Image, Text, and Story in the Recovery of Helen

*Three vases* attributed to the late sixth-century Athenian vase-painter Oltos depict the legendary Greek hero Menelaos capturing or leading off his wife Helen. Presumably, the occasion is the sack of Troy, the goal of which was the recovery of Helen; Menelaos pursued his wife with violent intentions on no other occasion, so far as we know. How do the spouses feel about each other after ten years of separation? On Oltos' neck amphora in Paris (fig. 1), Helen attempts to run away from Menelaos, but he has caught her by the wrist and has a drawn sword in his hand. On a fragmentary cup in Odessa (fig. 2), both the direction and order of the figures are reversed: Menelaos is leading Helen by the wrist, rather than pursuing her; but he still holds the drawn sword in hand, as on the neck amphora. Menelaos is leading Helen by the wrist on a cup in Malibu (fig. 3) as well. On all three vases the identities of the figures are certain, thanks to painted labels (though on the cup in Malibu only the name of Menelaos is preserved).

In Lilly Kahil's comprehensive monograph on the iconography of Helen in Greek art, as well as in her recent study of Helen in the *Lexicon Iconographicum*

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1. Martin Robertson's recent suggestion that Menelaos attacked Helen during the embassy to the Trojans ten years prior to the sack of Troy is discussed below.
3. Odessa 21972, cup fragment, *ARV*² 67.137, Ghali-Kahil (*supra*, n. 2) pl. 82.2.

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Mythologiae Classicae, Oltos’ vases are listed in different sections: the neck amphora, depicting the capture of Helen, is numbered among those vase-paintings that Kahil believes were inspired by the lost epic of Lesches known as the Little Iliad; the Odessa fragment, with Menelaos leading Helen away, is included among those representations thought to have been inspired by the lost epic, the Ilioupersis, of Arktinos.5 Without question, these vase-paintings represent different actions, a pursuit and capture on the one hand and an escort on the other. But do the pictures necessarily reflect different literary accounts of the story? It is conceivable that Oltos consulted written texts of the epics of Lesches and Arktinos, but the likelihood that he did so is extremely remote. It is now widely accepted that the poetry of Homer, Hesiod, and perhaps many other poets of the Archaic period was created and transmitted orally. In the Archaic and Early Classical periods, artists, poets, and the general public learned the myths by listening to or participating in oral performances, and presumably also through conversation.6 Even if the songs of the epic and lyric poets were preserved in writing throughout the seventh and sixth centuries, there were probably few copies of the texts in circulation until well into the Classical period, and it is unlikely that Archaic and Early Classical artists had regular access to texts of any kind.7

It is possible, of course, that Oltos heard the poems of Lesches and Arktinos recited orally, that he learned of them from someone who had heard them, or that he learned of them from someone who had learned of them from someone who had heard them. Each scenario is conceivable, though in the absence of unambiguous evidence concerning Oltos’ sources—letters, for example, written by the artist explaining how he learned of the stories represented on his vases—each scenario remains hypothetical. More important than the chances of any one of the scenarios being true, however, are the assumptions that underlie them about how visual narratives were created in Archaic and Classical Greece. All the scenarios presuppose that novel versions of traditional tales originated with poets more often than with vase-painters, and that the poetic accounts of a particular tale that survive today are likely to have been important enough in


their own (or subsequent) time to have left an impression on vase-painting. They presuppose, in other words, a close fit between the surviving literary remains and vase-paintings. Kahil concluded, for example, that her analysis of the visual representations of the recovery of Helen revealed a “tight relationship” between literature and art.8

That model (let us call it the “close relations” model of the relationship between poetry and art) may be correct, but, again, in the absence of evidence detailing how artists learned their subjects, it remains hypothetical. Furthermore, that model is not the only conceivable relationship between poetry and art in Archaic and Early Classical Greece. John Boardman suggested, for example, that vase-painters might have learned their myths on informal occasions, at their mothers’ knees or in street-corner banter, as much as from formal recitations of poetry.9 Anthony Snodgrass argued that vase-painters may not have been dependent on epic poetry at all in creating representations of legendary stories such as the tales of Troy; their sources may have been informal, oral, and vernacular.10 Long ago, Carl Robert argued that the relationship between ancient Greek narrative poetry and art was rarely direct. He argued that the myths did not exist in unalterable written form but by virtue of a living folk tradition that underwent constant change, and that art, no less than poetry, modified the tradition in a process that resembles a feedback loop.11 It is possible, then, that the relationship between poetry and art in Archaic and Early Classical Greece would be better characterized as indirect, distant, and, in some ways, perhaps even insignificant.

The assumption that vase-painters regularly made use of poems known to us may be due partly to our practice, as scholars, of making use of extant poems (and also prose accounts) to interpret the representations created by the vase-painters. Most narrative vase-paintings are not intended to relate by themselves the entirety of a story to a viewer who is unfamiliar with it.12 That is difficult in principle for

8. Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 325.
12. A point that is not acknowledged often enough. See R. Brilliant, Visual Narratives: Storytelling in Etruscan and Roman Art (Ithaca, 1984) 16–17. R. Kannicht, “Poetry and Art: Homer and the Monuments Afresh,” ClaAnt 1 (1982) 73, rightly stresses the importance of this point; but his assertion that stories existed in Archaic Greece by virtue of epic poetry seems to me to be an unwarranted restriction on the means by which stories may have been communicated. A refusal to
the visual arts, as Lessing noted long ago, and vase-painters in particular typically did not include enough pictorial or textual information to convey all parts of a story. They do not have access to the bedtime stories, street-corner conversation, or oral performances that once taught viewers and vase-painters alike the popular stories of the day. We have only the written texts of poetry and prose accounts from which to reconstruct the information that the artists assumed that we, as viewers of their work, would have. All too often, however, the means by which we educate ourselves about the popular stories of antiquity becomes an end: commentators search for precise matches between extant written accounts of a story and the surviving visual representations of it, rather than using the literary sources as a means of recreating in an approximate way the general intellectual background of the ancient viewer. Consider, for example, the remarks of J. D. Beazley about the funeral games for Patroklos on the François vase: "oddly enough, Kleitias departs widely from the Homeric account. . . . Left to himself, [he] did not remember the field, and could not find anyone who did; his learned friend was not at hand." Is it not possible that Kleitias and his friends knew nothing at all of Homer's account of the funeral games of Patroklos? That they had learned the story casually, by word of mouth, in an exchange of information so convoluted that the origin of the story—whether it is the Iliad or some other specific source—is irrelevant to understanding the vase-painting? We require some written source if we are to understand the narrative context of Kleitias' picture, but it does not follow that our source of information will be the same as Kleitias'.

As many recent studies have emphasized, a useful way of analyzing narrative is to envision it as consisting of two components: the story itself, that is, the series of events related to each other temporally or causally; and the discourse, the means by which the story is given concrete form. As Seymour Chatman put it, "[common to] verbal media, films, comic strips, paintings, sculptures, dance movements, and music . . . must be some substratum; otherwise we could not explain the transformation of 'Sleeping Beauty' into a movie, a

acknowledge that contemporary viewers were expected to recognize the stories represented in Greek art is the chief drawback to the study of P. G. P. Meyboom, "Some Observations on Narration in Greek Art," Meded N. S. 5 (1978) 55–82, esp. 57. J. Herington, Poetry into Drama: Early Tragedy and the Greek Poetic Tradition (Berkeley, 1985) 64–66 has pointed out that poets expected the same thing from their audiences, judging from the allusiveness as well as the frequency of their mythological references.


14. J. D. Beazley, The Development of Attic Black-Figure, rev. ed. (Berkeley, 1986) 32. For a good illustration in contemporary scholarship of the approach I am arguing against, see S. Lowenstam, "The Uses of Vase-Depictions in Homeric Studies," TAPA 122 (1992) 165–98, esp. the section (pp. 167–81) entitled "why painting sometimes deviates from poetry."

ballet, a mime show."\textsuperscript{16} That substratum is not necessarily another text or painting, as scholars of Greek iconography often assume, but may be something less tangible, the story as a logical structure of interrelated events, characters, and setting. In this paper, I hope to show that Archaic and Early Classical representations of the recovery of Helen are best understood as reflections of the same basic story, rather than as translations of two or more distinct literary accounts. I hope to cast doubt on several questionable interpretations of the images, such as reading into the pictures motifs or intentions including nudity or seduction that are known from literature but have not really been given visual form in the pictures. In particular, I hope to shed light on one of the most striking and problematic aspects of the iconography of the recovery of Helen, the variety of physical settings of the event. Scholars have suggested that the wide variety of settings in the visual representations reflect either a correspondingly wide variety of literary models or an artistic desire for pictorial variety. I explore a third possibility: that the pictorial elements of setting provide important narrative information that verbal narratives would convey in a different way. Every narrative medium—poetry, prose, painting, or sculpture—employs its own system of signification to give form to stories.\textsuperscript{17} I hope to illuminate some of the techniques of storytelling that are unique to Greek vase-painting and sculpture and to show that the relationship between iconographic and literary traditions in Archaic and Early Classical Greece is more distant and indirect than often thought.

\textbf{THE PURSUIT OF HELEN}

Representations of Menelaos in hot pursuit and Helen running away from him are popular in Athenian art from the time of Oltos' neck amphora (fig. 1), which includes the earliest certain instance of the motif, until the end of the fifth century B.C.\textsuperscript{18} Many representations of the pursuit of Helen differ from Oltos' in one important respect: Menelaos is not only running after Helen but has also just let go of his sword. One does not have to be an iconographer to understand the meaning of the dropping of the sword: Menelaos meant to use his sword on Helen, since he had pulled it out of its sheath, but now he has a different intention. It is hard to think of a motif in ancient Greek art that more effectively depicts a character changing his mind. Until recently, the earliest known example of the motif of Menelaos letting go of his sword occurred on a mature work of the Berlin

\textsuperscript{16} Chatman (\textit{supra}, n. 15) 9.


\textsuperscript{18} Kahil (\textit{supra}, n. 5) 539–40 lists two black-figure representations of a man with a drawn sword pursuing a woman, but notes that the identities of the figures are not certain. For the pursuit scenes generally, see Kahil 539–45.
Menelaos, dating to around 470 B.C. But the remarkable new cup by Onesimos in the Getty Museum (fig. 4), dating perhaps to the decade 500–490 B.C., also depicts the hero dropping his sword at the last minute. In this scene, there is, in addition, a pictorial element explaining why Menelaos let go of his sword: the love-god Eros hovering between the warrior and the woman. A mid-fifth-century vase-painting on an oinochoe in the Vatican (fig. 5) also gives visual form to the influences at work on Menelaos. Helen, frightened and disarrayed, has already arrived at a cult statue of Athena, where she takes refuge. Menelaos strides furiously toward her. But in between the warrior and the wife, Aphrodite stands quietly, adjusting her outfit. She has delegated Eros to take care of the problem, and he flies toward Menelaos with a lover’s crown. Standing behind Menelaos, the goddess of persuasion, Peitho, is even more uninterested in the action; since Menelaos has already let go of his sword, her work is finished.

The image of the dropping of the sword also occurs in literature. One of the characters in Aristophanes’ Lysistrata speculated that “when Menelaos caught a glimpse of Helen’s breasts—naked in whatever way—he threw away his sword” (lines 155–56). In Euripides’ Andromache, Peleus excoriated Menelaos for sparing Helen when he had the opportunity to kill her: “casting sheep’s eyes on her bosom, you unbuckled your sword and puckered up for kisses, petting that traitorous bitch” (lines 629–30). The coincidence between art and poetry with respect to the dropping of the sword has led a number of scholars on a futile

19. Vienna 741, neck amphora, ARV² 203,101, LIMC 2, pl. 182 Apollon 6, CVA Vienna 2, pls. 55,1–2, and 56. The setting of the scene is characterized as a sanctuary of Apollo by the inclusion of an altar, cult image of the god, and sacred tree. The composition on the Berlin Painter’s fragmentary stamnos in Oxford, 1965.123, ARV² 208,154, Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) pl. 60 must have been similar, except for the presence of other women running to and fro and, possibly, the god Apollo. See the description in Ghali-Kahil 87: the inanimate object on fragment three, however, is more likely to be the base of a tree than a statue base: compare the shape of the tree on the neck amphora in Vienna.

20. Malibu 83.AE.362, D. Williams, “Onesimos and the Getty IlIipersis,” GVMus 5 (1991) 55 fig. 8j, 56, and esp. 61 with a description of fragments added since the published photograph was taken. All of the figures are labelled.

21. Rome, Vatican H 525, ARV² 1173, Heimarmene Painter, Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) pl. 66. All of the figures on this vase are labelled.

22. Some scholars have thought that the figure of Peitho was misplaced by the vase-painter, that she was originally intended to stand to the right of the cult statue, from which vantage point she would regard the scene. But E. Simon, “Die Wiedergewinnung der Helena,” AntK 7 (1964) 93–95 has argued convincingly that the composition works well enough as it is. She suggested that Peitho turns away from the action in this picture because her particular power, the art of persuasion, is not required by the situation. E. C. Keuls, “The Brink of Death in Classical Greek Painting,” Meded 9–10 (1983) 10 made the nice suggestion that Peitho looks away because her task is finished.


search in the visual representations for the other prominent motif in those two passages, Helen’s breasts. It has been thought that Helen’s peplos is revealingly high cut on the side or that the viewer is meant to see that her breasts are visible to Menelaos through the opening in her peplos on the oinochoe in the Vatican (fig. 5); but Buschor has rightly stated that a peplos often reveals part of the body underneath without necessarily having erotic overtones.25 Furtwängler suggested that Helen’s body is revealed to Menelaos through her transparent chiton when she lifts up her mantle on Makron’s beautiful skyphos in Boston (fig. 6); but Makron regularly draws the contours of his women’s bodies beneath their clothing, even in situations where physical beauty or seduction seems unintended.26 Keuls claimed that the figure of Helen on Oltos’ neck amphora (fig. 1) is especially buxom, but many of the women of Oltos are drawn in a similar fashion.27 In her publication of a Siana cup from the circle of Lydos, Maria Pipili suggested that the female figure confronted by a warrior, plausibly interpreted as Helen, reveals a good deal of her chest, and that this may be an allusion to the story that Menelaos forgave his wife upon seeing her nude breast.28 Early vase-painters, however, would not necessarily have had to resort to such an oblique and ambiguous method of representing a partly nude Helen, because they had no difficulty depicting female nudity clearly and unambiguously when they wanted to, as in a representation of a symposium by the KX Painter or in a picture of the assault of Kassandra from the circle of the C Painter.29 None of the representations of Helen just considered contains explicit nudity. If the literary references to Helen’s nude breast did not exist, I doubt that anyone would have suspected that it was alluded to in those vase-paintings.

One further difficulty with the belief that Menelaos is transfixed by the sight of his wife’s nude body in the visual arts is that all of the vase-paintings just considered predate Euripides and Aristophanes. That motif has been thought to predate the late fifth century B.C. in literature. A scholion to the passage in the Lysistrata quoted earlier says that “the story is in Ibykos; and Lesches of Pyrrha

25. Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 98 and 326–27; E. Löwy, “Entstehung einer Sagenversion,” WS 34 (1912) 282–87. For arguments against the idea that there is any significant nudity in the picture, implied or explicit, see esp. Buschor’s commentary on the vase, FR 3:309, and Clement (supra, n. 23) 57.


27. Keuls (supra, n. 22) 9. Cf., e.g., London E 258, amphora, ARV² 54,4, Boardman (supra, n. 26) fig. 57,1.

28. M. Pipili, “Mia nea kulika tupou sianas,” AAA 14 (1981) 76–84. See also Kahil (supra, n. 5) 537 no. 211.

29. Samos 1184, fragmentary cup, ABV 26,27, KX Painter, Beazley (supra, n. 14) pl. 16,2; London B 379, Siana cup, manner of the C Painter, ABV 60,20, LIMC 1, pl. 253 Aias II 16. For female nudity in Greek art, see also L. Bonfante, “Nudity as a Costume in Classical Art,” AJA 93 (1989) 558–62.
has the same story in the *Little Iliad.*" Several scholars have taken the scholion as proof that the idea of Menelaos throwing away his sword upon the sight of his wife’s breast goes all the way back to the poems of Ibykos and Lesches.\(^{30}\) But does the scholion mean that the story precisely as the character in the *Lysistrata* tells it is in Ibykos, or merely that Ibykos told the story of the reunion of Menelaos and Helen? A scholion to the passage in the *Andromache* quoted above provides an answer: the note says that "[the story] is managed better in the works of Ibykos; for Helen flees to Aphrodite’s temple, and from there parleys with Menelaos, and because of love he drops his sword."\(^{31}\) As Paul Clement has emphasized, the scholion to the passage in the *Andromache* explicitly states that Ibykos told the story of the recovery of Helen differently than Euripides. About Ibykos’ treatment of the story we can only say that it included a flight to the temple of Aphrodite, a discussion, and the dropping of the sword.\(^{32}\)

It is not impossible that Aristophanes and Euripides invented the image of a horny Menelaos, who forgot his ten-year-long resolution to punish his wife the instant he clapped eyes on her breast. The image is well suited to both of the contexts in which it occurs: the women in the *Lysistrata* want to emphasize the inability of a man to resist his wife, and Peleus in the *Andromache* is trying to paint the most insulting picture possible of Menelaos. A character in poetry is quite capable of modifying a traditional tale to suit his or her purposes. One of the most arresting examples is the claim of Hekabe in Euripides’ *Trojan Women* (970–82) that the story of the Judgment of Paris, one of the best known and most widely represented of all Greek myths, was invented by Helen in order to explain her affair with Paris. Modifications of this sort do not necessarily have any


\(^{32}\) Clement (*supra,* n. 23) 47–51. A similar conclusion was reached by Löwy (*supra,* n. 25) 285. In *Bild und Lied* (*supra,* n. 11) 77, Robert correctly interpreted the scholia with respect to the reconstruction of Ibykos’ version of the story, but unaccountably concluded that the note on Aristophanes is evidence that the idea that Menelaos dropped his sword because of the physical beauty of Helen goes back to the *Little Iliad.* The explanation perhaps lies in his text of the scholion: in *Heldensage* (*supra,* n. 30) 1263 n. 4, Robert quoted the scholion to Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* but did not include the entire contents of the note, thereby changing its meaning. Compare his interpretation of the note to that of Clement.
basis in traditional mythology. Note that, in the Lysistrata, Lampito qualifies her statement: “when Menelaos caught sight of Helen’s breasts, I think he threw away his sword.”

The visual representations of the pursuit of Helen have been studied with the passages of the Lysistrata and Andromache too much in mind. The recurrence of the same action in both pictures and texts—Menelaos letting go of his sword—has been thought to document a direct connection between vase-painting and poetry; this has given rise to the assumption that the motivation that led the hero to throw down his sword in the two plays, the sight of Helen’s body, must underlie the visual representations as well. We have seen that the visual images of Menelaos dropping his sword predate by a considerable amount of time the earliest certain occurrences of the motif in literature. We have also seen that in the Archaic and Early Classical periods visual images do not give visual form to the idea that the sight of Helen’s body prompted the hero to throw away his sword.33 We can go further. The idea that Menelaos let go of his sword is not so improbable that it could only have been invented once, and that subsequent occurrences of the idea must represent diffusion from the original source, as if its invention were akin to the agricultural revolution in originality. There are few other means of conveying without words the complex idea that Menelaos intended to kill his wife but changed his mind. If the motif of throwing down a sword did not already exist, an artist wishing to convey the story of Helen and Menelaos as fully as possible would have every incentive to invent it. In contrast, it would have been easy enough for Euripides or Aristophanes to communicate the idea that Menelaos spared the life of his wife without making reference to the hero’s sword. The poets surely chose to use or invent the image of releasing the sword in part because of its potential connotations of demilitarization appropriate to the overall theme of the Lysistrata, and of emasculation appropriate to the insulting tone of Peleus’ speech. The poets, in other words, most likely chose the motif for different reasons than the painters did.

The dropping of the sword in the visual representations tells the viewer that Menelaos, having just intended to do so, will not kill Helen; that he has changed his mind. It does not tell us why he has changed his mind. The inclusion of Aphrodite, Eros, or Peitho in the pictures is the closest thing to an explanation that the artists have given us, as Kahil has rightly stressed.34 The presence of Aphrodite and her minions naturally suggests that Menelaos changed his mind because of love. But their presence in the pictures does not tell us

33. The earliest images of the recovery of Helen that I know of in which the heroine is nude date to the fourth century B.C.: Rome, Villa Giulia 1197, Faliscan calyx krater, J. D. Beazley, Etruscan Vase-Painting (Oxford, 1947) 95–96 and pl. 23; Frankfurt β 619, Campanian red-figure lekythos, LIMC 4, pl. 356 Helene 367.

34. Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 32. But on p. 97, Kahil suggests that the dropping of the sword reveals the effect of Helen’s physical appearance on Menelaos, which is reading more into the motif than the motif, alone, communicates.
specifically how that occurred, whether it was through an enhancement of Helen's beauty, the beguilement of Menelaos’ sight, a well-reasoned argument, or simply the overwhelming, coercive power of the goddess. The particular means employed by the goddess may not have been of utmost concern to the artists or the viewers. To take an example from literature, when Aphrodite threatens Helen in the *Iliad* (3.416–17)—"I can make hatred for you grow amid the Danaans and Trojans both"—a detailed explanation of how precisely she would carry out her threat is not included. In sum, the motif of Menelaos letting go of his sword signifies different things in poetry and vase-painting. There is no compelling reason to think that vase-painters and poets did not develop the image independently.

**THE ESCORT SCENES**

Let us return to the other compositional scheme employed by Oltos to represent the recovery of Helen, the escort. The fragmentary cups in Odessa (fig. 2) and Malibu (fig. 3) are not the only vases thought to show Menelaos leading Helen back to the ships: in red-figure vase-painting, there is a fine example by the Elpinikos Painter and an especially expressive one by the Painter of the Munich amphora (fig. 7). In black-figure vase-painting of the period ca. 540–500 B.C., there are many scenes of a veiled woman being escorted by two warriors. The identities of the figures are certain only on the vases by Oltos, which include painted labels. The similarities between the representations on Oltos’ Odessa cup and the red-figure vases by the Elpinikos Painter and the Painter of the Munich Amphora suggest that the latter also depict the recovery of Helen. The interpretation of the black-figure scenes is more uncertain, as Dugas has emphasized, because they may represent the rescue of Aithra or some other story.

35. On several vases, e.g., Markopoulo, fragmentary pyxis, follower of Douris, Ghali-Kahil (*supra*, n. 2) pl. 58.2, Eros flies toward Menelaos with a phiale, which, according to Robert (*supra*, n. 30) 1264 n. 5, contains a love-potion for the eyes of Menelaos. On the skyphos by Makron (fig. 6), Aphrodite appears to be straightening Helen's veil as if to enhance her charms. But Furtwängler, FR 2:127, goes too far when he states that Aphrodite’s enhancement of Helen’s physical appearance will cause Menelaos to let go of his sword and will melt his anger. The pictorial elements, alone, do not justify such a specific reading. In this image, as in most representations of the recovery of Helen, there are no specific indications as to exactly how Aphrodite persuaded Menelaos to pardon his wife.


38. See Clement (*supra*, n. 23) 60–71.

Kahil and other scholars have argued that the escort scenes depict the version of the recovery of Helen related in the lost epic Ilioupersis by Arktinos. In the Ilioupersis, according to the late Roman summary by Proklos, Menelaos found Helen, killed her third husband Deiphobos, and took her back to the ships. The vase-paintings are thought to show the last part, the return to the ships. Many scholars have suspected that, in the Ilioupersis, in contrast to the Little Iliad, Menelaos forgave Helen straightaway and perhaps never intended to punish her at all; and that the vase-painters depicted the return to the ships because there was no climactic moment in this version of the story. There is no certainty, however, that Menelaos did not intend to kill his wife in the Ilioupersis. The greatest impediment to that hypothesis is the brevity of Proklos’ summary: there is no guarantee that Proklos did not simply omit to mention that Menelaos intended at some point to kill his wife in the Ilioupersis, in order to save space; after all, he was writing a summary.

The assumption that the vase-painters were following a source in which Menelaos never intended to kill his wife raises a serious iconographic question about the escort scenes. If Menelaos never intended to harm Helen in that epic, why does he brandish conspicuously a drawn sword in all of the escort scenes? In order to get around that difficulty, Clement argued that the sword in these scenes is not meant as a threat to the woman, but as a means of clearing a path through enemy lines. There is little iconographic evidence to support that interpretation.

40. E.g., Luckenbach (supra, n. 30) 634; Arthur Schneider, Der troïsche Sagenkreis in der ältesten griechischen Kunst (Leipzig, 1886) 107 and 181; Massei (supra, n. 30) 261; Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 105. For a more conservative approach, see E. Kunze, Archaische Schildbänder (OlFor 2, Berlin, 1950) 164.


42. P. Ducati, “Una tomba di Felsina,” Dedalo 9 (1928–1929) 332; Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 31–32; Buschor, FR 3:308. Cf. also Wescoat (supra, n. 4) 60 on the interpretation of Oltos’ cup in Malibu (fig. 3). Ducati pointed out that in Book 6 of Virgil’s Aeneid, Deiphobos says that Helen cooperated with the Greeks by hiding his weapons so that he would be defenseless on the night when the Greeks climbed down from the horse. Ducati suspected that Virgil was following Arktinos in this passage. Robert (supra, n. 30) 1263 suggested that Menelaos forgave Helen because of her cooperation in the theft of the Trojans’ most sacred talisman, the Palladium. The robbery of the Palladium was described in the Little Iliad; for Helen’s participation, see esp. Naples 3235, amphora, ARV² 1316,1, Group of Naples 3235, LIMC 3, pl. 286 Diomedes I 27. The utility and sincerity of Helen’s aid to the Greeks prior to the sack of Troy, however, was not above suspicion: see Hom. Od. 4.235–89.

43. This point is emphasized by Clement (supra, n. 23) 51–52. Löwy (supra, n. 25) 285 also considered the possibility that a pursuit was included in Arktinos’ account of the recovery of Helen but omitted from the summary because of lack of space; but he rejected this possibility because he felt that the vase-paintings supported the hypothesis that Menelaos simply found Helen and returned her to the ships in the Ilioupersis, without more ado. Löwy’s argument is a good example of the way in which the assumption of a close relationship between text and image can lead to questionable philological or iconographical conclusions.

44. Clement (supra, n. 23) 61–68, esp. 62. Clement cited in support of his interpretation Robert’s discussion (supra, n. 11, 56–57) of black-figure representations of a woman being led by
A drawn sword is not included in representations of the rescue of Aithra, which employ the same pictorial type as the escort of Helen—a warrior leading a woman by the wrist—and represent a closely comparable situation—Achaian warriors attempting to escort a woman through the potentially hostile environment of Troy.\textsuperscript{45} Aineias does not carry a drawn sword in representations of his escape with his father Anchises from Troy, a situation that seems far more risky than the escorting of Helen back to the ships.\textsuperscript{46} During the last night of Troy, the Achaians gained control of the entire citadel, and they already controlled the region around Troy. For a Trojan like Aineias, attempting to lead his family to safety, the circumstances, one imagines, might well call for a drawn sword. But Menelaos was one of the top Achaian commanders: what danger did he run leading his wife back to camp?

In vase-painting, when a warrior leading a woman by the wrist carries a drawn sword, he intends to use it on the woman. On a cup in the Louvre, Makron depicted Neoptolemos leading or, more accurately, pulling Polyxena to the tomb of Achilles, which occupies the space under the handle of the cup; Neoptolemos has already drawn his sword in anticipation of cutting the girl’s throat to appease the restless spirit of his father.\textsuperscript{47} On a beautiful white-ground lekythos in Palermo, Douris depicts Iphigeneia being led for sacrifice to the altar of Artemis by Teukros. Not only does Teukros have his sword drawn but the warrior who follows the girl also has his sword ready.\textsuperscript{48} These pictures are the closest iconographic parallels

\begin{itemize}
  \item two warriors. Note, however, that Robert did not believe that those scenes depicted the recovery of Helen; he argued that they depicted Paris and Aineias leading Helen off to Troy. Naturally, he would have offered an explanation for the drawn sword that did not involve a threat to the woman, because in later red-figure vase-painting Paris does not threaten Helen. Robert, furthermore, cited as a parallel for the sword drawn as a precautionary measure the representations of the theft of the Palladion by Odysseus and Diomedes. But the cup by Makron, Leningrad B 649, ARV\textsuperscript{2} 460,13, LIMC 1, pl. 337 Akamas and Demophon 6, the earliest surviving representation of the burglary, shows that Diomedes and Odysseus have drawn their swords in “trying to attack each other, not to protect themselves. See J. Boardman and C. E. Vafopoulou-Richardson, “Diomedes I,” LIMC 3 (1986) 408.
  \item 45. U. Kron, “Aithra I,” LIMC 1 (1981) 420–31. Cf. esp. London E 456, calyx krater, ARV\textsuperscript{2} 239,16, Myson, LIMC 1, pl. 332 Aithra I 99: one of the brothers leads his grandmother by the wrist to the right; the other brother brings up the rear, looking back as if guarding their retreat. Both are fully armed but carry spears, not drawn swords. The names of all the figures are included on the vase.
  \item 46. S. Woodford and M. Louden, “Two Trojan Themes: The Iconography of Ajax Carrying the Body of Achilles and of Aeneas Carrying Anchises in Black Figure Vase Painting,” AJA 84 (1980) 25–40; F. Canciani, “Aineias,” LIMC 1 (1981) 386–88. In these scenes, Aineias carries two spears if he carries any weaponry at all in his hands. Cf. also the representations of Ajax carrying the body of Achilles out of battle collected by A. Kosssatz-Deissmann, “Achilleus,” LIMC 1 (1981) 185–91: judging from the ferocity of the fighting around corpses in the \textit{Iliad} (e.g., Book 17), one might expect Ajax to carry a drawn sword in these scenes, but he carries two spears or no weapons at all.
  \item 47. Louvre G 153, cup, ARV\textsuperscript{2} 460,14, Makron, BABesch 29 (1954) 12 fig. 1. The figures are labelled.
  \item 48. Palermo, white-ground lekythos, ARV\textsuperscript{2} 446,266, Dorius, LIMC 5, pl. 466 Iphigeneia 3. See now D. Buitron-Oliver, “Stories from the Trojan Cycle in the Work of Dorius,” in J. B. Carter and S. P. Morris, eds., \textit{The Ages of Homer: A Tribute to Emily Townsend Vermeule} (Austin, 1995) 437–40 with new illustrations. In the most powerful representation of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia, Kiel B 538,
for our escort scenes because the warrior leading the woman has drawn his sword, and the stories underlying the pictures assure us that the warrior intends to use the sword on the woman.

The most persuasive arguments against Clement’s hypothesis are the escort scenes themselves, which clearly indicate that Menelaos threatens Helen with his sword. The picture on the stamnos in Tarquinia (fig. 7) could hardly express this more explicitly: Menelaos is leading Helen by the wrist to the left, but turns his upper body all the way around to face her and holds his sword in her face. Even Clement had to acknowledge that, in this case, Menelaos is threatening to use his sword against her and not in her defense.49 Clement suggested that, on the cup in Odessa by Oltos (fig. 2) and the cup in Boston by the Elpinikos Painter, the position of the sword is due to the frontal pose of the warrior and not to any intention on the part of the painter to suggest that he is threatening the woman.50 In the depictions of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia just mentioned, however, Makron and Douris managed to draw a frontally-posed warrior with a drawn sword leading a woman by the wrist, without positioning the sword tip inches from the woman’s nose, as on the cup by the Elpinikos Painter.

It is unlikely, then, that the drawn sword in representations of Menelaos escorting Helen was intended or understood as anything other than a threat to harm the woman. If the Ilíoupersis related that Menelaos did not threaten Helen when he encountered her during the sack of Troy, then these pictures do not depict the same account. But the escort scenes prompt a further question independent of the literary sources. How can the presence of the sword in these scenes, which appear to depict the moment after the climactic meeting of the spouses after ten or twenty years, be explained? In the pursuit scenes, we often see Menelaos throwing away his sword, abandoning his original plan to kill Helen, as noted earlier. So why does Menelaos have a drawn sword in the escort scenes if he has already thrown it away, so to speak? One possibility is that the vase-painters are trying to suggest that Menelaos has not yet forgiven his wife, that he is leading her back to the ships more or less as a prisoner, and that he intends to dispose of her later.51 In the Trojan Women (869–83 and 1046–59), Euripides fashioned the story in that way: Menelaos intends to kill Helen, but only upon his arrival in Greece. There is, however, another possible interpretation of the drawn sword in the escort scenes that does not necessitate the supposition that the painters of the

_oinochoe, perhaps by the Shuvalov Painter, LIMC 5, pl. 466 Iphigeneia 1—in which Iphigeneia has fainted from fear and is being carried to the altar—the drawn sword is also prominently displayed._

49. Clement (supra, n. 23) 69: “the warrior . . . is now (for once) shaking his sword at the woman presumably to expedite her getting under way.”

50. Clement (supra, n. 23) 52 and 68.

51. According to Luckenbach (supra, n. 30) 626–27, Overbeck argued that a version of the story more or less along these lines was given in the Ilíoupersis of Arktinos. K. Scheffold, Götter- und Heldensagen der Griechen in der spätarchaischen Kunst (Munich, 1978) 259 interpreted Oltos’ representation on the cup in Odessa in that way.
escort scenes were following a version of the story different from that followed by the painters of the pursuit scenes. As Himmelmann-Wildschütz suggested, attributes do not always have to be understood in relation to the specific action depicted in a visual narrative: they can point backward or forward to earlier or later moments in a story, and their chief function in some instances seems to be to clarify the identities of the figures.52 So, for example, in a red-figure representation of the Judgment of Paris, in which Hermes leads the goddesses to Paris who is serving as a shepherd on Mt. Ida, the vase-painter included a scepter leaning against the rock, a reminder of Paris' royal background that has no relevance to his current occupation.53 Visual narration is not subject to the same temporal limitations as verbal narration. A verbal account must make explicit in some way the temporal relationship between two ideas, say, threatening Helen on the one hand and forgiving her on the other. If the order is reversed, if Menelaos initially forgives Helen and throws down his sword, then changes his mind and attacks her with his sword, the story of Helen will end quite differently. A visual artist can include both ideas in a representation without making the temporal relationship between them explicit, because the temporal dimension of visual storytelling is supplied by the viewer; it is usually not inscribed in the representation itself.54 In the representations of Menelaos leading Helen back to the ships, the sword may be intended to remind us that, although he no longer plans to kill his wife, he had every intention of doing so before he caught her.

It has not been emphasized often enough that the most definitive feature of the iconography of the recovery of Helen is the drawn sword.55 The sword it is the one element besides the two protagonists that occurs in all the different pictorial types: in the pursuit, when Menelaos often is letting go of it; in the escort, when he usually threatens Helen with it, and in the so-called attack scenes to be considered shortly, in which the drawn sword is also conspicuous. It has been argued that some representations of a woman escorted or pursued by a warrior equipped with a spear instead of a sword may also depict the recovery

53. Himmelmann-Wildschütz (supra, n. 52) 28; Louvre G 151, cup. ARV2 408.6, Briseis Painter, Recueil Charles Dugas (Paris, 1960) pl. 12b.
54. On temporality in verbal and visual narration, see W. Steiner, Pictures of Romance: Form Against Context in Painting and Literature (Chicago, 1988) 13–15. Although a narrative must make clear the sequence of events in the underlying story, the order of the telling does not have to correspond to the order of events. See, e.g., N. Goodman, "Twisted Tales; or, Story, Study, and Symphony," in W. T. J. Mitchell, ed., On Narrative (Chicago, 1981) 99–115.
55. The only scholars to emphasize this are Kunze (supra, n. 40) 164–66, and J.-M. Moret, L'Ilioupersis dans la céramique italique: Les mythes et leur expression figurée au IVe siècle (Rome, 1975) 31, who follows Kunze.
of Helen.\textsuperscript{56} But as Schneider argued in detail long ago, the same general pictorial type is used in black-figure vase-painting to represent the stories of at least four different women being escorted by men: Aithra, Polyxena, Briseis, and Helen (by both Paris and Menelaos).\textsuperscript{57} The representations of a woman being led by a warrior with a spear are as likely to represent the rescue of Aithra as the recovery of Helen.\textsuperscript{58} The recent work of Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood has underscored the important semantic differences between scenes of women being pursued by men armed with spears and those in which the women are pursued by men who have drawn swords.\textsuperscript{59} In the former, which Sourvinou-Inwood calls erotic pursuits, the spears serve merely to characterize the men as ephebes or warriors, and are not going to be used on the women, but in the latter, which she identifies as bona fide attacks, the men intend to use the swords against their victims.

Menelaos is equipped with a spear rather than the ubiquitous sword in only one surviving Athenian representation of the recovery of Helen that includes inscriptions identifying the figures, the cup in Malibu by Oltos (fig. 3): a warrior armed with spear and shield, labelled M[E]N\Lambda\AO\Sigma, leads a woman to the right by the wrist, and looks back at her in a seemingly menacing manner.\textsuperscript{60} The omission of the sword may be due to the direction of the action, left to right: Menelaos is using his right hand—his sword-hand—to lead Helen, leaving free his shield-hand. On the cup in Odessa (fig. 2), Oltos depicted the action from right to left, with Menelaos leading Helen with his left hand; that left his sword-hand free. One other representation that may be an exception to the rule is on a slightly later fragmentary cup from the Athenian Acropolis.\textsuperscript{61} What remains of the cup shows the lower part of a woman standing opposite a warrior holding a spear and a shield in his left hand; the warrior’s right hand is no longer visible. Beside

\textsuperscript{56} E.g., Clement (\textit{supra}, n. 23) 60. On pp. 58–59, however, Clement rightly argues that a number of pursuit scenes identified by Kahil as Menelaos pursuing Helen should be left unidentified.

\textsuperscript{57} Schneider (\textit{supra}, n. 40) 106–109.

\textsuperscript{58} Cf. Dugas (\textit{supra}, n. 39) 31–34. A picture of this type on a black-figure amphora in London, B 173, \textit{LIMC} 1, pl. 332 Aithra I 61, may represent the rescue of Aithra by her sons, Akamas and Demophon, because the letters ΑΘΕ are inscribed on one of the warrior’s shields. Kron (\textit{supra}, n. 45) 430 argued that this is best understood to mean that the warriors are Athenian.


\textsuperscript{60} For the reading of the inscription, see Wescoat (\textit{supra}, n. 4) 60.

\textsuperscript{61} Athens, Acrop., 212, unattributed, ca. 510–500 B.C., G. Graef and E. Langlotz, \textit{Die antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athen} (Berlin, 1925–1933) 2: pl. 10. There has also been much discussion about whether the picture on London E 336, neck amphora, \textit{ARV}² 1010,4, Dwarf Painter, \textit{LIMC} 2, pl. 182 Apollon 5, depicts the recovery of Helen or the attack on Kassandra. The identity of the cult statue (Apollo) has suggested to some that the woman must be Helen, because Kassandra invariably seeks refuge at the idol of Athena. But the desperation of the woman, the violence of the warrior’s assault, and the warrior’s lack of a drawn sword suggest that she is Kassandra. See K. Schefold, “Statuen auf Vasebildern,” \textit{Jdl} 52 (1937) 44; Clement (\textit{supra}, n. 23) 59; Kahil (\textit{supra}, n. 5) 550.
the woman is the final letter E of an inscription. Behind her is Neoptolemos, swinging the little body of Astyanax. The warrior and the woman have been tentatively identified as Menelaos and Helen, but that is not the only possible interpretation. The juxtaposition of the woman-warrior pair and the murder of Astyanax by Neoptolemos recurs on the famous cup in Paris by the Brygos Painter depicting a horrific Sack of Troy. On that cup, a warrior armed with a shield and spear leads a women by the wrist away from an altar on which Priam sits and towards which Neoptolemos rushes swinging Astyanax. The identifying labels are still preserved: the warrior is Akamas and the woman is Polyxena. Like the Brygos Painter’s vase-painting, the picture on the Acropolis fragments may have shown the capture of Polyxena, rather than the recovery of Helen. The final letter E of the woman’s name could as easily have been the final letter of the name “Polyxene” as that of “Helene.” That would explain why her captor may be armed with a spear rather than a sword.

The singularity of the figure of Menelaos on Oltos’ cup in Malibu (fig. 3), armed with a spear rather than a sword, is an indication of the importance of the sword in the representations of the recovery of Helen. It is not merely an attribute clarifying the identity of Menelaos as a warrior, for a helmet, corselet, spear, and shield can serve that purpose. The sword, drawn from its sheath, is the visible manifestation of the intention of Menelaos to murder his wife, just as the sword released from the hand is the sign of his change of heart. The importance of the sword as a narrative device is such that it is even included in pictures where its presence has struck some as awkward, in the escort scenes for example.

62. Clement (supra, n. 23) 63; Kahlil (supra, n. 5) 538. Both rightly note that the interpretation is not certain.


64. The correctness of the labels has sometimes been questioned. See Robert (supra, n. 11) 61–62 (concerning the arguments of Brunn); Furtwängler, FR 1:117–20; A. Cambitoglou, The Brygos Painter (Sydney, 1968) 31–33; H. R. Immerwahr, Attic Script: A Survey (Oxford, 1990) 89, and U. Kron, “Akamas et Demophon,” LIMC 1 (1981) 436 no. 11, with further bibliography. Some commentators have felt that the figures ought to have been labelled Menelaos and Helen, because Polyxena is too unperturbed and her captor is usually identified as Neoptolemos. Second-guessing the correctness of the labels written on vases at the time they were painted is a risky business, however, and several scholars have advanced cogent arguments in favor of assuming that the Brygos Painter meant what he wrote. See Moret (supra, n. 55) 55; Kunze (supra, n. 40) 167, and especially the sensitive analysis of Ghali-Kahlil (supra, n. 2) 112–13. In the Brygos Painter’s picture, Neoptolemos cannot lead Polyxena to the grave of Achilles, as he does, for example, on the cup by Makron (Louvre G 153, [supra, n. 47]), because he is busy murdering Priam, so the task has been given by the painter to another Achaian. The recently published cup in Malibu by Onesimos (Malibu 83.AE.362, Williams [supra, n. 20] 50–52 and fig. 8e) shows that Polyxena was more often included in representations of the Sack of Troy than previously thought. In the tondo of the cup, Polyxena (labelled) is present beside the altar of Zeus during the murder of Priam by Neoptolemos. The Brygos Painter depicted a slightly later moment in the story of Polyxena: having just been caught beside the altar, she is being led away for sacrifice.
HELEN AND MENELAOS FACE TO FACE

Two of the earliest works of art thought to depict the recovery of Helen employ a compositional scheme that is different from both the pursuit type and the escort scheme. On a well-known relief pithos on Mykonos (fig. 8) and an amphora in Berlin by Lydos, a warrior holding a drawn sword faces a woman and grasps her wrist or the hem of her cloak, while she stands before him and holds out the hem of the cloak with one or both of her hands. Scenes of this type, which have been called "attack" scenes, were grouped by Kahil with pursuit scenes as having been inspired by the Little Iliad of Lesches. Clement, however, advanced a compelling argument that the scenes of Menelaos confronting Helen represent the split second before the moment depicted in the escort scenes, which Kahil thought were inspired by the Ilioupersis of Arktinos. Clement's argument highlights, I think, the arbitrary quality of the attempt to distinguish between scenes inspired by Lesches and those inspired by Arktinos.

It has often been suggested that Helen stands quietly in front of Menelaos in this type of scene, rather than fleeing before him, because she is confident of the power of her beauty to subdue her husband's anger. If that interpretation were correct, then the story underlying the attack scenes would be quite different from that underlying the pursuit scenes, in which Helen runs for her life (and therefore seems less confident of her ability to prevail over her husband). That interpretation, however, is based on a gesture the meaning of which is by no means unambiguous or univocal, the covering or uncovering of the head and upper body. Ervin suggested that the artist of the pithos on Mykonos attempted to show that Helen was revealing her beauty to Menelaos by uncovering herself.

65. For the pithos on Mykonos, see M. Ervin, "A Relief Pithos from Mykonos," ArchDelt 18 A/ (1963) 37–75, esp. 48 (metope no. 7) and pl. 22; the amphora, Berlin F 1685, ABV 109,24, J. Boardman, Athenian Black Figure Vases (London, 1974) fig. 67. The depiction on the chest of Kypselos of the recovery of Helen described by Paus. 5.18.3—"Menelaos, wearing a cuirass and holding a sword, advances to kill Helen"—may have been similar, but one cannot be sure of the pose of Helen. The early-sixth-century stele in Sparta (inv. 1) may also depict Menelaos and Helen face to face. See M. Pipili, Laconian Iconography of the Sixth Century B.C. (Oxford, 1987) 30–31 and fig. 45.

66. Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 77 and 85; Kahil (supra, n. 5) 537–38.

67. Clement (supra, n. 23) 60–68. See also Ahlberg-Cornell (supra, n. 30) 80 on the futility of trying to determine which epic source the creator of the pithos followed.

68. Schneider (supra, n. 40) 181; Luckenbach (supra, n. 30) 634; Kunze (supra, n. 40) 164; Clement (supra, n. 23) 62; Scheffold (SB 2, supra, n. 5) 258.

69. Generally speaking, gestures and attributes rarely have a single, fixed meaning in Greek art. Their meaning or meanings in any given instance are suggested in part by the context in which they occur. See, e.g., the methodology discussed by C. Béard, "Iconographie—iconologie—iconologie," in C. Béard, ed., Essais sémiotiques (Lausanne, 1983) 5–37.

70. Ervin (supra, n. 65) 61: this figure is the most richly dressed of all the female figures on the pithos and, unlike the others, does not supplicate her attacker. On the evidence of the representation on the pithos, Ervin argued that the story of Menelaos' succumbing to his wife's physical beauty was not a sentimentalizing story originating in the fifth century B.C., but an old tale going back to
Moret, Keuls, and Ahlberg-Cornell also interpreted the gesture as an attempt at seduction.\(^71\) But the gesture of holding out the mantle or veil does not regularly signify an intention to seduce. Its most common function in art is to indicate that a woman standing opposite a man is his wife, and it appears to derive from real marital ritual.\(^72\) Because of its origins, the gesture may call to mind the idea of a woman revealing her body to her husband for the first time, but in many contexts in art it is difficult to imagine that the gesture would have signified seduction. The frequently reproduced representation of the departure of Amphiaraos on the lost Late Corinthian krater, for example, shows that the gesture is appropriate even for the bride of an estranged couple.\(^73\)

Furthermore, Clairmont suggested that Helen's gesture can be understood as an instinctive, protective gesture of covering up.\(^74\) Knauer followed Clairmont in her interpretation of the fleeing female figure on the skyphos in Berlin (fig. 9), to be discussed in detail shortly.\(^75\) Knauer's discussion highlights an important point that is not often mentioned in connection with the interpretation of Helen's gesture: in later red-figure scenes in which Helen is running for her life—and therefore less confident, one would guess, in the power of her beauty—she also holds up the edge of her cloak. Compare, for example, the recovery of Helen on the skyphos by Makron (fig. 6): Helen turns, throws one hand out in alarm, and lifts the edge of her mantle. The gesture seems more likely meant as an unconscious gesture of fear or alarm than as a conscious attempt to seduce Menelaos, for why, if she were trying to seduce him, is she also trying to run away?\(^76\)

There are representations of situations comparable to the recovery of Helen that support Clairmont's interpretation of her gesture. On the lekythos in Palermo by Douris discussed earlier, Iphigeneia lifts the edge of her veil or himation as Teukros leads her to the altar where he will kill her so that the weather will improve. The image is akin, formally, to the image of a groom leading a bride by the wrist to her new home.\(^77\) But the narrative context of the image, preparations

the epic cycle. See also Kahl (supra, n. 5) 538 no. 225, who suggests that Helen is revealing her face and shoulder, and perhaps even her breast.

71. Moret (supra, n. 55) 31–32; Keuls (supra, n. 22) 9; Ahlberg-Cornell (supra, n. 30) 79–80: "this scene of coquetry is unique in early Greek art." Clement (supra, n. 23) 62–64 argued that Helen was unveiling herself in these pictures chiefly in order that Menelaos be able to recognize her. But as Moret pointed out, if Menelaos is coming toward the woman with his sword drawn, he must already know who she is.


73. Once Berlin F 1655, column krater, Amphiaraos Painter, D. A. Amyx, *Corinthian Vase-painting of the Archaic Period* (Berkeley, 1988) 263. The picture was well analyzed by Robert (supra, n. 11) 14–16.


76. Boston 13.186 (supra, n. 26).

77. Palermo (supra, n. 48). The similarity has led to the hypothesis that Douris is alluding to the tradition, known from literature, that Agamemnon lured Iphigeneia to Aulis under the pretext of
for a human sacrifice, encourages the viewer, I think, to override the usual marital associations of the gesture. The action suggests that Iphigeneia is experiencing not the anxiety of marital union but the terror of death. The gesture of holding the hem of the mantle ought to be interpreted accordingly, not as one of unveiling before a husband but as one of covering up out of fear. Similarly, the gesture would not necessarily have signified seduction in representations of Helen and Menelaos face to face, but may have been understood as a gesture of fear.

PROBLEMS OF SETTING

If Helen's gesture in the attack scenes is not an attempt at seduction but a protective gesture, why is she not also fleeing as in the pursuit scenes? Perhaps she has already reached the destination of her flight, her place of refuge. Consider a red-figure calyx krater by the Niobid Painter (fig. 10): Helen stands still, holding out the edge of her mantle, facing her husband who advances from the right, just like the figure of Helen in the earlier attack scenes. But the Niobid Painter's picture makes visible something that is not given form in the earlier ones: the setting of the event. Helen stands in front of an altar and a column supporting a statue of Apollo. The god Apollo himself stands in front of her, a sign that he will protect his shrine from the desecration that would result if Menelaos stabbed his wife within the holy precinct. The inclusion of setting provides an answer to the question of why Helen has stopped running and turned to face her husband: she thinks—or hopes—that Menelaos will not harm her in a sacred precinct. The panel on the pithos in Mykonos (fig. 8) lacks any trace of setting, such as an altar or cult statue, but its absence is not surprising in view of the early date of the pithos: in Greek art, the pictorial vocabulary of setting developed later than that of the human figure and action. The artist of the pithos may have assumed that the viewer would know that Helen sought refuge from her husband in a sanctuary. Helen's flight to the temple of Aphrodite is one of the few surviving elements of the literary tradition that undoubtedly went back to the Archaic period, as we have seen. Furthermore, as soon as vase-painters developed a vocabulary to give form to the idea of a sanctuary, they began to depict Helen fleeing to various shrines of the gods, which may suggest that Helen's flight to a sanctuary was a well-known feature of the oral tradition.


78. Ferrara 2895, ARV² 601,18, S. Aurigemma, La necropoli di Spina in Valle Trebbia (Rome, 1960) 1: pls. 128–33, an early work by the Niobid Painter, perhaps ca. 470–460 B.C. Clement (supra, n. 23) 63–64 and Moret (supra, n. 55) 33 both cite this picture in support of their interpretations of Helen's gesture, but neither notes the connection between her demeanor and the setting of the scene.
The place where Menelaos finally caught up with Helen is often explicitly represented in late Archaic and Classical representations of the story. The setting is one of the most complex aspects of the iconography because the venue is not always the same: in one vase-painting, Helen seeks refuge at a temple of Aphrodite, but in others it is a sanctuary of Apollo, and in others still it is a sanctuary of Athena. Two vase-paintings may even localize the recovery of Helen in a domestic rather than religious setting. Let us consider first some specific problems in the interpretation of the setting of the recovery and then turn to the general problem of why the setting of this particular event is characterized by so much variety in the visual arts.

THE PARTHENON METOPES

The most readily identified subject on the north metopes of the Parthenon is the recovery of Helen. The subject takes up two panels: on metope 24, two warriors move quickly in the direction of metope 25, which includes two female figures and a cult image on a statue base. 79 The female figure to the left in metope 25—well dressed in a chiton and mantle and standing quietly—must be Aphrodite, because a small winged figure—certainly Eros—flies from her toward the approaching warriors. The other female figure, Helen, wears a peplos and a veil and runs toward the cult statue. The composition is similar in many points to that on the oinochoe in the Vatican (fig. 5). 80 On the oinochoe, Helen has taken refuge at a statue of an armed goddess, surely Athena. The preserved portion of the statue on metope 25—the lower part of the legs standing with feet close together and draped by an archaizing, tight-fitting, foldless peplos—also most closely resembles statues of Athena as represented in art, and scholars have generally assumed that the statue on the metope is an image of Athena. 81 Ernst Berger argued, however, that Helen could hardly have expected the help of Athena, because Athena was the enemy of the Trojans and Helen had even assisted in the theft of the Palladion, Troy’s most venerable idol of Athena. Helen’s ally was Aphrodite, Aphrodite appears in person in the representation on the metope to win over Menelaos, and so, in Berger’s opinion, the statue on the metope was most likely a statue of Aphrodite. 82 Berger suggested that the statue of the armed goddess on the oinochoe in the Vatican may represent an armed Aphrodite, an iconographic type attested in antiquity (though, it should be noted, only much later

80. Vatican H 525 (supra, n. 21). For the relationship between the two works of art, see C. Praschniker, Parthenonstudien (Augsburg, 1928) 98–104; Löwy (supra, n. 25) 282–83; Simon (supra, n. 22) 93.
than the fifth century B.C.); another possibility is that the vase-painter included the Palladion, the best-known landmark of Troy, so that the viewer would not mistake the setting of the scene for some other locale, a problem that would not face the viewer of the north metopes of the Parthenon because all of the events depicted in the metopes concern Troy.

To us, it may seem unlikely that Athena would lift a finger to help Helen, but that is not necessarily the way the artists saw it. Athena was included in one of the most complex and beautiful representations of the recovery of Helen, a late work of the Niobid Painter in Bologna (fig. 11), only slightly earlier in date than the Parthenon metopes.83 Menelaos strides to the right ready to thrust his sword. Helen runs ahead, looking back at her pursuer, holding a thin shawl or mantle with both hands. On the far right, partly underneath the handle of the vase, is the goal of her flight, a sanctuary of Apollo, represented by a column, altar, and cult statue of the god. Apollo stands in front of his altar with one hand raised to forbid Menelaos from advancing any farther. But the most prominent figure, compositionally, is the one standing between Helen and Menelaos, the stately figure of Athena. She stands so quietly and appears so impassive that Clement suspected that she was included in the picture merely because she, like Apollo, was one of the most prominent gods of the city of Troy, a part of the landscape, so to speak.84 But Dugas is certainly correct in suggesting that Athena’s role in this picture must be, in part at least, to prevent Menelaos from harming Helen, because the vase-painter placed her between the spouses.85 Helen’s traditional patron, Aphrodite, is not absent from the picture: she is almost certainly the female figure standing between the altar and the Doric column, under the handle of the vase.86 Her gesture is similar to that of Apollo though perhaps more emphatic, a command rather than a recommendation. Her left foot is turned toward the right, away from the action; she is about to depart, her presence no longer necessary. The Niobid Painter did not forget that Aphrodite played an important role in saving Helen, but his composition relegates her to the sidelines and places the greatest visual emphasis on the goddess Athena. Athena’s impassivity may be a reflection of her character, as the wisest and least hotheaded of the gods, rather than an indication that she is unconcerned by the situation. It may be that Athena is more concerned to prevent Menelaos, one of her clients, from committing the serious offence of desecrating a religious shrine than she is to aid Helen. But the picture suggests,

83. Bologna 269, ARV2 599.8, CVA Bologna 5, pls. 102–103. In his discussion of the Parthenon metopes, Berger did not consider this vase.
84. Clement (supra, n. 23) 208.
85. C. Dugas, “Du style sévère au style libre,” in Recueil Charles Dugas (Paris, 1960) 56–58. This point is also emphasized by Ducati (supra, n. 42) 332.
86. For the identification of this figure, see G. Montanari, CVA Bologna 5 (1960) p. 6, with further references. No labels identifying the figures were included in the picture. Occasionally, the woman under the handle is thought to be Artemis, e.g., by E. Brizio, “Menelao, Elena ed Etra: Vaso del museo civico di Bologna,” Adf 50 (1878) 64 and Moret (supra, n. 55) 33. But the figure lacks all of the attributes of Artemis.
at the very least, that artists did not consider Athena’s hostility toward Helen to be as great or as unremitting as Berger suggested.

A SKYPHOS BY THE TRIPTOLEMOS PAINTER

Athena appears on another vase that has been thought to depict the recovery of Helen, a skyphos in Berlin attributed to the Triptolemos Painter and published by Knauer (fig. 9). The composition consists of four figures running to the right in an architectural setting characterized by four Doric columns. The two central figures—a fully armed warrior with sword drawn in pursuit of a woman who runs from him, turns, and pleads for mercy—are like the figures of Menelaos and Helen in many scenes of the pursuit type. For Helen’s gesture of supplication, compare the picture on Oltos’ neck amphora (fig. 1), and for her lifting of her mantle in a seemingly defensive or fearful manner, compare the picture by the Niobid Painter (fig. 11) just considered. Knauer identified the central figures as Menelaos and Helen, and suggested that the young man running ahead of Helen may be Deïphobos, Helen’s third husband. The fourth figure, the one who follows Menelaos, is easily recognized as the goddess Athena.

Roland Hampe argued that Knauer’s identifications are incorrect. He pointed out that this would be the only known representation of the recovery of Helen to include her third husband and to depict Athena as an active participant on behalf of Menelaos. Hampe also suggested that the central figures differ from Menelaos and Helen as they are usually depicted in scenes of the recovery of Helen because of the ferocity and mercilessness of the warrior’s attack. Martin Robertson also found the presence of Athena strange because she appears to encourage Menelaos. But none of the objections to Knauer’s identifications is conclusive. The presence of Deiphobos (if that is who the young man is) may be unparalleled, but that, by itself, is hardly a decisive objection to the identification of the central figures. Menelaos’ attack is no more unrelenting and Helen’s flight no more desperate than they are in the pictures on the neck amphora by Oltos (fig. 1) or a cup in Tarquinia by the Foundry Painter (fig. 12). The presence of Athena at the capture of Helen by Menelaos is not unprecedented, as we have seen on the krater by the

87. Berlin inv. 1970.9, Knauer (supra, n. 75), LIMC 4, pl. 335 Helene 246.
88. That Deiphobos married Helen after the death of Paris was related in the Little Iliad (see Evelyn-White, supra, n. 41, 511), and is implied by Hom. Od. 4.276 and 8.517–20.
90. M. Robertson, The Art of Vase-Painting in Classical Athens (Cambridge, 1992) 114–15; Robertson, “Menelaos and Helen in Troy,” in Carter and Morris (supra, n. 48) 434–36. But he raised an important objection to Hampe’s suggestion that the skyphos depicts the murder of Ismene by Tydeus, namely, that the few extant representations of the story of Tydeus and Ismene consistently show that she was killed while still in bed. As a representation of the death of Ismene, this picture would be at least as atypical iconographically as it is as a representation of the recovery of Helen.
91. Tarquinia RC 5291, ARV² 405,1, CVA Tarquinia 2, pl. 13. For the attribution, Para 370,23 bis.
Niobid Painter (fig. 11). Moreover, the assumption that Athena is actively aiding Menelaos in the picture by the Triptolemos Painter may not be entirely correct. Although most of the left hand of the goddess is lost, the tips of the fingers are well enough preserved to show that she was gesturing toward the figures in the middle of the picture. Her gesture appears to have been similar to the gestures made by Apollo and Aphrodite in the picture on the krater by the Niobid Painter: hand up and open with the fingers spread. In that picture, the gesture seems to mean “stop.” Neumann argued that this type of gesture generally is a defensive one, indicating objection to or refusal of what is occurring or being proposed in a picture. On the skyphos, Athena jogs along behind Menelaos, it is true, in a position often taken in vase-painting by supporting deities. But I doubt that her hesitant stride and, in particular, her hesitant gesture would have been interpreted to mean “go ahead, kill the girl.”

The position of Athena, behind Menelaos rather than between him and his victim as in the picture by the Niobid Painter, becomes less surprising once the setting of the scene is identified. Moret and Kahil argued that the setting is a sanctuary because under each handle of the skyphos there is an altar. If sacred rather than secular, the setting is presumably the temple of Athena, according to Moret, because she alone of the gods is present. That is not impossible, because Helen seeks refuge in a sanctuary of Athena in other representations, as we have seen. But it seems odd that, if this is a temple of Athena, the goddess appears to be the last one through the door, rather than to be already at home in her temple. Compare the picture on the cup in Tarquinia (fig. 12), in which Aphrodite is seated in her temple. Moreover, as Sourvinou-Inwood has emphasized, columns and an altar together do not always denote a sanctuary: they often denote a house and its courtyard altar. Compare the cup in New York by the Briseis Painter depicting the houses of Aigeus and Poseidon: each house is characterized by two columns and a bit of entablature, and under one handle is an altar meant to be taken as part of both scenes. Several representations of the murder of Priam on his household

92. Cf. also the gesture that Aphrodite makes with her right hand in the picture by the Foundry Painter just mentioned. Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 81–82 suggested that Aphrodite is meant to appear unconcerned by the action in the Foundry Painter’s picture, but Clement (supra, n. 23) 208 and Schefold (supra, n. 37) 295 rightly believe that her gesture indicates that she is paying close attention to what is happening outside her temple.

93. Neumann (supra, n. 72) 37–38.

94. For a real instance of active divine assistance in scene of killing, see the fragmentary calyx krater by Euphronios in a New York private collection, Robertson (supra, n. 90) 25 fig. 19.

95. Moret (supra, n. 55) 34 n. 5; Kahil (supra, n. 5) 541. Knauer (supra, n. 75) 15 discounted the importance of the altars for the identification of the setting because there are two of them; she believed that they served merely to fill the spaces under the handles.


altar include columns denoting Priam’s palace. An even closer architectural parallel is the representation of the story of Telephos on the name-vase of the Telephos Painter: the setting, the inner courtyard of Agamemnon’s lavish palace, is characterized by four Aeolic columns connected by an entablature running around the rim of the cup, a doorway through which, one imagines, Telephos has just run, and an altar on which the hero cowards. It seems more likely, then, that the setting of the picture by the Triptolemos Painter is a domestic setting, perhaps the house of Deiphobos, as Knauer argued. She pointed out that the shield and spear leaning against the columns have the air of things lying around the house. Athena has followed Menelaos to the house presumably in order to protect him and to assist him in punishing the impertinence of Deiphobos, but she will not allow the situation to get out of hand and result in the death of Helen, who is, like Athena herself, a daughter of Zeus. Athena’s role in the story as the Niobid Painter represented it (fig. 11) might be understood in a similar way: she supports Menelaos’ effort to recover his wife, but she draws the line at murder or sacrilege.

MAKRON’S SKYPHOS

More uncertain is the setting of the recovery of Helen on the well-known skyphos in Boston by Makron (fig. 6). Menelaos is drawing his sword from its sheath. He is hopping mad, his weight on the balls of his feet. Helen, watching his actions, turns to run and lifts her mantle in the gesture familiar from the vase-paintings of the Triptolemos Painter (fig. 9) and the Niobid Painter (fig. 11). Waiting to receive Helen in her outstretched arms is Aphrodite, who perhaps also intends to neaten Helen’s coiffure. The goddess’ confidence and collectedness are embodied in her feet, which, in contrast to those of Menelaos, rest firmly on the ground. Behind Aphrodite, an old, white-haired man and a girl witness the event. The girl expresses her concern about the unfolding action by raising her hands, one of which holds a flower. The man and girl are labelled “Kriseus” and “Kriseis.” Behind Menelaos, seated on a stool underneath the handle, is another bearded man, balding and fair haired, labelled “Priam.”

Kriseus and Kriseis are generally thought to be alternate names for Chryses and Chryseis, known to us from Book 1 of the Iliad. Chryseus was a priest of

98. Boston 03.869, cup fragments, Clinic Painter, ARV² 808,1, AIA 58 (1954) pl. 61 fig. 25; Paris, Cab. Méd. 571, cup fragments, manner of the Brygos Painter, ARV² 386, AIA 58 (1954) pl. 61 fig. 24; Ferrara 2895 (supra, n. 78).
99. Boston 98.931, cup, ARV² 817,2, CB 3:pl. 88. See the commentary of Beazley, CB 3:54–57, who discusses the courtyard setting of the scene.
102. For the identification, see Beazley, CB 3:37, with further references, and for a nice discussion of Aphrodite’s feet, CB 3:36.
Apollo and so his presence here has been explained as an indication of setting: Helen has taken refuge in this scene, as in so many other pictures, at a sanctuary of Apollo, which Chryses evokes as priest. His daughter Chryseis is present, the argument runs, because the father is inseparable from the daughter in the mythological imagination. Conveying the setting of an event by including a figure who embodies the place is not unparalleled in vase-painting. On a skyphos in London depicting the departure of Triptolemos, Makron included a female figure labelled "Eleusis," the personification of the location of the event. But the means of personifying a setting thought to have been employed on the Boston skyphos—including an example of the type of person who would be employed there—seems a little strained. Furthermore, when Makron wanted to represent a sanctuary explicitly, he was perfectly willing to include an altar.

Another difficulty is the presence of Priam. Furtwängler and others have assumed that he is present as an indication that the setting is Troy. But, as an indication of the general setting, is he not redundant if the figure of Chryses is an indication of the specific setting? Is one to imagine that Priam is present at the sanctuary of Apollo where Helen took refuge? Robertson found the presence of Priam troubling for different reasons: he thought the king looked too young and too unperturbed for the event to be occurring during the sack of Troy. He suggested that the picture represents a moment during the embassy of Odysseus and Menelaos to Troy ten years before the sack of the city, in which Menelaos, enraged at the sight of Helen, lost his temper and drew his sword. The embassy is alluded to several times in ancient literature, although there is no reference to Menelaos' losing his temper.

It is perhaps not necessary to go as far as to suppose that there was more than one instance in his life in which Menelaos drew his sword on his wife. Makron was not the only artist to omit white hair from a depiction of Priam at the end of the Trojan war: two contemporary vase-painters depicted Priam at the moment of his death with a full, dark beard and a full head of dark or blonde hair—younger in appearance than the balding figure of Priam on Makron’s skyphos. The gesture

103. Furtwängler, FR 2:128–29; Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 81; Kahil (supra, n. 5) 541; Beazley, CB 3:37; Simon and Hirmer (supra, n. 81) 121; Schefold (supra, n. 37) 295.
104. London E 140, ARV² 459,3, H. A. Shapiro, Art and Cult under the Tyrants in Athens (Mainz, 1989) pl. 34a-d.
105. E.g., Athens, Acropolis 325, cup, ARV² 460,20, Graef and Langlotz (supra, n. 61) 2:pls. 20–21 (sanctuary of the nymphs?); Berlin F 2290 (supra, n. 26, sanctuary of Dionysos).
106. Furtwängler, FR 2:172; Simon and Hirmer (supra, n. 81) 121.
107. Perhaps Beazley sensed the difficulty when he wrote (CB 3:34): “in subject [Priam is] connected, though not very closely . . .”
109. The sources were collected and analyzed most recently by M. I. Davies, “The Reclamation of Helen,” AntK 20 (1977) 73–85.
110. Paris, Cab. Méd. 571, cup fragments, ARV² 386, manner of the Brygos Painter, LIMC 7, pl. 412 Priamos 133; Boston 03.869, cup fragments, ARV² 808,1, by or near the Clinic Painter, LIMC 7, pl. 412 Priamos 134.
Priam makes with his left hand in Makron’s picture is also perhaps significant: it is similar to the gestures of prohibition made by Apollo and Aphrodite on the vase in Bologna by the Niobid Painter (fig. 11), which suggests that the king is not completely unmoved by the possibility that Menelaos will kill Helen. If he is not more visibly moved, that is because nothing in the picture alludes to the other, more tragic events occurring during the sack of Troy: this is a representation of the recovery of Helen, not of the sack of Troy generally, and it would be unusual, I suspect, for a vase-painter to make a figure respond visibly to a stimulus that is not itself present in or directly implied by the action of the picture.

Why is Priam included in a representation of the recovery of Helen? One possible explanation is that he is Helen's father-in-law. Fathers are often included in visual representations of boys and girls being raped or abducted by the gods, a type of scene that is not unrelated formally to the scene on Makron’s skyphos. In those scenes, the fathers are most often inactive and unperturbed, like Priam in Makron’s picture. Whatever the explanation of their lack of distress—whether it is resignation in the face of the superior power of the gods or quiet satisfaction at the elevation of the status of their daughters or sons—their demeanor cautions us against assuming that figures in vase-painting ought always to display extreme emotional reactions to violent events.

Another explanation of Priam’s presence, one that is not incompatible with his presence as Helen’s father-in-law, is that he serves to indicate the specific setting of the action. The difficulty in reconciling the presence of Chryses and Priam in the same picture disappears if we reconsider the assumption that Chryses was included in order to indicate that the recovery of Helen is taking place in a sanctuary of Apollo. Perhaps Makron was primarily interested in including Chryseis in his picture, and added her father Chryses merely as her escort or chaperon. The significance of the choice of Chryseis would lie in the fact that she, like Helen, was the object of a dispute that led to the loss of many lives. As Homer tells us in Book 1 of the Iliad, when Chryses’ request for the return of his daughter was rejected, the priest, through Apollo, brought a deadly plague to the Achaian camp. Just so, Menelaos brought unremitting war to Troy when Helen was not returned to him. The return of Chryseis also led to the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles over Briseis, which resulted in heavy losses for the Achaianons. In this picture, then, Makron has included the two women who effected the deaths of the greatest number of Achaians and Trojans. Thematic juxtapositions of this

111. Simon and Hirmer (supra, n. 81) 121. I thank Meredith Hoppin for reminding me that, in Hom. Il. 3.172, Helen calls Priam “father.” Schefold (supra, n. 37) 295 suggested that the quiet figure of Priam is meant to be a visual foil for the angry figure of Menelaos.


113. Cf. the pelike by Hermonax in the Villa Giulia, ARV2 485,33, Simon and Hirmer (supra, n. 81) pls. 178–79: on the obverse, Boreas pursues Oreithyia; her companions run to her father Erechtheus, who stands quietly on the reverse.
kind are not foreign to early Greek art: consider the late-sixth-century Chalkidikean krater that juxtaposes and visually contrasts the two most famous Trojan couples, Helen and Paris and Hektor and Andromache.\textsuperscript{114} If Chryses is not meant to be understood as an indication of place, then the setting of Makron’s picture need not be understood to be a sanctuary of Apollo. The seated pose of Priam suits the space available for him underneath the handle, but in vase-painting the seated pose is often used for figures who are at home. Perhaps the presence of Priam, seated on a chair, is meant to suggest that the Menelaos has discovered Helen in Priam’s home. The picture on the Triptolemos Painter’s skyphos (fig. 9) suggests that localizing the recovery of Helen in a domestic rather than a religious setting would not have been inconceivable to Athenian vase-painters.

\textbf{VARIATION IN THE SETTING OF THE RECOVERY OF HELEN}

One of the most striking characteristics of the iconography of the meeting of Menelaos and Helen is the variety of settings. Helen flees to the temple of Aphrodite on the cup by the Foundry Painter (fig. 12), to the sanctuary of Apollo on vases by the Berlin Painter, Niobid Painter (figs. 10, 11), and other artists, and to the sanctuary of Athena on the Parthenon metopes and the oinochoe in the Vatican (fig. 5). In those representations, the identities of the places are established by the inclusion of cult statues of particular deities and/or the deities themselves. There are also several vase-paintings in which the setting of the pursuit of Helen is a sanctuary without specific identification.\textsuperscript{115} The setting of the scene on the skyphos by the Triptolemos Painter (fig. 9) appears to be a domestic space, perhaps the house of Deiphobos, and the setting on Makron’s skyphos (fig. 6) may be the palace of Priam. The skyphoi may thus depict an earlier moment in the story than the other representations, the moment when Menelaos first discovered Helen and she turned to run. Makron made the moment explicit by showing Menelaos just now beginning to draw his sword. The Triptolemos Painter chose a split second


\textsuperscript{115} Toledo 67.154, bell krater, Persephone Painter, \textit{LIMC} 4, pl. 340 Helene 274, \textit{CVA} Toledo 1, pl. 43: the setting is characterized by an altar and a tree. The tree, however, may be meant to represent an olive; if so, the setting would be a sanctuary of Athena. There is a striking similarity between the fall of Helen’s peplos on the vase in Toledo and that on the oinochoe in the Vatican, where the setting is also the sanctuary of Athena, suggesting perhaps a common pictorial source. See also Athens, NM 14983, fragmentary hydria, \textit{ARV}\textsuperscript{2} 1032.60, Polygnotos, \textit{ArchEph} (1937) 755–56 figs. 2–3; Princeton 86.34, fragmentary dinos, Copenhagen Painter, \textit{LIMC} 4, pl. 342 Helene 278: in the preserved portions of these two pictures, there are no clues as to the identities of the shrines, but it is possible that there were such clues on the parts of the vases now lost. See also Malibu 76.AE.44.2, hydria fragments, Providence Painter, \textit{LIMC} 4, pl. 335 Helene 245, published by K. Hamma, “Two New Representations of Helen and Menelaos,” \textit{GettMusJ} 11 (1983) 123–28: this representation, too, is fragmentary, but enough is preserved to suggest that there was no indication of the ownership of the shrine, which is represented by an altar.
later: the chase is on, help is nowhere in sight, and Deiphobos perhaps is still alive. But most artists chose an even later moment, when Helen draws near or reaches the goal of her flight, a god’s sanctuary.

One question that has frequently been raised is why vase-painters selected three different religious shrines as destinations for the flight of Helen. Some scholars have thought that each setting reflects a different poetic source, although only the temple of Aphrodite is attested in the literary tradition as a place of refuge for Helen. Robert and Clement called attention to the similarity between Ibykos’ version of the story and the scene represented on the cup by the Foundry Painter (fig. 12), both of which include a flight to a temple of Aphrodite. But it is indicative of the distance between the literary and iconographic traditions that no other surviving Archaic or Early Classical work of art depicts the flight to the temple of Aphrodite: other representations depict Helen running to the sanctuary of Apollo or Athena, which are not attested in the literary sources for the story. Some scholars have suggested that the variations in setting are the result of visual artists’ inventions. Kahil suggested that they were elaborated in order to avoid visual monotony. Dugas argued that the idea of the sanctuary of Apollo as the scene of the action was prompted by two factors: the importance of the sanctuary of Apollo Thymbraios in the story of Troy, particularly in vase-painting of the story of Troilos, and the importance of Apollo, as a Dorian god, to the Spartans—would he not be a natural choice of savior for Helen of Sparta? Bielefeld suggested that the choice of Apollo was due to the great importance of that deity in the years immediately after the Persian War. The implication of his suggestion is that the choice of Apollo had nothing to do with the god’s role in Trojan War mythology or earlier vase-painting. Several scholars have suggested that a desire to exalt the local goddess prompted Athenian artists to depict Helen seeking help at a sanctuary of Athena. Moret argued that the image of Helen fleeing to a sanctuary of a deity was developed by vase-painters as a response to the development of scenes of the rape of Kassandra, who sought refuge at the cult image of Athena. The choice of Apollo was due to a desire to avoid confusion between the iconographies of the recovery of Helen and the rape of

116. See Furtwängler, FR 2:129, who assumes that in some literary source, Helen fled to the sanctuary of Apollo. See also Robert (supra, n. 11) 76, who comments critically on Brizio’s assumption that, for every variation in the iconography, there was a particular literary model. Brizio (supra, n. 86) 68–69, for example, cited Eur. Or. 1625–43 as precedent for the idea that Apollo would protect Helen.

117. Robert (supra, n. 11) 78; Clement (supra, n. 23) 53.

118. Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 85.

119. Dugas (supra, n. 85) 57. Massei (supra, n. 30) 261–62 thought that the choice of Apollo made sense because Apollo was traditionally the protector of the Trojans. To what extent, however, was Helen a Trojan?


121. E.g., Dugas (supra, n. 85) 57; Ducati (supra, n. 42) 332.
Kassandra, and to the absence of a preestablished iconography of cult images of Aphrodite, Helen's traditional ally. The Foundry Painter, however, had little trouble conveying on his cup in Tarquinia (fig. 12) that Helen fled to a sanctuary of Aphrodite despite the lack of a preexisting iconography of Aphrodite statues.

What remains unexplained is the narrative function of the religious setting in the recovery of Helen. Vase-painters sometimes depicted Menelao's pursuit of Helen without including any trace of setting, as Oltos' neck amphora (fig. 1), among other vases, shows. When vase-painters took the trouble to include elements of setting in their pictures of the recovery, what narrative information does the setting contribute? Schefold made an important observation in distinguishing between the role played by a cult statue in representations of the story of Kassandra and the role of statues in visual narratives such as the recovery of Helen.

In depictions of the rape of Kassandra, the statue of Athena not only serves as an indication of place but also plays a role in the underlying story, because Ajax knocked the statue over in his attempt to drag Kassandra off. Athena made Ajax pay with his life for the desecration of her shrine, and also destroyed many of the Achaians on their return home from Troy in part because they did not punish Ajax for the offense. The cult statue of Athena is an essential element in the representations of the attack on Kassandra because it plays a role in the action.

In the story of the recovery of Helen, the sanctuary does not function in the way that it does in the story of Kassandra. Unlike Ajax, Menelaos did not offend a deity because he did not harm his wife in the deity's sanctuary (or anywhere else); the deity was thus not drawn into the story. Furthermore, it does not appear that the sacred nature of the setting was the chief reason why Menelaos decided

122. Moret (supra, n. 55) 33–34.
123. Schefold (supra, n. 61) 45.
124. See the summary of the Ilioupersis by Proklos, Evelyn-White (supra, n. 41) 520–22; Apollod. Epit. 5.23; Paus. 10.31.2. For other sources, see Robert (supra, n. 30) 1266. For Athena's anger at Ajax and the Greeks, see Eur. Tro. 69–71; Hom. Od. 3.135 and 4.499–502.
125. Because the figure of Athena does not stand on a statue base in sixth-century representations of the attack on Kassandra, some scholars have argued that the sixth-century images depict a version of the story in which Kassandra seeks the protection of Athena herself and not her statue: e.g., G. von Brauchitsch, Die panathenäischen Preisamphoren (Leipzig, 1910) 169; Robert (supra, n. 30) 1266; J. Davreux, La légende de la prophétesse Cassandre (Paris, 1942) 140–41 and 157; P. G. Mason, "Kassandra," JHS 79 (1959) 83. O. Touchefou, "Aias II," LIMC 1, 350, and P. E. Arias, "La tomba 136 di valle Pega," RivistaArch 4 (1955) 113, also seem to follow this view. It was rightly rejected by Beazley, CB 3:64; Moret (supra, n. 55) 12 and 24; S. B. Matheson, "Polygnotos: An Iliouperis Scene at the Getty Museum," Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum 3 (1986) 105–107. The dubious interpretation of the figure of Athena as goddess and not statue in sixth-century Kassandra-scenes reflects an overestimation of the importance of realism in the construction of Archaic Greek images and an underestimation of the active interpretive role played by the viewer. The assumption is that, unless a base is present, a viewer cannot distinguish a statue from the goddess herself. What has been overlooked is the information that the viewer brings to the image about Kassandra, Ajax, and Athena specifically, and about the power of the gods and the practice of seeking refuge generally. For the iconography of the attack on Kassandra, see now J. B. Connelly, "Narrative and Image in Attic Vase Painting: Ajax and Kassandra at the Trojan Palladion," in P. J. Holliday, ed., Narrative and Event in Ancient Art (Cambridge, 1993) 88–129.
not to kill Helen. The summary of Ibykos’ version of the tale, for example, says that he dropped his sword ὅπ’ ἔφωτος, “because of love,” not out of deference to the fact that he was in a sanctuary. In vase-painting, the same motive is often given visual form through the inclusion of Aphrodite, Eros, and sometimes even Peitho, as we have seen. Aphrodite appears even in the sanctuaries of other deities, in the sanctuary of Athena on the Parthenon metopes and the Vatican oinochoe (fig. 5), and in the sanctuary of Apollo on the krater in Bologna by the Niobid Painter (fig. 11) and other vases.126 The presence of Aphrodite on another deity’s property, especially when the other deity is present as well (e.g., fig. 11), is an important indication that the function of the setting is not primarily to explain why Menelaos changed his mind and spared his wife. If the religious nature of the setting by itself were enough to explain why Menelaos spared her, then the presence of Aphrodite would be unnecessary.

It is true that Apollo is the only deity included in some representations of the recovery of Helen. On a bell krater in Ferrara attributed to the Group of Polygnotos, for example, Menelaos runs after Helen and lets go of his sword. Helen flees before him to the safety of a temple, which is indicated by a Doric column. Between them stands the god Apollo, to whom the sanctuary presumably belongs.127 It does not follow, however, that Apollo is playing the same role in this scene that Aphrodite plays in the representations cited in the previous paragraph. As Moret observed, Apollo himself only begins to appear in representations of the recovery of Helen after his sanctuary has become a regular feature of the iconography.128 Apollo’s presence may reflect merely his interest in protecting his sanctuary from violation and not any concern for Helen personally. If Menelaos had escorted Helen unharmed out of Apollo’s temenos, and then tried to put her to death, would Apollo have stopped him? As Simon has rightly emphasized, the role of Aphrodite in this story is more than simply protecting Helen physically from Menelaos.129 Perhaps any deity could protect her, if she took refuge in the deity’s sanctuary, but only Aphrodite has the power to make her beloved again and, in that way, to insure that Menelaos not kill her the minute the gods turned their backs on him.

In vase-painting, then, the setting of the recovery of Helen does not play a critical role in the action, as the statue of Athena does in the story of Kassandra. The setting does not explain how it came to pass that Menelaos gave up his resolve to kill his wife and returned to Sparta to live with her. The sanctuary plays a different role in the visual narrative, an indirect rather than a direct

126. In addition to the krater, see Rome, Torlonia, unattributed red-figure hydria, ca. 450–425 B.C. Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) pl. 57.2.
127. Ferrara 4098, ARV² 1054,46, illustrated and discussed at length by Massei (supra, n. 30) 258–64.
128. Moret (supra, n. 55) 34. See also G. Beckel, Götterbeistant in der Bildüberlieferung griechischer Heldenagen (Waldsassen, 1961) 30.
129. Simon (supra, n. 22) 92.
one. It explains how Helen reacted when she saw Menelaos coming with his sword drawn: she did not stand her ground, confident in the power of her beauty or trusting in the favor of Aphrodite; she ran for her life to the nearest sanctuary, hoping that her husband, angry as he was, would not violate a god's property. The psychological significance of the flight of Helen has not received much attention in scholarship. Perhaps that is partly due to the common belief, discussed earlier, that in representations of Menelaos and Helen face to face Helen betrays no fear of Menelaos. As we have seen, that belief rests on the questionable assumption that Helen is revealing herself in an attempt to seduce her husband. Later representations, by vase-painters who had developed a wider and more nuanced range of motifs to indicate psychological states, reveal that Helen was afraid of her husband. Helen's disheveled hair, loose clothing, and defensive gesture on the oinochoe in the Vatican (fig. 5) suggest that her flight to the sanctuary of Athena was desperate and that she has no doubt about the seriousness of Menelaos' attack. On Makron's skyphos (fig. 6), Helen recoils from Menelaos, flings one arm out, and lifts her himation with the other: to the extent that the ancient language of gesture is still meaningful today, surely those are gestures of fear. On the neck amphora by Oltos (fig. 1), the skyphos by the Triptolemos Painter (fig. 9), and the cup by the Foundry Painter (fig. 12), nothing about the figures of Helen or Menelaos points to the outcome that the viewer is familiar with, the pardon of Helen: everything suggests that Menelaos' intention to kill his wife is in earnest, and that Helen is not merely playing hard to get. The recently published cup by Onesimos (fig. 4) includes perhaps the finest representation of Helen's reaction to the arrival of her husband. Helen faces him (as in the representations thought to show a defiant Helen) and reaches out with both hands, asking perhaps to be received again. But she is hardly confident of the outcome: she crumples in anticipation of the blow from the sword that Menelaos was in the course of delivering when Eros—arriving not one second too soon—effected a change of heart. Helen's flight to the sanctuary of Aphrodite, Apollo, or Athena serves the same narrative function as the contracted position of her body on Onesimos' cup: to show that she was terrified by the arrival of her husband.

Both the variety and the function of settings of the recovery of Helen can be explained without recourse to the idea that they reflect distinct literary traditions or serve some nonnarrative function such as variation for the sake of artistic originality. The variety is made possible by the fact that the setting does not figure directly in the action; Menelaos does not have to encounter Helen in any particular sanctuary for the story to unfold in the way that it was generally understood to unfold. Contrast, again, the rape of Kassandra: change the venue and the story develops in a fundamentally different way, because the motivation for Athena to take action against Ajax vanishes. In narratological terms, the desecration of

130. See Löwy (supra, n. 25) 287; Buschor, FR 3:309; Ghali-Kahil (supra, n. 2) 91.
Athena's cult statue by Ajax is a "cardinal function" or "kernel" of the story, which cannot be omitted without destroying the story's causal structure.\textsuperscript{131} The flight of Helen to a sanctuary, in contrast, is not required by the logic of the underlying story. By depicting the flight of Helen to a sanctuary, artists gave visual form not to a critical turning point in the action, but to an aspect of Helen's emotional condition, which might have been expressed in verbal narration in a different way—through speech or internal monologue—but which can only be expressed in visual narration through action of some kind. There is, moreover, a narrative explanation of why the artists would have wanted to develop a setting other than the sanctuary of Aphrodite. By situating the recovery in a sanctuary of Apollo or Athena, the artists made one final point: that Aphrodite did not come to Helen's aid merely to honor her request as suppliant in her sanctuary. The presence of Aphrodite in the sanctuary of Apollo or Athena tells us that she has gone out of her way to protect Helen, that her concern for the woman has not completely dried up. Thus the setting is also an index of Aphrodite's character.

To conclude, Kahil's widely accepted typology of the visual representations of the recovery of Helen is more precise than the evidence will bear. I propose a broad simplification of our conception of the relationship between the visual and the literary representations of the story in the Archaic and Early Classical periods. Instead of supposing that two fundamentally different versions underlie the pictures (one by Lesches, the other by Arktinos), I propose that the same general story underlies them all: after ten years of war and separation, Menelaos was angry enough to kill his wife. Helen attempted to flee; he caught her but, in the end, he spared her and took her back to Sparta. No specific poetic source is necessarily behind the story circulating among the vase-painters, because it is fair to assume that it was common knowledge that Helen returned to Sparta to live with Menelaos again: no ancient literary source suggests that anyone in antiquity thought that the story ended in any other way, such as in Menelaos murdering Helen. In its complexity and variety, the iconography of the recovery of Helen is comparable to that of, say, the death of Troilos. Vase-painters (and perhaps also sculptors) developed at least four distinctive types of pictures representing the story of Troilos: the ambush, pursuit, and murder of Troilos, and the fight over his body.\textsuperscript{132} The pictorial types do not reflect different poetic accounts, but merely different moments of the same general story.

Overlooked in the attempts to relate the iconographic tradition of the recovery of Helen to the surviving literary accounts are the techniques of storytelling that are unique to the visual arts. In this paper, I have called attention to two of these techniques in particular: one is the compression of two distinct actions


or intentions into one image. In some images, Menelaos pursues Helen with murderous intentions and lets go of his sword at the same time; in others, he leads Helen back to the ships, having decided to spare her, while threatening to kill her with his sword. The second is the use of setting to convey something about a character’s emotions, such as Helen’s lack of confidence and even terror at the arrival of Menelaos, and Aphrodite’s continuing concern for her long after she had served the goddess’ purpose.

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Fig. 1: Attic red-figure neck amphora, *ARV*² 53,1, Oltos. Paris, Musée du Louvre G 3. Photo courtesy of the Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Fig. 2: Fragmentary Attic red-figure cup, *ARV*² 67,137, Oltos. Odessa, Archaeological Museum 21972. After *LIMC* 4, pl. 348 Helene 310.
Fig. 3: Fragmentary Attic red-figure cup, Oltos. Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum 80.AE.154. Photo courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California.

Fig. 4: Attic red-figure cup, Onesimos (detail). Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum 83.AE.362. Photo courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California.
Fig. 5: Attic red-figure oinochoe, ARV² 1173, Heimarmene Painter. Rome, Vatican, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco H 525. Photo courtesy of Alinari/Art Resource, NY.
Fig. 6a-b: Attic red-figure skyphos, *ARV*² 458,1, Makron. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 13.186 (Francis Bartlett Fund). Photo courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
Fig. 7: Attic red-figure stamnos, ARV² 246.9, Painter of the Munich Amphora. Tarquinia, Museo Nazionale RC 2460. Photo courtesy of the Soprintendenza Archeologica per l’Etruria Meridionale.

Fig. 8: Cycladic relief pithos. Mykonos, Archaeological Museum 2240. After ArchDelt 18, A' (1963) pl. 22.

Fig. 9: Attic red-figure skyphos, Triptolemos Painter (photo by Ute Jung). Berlin, Staatliche Museen inv. 1970.9. Photo courtesy of the Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz.
Fig. 10: Fragmentary Attic red-figure calyx krater, ARV² 601.18, Niobid Painter. Ferrara, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 2895. Photo courtesy of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Ferrara.
Fig. 11a–c: Attic red-figure volute krater, ARV² 599,8, Niobid Painter. Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico 269. Photo courtesy of the Museo Civico Archeologico, Bologna.
Fig. 12: Attic red-figure cup, $ARV^2$ 405,1, Foundry Painter. Tarquinia, Museo Nazionale RC 5291. Photo courtesy of the Soprintendenza Archeologica per l’Etruria Meridionale.