and unwilling transition into marriage, may as a result suggest certain underlying ideologies regarding the concept of marriage in ancient Athenian society and male-female relationships.



## 5.2 Marriage: A Forceful and Unwilling Event?

### 5.2.1 An Unwilling Bride?

Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:67) states:

We have seen that the meanings produced by the iconographical theme ‘erotic pursuit’ included connotations of sexually coloured violence: sexual intercourse is about to be forced on the girl; she will be submitted to sexual violence, defloration, and sex as an act of aggression and domination of women.

With reference to the iconography of erotic pursuit/abduction scenes in chapter five, the underlying nuptial motif implied in these scenes may evoke certain cultural ideologies pertaining to marriage in fifth-century Athens. Nevertheless, although the Rape of Cassandra scene, which is explicitly set in the context of war, is to some extent different from other pursuit/abduction scenes, Cassandra does evoke the image of a bride. However, before discussing Cassandra’s possible bridal status in fifth-century Athens, it is worth investigating whether the concept of marriage was in fact such a forceful and violent event for women.

According to Sourvinou-Inwood (1988:29) since the female body was perceived as uncontrollable in ancient Athenian society, there tended to be this emblematic desire to bring female transitions under control, especially male control. The concept of marriage, in this regard, was considered a useful resolution for such regulation. When a girl reached the age of approximately fourteen, therefore at the onset of menstruation, she became a *parthenos*, which can be interpreted as a “liminal creature,” or virgin, thus mature enough to bear children yet still unmarried (Lee 2015:45). According to Lee (2015:45), this stage was very challenging for women and was fraught with anxieties surrounding a proper transition, he elaborates:

sexual intercourse must not take place before marriage; following marriage, the birth of a child was required to achieve true adult status. Given the particular concerns surrounding patrilineage, the virginal female body was arguably the most socially regulated in ancient Greece.

(Lee 2015:45)

The body of a woman in ancient Athenian society was therefore primarily valued for her ability to reproduce children, especially male heirs. A *parthenos* who got married and was able to fulfil this

social obligation was known as a *gyne* or woman and are consistently represented fully clothed and often in many layers of cloth (Lee 2015:46). Although this more fully clad representation can be considered less erotic, it does to some extent, accentuate the reproductive capacities of the female body (Lee 2015:46). With reference to chapter five, the figure of Cassandra only appears fully dressed in a few red-figured examples,<sup>58</sup> which do not follow this type of figure-hugging form since her body is completely concealed beneath layers of clothing. Her loose garments in red-figure examples, however, may resemble a *krokotos*. This garment was typically worn by women in the final stage of the *arkteia* which enhanced an Athenian's girl status as a marriageable woman (Sourvinou-Inwood 1988:123).

As briefly discussed in chapter five, the general perception of an unmarried Athenian girl was that she was regarded as a wild thing which could only be tamed through marriage (Sourvinou-Inwood 1987:138). According to common ancient Athenian belief, *parthenoi*, especially, were considered to possess an "unbridled sexuality" that could have easily ventured into a state of "animality" (Stewart 1997:164). The domestic institution of marriage was therefore an essential part of an Athenian woman's life as it was the final stage of her domestication process (Sourvinou-Inwood 1987:138). Some of these cultural and ideological assumptions therefore suggest that unmarried women in ancient Greece were considered reckless and were required to be under constant supervision, which only could have been possible through marriage (Reeder 1995:300).

According to Dougherty (2003:45) the rhetoric of marriage rituals and myths are often transformed from what appears to be a violent and unruly act into a rather familiar and benevolent process. In this regard, what is actually considered a brutal and harsh event is consequently naturalized and civilized (Dougherty 2003:45). This dichotomy of violence and consent regarding marriage is particularly evident in many ancient Greek myths, such as the rape of Persephone by Hades. Persephone's abduction is perhaps one of the most well-known wedding/marriage paradigms in ancient Greek mythology, in which Persephone dies a symbolic death, in order to evoke her transition from child to a matured woman. Sourvinou-Inwood (1991:67) elaborates: "Within the matrimonial facet of the theme's semantic field that death was symbolic, the death of the girl, to give way to the wife and mother". The motif of marriage as death is also prevalent in fifth-century

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<sup>58</sup> Rf cat. no 8; figure 4.13, Rf cat. no 13; figure 4.9, Rf cat. no 14; figure 4.17, Rf cat. no 17; figure 4.23, Rf cat. no 19.

Athenian tragedy. In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* and Euripides' *Trojan Women* there are several indications of Cassandra's bridal status and her highly anticipated death.

Connelly (1993:121) refers to the powerful scene in the *Agamemnon* (1269-1270) in which Cassandra is in a state of prophetic vision and on the verge of throwing off her oracular garments: "Look, Apollo himself is stripping me of my prophetic garb" (Aesch. Ag. 1269-1270).<sup>59</sup> According to Connelly (1993:121) this particular image of Cassandra flinging off her garments calls to mind a pivotal moment of ancient Athenian girls' initiation rites: "the shedding of the *krokotos*" (Connelly 1993:121). In this regard, taking off ritual garments may have been as important as putting them on, especially in the process of acquiring a new or modified identity (Goff 2004:111). In Euripides' *Trojan Women*, Cassandra similarly strips off her garments and adornments recalling yet another divestment scene:

O garlands of that god most dear to me! Farewell, you mystic symbols! I here resign your feasts,  
my joy in days gone by. Go, I tear you from my body, that, while yet mine honor is intact, I may  
give them to the rushing winds to waft to you, my prince of prophecy!

Eur. *Tro.* 450-454 (trans. Coleridge 1891)

This significant and powerful act of stripping of her garlands therefore transforms her prophetic costume into a nuptial one, while she physically performs her delirium on stage "in a perversion of preparations for her 'marriage' to Agamemnon" (Connelly 1993:121). Cassandra's sexual maturity in red-figure vase images, therefore, suggests that she is an eligible *parthenos*, evoking a bride-to-be.

The concept of marriage in ancient Greek society is therefore often perceived as an ambiguous act, thought to be unified by both violence and sexuality (Dougherty 2003:45). Both ancient literary sources and visual material, such as vase-painting, evoke certain assumptions regarding social coercion towards ancient Athenian brides and their continued fear of marriage (Wasdin 2018:198).

The scholiast on Theocritus briefly describes what occurred on the wedding night: "The maidens sing the epithalamium before the wedding chamber, so that the voice of the maiden forced by her husband might not be heard, but escape notice by being covered up by the voice of the maidens"

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<sup>59</sup> (trans. Smyth 1926)

(Wasdin 2018:198).<sup>60</sup> Ancient literary sources therefore perpetually evoke this stereotypical idea that marriage in ancient Athenian society was a forceful and rather violent experience for the bride involved. However, according to Reeder (1995:300), the thought of the marriageable *parthenos* as a wild animal that had to be tamed, was possibly regarded as a positive image and perhaps accepted by both a male and female audience (Reeder 1995:300). Moreover, as discussed earlier, most of these vases in the Classical period were mostly used by females, which could suggest that they might have found these violent representations acceptable (Stewart 1997:174).

It would, therefore, be completely unrealistic to assume that every marriageable woman in ancient Greece was filled with certain anxieties surrounding sexual violence. The nuptial motif pertaining to violence and sexuality which is implicit in fifth-century red-figured pursuit/abduction scenes, however, does to some degree, raise an awareness regarding the overall perception and treatment of women in a male-dominated society.

Just as the diminutive black-figure Cassandra evokes the running bears in the cult of Artemis at Brauron, so does the red-figure Cassandra possibly allude to a more erotic quality of the *arkteia*. As discussed earlier, Cassandra's nude physique and loose garments in red-figure vase-painting therefore may resemble a *krokotos*, a garment associated to *krokos*, better known as saffron (Goff 2004:111). Goff (2004:111) maintains that during a certain stage of the *arkteia*, when girls wore the *krokotos* they were introduced and placed into the system of adult sexuality and therefore on the verge of marriage. Sourvinou-Inwood (1988:30) however, disputes this notion that the *arkteia* was an event which had to occur just at, or very soon before marriage, but maintains that it should rather be a precondition that had to take place at a time before marriage.

## 5.3 A Change in the Collective Consciousness?

### 5.3.1 The Development of the Female Nude in Classical Athens

Considering the dramatic change in representation of women on Attic pottery from the Archaic period to the Classical period, it seems that a significant change may have developed in the collective consciousness regarding the perception of women in ancient Athenian society. For example, not only did women become more prominent in vase-painting at the beginning of the

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Pollux 3.42 and Antiphanes AP 9.245= 3 *Gph*

fifth century, but the types of scenes in which they appeared became more diverse (Bennett 2019:2). Subsequently, women became the focus of a single or a series of vase scenes and therefore demanded more attention from the viewer. Another significant development was the overwhelming number of nude female bodies that appeared on ancient Athenian vases. The Rape of Cassandra scene is perhaps one of the most prominent mythological vase images that demonstrates this transformation which shows the figure of Cassandra gradually developing into a more sexual female figure and becoming more conspicuous to the viewer's gaze through her central position in the picture field, size and erotic nature.

In the Archaic period, Homer's *Iliad* (2.258-262) implies how the idea of nakedness suggested "shame, vulnerability, death, and dishonor" (Bonfante 1989:547). In the following passage Odysseus threatens the hero Thersites with stripping him naked: "If I catch you once again acting mindlessly as this [...] If I don't get my hands on you, strip you of your clothes - the cloak and tunic that cover your genitals - thrash you [...]" (*Il.*2.258-262).<sup>61</sup> In the *Odyssey* (6.126-129), a naked Odysseus covers himself with leaves from a bush before Nausicaa, a young and unmarried woman (Bonfante 1989:547). This incident, however, does not necessarily suggest that Odysseus might have felt weak and defenceless, but perhaps because his nudity in this specific situation was simply inappropriate.

Ancient literary sources therefore have been perpetuating these ideological beliefs regarding nakedness, especially female nakedness, which was initially perceived as shameful, vulnerable and often perilous (Bonfante 1989:544). Because ancient literature was mainly shaped by a patriarchal ideology, certain provocative notions surrounding female nakedness developed into perpetuating stereotypes in ancient Athenian society. This induces the notion that a clothed female body is regarded as more respectable than a naked/nude body. Stewart (1997:41) states: "a woman's body must be contained by clothes, constricted by a girdle, capped by a veil, and controlled by a man - and it's still dangerous even then".

However, due the increase in the number of unclothed women depicted in Attic red-figured vase images, the female nude became a consistent and perhaps acceptable notion in polite society (Cohen 1993:41). Thus, unlike the Archaic nude male which first took prevalence on monumental

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<sup>61</sup> (trans, Jones 2003:28)

scale, such as in sculpture, the new female nude physique started to unfold in red-figure vase-painting (Cohen 1993:39-41). The red-figure technique, in this regard, created room for painters in which they could explore the various aspects of human anatomy, as well as the ability to reveal certain emotions (Stewart 1997:59). Iconographic indicators such as posture, gesture and facial expression therefore suggestively enriched the aesthetic and emotive value of a vase scene.

Although the consistent portrayal of the female nude in Classical red-figure vase-painting in most instances can conjure an erotic connotation, it may evoke other possible meanings as well. Stewart (1997:165) acknowledges that the female nude in certain social contexts can function as a tool to suggest sexual violence against women. Additionally, this may evoke certain underlying social and psychological ideologies that reinforce male dominance over the female.

Although these images may have been prevalent in the context of the symposium, other scenes that include the female nude such as bathing scenes or nuptial scenes which show brides preparing for their wedding tend to evoke a much more positive notion. This, however, does not necessarily mean that there really existed an idea of a respectable nude and dishonourable nude, but rather that the thought of the nude female body became more acceptable in art, due to certain underlying developing perspectives in society. More importantly, it depends on the context of the vase scene itself, as Lewis (2002:149) states: [...] “nudity in art has different meanings in different contexts”.

Although scholars<sup>62</sup> have been debating as to why this new female bodily consciousness developed in the beginning of the fifth century, one rather conceivable answer to this question is shared by both Bennett (2019) and Elshtain (1987). According to Bennett (2019:2) during the fifth century, Athens was going through a time of instability and uncertainty due to the effects of extended wars. Elshtain (1987:3) too, suggests that perhaps because Athens was in a time of war, women were now considered the “collective other to the male warrior.” This once again evokes the notion of complementary opposition regarding gender ideology in ancient Greek culture. These types of binary concepts involving private life and public life; *oikos* and state; emotional and rational and compassionate and violent are embedded in ancient Greek ideology. In a time of war, women were therefore transformed into “custodians of culture” in which they “embodied particular ethical aspirations but were denied a place in the corridors of power” (Elshtain 1990:262).

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<sup>62</sup>Cohen (1993);Sutton (2009);

And although women were evidently perceived as wild animals in need of civilising, during a time of war, the idealisation of a woman's body thus evolved into its purest, most modest and most beautiful form, consequently recapitulating the complete beauty of it, the "lady unbesmirched" (Elshtain 1987:141).

Thus, like many other signs and symbols in art, the image of the female nude is regarded as polysemic, therefore evoking several different meanings depending on the context of that particular image and the social and political values that underline it. With reference to the female nude, Nead (1992:57) states that:

Metaphorical language constitutes the receptive surface as bare, resistant, without meaning until it is inscribed with the signs of style. But this structure is then repeated; for woman's body is itself a metaphorical blank surface which is given meaning through the values of the dominant culture.

Therefore, with regards to these primarily male interpretations and perceptions of the female nude in art, the nude female figure remains an inactive partner within the interpretative process. A general perception of female nudity in ancient Greek society, especially with regards to their supposed 'cloistered existence' suggests that although it may not have been entirely acceptable in a patriarchal society, certain contextual factors could have contributed to this new development in art. According to Cohen (1993:45), "[...] to see a beautiful, aristocratic nude young woman in a violent mythological context" must, at first, have seemed shocking to an ancient Athenian audience. However, as mentioned before, it may have been more acceptable in "the eroticized context" of Classical red-figure vase-painting (Cohen 1993:45). In the case of the Rape of Cassandra scene, the context of war and notions of violence and vulnerability are clearly communicated, which may have been consequently influenced by the perceptions of a war-stricken society.

### **5.3.2 The Fifth Century: Violence and Instability**

The changes to the figure of Cassandra in early red-figure vase-painting are quite significant as the viewer is confronted with her individual suffering. By the middle of the fifth century, Cassandra's mythological character becomes even more conspicuous as she assumes a prominent role in ancient Athenian drama and continued to receive close attention in vase-painting (Connelly 1993:121). Overall the context of the *Ilioupersis* became a prominent theme in Attic pottery where



scenes portraying the various *Ilioupersis* episodes evoke the different elements of war, such as suffering, destruction, violence and death (Connelly 1993:121). The *Sack of Troy* therefore became a prevalent theme in Classical art, especially Attic vase-painting. According to Boardman (1975:3), Trojan-related themes were considered very popular in fifth-century vase-painting, and about 75% represented *Ilioupersis* scenes.

This overwhelming focus of mythological characters shown in the context of the *Ilioupersis*, came at a time when Athens were going to war with Persia (the Graeco-Persian Wars or Persian Wars which took place between 499-449 BCE). Garland (2017:15) refers to the Ionian Revolt 499 BCE and first major battle as the “the opening act” of the Greco-Persians Wars. The events of this fatal incident which incited years of bloodshed between the Persians and Greeks resulted from an official visit by the deputy tyrant of the Ionian city Miletus, Aristagoras (Garland 2017:13). This occurred during a time when the Ionian Greeks wanted to revolt against the Persians as they had been subjugated by the Persians for almost half a century (Garland 2017:13). Aristagoras, therefore sought help from major Greek city-states such as Sparta and Athens. Although he was dismissed by Sparta and consequently driven out by Cleomenes the Lacedaemonian, Athens, on the other hand, agreed to support him by sending twenty ships. The Milesian was also aided by the Euboian city of Eretria, which was able to furnish five ships. Herodotus, however, regarded this as a senseless act (Garland 2017:13-14):

This he said adding that the Milesians were settlers from Athens, whom it was only right to save seeing that they themselves were a very powerful people. There was nothing which he did not promise in the earnestness of his entreaty, till at last he prevailed upon them. It seems, then, that it is easier to deceive many than one, for he could not deceive Cleomenes of Lacedaemon, one single man, but thirty thousand Athenians he could.

Hdt.5.97.2 (trans, Godley 1920)

Like the Eretrians, the Athenians presumably felt a great kinship with the Ionians due to their similar cultural and religious customs (Dougherty 1996:253). In 499 BCE, as a combined naval force, the Athenians and Eretrians made their way across the Aegean and came ashore at Ephesus, a city not far from Miletus, where they joined the other Ionian rebels (Garland 2017:14). They then launched an unexpected attack on Sardis, which was located about eighty miles from Ephesus. And as the fighting progressed the Greeks were able to capture the city which ultimately caught

fire and consumed everything (Garland 2017:14). More importantly, the fire spread to one of Sardis's most sacred buildings, the Temple of Cybele. Herodotus explains these events:

While the city was burning, the Lydians and all the Persians who were in the citadel, being hemmed in on every side since the fire was consuming the outer parts and having no exit from the city, came thronging into the marketplace and to the river Pactolus [...] In the fire at Sardis, a temple of Cybebe, the goddess of that country, was burnt, and the Persians afterwards made this their pretext for burning the temples of Hellas.

Hdt.5.101.2 & 102.1 (trans, Godley 1920)

The Greeks, however, who were reluctant to continue fighting on enemy turf, withdrew to Ephesus, and as a result, were pursued and defeated by the Persians instead (Garland 2017:15). Subsequently, suffering a heavy blow, the Athenians and Eretrians sailed home and left the Ionians to their fate (Hdt.5.103.1). Aristagoras, refusing to accept their defeat continued to wage war against the Persians and appealed to others, such as Thrace and Cyprus for aid. On the other hand, the Persians' desire for vengeance escalated which consequently spurred a sequence of ruthless attacks on Greek cities. And since it was Miletus that instigated the Ionian Revolt, the Persians sacked the city in 494 BCE which shook the whole of Greece and beyond (Garland 2017:15). According to Herodotus (6.19.3), after the Persians massacred the soldiers of Miletus and enslaved its women and children, they plundered and burnt the sacred Temple of Apollo at Didyma and set it alight. And as Herodotus mentioned, it was considered a vengeful act for the initial destruction of the Temple of Cybele (Hdt.5.102.1).

The sack of Miletus had a great impact on the revolt itself, as Garland states (2017:15): "the back of the revolt was broken." It was regarded as one of the largest and most well-off Ionian cities, and a place of scientific and philosophical inquiry (Garland 2017:15). Additionally, according to Garland (2017:15), the Athenians and Eretrians' abandonment of the Ionians may have induced a level of moral culpability. Shortly after the sack of Miletus, a tragedy entitled the *Capture of Miletus* by an Athenian dramatist, Phrynichus, suggests how deeply affected the Athenian people were by this (Garland 2017:15). Herodotus (6.21.2)<sup>63</sup> talks about the effect the play had on the Athenians: "the whole theatre fell to weeping; they fined Phrynichus a thousand drachmas for

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<sup>63</sup> (trans, Godley 1920)

bringing to mind a calamity that affected them so personally and forbade the performance of that play forever.” The Athenians, however, suffered a similar fate in 480 BCE, when Xerxes launched an attack on Athens. Although the Athenians had evacuated the whole city, some remained behind to guard the Acropolis. Xerxes ordered his men to set the city alight to avenge the burning of Sardis in 498 BCE during the Ionian Revolt (Garland 2017:62). Most of the Athenians, however, retreated to Salamis and eventually were able to defeat the Persians in a decisive victory.

The effects of the Ionian Revolt and the events that followed, thus presumably had a major impact on the ancient Athenians. The following section provides some insight on how captives, specifically female captives, were treated in the context of war. More importantly, although vase-painting is regarded as a medium of its own and therefore independent of ancient written sources, the same hubristic and unjustified act depicted on red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes resonates with fifth-century Athenian literature (Dué 2006:94). In the following section, the representation of the *Ilioupersis* in fifth-century Athenian tragedy is discussed. Accordingly, the sympathetic treatment of the war captives in Aeschylus’ *Persians* and *Agamemnon*, and Euripides’ *Trojan Women* and *Andromache*, may shed some light on the atrocities the Trojans faced in their defeat against the Achaeans and how this may have evoked a sympathetic response from an Athenian audience.

### 5.3.3 Violence in the Context of Ancient Greek Warfare

When a city in ancient times was under siege, the women had limited options, which were either to die or be enslaved (Schaps 1982:202). However, Schaps (1982:202) states that unlike in modern warfare, although death was often regarded as an alternative to defeat, women in ancient warfare generally did not have to fear death as a primary option. For the behaviour of warriors in the context of war did follow certain rules which aligned with their warrior code (Vikman 2005:25). Van Wees (1992)<sup>64</sup> refers to the Trojan War, in which a code of treatment is clearly implemented based on gendered principles. Accordingly, Trojan men were slaughtered, and Trojan women raped and enslaved (Vikman 2005:25). However, in *The Peloponnesian War* (7.29.4)<sup>65</sup>, Thucydides talks about a rare occasion in which the Thracians killed women and children during

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<sup>64</sup> in Vikman 2005:25

<sup>65</sup> (trans, Dent & Dutton 1910)

a siege of Mycalessus. In Euripides' fifth-century Athenian tragedy, *Trojan Women*, Polyxena is killed as a sacrificial gift to Achilles at his tomb (Eur. *Tro.*622). These examples from ancient texts suggest the erratic behaviour which existed in war and that the fate of captives depended on the context itself. Schaps (1982:204) states despite these rare occasions in which women were slaughtered in warfare, it did occur on a more regular basis when Greeks fought against foreigners or 'barbarians.' Apart from Thucydides' account of the siege of Mycalessus, Schaps (1982:204) provides two more historical examples mentioned by Diodorus in which the victors behaved with no restraint regarding captured women: the Carthaginians at Selinus<sup>66</sup> and the Greeks at Moyte.<sup>67</sup>

Rape, on the other hand was an inevitable act and regarded as normal behaviour in the context of war (Schaps 1982:203). The victors of war considered female captives as part of their booty and often became the wives, concubines, slaves or battle-camp trophy of the male victors (Askin 1997:21). The physical violence or loss of freedom which female captives had to endure were more importantly recognized as a strategic attempt to humiliate the defeated enemy (men) by stripping them of their property and dignity (Heckel & McLeod 2015:253). According to Lerner (1986:80) the act of rape in the context of war had a 'double effect' on the conquered women and men. Firstly, it caused great dishonour to the women and secondly, served as a symbolic castration of their men, for men who cannot protect their wives, sisters, and children's virtue are regarded as truly powerless and dishonoured (Lerner 1986:80).

Rape or sexual violence in connection to the siege of a city is, however, hardly ever and explicitly mentioned in ancient literary sources (Schaps 1982:203). Herodotus writes about one of these occurrences when the Persians passed through one of the ancient regions of Greece, Phocis, in which some women were killed as a result of mass rape. According to Herodotus (Hdt.8.33), the Persian soldiers pursued and caught some of the Phocians near the mountains in which certain women died because of the "multitude of their violators" (Godley 1920). Homer's *Iliad* (2.354-356) provides a much more explicit indication in Nestor, a Greek charioteer's speech, in which he demands that no Greek soldier be permitted to return home before he has slept with a Trojan wife. Other indications, however, are relatively routine references to an idea of 'grabbing' or 'dragging' women during a siege (Heckel & McLeod 2015:254). Proclus' summary of Arktinus' *Ilioupersis*,

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<sup>66</sup> Diod. *Sic.*13. 56-57

<sup>67</sup> Diod. *Sic.*13.53.1

although it is regarded as rather ambiguous, also mentions how Ajax forcefully dragged Cassandra from the statue of Athena.

Despite the violence and turmoil which occurred in a war-stricken country, it is worth discussing the effects of a distant war, namely how the women who endured certain hardships at home, while the men were away. Although the effects of a distant war are not as grievous and brutal as those who were faced with mortal danger, it did affect women to some extent; loneliness being the most immediate hardship (Schaps 1982:206). More importantly, these women often faced widowhood or spinsterhood (Schaps 1982:207). During a time of war, a city often suffered from deprivation, since there was no one capable of working the fields or manage the trade industry properly and this resulted in a lack of imported products (Schaps 1982:206).

Nevertheless, with most of the men away at war, and women and children left behind, female images started to feature more prominently in Attic vase images. Bennett (2019:3) makes an interesting comparison between the evolving images which were created during the time of the Persian wars in fifth-century Athens, and the visual material that was distributed during the World Wars of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries CE. In both instances, there developed significant changes in these images, which may suggest a shift in the collective consciousness. According to Bennet (2019:3), this modern comparison may help serve as a ‘backdrop’ for people to understand these social and ideological changes which occurred in fifth century Athens. Bennett elaborates on how women during World War II, too, started to occupy a more prominent role in visual material:

The first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century CE included similar times of uncertainty, war, economic booms for some, and changes in target demographics for advertising, much like during the High Classical Period [...] there are dramatic changes in how women are depicted and popular subject matter. There is a movement towards more diverse scene types including women.

(Bennett 2019:3)

With reference to the previous section, women became a more targeted consumer for tradesmen, like Athenian vase-painters, who appealed to women’s feminine sensibilities and female realities. As mentioned by Bennett (2019:3), vase-painters in the ancient Athenian trade market may have motivated their clientele with certain market strategies, one being to be able to create an emotional connection between the buyer and the image of the vase itself. In this regard, nuptial imagery and

domestic scenes may have fulfilled an Athenian woman's needs for self-fulfilment, respect and recognition. However, according to Peterson (1997:44) these industrious and virtuous vase scenes of women in ancient Athenian society also helped to reinforce patriarchal propaganda and certain notions of female virtue.

### 6.3.4 The Ilioupersis in Fifth-Century Athenian Tragedy

After years of fighting in The Persian Wars, the ancient Greeks were subsequently faced with wars between city states: The Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE) was fought between Athens and her allies and Sparta and her allies (Brice 2012:120). It was during this time that fifth-century Athenian tragedians such as Euripides, Aeschylus and Sophocles produced some of the most eminent and provocative tragedies. They drew much of their inspiration from the Homeric epics, which regarded war as a glorious and celebratory event that defined men while fifth-century tragedians both celebrated and lamented it (McDonald 2006:83).

Ferrari (2000:120) refers to Schefold and Jung<sup>68</sup>, who recognized how the representations of the *Sack of Troy* on Athenian vases started to increase dramatically from the 490s BCE. The murder of Priam at the altar of Zeus *Herkeios*, the rape of Cassandra at the statue of Athena, the murder of Astyanax, and the sacrifice of Polyxena, all embody the effects of the Trojan War. This consequently developed onto the platform of fifth-century Athenian tragedy. As a result, the brutality of war became a significant theme in both mediums (art and literature). However, considering the historical circumstances in which these plays were produced and performed it may have provoked a mixed array of emotions from the Athenians (Dué 2006:102). The Trojans and the fifth-century Persians were often symbolically connected, as both evoke the savage enemy who fought against the Greeks. However, with reference to the representation of Cassandra as a vulnerable victim of war in Classical red-figure vase-painting, the Trojans as a whole, evidently were also represented as the ultimate victim in fifth-century theatre.

In view of this new sympathetic response to the conquered enemy, Dué asks the following questions which are relevant to this change in reception (Dué 2006:103): “How does the representation of the victims of Troy resonate with the contemporary events of the Peloponnesian

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<sup>68</sup> Schefold, K. & Jung, F. 1989. *Die Sagen von den Argonauten, von Theben und Troia in der klassischen und hellenistischen Kunst*. Munich. 283-285.

War, in which the Athenians are the destroyers of cities and the enslavers of women? Are the Athenians being asked to confront their current actions?" Before attempting to answer any of Due's questions it is perhaps necessary to look at some of the fifth-century Athenian plays which may reflect underlying ideas/reservations regarding the Greeks' behaviour in warfare.

Aeschylus's drama, the *Persians* (472 BCE) is the only one of the extant tragedies that is explicitly based on the most recent events which eventually led to the Persians' defeat in 479 BCE (McDonald 2006:85). More importantly, Aeschylus narrates and laments the Persians' defeat from their own perspective, thus evoking an underlying sympathetic quality. Even though the Athenians regarded the Persians' as one of their worst enemies for a long time, they were capable of sympathizing with them less than a decade after the battle of Salamis (Dué 2006:108). Dué (2006:108) states that although Aeschylus characterized the Persians with foreign traits, their suffering can be considered universal.

Like many of Aeschylus' plays, *Persians* evokes a religious consideration which consequently places the Persians in the wrong, since they have greatly offended the gods by committing sacrilege. The following passage from the play refers to King Darius' spirit voicing his discontent for his son, Xerxes' hubristic behaviour:

[...] Here they will meet their crowning disaster in requital for their presumptuous pride and impious thoughts. For, on reaching the land of Hellas, restrained by no religious awe, they ravaged the images of the gods and set fire to their temples. Altars have been destroyed, statues of the gods have been thrown from their bases in utter ruin and confusion. Therefore, since they wrought such evil, evil they suffer in no less measure [...]

Aesch.*Pers.*807-813 (trans, Smyth 1926)

Euripides' *Andromache* (428-425 BCE) and *Trojan Women* (415 BCE) are perhaps two of the most significant examples that imply the present victimization of the Trojans. The captive women of Troy occupy a central role, and through their lament draw the Athenian audience into their anguish (Dué 2006:102-103). *Andromache* dramatizes the life of Hector's widow who has lived as a slave for years after she had been taken prisoner by Neoptolemus. It also tells us about the trouble and danger she faces regarding her captor's new wife, Hermione. Throughout the play, the character of Andromache is constantly belittled due to her slave and barbarian status, especially



by the Spartan, Hermione. Euripides talks about the Spartan wife's cruelty towards Andromache, who had hoped for a better life after her terrible misfortune:

Formerly, though I was sunk in misfortune, the hope always drew me to him that if the child lived my family would find some kind of help and defense. But ever since Neoptolemus married Hermione, spurning my bed since he was master and I a slave, I have been hounded with cruel ill-treatment by her.

(Eur.*Andr.*26-31).<sup>69</sup>

*Trojan Women* is set just after the city of Troy had been sacked, and in which the women are taken prisoner by the victorious and avaricious Greek warriors. The text itself is filled with emotional laments which evoke the women of Troy's sorrow over the loss of their freedom, husbands and children. In the following passage Andromache laments Astyanax, her son's fate, after the Greeks condemned him to death:

You Greeks! You have dreamed up such cruelties  
Even the barbarians would flinch at! Why  
Are you killing this Child? What has he done  
In his innocence? He's guilty of nothing!

Eur. *Tro.* 764-767 (trans, Taylor 2007:37)

And later in the play, Hecuba, laments the loss of her children:

Cassandra, my child, what violation will end  
Your consecrated virginity, that mystic ecstasy  
You shared with Dionysus, and all the gods?  
And you, my poor Polyxena,  
Where are you now? None of my children  
Neither sons or daughters-and there were so many of them.

Eur. *Tro.* 500-504 (trans, Taylor 2007:25)

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<sup>69</sup> (trans, Kovacs)

These passages from ancient Athenian drama conspicuously represent the Greeks with barbaric and sacrilegious qualities. Ferrari (2000:128) states that although a degree of savagery was anticipated by the heroic code, in representations of the Trojan War, this kind of behaviour is primarily attributed to the Achaeans, revealed in their actions of murdering children and human sacrifice. Hall (1989:1) however argues that in Greek epic there is little distinction made between the Greeks and Trojans, whereas in tragedy, Trojans are recognized as barbarians. According to Hall (1989:1-2) the Trojans are ascribed with foreign customs, speech, clothing and behaviour, and as a result are equated with the Persians of the fifth century BCE. Nevertheless, when considering fifth-century red-figured vase-paintings such as the Rape of Cassandra scene and Athenian plays, the Trojans in most instances, are portrayed as Greek. As discussed in chapter five, some examples show Cassandra with coiffed hair and wearing a concealing peplos, thus evoking a proper Greek woman. Furthermore, Trojan warriors which do appear in some red-figure *Ilioupersis* scenes resemble Greek hoplites.

Du   (2006:104-105) states that Hall is therefore forced to admit “that there is a significant subgroup of ‘noble barbarians’ in Greek tragedy,” referring in most instances to Trojan women. With reference to fifth-century Athenian tragedy, not only are these women depicted sympathetically, but are often “morally superior” in their behaviour and actions to their Greek captors (Du   2006:105). In *Trojan Women*, Cassandra mentions how the Trojans had more glory on the battlefield than the Greeks because they were fighting to defend themselves, suggesting a sense of honour on the part of the Trojans. She says:

Oh yes, the whole Greek nation  
Has a great deal to thank their army for!  
There were other things too, terrible things,  
Things better left unsaid, not fit  
To be spoken by the tongue of a consecrated virgin.  
But our Trojans! What a contrast there! They won  
The greatest of all glories. They died  
Fighting for their fatherland!

Eur. *Tro.* 385-389 (trans, Taylor 2007:20)

Although the Spartans are portrayed as the common enemy in Euripides' *Andromache* and therefore assume their contemporary role in the Peloponnesian War, the Trojans yet sympathize with them. Euripides' *Hecuba* (Eur. *Hec.* 650-655)<sup>70</sup> provides an astonishing passage in which the women of Troy share their compassion for the Spartan women, who too have experienced a similar sense of loss due to the atrocities of war.

Tragedy in fifth-century Athens therefore not only disintegrates the boundaries which Hall first claimed to have existed between the Greeks and the Trojans but emphasizes the commonality of their pain and suffering (Dué 2006:107). The Greeks in these Athenian tragedies thus become the Persians, and the Athenians identify with the Trojans. The Peloponnesian War context thus evokes a dramatic shift in emotional alliances, in which they are now able to identify with the Trojans (Dué 2006:108). Although these fifth-century Athenian tragedies may be regarded as a protest against certain war policies during the time of the Peloponnesian War, it may also serve as a challenge or “questioning of imperialist ideology” (Dué 2006:149). Dué (2006:149), in this regard, maintains that being confronted by events of the *Ilioupersis* and the suffering of Trojan women provokes certain questions to the Athenians concerning recent political decisions.

## 5.4 Summary

The *Ilioupersis* in fifth-century Attic red-figure vase-painting thus evolved into a prevalent theme in which the Rape of Cassandra scene is presented within its greater context. This could be a result of certain changes in the perception of time and events which are reflected in these images. According to Connelly (1993:120), not only did the *Ilioupersis* become a more familiar subject in fifth-century Athenian society, but its popularity may have been governed by historical developments such as the Persian Wars. Women occupied a more central and conspicuous role in these images, in which the production of ‘female vase shapes’ rapidly increased as well. Themes pertaining to domestic settings, such as spinning and weaving, became more prevalent, thus evoking the quintessential roles of women in ancient Athenian society. Furthermore, like the evolution of the Rape of Cassandra scene in red figure, nuptial scenes became more emotive and dynamic. The wedding scene in red-figure vase-painting therefore departed from the general

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<sup>70</sup> (trans, Coleridge 1938)

detached parading scene in Archaic black figure to a more intimate portrayal of an Athenian bride and groom.

Red-figure iconography in the fifth century therefore provided vase-painters with an inventive platform to explore various compositional aspects, especially in representing human emotion. This, however, also led to the portrayal of human suffering in which certain emotional states such as pain, fear and vulnerability became more prevalent. Many pursuit/abduction scenes in red figure therefore reveal a different view about marriage in ancient Athenian society, often evoking underlying notions of violence against women. Moreover, these misogynistic and patriarchal notions regarding the perception and treatment of women are explicitly conveyed in ancient literary sources. As a result, these red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes emphasize Cassandra's individual suffering which is eventually echoed in poetry and drama.

Unlike in Archaic black-figure examples the female nude becomes a prominent aspect in vase-painting, often evoking different meanings depending on the image's context. As discussed in previous chapters of this thesis, female nudity, especially in art is prone to more than one interpretation.

Owing to the context of war, the *Ilioupersis* scenes in red figure therefore exemplify the effects of war, especially focusing on its human element. The Trojans, who often have been assimilated with the Persians, now assume a sympathetic role in vase-painting. Cassandra's character in both drama and art in the fifth century therefore evokes a variety of evolving connotations in a developing society, as she embodies various personas ranging from a foreign princess, beauty, bride, prisoner of war and priestess (Connelly 1993:123). The *Sack of Troy* is therefore emblematically retold in the fifth century from the perspective of the victims of war and not the victors. In this regard, attempting to look at these red-figured Rape of Cassandra scenes in context, suggests underlying ideological and psychological undercurrents of fifth-century Athenian society regarding the effects of war.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

In this thesis I aimed to investigate the Rape of Cassandra scene in Archaic and Classical Athenian black- and red-figured vase-painting through iconographical analysis of these vase images in context. The investigation has shown significant differences between the black-figure and red-figure iconography of the two periods. It was therefore important to explore the differing contexts in which these vase images were created to find possible reasons for these changes. In order to understand these differences in the iconography, it is useful to investigate what the differing contexts of these vase images are and whether the social norms and ideals of a patriarchal society are reflected in these artistic representations. In other words, what potential social views or subtexts operate in these images or may have influenced their depiction/production.

In view of the of the iconography and differing contexts of the Rape of Cassandra vase images, existing evidence was therefore brought together to look through a modern lens to the historical, social and cultural setting in which the ancients (artists and audience) interacted. My survey of scholarship and the vase corpus reveals three conceivable conceptual ‘shifts’ in interest that occur in the collective consciousness of ancient Athenian society between 575-400 BCE: 1) generic to individual; 2) divine to human; 3) epic to tragic (Connelly 1993:123).

These are primarily implicit in the change in emphasis from Athena in black figure to Cassandra in red figure. The roles of Athena and Cassandra are thus reversed, consequently evoking different subtexts in each period. In most black-figured examples, the impersonal figure of Cassandra resembles a faceless bystander/fugitive/victim of war, thus affording her no individual identity. The figure of Athena, which has been compared in the scholarship to the Panathenaic Athena assumes a recurring and prominent role in the narrative scene. The entire scene configuration in most black-figured examples therefore evokes a generic battle scene in which two warriors fight each other in combat. The insignificance of Cassandra and the prevalence of the battle between a warrior and god suggest the importance of a cultic religion and the implication of sacrilege in sixth-century Athens. Cassandra, in turn, is the archetypal inconspicuous female figure and faceless captive woman in the context of war.

Cassandra in red figure however develops into a more prominent figure who takes centre stage in the narrative scene. More importantly, Cassandra is attributed with an individual identity and thus becomes a familiar character to the viewer of these vase images. Her nude figure and vulnerable demeanour in red figure now explicitly evoke a vulnerable captive woman in the context of war. This shift from generic to individual focus pertaining to the Rape of Cassandra scene shows how women in the Classical period occupied a more visible role in ancient Athenian art and literature than women in the Archaic period.

The setting in black-figure examples contain various signs and symbols associated with cultic religion and sacrilege; altars and the base of a cultic statue. However, in most black-figured examples the notion of cult appears more symbolic rendering the conflict between the goddess Athena and a Greek warrior, who committed a sacrilegious act. In addition, considering significant contextual events such as the reformation of the Panathenaia under Peisistratos in the Archaic period and the overwhelming number of black-figured amphorae representing the Rape of Cassandra scene does suggest a cultic (divine) undertone. The viewer of these vase images is therefore confronted with a symbolic cautionary tale of violating sacred spaces and consequently offending the gods. In Classical red-figure examples, emphasis shifts from the divine to a more human element. More importantly, the primary conflict which is now represented in the narrative scene occurs between a man and woman, instead of mortal and god. Cassandra's vulnerability and susceptibility to violence and rape therefore becomes a significant aspect in red-figured scenes. The Rape of Cassandra episode in red figure is often placed in the greater context of the *Ilioupersis* which therefore draws the viewer into the anguish of Cassandra's closest family members. In view of this, there is a distinctive shift in the collective focus from Ajax's sacrilegious act in black figure to the element of human suffering in red figure.

Another significant changing aspect which is reflected in these vase images is the shift from an epic theme to a tragic one. The strong epic undertone contained in the black-figured examples suggest the extraordinary actions of Greek warriors and heroes, and their relationship with the divine. It also stresses the qualities that made these heroes and those that do not. In the Rape of Cassandra scene, Ajax is characterized as the epic hero who has fallen from grace because of his violation of the goddess Athena's sanctuary. The reverse sides of these black-figure vases

represent similar epic motifs which evoke the commemoration of war and the reverence for the gods. The scene in red figure contains a tragic theme which takes on an entirely different perspective. Even if stories of tragedy stem from epic and lyric poetry, it represents the notion of war very differently. War in this regard is more lamented than celebrated, which is a notion that seems to be in accordance with fifth-century Athenian tragedy. Like Cassandra in red-figured examples, women in tragedy take centre stage and embody the plight of captive women in war. For this reason, it is possible that a gradual interest regarding violence against women in the context of war developed during the Persian Wars (499-449 BCE).

This newly developed awareness of women and violence, however, must have occurred before the birth of Athenian tragedy as it has been a recurring theme in late Archaic and early Classical red-figure vases. Athenian tragedy, however, reached its zenith during the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE). Stories concerning the *Sack of Troy* became even more prevalent, especially focusing on Greek and Trojan women's suffering in war. The Rape of Cassandra scene in red figure may have therefore served as a symbolic vehicle to express the contemporary conflicts and anxieties of war. Nevertheless, the developing awareness of a woman's plight in war may have also shed some light on the perception and treatment of women in a patriarchal society.

As a result, although the subtexts of both Archaic black-figure and Classical red-figure scenes evoke notions of violence and sacrilege, sexual violence becomes more conspicuous in red figure. The insignificant and faceless woman in sixth century Athens emerges into a beautiful and prominent, yet vulnerable victim in the fifth century.



## Catalogue 1: Black Figure

Vase Number	Figure Number	Beazley Vase Number	LIMC Number	Shape	Date	Identification
1	2.22	300525	N/A	Cup	575-525 BCE	London, BM B379
2	2.26	310167	AIAS II 50	Amphora	575-525 BCE	Paris, Louvre F29
3	2.10	301059	N/A	Amphora	575-525 BCE	New York, Met 41.162.143
4	2.12	310294	AIAS II 20	Amphora	575-525 BCE	Munich, Antikensammlungen J617
5	2.11	310314	N/A	Amphora	575-525 BCE	Berlin, Antikensammlungen F1698
6	2.1	1244	N/A	Olpe	550-500 BCE	Leiden, Rijksmuseum PC54
7	2.13	302940	N/A	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Vatican City, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco G22
8	2.14	302941	N/A	Amphora	550-500 BCE	London, BM B242
9	2.15	24969	N/A	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Melbourne GPA1.3
10	N/A	320430	N/A	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1965.124
11	N/A	320430	Kas I 64	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 2965.124
12	2.29	320431	N/A	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Krefeld, Kaiser Wilhelm 32.1911
13	2.31	340545	N/A	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Warsaw, National Museum 138487
14	2.25	7085	AIAS II 22	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Trieste S454
15	N/A	320389	AIAS II 23	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Wurzburg, Martin von Wagner Museum L249
16	N/A	7039	AIAS II 25	Krater	550-500 BCE	San Simeon (CA), Hearst Historical State Monument, 529.9.5613
17	N/A	N/A	Kas I 63	Amphora	c.540 BCE	Ginevra, Mus. HR 84
18	N/A	9973	Kas I 67	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Rome, Civitavecchia 56199
19	2.5	331269	Kas I 71	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Berlin, Antiken sammlungen F1863
20	N/A	330187	Kas I 73	Lekythos	550-500 BCE	Rome, Mus. Naz. Etrusco di Villa Giulia 50437
21	N/A	N/A	Kas I 74	Lekythos	530-520 BCE	Paris, Louvre C 10742
22	2.6	N/A	Kas I 96	Amphora	530 –520 BCE	Vulci, Mus. Naz.

23	N/A	7035	AIAS II 40	Cup	550-500 BCE	Glyptohek Munich 2017A
24	N/A	7035 Reverse	N/A	Cup	550-500 BCE	Glyptohek Munich 2017A
25	N/A	N/A	AIAS II 29	Amphora	520 -510 BCE	Naples H 2712, d'Etrurie
26	2.8	643	AIAS II 33a	Krater	530-520 BCE	London, market, Sotheby's
27	N/A	N/A	Kas I 80	Amphora	520-510 BCE	Mercato antiquario, Basilea MuM Auktion 63,1983
28	2.30	5189	Kas I 78	Cup	525-475 BCE	Madison (WI), Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1985.97
29	N/A	5189 Reverse	N/A	Cup	525-475 BCE	Madison (WI), Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1985.97
30	2.2	351362	Kas I 81	Oinochoe	525-475 BCE	Malibu, Getty Museum 86.AE.121
31	2.24	351417	AIAS II 36	Olpe	525-475 BCE	Paris, Cabinet des Medailles, 181
32	2.7	7034	AIAS II 39	Fragment	530-520 BCE	Orvieto, Museo Civico
33	N/A	N/A	Kas I 83	Amphora	510 BCE	London, market, Sotheby's 10-11.7.1989
34	2.16	10668	AIAS II 41	Lekythos	500-450 BCE	Copenhagen, National Museum B87
35	2.17	303370	AIAS II 42	Lekythos	525-475 BCE	Gela, Museo Archeologico 31
36	2.32	351083	AIAS II 38	Hydria	525-475 BCE	Vatican City, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco AST733
37	N/A	320082	AIAS II 31	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Boulogne, Musee Communale 100
38	2.21	30026	Kas I 97	Lekythos	500- 450 BCE	Kiel, Antikensammlung B370
39	N/A	N/A	N/A	Amphora	530-520 BCE	Philadelphia 68.34.2 (unpub.)
40	N/A	N/A	Kas I 90	Olpe	520-510 BCE	Hermitage T 1913.35
41	N/A	301737	Kas I 89	Amphora	550-500 BCE	Tarquiniia, Museo Naz Traquiniese, 655
42	N/A	N/A	Kas I 86	Amphora	510- 500 BCE	New York market
43	N/A	15516	Aias II 17	Amphora	510- 500 BCE	Boulogne, Musee Municipal 67
44	N/A	9025069	Kas I 93	Amphora	No date	Florence, Museo Archeologico Etrusco 76360
45	N/A	N/A	N/A	Amphora	480 BCE	Basel Market
46	N/A	N/A	Kas I 100	Pelike	No date	Laon,Mus – Brommer, Vastenlisten 384 A33

## Catalogue 2: Red Figure

Vase Number	Figure Number	Beazley Vase Number	LIMC Number	Shape	Date	Identification
1	4.1	201522	AIAS II 51	Plate	525-475 BCE	New Haven (CT), Yale University 1913.169
2	4.2	13363	Kas I 104	Cup fragments	525-475 BCE	Rome, Mus. Naz. Etrusco di Villa Giulia, 121110
3	4.16	16776	Kas I 106	Cup	525-475 BCE	Malibu, Getty Museum, 80.AE.154
4	N/A	203229	AIAS II 45	Cup fragments	525-475 BCE	Vienna, University 53C20
5	4.12	7930	Kas I 103	Cup fragments	500-450 BCE	Athens, National Mus., Acropolis Coll. 2.212
6	N/A	203041	AIAS II 46	Fragments	500-450 BCE	Athens, National Mus., Acropolis Coll. 2.812
7	4.5	201724	AIAS II 44	Hydria	525-475 BCE	Naples, Museo Archeologico Naz. 81669
8	4.13	7033	AIAS II 65	Oinochoe	475-425 BCE	Oslo, Museum of Applied Art 10155
9	4.10	206929	AIAS II 61	Krater	475-425 BCE	Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico 268
10	4.8	207783	AIAS II 63	Amphora	475-425 BCE	New York, Met 56.171.41
11	4.25	210103	AIAS II 64	Cup	475-425 BCE	St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Mus. 658
12	4.3	206829	AIAS II 60	Krater	475-425 BCE	Boston (MA) 19.59.176
13	4.9	214142	Kas I 121	Amphora	475-425 BCE	London, BM E336
14	4.17	207119	AIAS II 66	Krater	475-425 BCE	London, BM E470
15	4.21	31616	Kas I 126	Krater fragment	450-400 BCE	Malibu, The Getty Museum 79.AE.198
16	4.15	217220	AIAS II 67	Cup	450-400 BCE	Paris, Louvre G458
17	4.23	213744	AIAS II 54	Amphora	475-425 BCE	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College
18	N/A	201129	AIAS II 105	Cup	525-475 BCE	Boston (MA) 08.30a
19	N/A	7564	AIAS II 62	Krater	450-400 BCE	Chiusi Museo Archeologico Naz., 1823
20	4.22	6369	Kas I 127	Krater, Calyx fragments	425-375 BCE	Wurzburg, Martin von Wagner Mus., H4706

21	N/A	216252	AIAS II 75	Cup	450-400 BCE	Ferrara, Museo Nazionale Di Spina, T264
22	N/A	213271	Kas I 122	Skyphos	475-425 BCE	Padula, Museo Archeologico d. Lucania Occ., TXV15
23	N/A	N/A	Kas I 124	Cup fragment	480-470 BCE	Athens, Acropolis Museum 355
24	N/A	8482	Kas I 119	Krater	475-425 BCE	Bari, Museo Archeologico Provinciale, TOMB11
25	N/A	9032554	N/A	Hydria	No date	Athens, National Museum 30116
26	N/A	9025073	N/A	Cup Fragment	No date	Athens, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ephoreia of Hist. and Classical Antiquities

## Catalogue 3: Comparanda

Vase Number	Figure Number	Beazley Vase Number	Date	Description	Identification
1	2.27	302109	c.550-500 BCE	Athena, Panathenaic Amphora	New York, Met 07.286.80
2	2.28	8780	c.575-500 BCE	Athena, Panathenaic Amphora	New York, Met 1978.11.13
3	2.2	3363	c.575-525 BCE	Gigantomachy scenes	Athens, National Museum 2211
4	2.3	301942	c.550-500 BCE	Gigantomachy scenes	Athens, National Museum 2134
5	2.9	320410	c.550-500 BCE	Gigantomachy Scene	Madrid, Museo Arqueologico, Nacional L52
6	2.3	N/A	c.520-500 BCE	Sack of Troy, murder of Astyanax	Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlung and Glyptothek
7	2.4	78	c.550-500 BCE	Achilles and Troilos	Boston (MA) 89.561
8	2.18	300620	c.575-525 BCE	Circe with Cup	Boston (MA) 99.519
9	2.19	643	530-520 BCE	Recovery of Helen	London, market Sotheby's
10	2.20	302101	c.550-500 BCE	Two hoplites in battle	Munich, Antikensammlung J5 3
11	2.23	N/A	c.590-580 BCE	Shield Strap. Olympia	Olympia, Museum B 1891
12	3.1	N/A	c.550 BCE	Small bronze Athena statue	Athens, National Museum 6457
13	3.4	N/A	c.500 BCE	Arkteia, running girls on krateriskos	Brauron, Archaeological Museum
14	3.5	44635	c.525-475 BCE	Arkteia, older girls running/dancing	Brauron, Archaeological Museum A25
15	4.6	200435	c.525-475 BCE	Menelaos and Helen	Paris, Louvre G3
16	4.7	N/A	c.430-425 BCE	Roman marble copy of The Barberini Suppliant	Paris, Louvre MA 3433
17	4.11	N/A	c. 470 BCE	Thracian women running	Staatliche Antikensammlungen and Glyptothek 2378

18	4.14	13417	c.475-425 BCE	Wedding (domestic) scene	University (MS) 1977.3.91.
19	4.18	205639	c.500 - 450 BCE	(B) Youth with Spear (Pursuit scene)	St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum ST1786
20	4.19	205639	c.500-450 BCE	(A) Youth with sword (Theseus and Aithra)	St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum ST1786
21	4.20	N/A	c.480 BCE	Helen and Menelaos	Berlin 1970.9
22	4.24	216252	c. 450-400 BCE	Death of Cassandra	Ferrara, Museo Nazionale di Spina, T264
23	5.1	25156	c.425-375 BCE	Wedding, bride and bridegroom	Tampa, Florida, Museum of Art 86.78
24	5.2	203944	c.500-450 BCE	Draped man vomiting, youth	Berlin, Antikensammlung, F2309
25	5.3	N/A	c. 480 BCE	Komasts participating in the komos	Malibu, Getty Museum 86.AE.293

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## Cited Images:

### Chapter 3:

**Figure 3.1:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure olpe. Currently residing in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden PC54. Beazley Vase Number:1244.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=2&start=0>

**Figure 3.2:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.525-475 BCE. Athenian black-figure oinochoe. Currently residing in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu 86.AE.121. Beazley Vase Number:351362.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure. 3.3:** The Iris: Behind the Scenes at the Getty [Online].2011. *The Sack of Troy: The Murder of Astyanax*, c.520-500 BCE. Black-figure hydria attributed to the Leagros Group. Currently residing in Glyptothek Munich. <http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/representing-troy-in-ancient-greece-and-medieval-europe/>

**Figure 3.4:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Achilles and Troilos*, c. 550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure hydria. Currently residing in the Museum of Arts, Boston 89.561. Beazley Vase Number: 78.<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=3&useQuery=100&start=0>

**Figure 3.5:** LIMC VII. Kassandra I. 1994:676; figure. 71. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Antikensammlungen, Berlin F1863.

**Figure 3.6:** LIMC VII. Kassandra I.1994:680; figure 96. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.520-510 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in the National Museum of Vulci, Italy.

**Figure 3.7:** LIMC I. Aias II.1981:258; figure 39. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.520-510 BCE. Athenian black-figure fragment. Currently residing in Museo Civico, Orvieto 7034.

**Figure 3.8:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.530 BCE. Athenian black-figure krater. Currently residing in London, market, Sotheby's 643. Beazley Vase Number:643. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.9:** Beazley Archive [Online]. Gigantomachy Scene, c. 550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Museo Arqueologico Nacional, Madrid L52. Beazley Vase Number: 320410. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.10:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 575-525 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in the MET, New York 41.162.143. Beazley Vase Number: 301059. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.11:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 575-525 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Antikensammlungen, Berlin F1698. Beazley Vase Number: 310314. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.12:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 575-525 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Antikensammlungen, Munich J617, Beazley Vase Number: 310294. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.13:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Museo Gregoriano Etrusco, Vatican City G22. Beazley Vase Number: 302940. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.14:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in the British Museum, London B242. Beazley Vase Number: 302941. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.15:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Melbourne University 24969. Beazley Vase Number: 24969. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.16:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 500-450 BCE. Athenian black-figure lekythos. Currently residing in the National Museum, Copenhagen B87. Beazley Vase Number: 10668. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.17:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 525-475 BCE. Athenian black-figure lekythos. Currently residing in Museo Archeologico, Gela 31. Beazley Vase Number: 303370. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.18:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 575-525 BCE. Athenian black-figure cup. Currently residing in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 99.519. Beazley Vase Number: 300620  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.19:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Recovery of Helen*, c. 530 BCE. Athenian black-figure krater. Currently residing in London, market Sotheby's. Beazley vase number: 643. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetailsLarge.asp?recordCount=1&id={0C7E9C2B-C1A1-4FB3-A622-03846B232E2B}&fileName=IMAGES200%2FUNATT46TO60%2F643%2EB%2F&returnPage=&start=0>

**Figure 3.20:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 575-525 BCE. Athenian black-figure cup. Currently residing in the British Museum, London B379. Beazley Vase Number: 300525. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.21:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Warriors fighting*, c. 550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Antikensammlungen, Munich 1408. Beazley Vase Number: 302101. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.22:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 500-450 BCE. Athenian black-figure lekythos. Currently residing in Antikensammlung, Kiel B370. Beazley Vase Number: 30026. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.23:** Connelly 1993:90, fig 33. *Rape of Cassandra, Shield strap*.

**Figure 3.24:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.525-475 BCE. Athenian black-figure olpe. Currently residing in Cabinet des Medailles, Paris 181. Beazley Vase Number: 351417.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.25:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c.550-525 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Museo Storia ed Arte, Trieste S454. Beazley Vase Number: 7085.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.26:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Ilioupersis: Rape of Cassandra scene*, c. 575-525 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Louvre, Paris F29. Beazley Vase Number: 310167.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.27:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Panathenaic Athena*, c. 575-525 BCE. Athenian black-figure Panathenaic amphora. Currently residing in the MET, New York 1978.11.13. Beazley Vase Number: 8780.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=2&start=0>

**Figure 3.28:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Panathenaic Amphora*, c.550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure Panathenaic amphora. Currently residing in the MET, New York 07.286.80. Beazley Vase Number: 302109.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.29:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Kaiser Wilhelm, Krefeld 32.1911. Beazley Vase Number: 320431.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.30:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 525-475 BCE. Athenian black-figure cup. Currently residing in Madison (WI), Elvehjem Museum of Art 1985.97. Beazley Vase Number: 5189.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 3.31:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 550-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure amphora. Currently residing in Warsaw, National Museum 138487. Beazley Vase Number: 340545.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetailsLarge.asp?recordCount=1&id={E500BC88-F456-4833-B680-FD2E1720E45E}&fileName=IMAGES200%2FPOL04%2FCVA%2EPOL04%2E139%2E1%2F&returnPage=&start=0>

**Figure 3.32:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 515-500 BCE. Athenian black-figure hydria. Currently residing in Vatican City, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco AST733. Beazley Vase Number: 351083.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetailsLarge.asp?recordCount=1&id={B5760E46-D9B3-4EA1-B621-FB77C9640C80}&fileName=IMAGES200%2F010707%2F351083%2EBD%2F&returnPage=&start=0>

## Chapter 4:

**Figure. 4.1:** Shapiro 1989: Pl 8b. *Small Bronze Athena Statue*.

**Figure. 4.2:** Tiverios 2007: 3, fig. 4. *Gigantomachy scenes on Athena's peplos*.

**Figure. 4.3:** Tiverios 2007: 3, fig. 5. *Gigantomachy scenes on Athena's peplos*.

**Figure. 4.4:** Wordpress [Online]. *Arkteia, girls running on krateriskos*, c. 500 BCE. Athenian black-figure krater. Currently residing in Brauron, Archeological Museum.  
<https://womeninantiquity.wordpress.com/2017/03/20/the-cult-of-artemis-at-brauron/>

**Figure. 4.5:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Arkteia, older girls running/dancing on krateriskos*, c.525-475 BCE. Athenian black-figure krater. Currently residing in Brauron, Archeological Museum A25. Beazley Vase Number: 44635  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

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**Figure.5.1:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Paseas Plate*, c.525-475 BCE. Athenian red-figure plate. Currently residing in New Haven (CT), Yale University 1913.169. Beazley Vase Number: 201522.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.2:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra*, c. 525-475 BCE. Athenian red-figure cup fragments. Currently residing in Cevetri, Museo. Nazionale Cerite. Beazley Vase Number: 13363. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.3:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Ilioupersis: Cassandra at statue; Death of Priam*, c.475-525 BCE. Athenian red-figure krater. Currently residing in Boston (MA) 19.59.176. Beazley Vase Number: 206829.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.4:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Ilioupersis: Cassandra at statue; Death of Priam*, c.475-525 BCE. Athenian red-figure krater. Currently residing in Boston (MA) 19.59.176. Beazley Vase Number: 206829.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.5:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 500-450 BCE. Athenian red-figure hydria. Currently residing in Naples, Museo Archeologico Naz 81669. Beazley Vase Number: 201724.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.6:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Menelaos and Helen*, c. 525-475 BCE. Athenian red-figure amphora. Currently residing in Paris, Louvre G3. Beazley Vase Number: 200435.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.7:** Cohen 1997:67, fig.3. *The Barberini Suppliant* (Roman marble copy)

**Figure 5.8:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 475-425 BCE. Athenian red-figure amphora. Currently residing in New York, Met 56.171.41. Beazley Vase Number: 207783.  
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>



**Figure.5.9:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Ajax and Cassandra/ Menelaos and Helen*, c. 475-525 BCE. Athenian red-figure amphora. Currently residing in London, British Museum E336. Beazley Vase Number: 214142.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.10:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 475-425 BCE. Athenian red-figure krater. Currently residing in Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico 268. Beazley Vase Number: 206929.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.11:** Lee 2015:85, fig.3.16. *Thracian woman running*.

**Figure.5.12:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Racing figures on Athena's peplos*, c. 500-475 BCE. Athenian red-figure cup fragments. Currently residing in Athens National Museum, Acropolis Coll. 2.212. Beazley Vase Number: 7930.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=2&start=0>

**Figure.5.13:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 475-525 BCE. Athenian red-figure oinochoe. Currently residing in Oslo, Museum of Applied Art 10155. Beazley Vase Number: 7033.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=2&start=0>

**Figure.5.14:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Wedding (domestic scene)*, c. 475-425 BCE. Athenian red-figure lebes. Currently residing in the University of Mississippi 1977.3.91. Beazley Vase Number: 13417.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.15:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 450-400 BCE. Athenian red-figure cup. Currently residing in Paris, Louvre G458. Beazley Vase Number: 217220.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.16:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 525-475 BCE, Athenian red-figure cup. Currently residing in Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum 80.AE.154. Beazley Vase Number: 16776.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure 5.17:** The British Museum [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 475-425 BCE, Athenian red-figure krater. Currently residing in London, British Museum E470.

[https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details.aspx?objectId=461419&partId=1&searchText=Polyxena&page=1e](https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=461419&partId=1&searchText=Polyxena&page=1e)

**Figure.5.18:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Youth with Spear (Erotic pursuit scene)*, c. 500-450 BCE. Athenian red-figure krater. Currently residing in St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum: ST1786. Beazley Vase Number: 205639.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>



**Figure.5.19:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Youth with Sword (Theseus and Aithra)*, c. 500-450 BCE. Athenian red-figure krater. Currently residing in St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum: ST786. Beazley Vase Number: 205639.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.20:** Photo by Samantha Masters. *Menelaos and Helen*, c. 480 BCE. Athenian red-figure skyphos. Currently residing in Berlin 1970,9.

**Figure.5.21:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Ilioupersis: Statue of Athena; Athena goddess*, c. 450-400 BCE. Athenian red-figure krater fragment. Currently residing in Malibu, The J. Paul Getty Museum 79.AE.198. Beazley Vase Number: 31616.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.22:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Cassandra at Palladion*, c. 425-375 BCE. Athenian red-figure cup fragments. Currently residing in Wurzburg, Martin von Wagner Mus., H4706. Beazley Vase Number: 6369.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.23:** LIMC I. Aias II. 1981: 261; fig 34. *Rape of Cassandra Scene*, c. 475-425 BCE. Athenian red-figure amphora. Currently residing in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College.

**Figure.5.24:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Death of Cassandra*, c. 450-400 BCE. Athenian red-figure cup. Currently residing in Ferrara, Museo Nazionale di Spina, 2482. Beazley Vase Number: 216252. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.5.25:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Rape of Cassandra*, c. 475-525 BCE. Athenian red-figure cup. Currently residing in St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Mus. 658. Beazley Vase Number: 210103. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

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**Figure 6.1:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Wedding; bride and bridegroom*, c. 425-375 BCE. Athenian red-figure loutrophoros fragment. Currently residing in Tampa Florida, Museum of Art: 86.78. Beazley Vase Number: 25156.

<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.6.2:** Beazley Archive [Online]. *Draped man vomiting; Youth*, c. 500-450 BCE. Athenian red-figure cup. Currently residing in Berlin, Antikensammlung F2309. Beazley Vase Number: 203944. <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=1&start=0>

**Figure.6.3:** The J Paul Getty Museum. [Online]. *Komasts participating in the komos*, c. 480 BCE. Athenian red-figure cup. Currently residing in Malibu, Getty Museum 86.AE.293.

<http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/12085/attributed-to-briseis-painter-and-signed-by-brygos-attic-red-figure-cup-greek-attic-about-480-bc/?dz=&artview=#a60eece30e162f9b8df1609e182730887b73bb16>