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Of Water Jars and Women:
A Re-evaluation of Fountain House Imagery on Late Archaic Black-Figure *Hydriai*

by

Christopher Lenwood Askew

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Of Water Jars and Women:

A Re-evaluation of Fountain House Imagery on Late Archaic Black-Figure *Hydriai*

Christopher Lenwood Askew, M.A.

University of Nebraska, 2019

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From approximately 530 to 500 BCE, images of fountain houses became popular subjects on black-figure *hydriai* produced in or around ancient Athens. These scenes often involve groups of unidentified women gathering around a fountain spout, typically attached to an ornate architectural structure, in order to fill their water jars. Although isolated pottery sherds depicting these scenes have been discovered in Greece, approximately seventy-five of these scenes have been identified on Attic *hydriai* depicting such scenes were discovered in Etruscan tombs. Past scholarship has categorized these images either as genre scenes, which represent a domestic activity characteristic of everyday life, or as religious scenes, which depict the gathering of water for cultic activity, but evidence for both interpretations remains inconclusive. Recent critical studies of gender and social history have sought to shed light on these scenes by attempting to identify the social status of the women represented in these images. However, the interpretive ambiguity persists because the visual features of these scenes do not offer a clear indication of the women's socioeconomic status.

In an attempt to address this problem, the following study seeks to re-evaluate the meaning of fountain house imagery on Attic black-figure *hydriai* by means of an iconographic and iconological analysis of the visual motifs that constitute the fountain house scene. Through an iconographic analysis of the architectural features of the fountain house and the way in which the appearance, gestures, and attributes of the women are represented, this thesis will connect the

visual evidence from these *hydriai* with ancient literary evidence and archaeological finds relating to the lives of women and to the use and history of fountain houses in late Archaic Athens in order to propose further facets to the interpretation of this common visual motif. It may be argued that late Archaic fountain house imagery is already multivalent, both domestic and religious in nature. This research has the potential to redefine our understanding of genre scenes and to further elucidate the shadowy world of women in the ancient Athenian society.

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INTRODUCTION

From roughly 530 to 480 BCE, Athenian vase-painters created scenes of women filling water receptacles at fountain houses which adorn black-figure *hydriai*. These vessels have regularly been used by scholars as visual evidence of women's labor in the Greek world, with many concluding that these scenes are direct representations of Athenian life. This notion, however, has come under fire from scholars of ancient history and Classical philology who argue that the ancient literary evidence suggests that Greek women lived in domestic seclusion from the outside world. The tension between the literal interpretation of these vases and the canonical view of gender in the ancient world has resulted in these genre scenes receiving considerably less attention in Classical scholarship. Additionally, the seemingly mundane character of the fountain house motif pales in comparison to the iconographically complex and intellectually rich mythological images on contemporary vases, which is why many art historians ignore these scenes entirely. Furthermore, the ambiguous nature of these fountain house motifs has greatly contributed to the confusion surrounding their meaning. Who are the women depicted in the scene? What is the occasion that necessitates them to fetch water? Are these fictive fountain houses indicative of analogous structures within the urban topography of late Archaic Athens? These questions, which have plagued scholars for decades, continue to cloud our view of these common motifs. Rather than focusing on one aspect of these fountain house scenes, this study will dissect the visual elements of these images by focusing on the fountain house itself, the women involved in the scene, and the unique attributes which offer insight into the meaning of this enigmatic imagery.

In order to execute this research goal, an iconographic and iconological methodology will be used to analyze the visual composition of these fountain house scenes and to contextualize

them within the social fabric of ancient Athenian society. This methodological approach was pioneered by Erwin Panofsky who advocated for a two-step approach to the analysis of the visual arts. For Panofsky, iconography constitutes the study of subject matter and meaning while iconology concerns itself with the interpretation of images based on a synthesis of textual sources from the period in question.¹ Panofsky believed that images have multiple levels of meaning that are dependent on the natural forms of the motif, the specific identity of the figure, and the underlying values held by the society from which these images originate.² This complex method of visual analysis allows for both the systematic examination of images and the creation of discourse concerning its interpretation. Although modern art historical scholarship has been quite critical of Panofsky's approach to images, particularly over the notion of there being a true meaning to works of art, the impact of his methodology on the field is without question a foundational principle in the academic study of the visual arts. This study of the fountain house theme in Attic vase-painting will use aspects of Panofsky's iconographic and iconological approach to visual analysis in order to examine this common motif within the social and political framework of Archaic and Classical Athens. In some respects, this study is traditional in its application of Panofsky's research method, however, the iconographic and iconological approach is well suited for this topic because it allows for the synthesis of visual art, material culture, and literary texts. This interdisciplinary approach to fountain house imagery will reevaluate past claims and offer a more nuanced way in which to view these images.

The historiography of Attic fountain house imagery is strongly connected to the study of women in Classical antiquity. Nineteenth-century scholarship concerning women in the Greek

¹ Erwin Panofsky. "Iconography and Iconology: An Introduction to the Study of Renaissance Art," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts: Papers in and On Art History*, (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1955), 26 and 32.

² Panofsky, *Iconography and Iconology*, 28-31.

world sought to both illuminate and delineate the role of women in Greek society through the examination and interpretation of ancient literature. Based on the works of Hesiod, Homer, and Xenophon, among many others, the Classical scholars of the late nineteenth century concluded that women in ancient Greece were viewed with contempt and forcibly relegated to the domestic sphere of life.³ As a result of this conclusion, much early research on Greek women does not offer a critical outlook on their lived experiences nor does it give a detailed analysis of nonmythological women in visual culture.⁴ Fountain house imagery, like other genre scenes, was interpreted as being a direct reflection of everyday life, with the female figures often being identified as either female Athenians performing domestic work or idealized slaves.

One of the first critical discussions of fountain house imagery on Attic black-figure *hydriai* was written by Erica Diehl in 1964. She frames her analysis of these scenes within a comprehensive study of the hydria's shape, decoration, and development from the Iron Age to the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Regarding the fountain house motif on Attic black-figure *hydriai*, Diehl argues that some of these scenes are religious in nature due to several iconographic features, such as vines and woodland creatures, which suggest a Dionysian element.⁵ This interpretation pulls from literary texts and visual analyses to come to the conclusion that these hydriai may be representing the Attic *Anthesteria* festival. While Diehl's

³ Lin Foxhall notes that these early misogynistic views of ancient women are the product of literal interpretations of diverse and often times fragmentary sources. She advocates for a more nuanced view of ancient women which takes into account the agendas of each individual author. Foxhall also believes that archaeology does not necessarily present an unbiased view of the ancient world because of the fragmentary nature of archaeological evidence which often times does not showcase the lives of individuals outside of the ruling class. Lin Foxhall, "Gender" in *A Companion to Archaic Greece*, edited by Kurt Raaflaub and Hans van Wees, (Chichester, U.K, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013, 483-497.

⁴ Eva Keuls notes this trend of uncritical approaches to gender in early twentieth century German scholarship of Classical Studies which placed emphasis on cataloging and philological analysis over the discourse on female identity in antiquity. Eva Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus*, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993), 9-10.

⁵ Erika Diehl, *Die Hydria: Formgeschichte und Verwendung im Kult des Altertums*, (Mainz am Rhein: P. von Zabern, 1964), 133.

main focus is on the potential religious imagery, she also discusses possible interpretations of fountain house scenes that lack these specific iconographic features. It is suggested by her that the fountain house imagery underwent an iconographic breakdown from its inception around 530 BCE to its eventual translation onto red-figure vases just after 500 BCE.⁶ Overall, Diehl's study offers a critical inquiry into the complexities of fountain house imagery and presents a compelling argument for a religious interpretation of these genre scenes.

The ideas put forth by Diehl do not seem to have had an immediate effect on the way in which scholars interpreted these fountain house scenes. John Boardman's 1974 overview of Attic black-figure vase-painting continues the canonical interpretation of fountain house imagery by suggesting that these scenes may be depictions of the *Enneakrounos*, which was a local Athenian fountain house constructed by the Peisistratids, thereby making these vases political propaganda.⁷ This approach to fountain house scenes is largely iconographic in nature, yet it presumes that vase imagery, although idealized, is a direct reflection of reality. Furthermore, the position held by Boardman attempts to connect these fountain house motifs with the literary record of the ancient Greek world. This method of scholarship is common amongst Classicists and often cast visual culture as the secondary companion to literary texts. While Boardman's interpretation of these scenes offers plausible suggestions for the meaning of late Archaic fountain house imagery, it refrains from giving a conclusive reading of these ambiguous depictions of female labor. The conservative element of Boardman's scholarship on women was challenged during the 1970s as a result of Classicists adopting new approaches to the study of ancient Greece which emphasized issues relating to gender, race, and social status in an effort to better understand the nuances of life in Classical Antiquity. Consequently, the more recent

⁶ Diehl, *Die Hydria*, 133-134.

⁷ John Boardman, *Athenian Black-Figure Vases*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 206.

scholarship on late Archaic fountain house imagery places a more pronounced focus on the gendered behavior and social identity of the women present.

There is a noticeable change in the scholarship on Attic fountain house imagery during the 1980s which comes as a result of Sarah Pomeroy's 1975 landmark study of ancient Greek women. Her academic approach to the topics of women and gender in antiquity inspired an entire generation of scholarship that sought to offer critical evaluations of women in ancient art and literature. One follower of Pomeroy is Lise Hannestad, whose 1984 study of scenes involving women at the fountain house on Attic pottery sought to debunk the longstanding assumption that these female figures were slaves. In this essay she uses a purely iconographic mode of inquiry to analyze the clothing, jewelry, and hairstyles worn by these enigmatic female figures in order to determine the identity of the women in these scenes. Hannestad suggests that these unknown women are not slaves because their mode of dress and adornment is far too ornate to be those worn by ancient Athenian slaves.⁸ However, she notes that it is incredibly difficult to identify slaves in Archaic Greek art because of the idealization of the human form.⁹ Hannestad also raises the question as to why vase-painters would create so many depictions of female slaves engaging in seemingly demeaning domestic task.¹⁰ She concludes her study by accepting that these fountain house scenes more than likely show citizen women, but believes that Diehl's attempts to connect the scenes to specific religious activity in Archaic Athens is faulty due to the lack of visual attributes which allude to this context.¹¹ This essay, although both brief and general in its respective length and scope, provided a launching point for future scholars to further our

⁸ Lise Hannestad, "Slaves and the Fountain House Theme" in *Ancient Greek and Related Pottery: Proceedings of the International Vase Symposium in Amsterdam 12-15 April 1984*, edited by H. A. G. Brijder (Amsterdam; Allard Pierson Series, 1984), 254-255.

⁹ Hannestad, *Slaves and the Fountain House Theme*, 252-253.

¹⁰ Hannestad, *Slaves and the Fountain House Theme*, 254-255.

¹¹ Hannestad, *Slaves and the Fountain House Theme*, 255.

understanding of these genre scenes by continuing the discussion of gendered activity and women's experience in ancient Athens.

The scholarship of Eva Keuls presents more inquiry into the fountain house theme by examining the role of women within the male dominated sociopolitical landscape of ancient Athens. In her groundbreaking 1985 book, titled *The Reign of the Phallus*, Keuls argues that fountain house imagery may have a deeper level of significance than simple being a depiction of everyday life. She notes that although Athenian women were not supposed to partake in work outside of the home, certain activities, such as water carrying and textile production, were permitted due to their religious associations.¹² In this respect, Keuls believes that Athenian women were more mobile than previously thought and suggests that these images of them at the fountain house are meant to illustrate proper models of female behavior. She argues further that images of men and women at the fountain house depict the dangers faced by women in public spaces while also highlighting the agency of the male gaze.¹³ The appeal of these scenes, in her view, stems from the ability for men to see elite women in public, a rare site in Archaic Athens.¹⁴ Keuls' analysis of fountain house imagery is a stark contrast from the scholarship of previous generations which assumed these women to be slaves based solely on textual evidence. She concludes her analysis by stating that these women are likely free-born Athenians, based on iconographic evidence, and that these scenes, although possibly inspired by the Peisistratid *Enneakrounos*, are fantastical depictions of ideal Athenian women.

¹² Although the original copy of this book was published in 1985, I have chosen to use the 1993 second edition because of it offers an expanded discussion of gender in light of new academic perspectives from the early 1990s that further Keuls inquiry into the gendered landscape of ancient Athens; Eva Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), 233.

¹³ Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus*, 236-240.

¹⁴ Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus*, 240.

Dyfri Williams' 1989 piece on the ambiguity of women in Attic vase-painting highlights the problems of interpretation that occur when scholars assume the meaning of vase imagery without clear iconographic features to guide them. Echoing Boardman in his reliance on ancient literary sources, Williams notes that respectable Athenian women would not have visited fountain houses because they were considered to be unpleasant gathering places.¹⁵ He suggests that images of women at the fountain house could be interpreted in any number of ways due to the lack of specific visual details. However, Williams argues that the names of female figures, which are sometimes inscribed on the surface of the hydria, are those of slaves, thereby alluding to the possibility of them being either slaves or *hetairai*.¹⁶ This interpretation of fountain house iconography is rooted in Williams' belief that Athenian vase-painting was exclusively a male point of view that mirrored the social gaze of actual Athenian men.¹⁷ While the acknowledgement of visual ambiguity in Williams' study addresses the art historical issues that have hindered further inquiry into this topic, his conclusions do not offer a concrete solution to this predicament and he essentially continues the traditional text-based approach to gender in the Classical world.

In contrast to Williams' view on these depictions of women at the fountain house, Sian Lewis presents a more female-focused discussion of these genre scenes in her 2002 study of ancient Athenian women. Lewis provides a brief overview of the technical aspects of pertaining to the decoration of black-figure *hydriai*, with special attention given to the iconographic composition of fountain house scenes.¹⁸ She goes on to examine the research of John Boardman

¹⁵ Dyfri Williams, "Women on Athenian Vases: Problems of Interpretation" in *Images of Women in Antiquity*, edited by Averil Cameron and Amelie Kuhrt (Detroit, M.I: Wayne State University Press, 1983), 103.

¹⁶ Williams, *Women on Athenian Vases: Problems of Interpretation*, 103-104.

¹⁷ Williams, *Women on Athenian Vases: Problems of Interpretation*, 105.

¹⁸ Sian Lewis. *The Athenian Woman: An Iconographic Handbook*. (London, New York: Routledge, 2002), 71-73.

and Lise Hannestad in order to situate her argument within the larger network of scholarship on the topic. For Lewis, the notion of these images being the product of Peisistratid propaganda makes little sense because most of the vases bearing fountain house imagery have been discovered in Etruscan tombs, thus placing them outside of the Athenian tyrants' political sphere.¹⁹ In light of this conclusion, she suggests that these late Archaic fountain house scenes must be reinterpreted through a wider cultural lens than the strictly gendered mores of ancient Athenian society.²⁰ This includes her suggestion that the Etruscans may have interpreted these scenes as idyllic images of the afterlife due to their presence in Etruscan *necropoleis*.²¹ In terms of the original societal context of these images, Sian Lewis believes fountain house imagery to be a reflection of daily life that offers a glimpse into the lives of Athenian women that is more reliable than the often biased textual sources that are used to describe women's domestic activity.²² This picture of fountain house imagery painted by Lewis opens the door for more critical inquiry into the social context of these images.

The scholarship of Nicole Bahl presents an interesting argument for the identity of the women who populate the fountain house scenes of late Archaic Athenian *hydriai*. In her 2003 master's thesis on the topic, Bahl suggests that the women in these scenes are free-born Athenians taking part in religious activity.²³ This argument is similar to that of Erika Diehl and Lise Hannestad, however, Bahl focuses on the identity of the women as the main indicator for the meaning of these fountain scenes. While Bahl's methodological approach is largely textual in its attempts to contextualize the images of women within the larger framework of ancient

¹⁹ Lewis. *The Athenian Woman*, 74.

²⁰ Lewis. *The Athenian Woman*, 74.

²¹ Lewis, *The Athenian Woman*, 75.

²² Lewis. *The Athenian Woman*, 79-80.

²³ Nicole Bahl. "An Investigation of Women at the Fountain House," (Master's thesis, Michigan State University, 2003), 45-50.

Athenian social and religious mores, she uses an iconographic analysis to suggest that the female figures are free-born Athenian women. Bahl's assertion about the status of these female figures is far from accepted, due in part to the idealization of human figures in Archaic vase-painting and the lack of identifying attributes. Many scholars continue to speculate as to whether or not it is even possible to identify these figures purely based on visual features. The inclusion of Bahl in this study of women and the fountain house theme is done with caution and the fallacies in her argument will be addressed later in the third chapter.

Cynthia Koso and Kevin Lawton offer a more critical discussion of the fountain house theme in relation to the lived experience of Athenian women. In their 2009 joint essay about this topic, the two authors voice their disagreement with previously proposed arguments which believe fountain house imagery to be completely fictionalized. Koso and Lawton assert that fountain house scenes on late Archaic black-figure *hydriai* attest to Athenian women's participation in the social fabric of the *polis* in the form of public appearances.²⁴ The most likely reasons for women to visit fountain houses, in the authors' view, were for the procurement of water for domestic and religious usage, thereby showing the influence of Sian Lewis' scholarship on almost a decade later. Throughout the piece, the authors discuss how religious occasions such as weddings, festivals, and funerals served allowed women to leave the confines of the home.²⁵ Koso and Lawton go on to assert that the women who appear in these fountain house scenes are elite Athenian women based on their clothing, hairstyles, and adornment. In some respects, this argument is similar to the one presented by Bahl, however, these two authors use multiple case studies to support their assertions about status and female dress in Archaic vase-painting.

²⁴ Cynthia Koso and Kevin Lawton. "Women at the Fountain and the Well: Imagining Experience," in *The Nature and Function of Water, Baths, Bathing, and Hygiene from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, edited by Cynthia Koso and Anne Scott (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2009), 87.

²⁵ Koso and Lawton, *Women at the Fountain and the Well*, 90-92.

Overall, Kosso and Lawton's research posits that these images not only serve as evidence for women's public activities, but also suggests that these fountain house scenes can be used to gauge their lived experience.

The most recent work on fountain house imagery comes from Sheramy Bundrick, whose study of the Athenian pottery trade between Greece and Etruria has helped to redefine the way in which scholars understand Greek vases in Etruscan contexts. Bundrick notes that the popularity of these fountain house scenes in Etruria suggests that these images may have been specifically tailored for the Etruscan market, yet it seems that the iconography of these vessels are no different from fountain house scenes discovered in Athens itself.²⁶ On the one hand, this would suggest that the Athenians did not create special iconography for the Etruscan market and simply decorated vessels intended for export with the same imagery as those that remained in Attica. On the other hand, this situation could mean that the Etruscans were genuinely interested in Greek visual culture. Bundrick also echoes the sentiment of Sian Lewis in proposing a symbolic funerary interpretation of fountain house imagery in the context of Etruscan society.²⁷ However, in the case of the fountain house theme's Greek context, Bundrick notes the various interpretations of proposed by past scholars without offering her own conclusive statement on the Attic Greek meaning of this genre scene.²⁸ Being the most recent source published on the topic of fountain house imagery, Sheramy Bundrick's work presents a synthesis of previous scholarship that blends together aspects of Hannestad, Lewis, and Kosso and Lawton with her own. Her research will prove to be vital in the following discussion of fountain house motif's interpretation.

²⁶ Sheramy Bundrick. *Athens, Etruria, and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2019), 127-129.

²⁷ Bundrick, *Athens, Etruria, and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery*, 152-155.

²⁸ Bundrick, *Athens, Etruria, and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery*, 139-142.

As illustrated by this historiographic review of the scholarship on fountain house imagery, there is a strong emphasis on the study of gender and social status in regard to the female figures present in the fountain house motif. This research interest is largely based on the inherent ambiguity of the female figures' social statuses and the seemingly contradictory relationship between these scenes of women's labor and the textual tradition of Greek women's social seclusion. While some scholars have provided some critical scholarship on the interrelationship between these fountain scenes and actual Athenian fountain house architecture, few have considered the issues of gender and architecture together. In order to better evaluate the meaning of late Archaic fountain house imagery, this study will bring together the iconographic elements of the fountain house and the women who populate it as a means of extracting meaning from these highly ambiguous scenes. This inquiry has the potential to change our understanding of women in late Archaic Athenian society by showing that, in contrast to the image of female seclusion painted by ancient literary source, women did in fact leave the home. Likewise, these fountain house scenes represent some of the earliest depictions of female only scenes in the canon of Attic vase-painting. By further analyzing and contextualizing this common type of genre scene, we may begin to consider new questions surrounding the position of women in the social fabric of Archaic Athenian society. With the history and potential future implications of this topic understood, we now turn to the formal aspects of Athenian vase-painting that impact the study of fountain house imagery.

CHAPTER 1: FORMAL ASPECTS OF ATTIC *HYDRIA* AND THE *ATHENIAN VASE TRADE*

The names of many Greek vases are modern conventions employed by scholars to organize the various shapes into groups for the purpose of academic study.²⁹ Researchers scoured through ancient literature and late antique encyclopedias in order to assign ancient names to vessels with no modern equivalents. However, as noted by R.M. Cook, this organizational endeavor is not without fault. The ancient textual sources often times give multiple names for the same vessel and offer few descriptive details about their physical forms.³⁰ This is likely due to the ancient author's familiarity with the vessels and acknowledgment of flexible terminology. Similarly, the late antique *scholia* present vague, secondhand information on these objects, further contributing to confusion regarding the terminology of ancient Greek pottery. Due to these inconsistencies in the textual sources, some scholars have sought to use images of vases on figure decorated pottery to better understand the function of each vessel. This angle of research has shed light on the utilitarian purpose and social context of various types of Greek vases.

In the case of the *hydria*, however, textual sources appear to support the application of the name to the vessel. As seen in the ancient comedy *Lysistrata* by the Athenian dramatist Aristophanes, the ancient water jar is called both a *hydria* and a *kalpis*. The first instance occurs when the chorus of Athenian women fetch water from a local spring in order to douse the flames. They proclaim:

O these dreadful old men
And their dark laws of hate!
There, I'm all of a tremble lest I turn out to be too late.
I could scarcely get near to the spring though I rose before dawn,
What with tattling of tongues and rattling of pitchers in one jostling din
With slaves pushing in!....
Still here at last the water's drawn

²⁹ Christiane Bron and François Lissarrague, "Looking at the Vase" in *A City of Images: Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*, edited by Claude Bérard (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1989), 14.

³⁰ Robert Cook. *Greek Painted Pottery*. (London: Methuen, 1972), 208.

And with it eagerly I run
 To help those of my friends who stand
 In danger of being burned alive.³¹

Subsequently, the vessels are referenced once again as the Athenian men, lamenting to the local magistrates about being rejected by their wives, proclaim:

O if you knew their full effronery!
 All of the insults they've done, besides sousing us
 With water from their pots to our public disgrace
 For we stand here wringing our clothes like grown-up infants.³²

It is suggested by Gisela Richter and Majorie Milne that *hydria* is derived from the ancient Greek noun *hudos* which means water, thereby connecting the vessel to its intended function as a water receptacle.³³ This connection is further strengthened by the existence of several words, such as the noun *hudreion*, which is often translated as water-bucket or well-bucket, and the verb *hudreuw*, quite literally meaning to fetch or carry water, which have similar etymological roots. Based on these similarities it is clear that the name *hydria* is an applicable name for this particular class of vase. The etymological origins of *kalpis* are less clear, although it often times is used interchangeably with *hydria* and is translated as such. Modern researchers use both terms to distinguish between the two distinct forms of ancient Greek water jars, with *hydria* used to identify the earlier type which is characterized by its broad body, articulated shoulder, and off-set neck (fig. 1.1) and *kalpis* used to identify the latter type which is characterized by its continuous curve and rounded body (fig. 1.2). Both vessel types have three handles, two horizontal handles on opposite sides of the body and one vertical handle along the backside of the neck, which allow the user to balance the pot as it fills with water and to control its pouring capability.³⁴ The

³¹ Ar. Lys. 321-334; Translation by H. Rackham.

³² Ar. Lys. 399-402; Translation by H. Rackham.

³³ Gisela Richter and Marjorie Milne. *Shapes and Names of Athenian Vases*. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1935), 11.

³⁴ Richter and Milne, *Shapes and Names of Athenian Vases*, 11.

technical use of these water jars can be seen on figure decorated *hydriai* themselves which often show self-referential imagery of the vessel in use. As exemplified by a black-figure shoulder *hydria* attributed to the so-called Class of Hamburg 1917.477 (fig. 1.3), we see a woman standing before a fountain house on the right side of the composition as her *hydria* is filled with water from a lion-headed spout. This scene also shows how the vessel was handled during use, with two women balancing presumably empty *hydriai* on their heads as another female figure holds one by its vertical handle.

While the primary function of the *hydria* is that of a water receptacle, other uses for the vessel have been recorded. The ancient Greek author Xenophon reports in the *Hellenika* that the Athenian Assembly used two *hydriai* to collect ballots as they deliberated the fate of six disobedient generals from the Battle of Arginusae in 406 BCE. Xenophon specifically notes that:

Then they called an Assembly, at which the Senate brought in its proposal, which Callixeinus had drafted in the following terms: “Resolved, that since the Athenians have heard in the previous meeting of the Assembly both the accusers who brought charges against the generals and the generals speaking in their own defence, they do now one and all cast their votes by tribes; and that two urns be set at the voting-place of each tribe; and that in each tribe a herald proclaim that whoever adjudges the generals guilty, for not picking up the men who won the victory in the naval battle, shall cast his vote in the first urn, and whoever adjudges them not guilty, shall cast his vote in the second.”³⁵

This civic function attributed to the *hydria* is further supported by the Athenian rhetorician Isokrates in his seventeenth oration *Trapezitcus* as he narrates the misdeeds of a man by the name of Pythodorus who supposedly rigged an election by removing ballots naming several judges from within the vessels. As Isokrates proceeds to delineate the nature of the case, he notes:

So then, the fact that we made the agreement, not as Pasion will try to explain, but as I have related to you, I think has been sufficiently established. And it should not occasion surprise, men of the jury, that he falsified the memorandum, not only for the reason that there have been numerous frauds of such nature, but because some of Pasion's friends

³⁵ Xen. Hell. 1. 7. 9; Translation by C. L. Brownston.

have been guilty of conduct far worse. For instance, is there anyone who is ignorant that Pythodorus, called “the shop-keeper,”¹ whose words and acts are all in Pasion's interest, last year opened the voting-urns and removed the ballots naming the judges which had been cast by the Council?³⁶

Aristotle also makes note of *hydriai* within this political context in his work the *Athenian Constitution* which outlines the political structure of ancient Athens. Delineating upon the voting procedure described by Xenophon and Isokrates, Aristotle reveals that the ballots are extracted from the *hydria* and counted under the supervision of a presiding *Archon*. He notes that:

The man called obeys and draws an acorn from the urn and, holding it out with the inscription upward, shows it first to the superintending Archon; when the Archon has seen it, he throws the man's ticket into the box that has the same letter written on it as the one on the acorn, in order that he may go into whatever court he is allotted to and not into whatever court he chooses and in order that it may not be possible to collect into a court whatever jurymen a person wishes.³⁷

Although these fourth century BCE literary sources are later in date than the *hydriai* that are the subject of this study, they suggest that Athenian society viewed pottery as a multifunctional resource which could be adapted for use in any number of domestic or civic activities.

Another function of the *hydria* is its use as a receptacle for human remains in ancient Greek funerary customs. Archaeological evidence from the Greek islands and mainland suggests that pottery was employed as a common grave good in the Greek world as early as the Neolithic period. Its use as a burial vessel for human remains begins in the early Bronze Age with cremated ashes being stored and buried in ceramic vessels in certain regions of Greece.³⁸ This mode of burial becomes more commonplace during the Iron Age (c. 900-700 BCE), particularly with the remains of infants and children. A late Geometric burial, dating to approximately 725

³⁶ Iso. 17. 33. Translation by G. Norlin.

³⁷ Arist. Ath. Pol. 64. 4. Translation by H. Rackham.

³⁸ There is a high degree of variability in the funerary customs of Bronze Age Greece, the use of pottery vessels to hold human remains is most common on the Ionian island of Lefkas, where early Bronze Age burials took the form of pithos jars filled with cremated remains being buried within *tumuli*, and Tanagra in Boeotia, where terracotta larnakes held the remains of children. Christopher Mee. “Death and Burial,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean*, edited by Eric Cline (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 277-288.

BCE, from the Athenian Agora offers an early example of the *hydria* in a funerary context.³⁹ Located within a grave precinct along the southern edge of the Agora, the bones of a child were discovered to have been placed inside of a *hydria* (fig. 4) and buried alongside two small cups which served as grave goods.⁴⁰ Far from an isolated incident, it has been noted that similar burial *hydriai* have been unearthed at other locations in Athens as well as the necropolis at Phaleron and the cremation graves of Lefkandi.⁴¹ The popularity of this type of burial continued into the Archaic period (c. 700-480/479 BCE) with cremation becoming more widely practiced throughout the seventh and sixth centuries BCE.⁴² Examples of funerary vessels from this period include the monumental Eleusinian neck-amphora attributed to the Polyphemos Painter (fig. 1.4), dating to c. 650 BCE, which held the remains of a child and the so-called Burgon Amphora (fig. 1.5), dating to c. 560 BCE, which contained cremated ashes at Athens.⁴³

It appears both cremation and inhumation were practiced simultaneously in Attica during the Classical period; Boardman and Kurtz note that there appears to be no correlation between economic status and the type of burial nor any difference in the funerary cultic activity.⁴⁴ While the *hydria* is still used as a burial vessel during the Archaic period, its frequency in the archaeological record begins to wane with only one example of being discovered to hold the remains of a child.⁴⁵ During the late Archaic and early Classical period we also see the

³⁹ Rodney Young, *Late Geometric Graves and a Seventh Century Well in the Agora*. (Athens, Greece; American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1939), 26.

⁴⁰ Young, *Late Geometric Graves and a Seventh Century Well in the Agora*, 26-28.

⁴¹ Young, *Late Geometric Graves and a Seventh Century Well in the Agora*, 26. John Boardman and Donna Kurtz. *Greek Burial Customs*. (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press), 26.

⁴² Boardman and Kurtz note that the Archaic burials of both the Athenian Agora and Athens as a whole have not been systematically published, however, there appears to be a trend towards cremation rather than inhumation during this period. Boardman and Kurtz, *Greek Burial Customs*, 69-70.

⁴³ Boardman, *Early Greek Vase Painting*. (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1998), 88-90. Boardman, *Athenian Black-Figure Vases*, 168; and Boardman and Kurtz, *Greek Burial Customs*, 70-72.

⁴⁴ Boardman and Kurtz, *Greek Burial Customs*, 96.

⁴⁵ Diehl, *Die Hydria*, 124.

appearance of *hydriai* in scenes of ritual mourning on Attic red-figure vessels. As seen on a hydria attributed to the workshop of the Niobid Painter (fig. 1.6), c. 460 to 450 BCE, a *kalpis* is shown in the foreground as two women prepare to perform ritual acts at a grave site. It is likely that the *hydria* in this scene holds the cremated remains of the deceased and the eight *lekythoi*, placed within the wicker basket held by the central woman, will be used in for ritual libation pouring in honor of the dead.⁴⁶ Additionally, it has been noted by Ellen Reeder that *hydriai* were also used to fetch the water needed in order to wash the deceased before burial.⁴⁷ The act of washing the body is both practical, in order to clean and make them presentable for viewing, as well as symbolic, in the sense that it ritually cleanses the deceased.⁴⁸ This use of the hydria for funerary ritual is paralleled in the red-figure scenes of South Italy. A *hydria* by the Choephoroi Painter (fig. 1.7), dating approximately to 350 BCE, depicts the mythological figure Elektra seated on the tomb of her father, Agamemnon, with several vessels placed on its steps, a hydria among them. In this context at the graveside the *hydria* in the scene probably held water that was used to wash the corpse and, as a result of its funerary use, is being disposed of as a ritual offering to the dead. Overall, the funerary usage of the *hydria* illustrates the vessel's multifunctional purpose in ancient Greek society and the permeable boundaries between the utilitarian, political, and religious functions in antiquity.

While archaeological evidence and textual sources provide insight into the function of the *hydria* in its original societal context, they do little to inform us as to how these vessels were constructed. The most complete discussion of ancient Greek pottery production comes to us from an ancient poem known as the *Kiln*. This work of disputed authorship and origin describes the

⁴⁶ Ellen Reeder et al., *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*. (Baltimore, Md: Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery in association with Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J, 1995), 219-220.

⁴⁷ Reeder, *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*, 220.

⁴⁸ Boardman and Kurtz, *Greek Burial Customs*, 144.

difficulties encountered by potters as they try to fire their vessels within the titular apparatus.⁴⁹

The anonymous narrator proclaims:

If you will pay me for my song, O potters,
then come, Athena, and hold thy hand above the kiln!
May the kotyloi and all the kanastra turn a good black,
may they be well fired and fetch the price asked,
many being sold in the marketplace and many on the roads,
and bring in much money, and may my song be pleasing.
But if you (potters) turn shameless and deceitful,
Then do I summon the ravagers of kilns,
both *Syntrips* (Smasher) and *Smaragos* (Crasher) and
Asbetos (Unquenchable) too, and *Sabaktes* (Shake-to-Pieces)
and *Omodamos* (Conqueror of the Unbaked), who makes much trouble for this craft.
stamp on stoking tunnel and chambers, and may the whole kiln
be thrown into confusion, while the potters loudly wail.⁵⁰

While this passage notes the difficulties of firing pottery and selling it at market, it does little to explain the means by which vases were created. In the absence of textual sources scholars have used experimental archaeology, anthropological analogies, and iconographic evidence to understand the complex operational chain of Greek pottery production. Known as the *chaîne opératoire*, this approach to material culture seeks to describe in chronological order the transformation of raw materials into artifacts.⁵¹ This conceptual viewpoint also places emphasis on the life trajectory of artifacts as well as the social and historical factors that contribute to the object's creation.⁵² Using this methodological approach, our attention now turns to the multistep process of ancient Greek pottery production.

⁴⁹ This work comes from the *Life of Homer* that was once believed to be the work of Herodotus, however, subsequent research has resulted in the text being dated to the second or third century CE, when fifth century BCE literary styles and dialects were emulated, thus the author is now identified as Pseudo-Herodotus and the poem itself is not attributed to Homer. Joseph Noble. *The Techniques of Painted Attic Pottery*. (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1965), 102-106.

⁵⁰ Ps. Hdt. 1. 32; Translation by Marjorie J. Milne in Noble, *The Techniques of Painted Attic Pottery*, 107.

⁵¹ Frédéric Sellet, "Chaine Operatoire: The Concept and Its Applications," in *Lithic Technology* 18, no.1/2 (1993), 106.

⁵² Sellet, *Chaine Operatoire: The Concept and Its Applications*, 107-108.

Athenian pottery was made from the iron rich clay that resides in the soil of the Attic countryside.⁵³ In the absence of literary sources on clay mining, a Corinthian *pinax* (fig. 1.8) dating to c. 580 BCE offers a glimpse into the process.⁵⁴ The plaque depicts two older men and two youths extracting clay from within a deep trench. While the man to the far right uses a pick-ax to chip away at the bedrock, his two comrades place bits of clay into baskets which are then lifted out of the trench and given to their associate. These baskets likely served as the primary means of transporting the clay from the site back to the workshop. It is plausible to suggest that the clay was either transported in these baskets by hand or, if was too heavy, by way of an animal drawn cart. Additionally, the toil of clay mining is highlighted by the figures's nudity which suggests, unlike heroic nudity used to depict divine beings and athletes, these workers are covered in dirt and sweat from their occupation. Thus, this image sheds light on both the social status of pottery workers, showing them to be of the lower classes, as well as the means by which they harvested raw clay to make their vessels.

After having transported the raw material back to the workshop, the artisans purified the clay of mineral impurities through the process of levigation and prepared it to be shaped into a vase. This step involves submerging the clay in water to allow organic matter, stones, and other foreign material to settle out of the solution.⁵⁵ Eventually the water would evaporate and leave

⁵³ Clay is a mineral that is produced from the decomposition of feldspar rocks into alumina (aluminum oxide) and silica (silicon dioxide) by the process of weathering. Attic clay is a secondary clay, meaning it was transported from its original source by flowing water, and contains a high level of iron which gives Athenian pottery its characteristic red hue. Toby Schreiber, *Athenian Vase Construction* (Malibu, Calif: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1998) 3. J. M. Hemelrijk, "A Closer Look at the Potter" in *Looking at Greek Vases*, edited by Tom Rasmussen and Nigel Spivey. (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 236.

⁵⁴ Corinthian pottery offers the earliest examples of Greek potters at work, Attic depictions of potters do appear until roughly 530 BCE with small pot sherds from the Acropolis showing black-figure scenes of a pottery workshop as discussed by John Beazley in *Potter and Painter in Ancient Athens*, (1944), 5.

⁵⁵ Noble, *The Technique of Painted Attic Pottery*, 2-3.

behind refined clay ready to be worked by hand.⁵⁶ The clay would then be kneaded in order to expel air bubbles that could cause explosions later in the firing process.⁵⁷ This act of wedging also made the clay softer and more malleable for the potter to shape. Once on the wheel, an assistant physically turned the rotary disk as the potter shaped the vessel using their own hands and various tools to achieve the desired form. In the case of large vases like the *hydria*, the vessel is made in individual sections and assembled later. The body and shoulder were thrown as a single piece, being rotated on the wheel upside down as the potter pulled and stretched the clay to create the main section pot itself.⁵⁸ Afterward, the neck, mouth, and lip were thrown right side up on the wheel with the potter creating a cylinder, pulling it outward, and curing it under to make each section.⁵⁹ The foot of the vessel was also thrown separately, being created upside down like the body.⁶⁰ Each section of the vase was allowed to dry into a leather-hard state before being joined together and adhered by the application of slip.⁶¹ Finally the horizontal and vertical handles of the *hydria* were attached and the vessel was subsequently decorated with slip and fired within a kiln to achieve the signature black and red color of Greek vases.⁶² A Corinthian *pinax* (fig. 1.9) dating between c. 575 and 550 BCE depicts the firing process and offers a rare look at the ancient kiln in action, showing that potters stacked the vessels inside.

⁵⁶ Scholars are not sure as to where this process would have taken place, but anthropological comparisons between ancient and modern Greek potters suggests it would have taken place near a water source. Some believe this process would have taken place at the site of the workshop itself, but the lack of representational evidence and limited archaeological finds from workshops mean this question remains largely unsolved. Cook, *Greek Painted Pottery*, 231 and Beazley (1944), *Potter and Painter in Ancient Athens*, 7.

⁵⁷ Schreiber, *Athenian Vase Construction*, 9.

⁵⁸ Schreiber, *Athenian Vase Construction*, 117-118.

⁵⁹ Schreiber, *Athenian Vase Construction*, 118.

⁶⁰ Noble, *The Technique of Painted Attic Pottery*, 17.

⁶¹ Cook, *Greek Painted Pottery*, 231.

⁶² Greek vases were decorated by applying slip, which had been further diluted by water, to the surface of a vessel using brushes of varying thickness. Physical analyses of Greek vases have shown that Attic painters applied a thin coat of red ochre, known as *miltos*, to the vessel's surface in order to heighten the colors of both the base clay and the eventual black gloss. Schreiber, *Athenian Vase Construction*, 48.

The iconographic repertoire of *hydria* decoration is vast and reflective of the collective Greek social conscious. Grand mythological scenes, such as Trojan War imagery and the deeds of the divine, dominate the decorative motifs of Greek pottery throughout much of the Archaic Period. A black-figure hydria by the Leagros Group (fig. 1.10) offers a look at mythological imagery commonly seen on Attic vases. The painter takes advantage of the space presented on the vessel's body by creating a complex iconographic composition. Here the Greek hero Achilles, enraged by the murder of his comrade Patroclus at the hands Trojan prince Hector, gets revenge on the latter by dragging Hector's corpse around the city in a chariot. The raised hands of both King Priam and Queen Hecuba, located on the left underneath a columned porch, and the winged messenger goddess Iris, who appears to levitate in the foreground, suggest this scene is meant to invoke great anguish in the heart and mind of the viewer. This dynamic and evocative scene is a testament to the artistic quality of mythological imagery, affectively showcasing why mythology was a popular subject for Attic vase-painting. During the second half of the sixth century, however, we see the rise of genre scenes which seemingly offer glimpses into everyday activity in the ancient Greek social sphere.⁶³ A prime example of this type of imagery is the fountain house motif which will be the central topic of this thesis. As presented on another *hydria* attributed to the Leagros Group (fig.1.11), we are introduced to a group of unidentified women as they fetch water from a fountain house. While the meaning of such imagery, which will be explored in the following chapters, remains elusive, it is certain that these scenes of domestic activity mark a shift in the subject matter of Attic vase-painting. Over the duration of the late Archaic and Classical periods there is a noticeable increase in depictions of women on

⁶³ Boardman notes that prior to the late sixth century BCE the only depictions of daily life in Attic vase-painting are images of cultic activity and scenes that seemingly blend mythological subjects with contemporary Athenian dress and culture. Boardman, *Athenian Black-Figure Vases*, 205.

vessels commonly associated with Greek women, the *hydria* being one of them.⁶⁴ While there is no consensus as to the reason why this shift occurs, it has been argued that the increase in female imagery is meant to satisfy the aesthetic tastes of new clientele, namely women and the foreign buyers in Etruria.⁶⁵ The lack of surviving textual sources concerning pottery consumption makes discussion of the female consumer tantamount to conjecture. However, archaeological evidence offers some insight into the Etruscans market.

While much scholarship on Greek vase-painting discusses the context of images within the Greek world, it is important to note that many of the Greek vases which populate the world's museums were discovered outside of Greece itself. Excavations during the eighteenth century uncovered large numbers of Greek vases from archaeological sites in, and around, Campania and Naples.⁶⁶ Later during the 1828-1829 excavations at the Etruscan site of Vulci, approximately 3,000 vases were discovered within the tombs of the ancient necropolis.⁶⁷ These vessels were initially believed to be of Etruscan origin due to their find spot and much early scholarship refers to them as such.⁶⁸ However, the presence of Greek inscriptions on numerous vessels forced both antiquarians and researchers to acknowledge these vases as Greek exports to Etruria.⁶⁹ This realization had a significant impact on the study of Greek vase-painting, particularly in our understanding of vase imagery and audience reception, and continues to influence the study of vase iconography and iconology. In subsequent chapters this point of different audience

⁶⁴ T. B. L. Webster, *Potter and Patron in Classical Athens*, (London: Methuen, 1972), 227.

⁶⁵ Webster, *Potter and Patron in Classical Athens*, 228.

⁶⁶ Joan Mertens, *How to Read a Greek Vase*. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010), 20-21.

⁶⁷ Vinnie Nørskov, *Greek Vases in New Contexts: The Collecting and Trading of Greek Vases* (Aarhus, Oakville, CT: Aarhus University Press, 2002), 58-64.

⁶⁸ Cook, *Greek Painted Pottery*, 289.

⁶⁹ Mertens, *How to Read Greek Vases*, 20. Spivey, *Greek Vases in Etruria*, 131-133. Cook, *Greek Painted Pottery*, 290.

receptions will be emphasized as the iconographic features which adorn black-figure fountain house scenes are dissected and discussed within their societal context.

The sheer volume of Greek pottery in Etruscan tombs speaks to a robust trade network between the Italic people and the Greeks, yet we know very little about the nature of this ancient pottery market. It has been proposed by scholars that Attic vases most likely traveled to Italy by boat because water routes allowed for large cargo to move over vast distance more efficiently than over land.⁷⁰ Rather than sailing across the Adriatic Sea from the western coast of Greece to the eastern coast of Italy, it seems merchant vessels instead traveled around to the Tyrrhenian Sea and engaged the cities of Etruria by way of seaside emporia.⁷¹ This fact is made evident by the large number of Etruscan cities and ports situated near the west coast of Italy. Although some scholars assert that Greek vases were valuable commodities in their own right, many have since critiqued this position and argued that vases were valued for their contents rather than their aesthetic quality. David Gill, noting the so-called “ceramo-centric” focus of earlier scholarship, asserts that Greek pottery vessels were “parasitic” passengers attached to more important cargo, most likely precious metals, luxury items, and slaves.⁷² This problem is further complicated by pottery’s natural durability and low intrinsic value which have allowed vases to survive from antiquity in large number, thereby distorting the archaeological record.⁷³ In an effort to solve this conundrum scholars, such as John Boardman and A. W. Johnston, have sought to use trademarks as a means of calculating the monetary value of Greek vases. These trademarks take the form of graffiti which are scratched onto the exterior of some vessels.⁷⁴ In the case of the hydria,

⁷⁰ Bundrick, *Athens, Etruria, and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery*, 44-50.

⁷¹ Barker and Rasmussen, *The Etruscans* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1998), 149-158 and 167.

⁷² Gill, “Pots and Trade: Spacefillers or Objets D’Art?” in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 111, (1991), 29-35.

⁷³ Spivey, *Greek Vases in Etruria*, 134.

⁷⁴ The earliest appearance of trademarks on Greek pottery appearance on Mycenaean vessels of the Bronze Age found both in Cyprus and the Near East. The practice of marking pottery continued into the Iron Age and became

Johnston notes the appearance of marks denoting the vessel's shape and suggests this class of vase went for approximately seven *oblols* during the Archaic period.⁷⁵ This conclusion has encountered much scrutiny due to the fact that the Etruscans did not have a monetary economy until the fourth century BCE, thereby making these estimated values virtually problematic.⁷⁶ In order to better understand the value of Greek pottery in Etruscan society Nigel Spivey has proposed to instead examine the utilitarian function and social desirability of these vessels.⁷⁷ This mode of inquiry will arguably yield a more fruitful discussion of Greek vases in their Etruscan context.

In the absence of literary evidence from the Etruscans themselves, we turn to archaeological and visual evidence to understand the function and social context of Greek vases in their society. A wall-painting from the aptly named Tomb of the Painted Vases (fig. 1.12) at the necropolis of Tarquinia, dating to approximately c. 500 BCE, offers insight into the Etruscan fascination with Greek pottery.⁷⁸ The iconographic program presented on the tomb walls depicts a banquet with men and women using decorated vessels to both contain and consume wine. In the scene we see what appears to be a bronze *krater* situated between two black-figure *amphorae* on a *kylikeia* with two *kylikes* placed upside down on the floor beneath. The appearance of a dancing man holding a *kylix* seemingly confirms both the sympotic context of the fictive banquet as well as the use of decorated Greek pottery in Etruria being largely connected to symposium

more common during the sixth century as Athenian pottery became more popular overseas. Johnston, *Trademarks on Greek Vases* (Warminster, Wiltshire, England: Aris & Phillips, 1979), 1-3.

⁷⁵ Johnston, *Trademarks on Greek Vases*, 32-35.

⁷⁶ Spivey, *Greek Vases in Etruria*, 138-139.

⁷⁷ Spivey, *Greek Vases in Etruria*, 138.

⁷⁸ Tarquinia has yielded the largest number of painted tombs, with the vast majority of these decorated tombs appearing in the *Monterozzi* necropolis. During the Archaic Period we see the development of canonical Etruscan iconographic programs from some preexisting Greek motifs. Stephan Steingraber *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 63-64. Haynes, *Etruscan Civilization: A Cultural History* (London: British Museum, 2000), 148-149.

activity. This image of Greek vases in banquet scenes is far from an isolated incident, with a similar iconographic program appearing in the Tomb of the Ship (fig. 1.13), also located at Tarquinia, which dates approximately to 450 BCE.⁷⁹ The scene presents Greek decorated pottery in an identical manner as the previous example with a *krater*, an *amphora*, and several other vessels placed on a *kylikeion* with an *olpe* on the bottom shelf as two *kylikes* hang from the wall in the background. The imagery from these two tombs shows that Greek vases were indeed valuable within the world of the symposium. To further elaborate on the use of Greek vases in the symposium environment we turn to the Tomb of the Leopards (fig. 1.14) at Tarquinia, dating approximately to 480 BCE, which provides more detail.⁸⁰ In this depiction of an Etruscan banquet we see a man holding a *kylix* as two musicians play the *aulos* and the *chelys*, thus suggesting the figures are taking part in alcohol-induced revelry. Arguably, this scene shows that Greek pottery was valued for their contents as well as their function as drinking vessels, essentially confirming David Gill's assertion that these vases were purchased for utilitarian, rather than artistic, purposes. In this respect, it seems likely that decorated *hydriai* in Etruria, much like their Hellenic counterparts, served as sympotic vessels by being able to retain water that was later used to dilute wine.⁸¹

This claim in favor of Etruscan buyers purchasing vessels for their contents and function, rather than artistic quality, does not totally eclipse the aesthetic appeal of Greek vases. Some scholars such as Michael Vickers have argued that Greek pottery was little more than a cheap derivative of more valuable metallic vessels, however, this position does not hold true when placed in conversation with the images of Greek vases in Etruscan tomb painting.⁸² As

⁷⁹ Steingraber, *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting*, 153-155.

⁸⁰ Steingraber, *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting*, 165.

⁸¹ Kathleen Lynch, *The Symposium in Context: Pottery from a Late Archaic House near the Athenian Agora*, 130.

⁸² Michael Vickers. *Artful Crafts* (Oxford, Clarendon), 1-32.

previously seen in the Tomb of the Painted and the Tomb of the Ship respectively, the ceramic Greek vases outnumber their metallic counterparts and are shown being used side-by-side. If metallic vessels were preferred over pottery, then one would expect to see more of the former depicted in scenes of elite Etruscan banqueting. Additionally, the large number of Greek vases found in Etruscan tombs suggests that ceramic vessels were popular items for feasting activity as well as appropriate objects to serve as grave goods.⁸³ Recent research undertaken by Sheramy Bundrick proposes that the iconography and subject matter of Greek vases in Etruria were influenced, to varying degrees, by the consumer.⁸⁴ This discussion of consumption and iconography naturally leads into questions of social context and meaning. The topic will be further delineated in subsequent chapters which will analyze the images of fountain houses and women in relation to late Archaic Athenian society.

We may conclude this overview of the *hydria*'s form, function, and decoration by noting the way in which the vessel's context can impact both its use and the meaning of its iconographic program. The archaeological and art historical inquiry into the *hydria*'s context in Etruscan society reminds us that it is possible for visual motifs to have multivalent meanings. While we may agree that the value of Greek vases did not hold the same value and reverence as the major arts of painting or sculpture, the aesthetic quality of these vessels likely had some influence over the Etruscan buyer. Going forward, this thesis will analyze the iconographic and iconological features of the fountain house motif in relation to ancient Athenian society and, to a lesser extent, possible Etruscan interpretations of such imagery.

⁸³ Noble, *The Techniques of Painted Attic Pottery*, 95.

⁸⁴ Bundrick, *Athens, Etruria, and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery*, 52-57.

CHAPTER 2: EVOLUTION OF THE FOUNTAIN IN GREEK HISTORY AND ATTIC VASE PAINTING

The most visible feature of Late Archaic fountain house imagery is the architectural setting of the fountain itself. Elaborate and elegant in form, the fountain house is essentially the final product in the complex evolution of the fountain from a simple water conduit into an architectural space that facilitated social interaction and retained a utilitarian function. In ancient Athens, the *Enneakrounos* fountain house served this dual role by diverting the *Kallirhoe* spring's water into the Agora and providing its visitors with a congregational space.⁸⁵ The creation of the *Enneakrounos* is often used to mark the growing urbanization of Athens from a small Archaic *polis* into a major metropolitan city.⁸⁶ Likewise, the structure's connection to the Athenian tyrant Peisistratos has been used to mark the beginning of civic patronage in the *polis*. This situation is noted by the Athenian historian Thucydides who, writing at the end of the fifth century BCE on the Athenian's actions during the Peloponnesian War, offers a short discussion of the city's development. He informs us that:

“Before this the city consisted of the present Acropolis and the district beneath it looking rather toward the south...The fountain too, which, since the alteration made by the tyrants, has been called Enneacrounos, or Nine Pipes, but which, when the spring was open, went by the name of Callihoe, or Fairwater, was in those days, from being so near, used for the most important offices. Indeed, the old fashion of using the water before marriage and for other sacred purposes is still kept up.”⁸⁷

⁸⁵ This aspect of the fountain house being a place of congregation was noted earlier in the excerpt from Aristophanes's *Lysistrata* where the female chorus grumble over the many commoners and slaves present in the fountain house. Ari. Lys. 321-324.

⁸⁶ The sixth century was a major period of growth in Athens as a result of the solidification of the Athenian constitution and the eventual reign of Peisistratos and his sons Hippias and Hipparchos. During this century we also see the establishment of several architectural structures, identified as buildings C, D, and F, along the *Kolonos Agoraios* (Market Hill) which are quite possibly the earliest civic structures in the city. Camp, *Athenian Agora*, 38-39.

⁸⁷ Thuc. 2.15.3 and 5; Translated by Richard Crowley.

The words of Thucydides show us that the fountain house is intrinsically tied to both the urban topography of Athens as well as the social institutions that defined Athenian life.

The cultural impact of the *Enneakrounos* was of such significance that notable scholars have suggested that the fountain house images of the Late Archaic Period are direct references to the Peisistratid structure itself.⁸⁸ This bold assertion reduces the image of the fountain house to an example of Peisistratid propaganda and makes the vase-painters participants, either willingly or subconsciously, in this political campaign. While this claim is certainly plausible, it assumes that Attic vase-painters proliferated this propagandistic imagery much like the court artists of the later Hellenistic kingdoms. Arguably, this approach to Late Archaic fountain house imagery simplifies the complex interplay between sociopolitical events and visual culture. The following discussion will offer another explanation for the appearance of fountain house motifs on Attic black-figure *hydriai* at the end of the sixth century BCE by suggesting that these scenes should be read as religious imagery rather than depictions of daily life. In doing so, this chapter makes use of iconographic and iconological methods of inquiry to support this nuanced reading of these seemingly mundane fountain scenes.

Before delving into an iconographic and iconological reading of Late Archaic fountain-house imagery on black-figure *hydriai*, it is first necessary to provide an overview of the development of the fountain-house as an architectural feature of Greek urban centers and the reason for its subsequent incorporation into Athenian vase-painting. To begin this discussion, it should be noted that the climatic and geographical factors of Greece necessitate the creation and management of a sufficient supply of fresh water. The high salinity of the surrounding bodies of water, i.e. the Aegean Sea, Ionian Sea, and Mediterranean Sea, require the exploitation of inland

⁸⁸ Boardman, *Athenian Black-Figure Vases*, 206; Shapiro, *Brief Encounters: Women and Men at the Fountain House*, 96-97.

water sources in order to obtain clean drinking water.⁸⁹ This task is further problematized by the Mediterranean climate which typically produces less rain during the warmer months out of the year.⁹⁰ As a result of these climatic conditions, permanent lakes tend to be located at higher elevations and the streams, which flow down from the mountains, are prone to drying up before reaching the southern Balkans.⁹¹ Subsequently, many Greek city-states relied on underground water sources, particularly wells and springs fed from aquifers, to satisfy their needs. Visual evidence from later vases suggests that water was drawn directly from wells, while spring water was funneled into pipes and allowed to flow from spouts. Fountain-house architecture essentially developed around these spouts and, over the centuries, transformed the water facility from a purely utilitarian location into a space loaded with social and political connotations. We now turn our attention to the development of the fountain-house from the Bronze Age to the Late Archaic Period, where these structures became common subjects on Athenian water jars.

The earliest evidence of water management in the Greek world appears around 2000 BCE at the so-called palatial sites of Bronze Age Crete. Archaeologists have noted that the Minoans devised strategies in order to transport, collect, and redirect water for the benefit of the general public and private individuals. These achievements were made possible through the use of terracotta and stone lined conduits which moved water from natural springs into cisterns for later consumption and allowed both excess water and waste to be removed from urban areas.⁹² As a

⁸⁹ The high salinity of these bodies of water is due to the disproportionate rate of evaporation in relation to precipitation which results in more water leaving, in the form of vapor, than entering, via evaporation, thus giving the seas surrounding Greece a particularly high salt content. Carol Thomas. "The Mediterranean World in the Early Iron Age," in *A Companion to Archaic Greece*, edited by Kurt Raaflaub and Hans van Wees, (Chichester, U.K, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 23.

⁹⁰ B. Dunkley, *Greek Fountain-Buildings before 300 B.C.*, 142-143.

⁹¹ These sources of water allow for the growth of various shrub and tree species, such as laurel, myrtle, and oak, which in turn contribute to the biodiversity of the region; Thomas, *The Mediterranean World in the Early Iron Age*, 24.

⁹² Juuti et al. *A Short Global History of Fountains*, 2316.

result of this technological innovation, the Minoans were able to have running water and indoor plumbing which greatly contributed to the congregation of people into metropolitan communities throughout the island.⁹³ Among the many hydraulic amenities of Minoan society were fountains, defined by Dora Crouch as “a man-made architectural expression of the delivery of water to a public place.”⁹⁴ The archaeological remains of fountains have been excavated at several palatial sites, such as Knossos, Palaikastro, and Zakros, and offer insight into the social context of these hydraulic features in the Bronze Age Mediterranean. One of the most prominent examples of these early water displays is the *Tykte* fountain at Zakros which is located within a structure known as the Hall of the Cistern.⁹⁵ The fountain (fig. 2.1) is positioned in the southwest corner of the architectural space, inside a small chamber, and is connected to a nearby basin via a channel that runs underneath the floor.⁹⁶ Due to the private nature of this water display it has been suggested that these interior fountains supplied water for private use, possibly for indoor swimming or even ritual activity.⁹⁷ Other artifacts from Zakros associated with water displays include two zoomorphic waterspouts (fig. 2.2), which appear to resemble lion heads, that adorned water conduits in a courtyard at the palatial site. Some scholars have theorized that public fountains, much like their indoor counterparts, may have served both a practical and religious function in Minoan society. This suggestion is particularly convincing due to the frequent associations between Minoan religious sites and small bodies of water, specifically wells and natural springs, as well as the popularity of libation vessels, known as *rhyta*, in the

⁹³ Dora Crouch. *Water Management in Ancient Greek Cities*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 30.

⁹⁴ Crouch, *Water Management in Ancient Greek Cities*, 345.

⁹⁵ Angelakis, *A History of Fountains and Relevant Structures in Crete, Hellas*, 204.

⁹⁶ Angelakis *A History of Fountains and Relevant Structures in Crete, Hellas*, 204.

⁹⁷ Angelakis, *A History of Fountains and Relevant Structures in Crete*, 204.

archaeological record.⁹⁸ Arguably, this cultic reading of Minoan water displays may also be applied to the Zakros waterspouts. Leonine imagery is often interpreted to have an apotropaic function in Minoan society, therefore the zoomorphic spouts from Zakros may possibly bring together the practical and religious aspects of Minoan water culture.⁹⁹ Overall, the appearance of fountains and other hydraulic technologies in Minoan society tell us that the movement, distribution, and storage of water served an important role within the social landscape of Bronze Age Crete.

A similar circumstance of water management is also evident in the Mycenaean world of mainland Greece. Once believed to be less culturally nuanced and technologically advanced than their Minoan counterparts, archaeological inquiry into Mycenaean settlements has shown that they too developed complex hydraulic technology in order to control the flow water. They employed stone and terracotta lined conduits to funnel water from natural springs into the citadels, much like their Minoan counterparts. This is particularly evident at major sites like Mycenae, Tiryns, and Athens where underground channels were created in order to feed water into the citadels for access during times of siege warfare.¹⁰⁰ Excavations spearheaded by the American School at Athens in 1937 noted the appearance of various hydraulic features connected to these fortified conduits within the bedrock of the Athenian Acropolis.¹⁰¹ The remains of a Mycenaean fountain are present on the northwest corner of the Acropolis slope,

⁹⁸ Alan Peatfield. "Water, Fertility and Purification of Water in Minoan Religion." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, 40 (1995), 223.

⁹⁹ Peatfield, 223-226.

¹⁰⁰ The fortification of Mycenaean cities appears around the Third Palatial Period, roughly 1400 to 1100 BCE, and is likely a result of the social and political upheaval connected to the Bronze Age collapse. Oliver Dickinson, *The Aegean Bronze Age* (Cambridge, N.Y: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 81. Camp, *Athenian Agora*, 25. Broneer, *A Mycenaean Fountain on the Athenian Acropolis*, 317.

¹⁰¹ Bronner notes that the initial goal of the expedition was to uncover remains from the sanctuary of Aphrodite and Eros on the Acropolis and to discover more fragmentary inscriptions and sculptures; Bronner, *A Mycenaean Fountain on the Athenian Acropolis*, 322-346.

where a cleft in the rock was transformed into a makeshift water conduit. No architectural remains have been found to be associated with the fountain, however, it appears a narrow staircase, built of stone and wooden timber, provided access to the underground water supply. Pottery discovered at the site reveals that the fountain was active during the thirteenth century BCE and was only in use for approximately 35 years before drying up as the spring water receded deeper into the earth.¹⁰² The pot sherds from the archaeological deposit were mostly from large vessels, both *amphorae* and *hydriai*, which would have been used to carry water up the stairs, thus attesting to the social interaction that occurred at this site.¹⁰³ Likewise, the presence of small terracotta figurines (fig. 2.3) further suggests social events, even ritual activity, connected to the fountain, however, there is no conclusive evidence to support such a claim.¹⁰⁴ Arguably it is due to the accessibility of water and the defensible position of the Acropolis that the Mycenaean settlement on the site flourished, a sentiment later echoed in the words of Thucydides concerning the development of Athens during the Archaic Period.¹⁰⁵

Following the collapse of the Bronze Age around 1200 BCE the intricate water systems of the Greek mainland fell into disrepair as the citadels ceased to function as sociopolitical nuclei and the population scattered to small enclaves throughout the countryside. In Athens, the water conduits were turned into refuse dumps and new sources of drinking water were exploited in order to sustain human occupation. Archaeological inquiry into Iron Age settlements shows a growing number of ground wells throughout the Attic Peninsula. This exploitation of ground

¹⁰² Crouch notes that “the Mycenaean spring was probably accessible at a higher level, but as the water receded it was necessary to build additional flights of stairs down to it.” See Crouch, *Water Management in Ancient Greek Cities*, 257-259.

¹⁰³ Most of these pot sherds from this archaeological deposit were coarse ware, however, some show evidence of glazing. Broneer notes that the sherds are of varying clay fabrics, with the fine ware being made from a smooth, buff colored clay and the coarse ware being made from a grainy, red clay. For more on the ceramic analysis and seriation see Broneer, *A Mycenaean Fountain on the Athenian Acropolis*, 346-405.

¹⁰⁴ Broneer, *A Mycenaean Fountain on the Athenian Acropolis*, 406-407.

¹⁰⁵ Thuc. 2. 15.

water likely increased over the duration of the Iron Age as the population numbers increased and Greek society slowly began to recover from the Dark Ages. It has been suggested that many of these wells may have been privately owned and possibly demarcate individual homes.¹⁰⁶ Excavations of these Geometric wells have yielded artifacts from Iron Age settlement activity, such as cooking vessels and coarse ware water jars, as well as finds from later periods, no doubt attesting to the adaptive reuse of these structures.¹⁰⁷ While many believe these wells were functional water supplies during their period of use, it has been argued that some of these wells may in fact be rubbish pits based on their archaeological fill.¹⁰⁸ Overall, the Geometric wells of Athens speak to a growing sense of urban organization in the city toward the end of the Iron Age which in turn connects to the increased need for water.

A well from the Athenian *agora* offers some insight into the water systems of the transitional period between the Iron Age and the Archaic Period. The well is located in the area of the old Agora, on the eastern side of the Kolonos Agoraios, and dates roughly to the seventh century BCE. The structure of the well is both round and vertical with a diameter of 1.90 meters and a depth of 16.95 meters, making it the deepest Attic well of the late Iron Age and early Archaic Period.¹⁰⁹ Although we know very little about the socioeconomic function of the Agora during this period, it is still possible to theorize about the social interactions at this well. Archaeological inquiry shows that much of the land area which constitutes the Athenian *agora* was dedicated to burying the dead. The only section of the Agora dedicated to commercial activity was a small patch near the Acropolis, however, by the beginning of the sixth century

¹⁰⁶ Camp, *Athenian Agora*, 33.

¹⁰⁷ Dimitriadou, *Early Athens: Settlements and Cemeteries in the Submycenaean, Geometric, and Archaic Periods*, (: Los Angeles: Costen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2019), 72-77; John Papadopoulos. *Ceramicus Redivivus: The Early Iron Age Potter's Field in the Area of the Classical Athenian Agora*, 89-112.

¹⁰⁸ Papadopoulos, *Ceramicus Redivivus: The Early Iron Age Potter's Field in the Area of the Classical Athenian Agora*, 1-6.

¹⁰⁹ Young, *Late Geometric Graves and a Seventh Century Well in the Agora*, 139.

BCE the market had moved to a plot of land on the north side of *Areopagus*.¹¹⁰ It has been thought that this early market place was a movable cluster of temporary booths and tents.¹¹¹ This notion of a mobile commercial center may very well explain the large quantities of Subgeometric, Geometric, Protocorinthian, and Protoattic pottery found in the *Kolonos Agoraios* well.¹¹² It seems quite likely that these pot sherds attest to commercial activity near the site of the well and may even allude to the structure's adaptive reuse as a refuse pile. Rodney Young offers a counter argument to the ceramic assemblage, believing the pot sherds were swept into the well from a nearby shrine.¹¹³ Although there are no conclusive answers as to nature of the archaeological deposit, the presence of this well and the many others which dot the landscape show the growing need for water in Athens as the city's population began to grow. This need would be settled in the coming century as the economic success and political environment of the city facilitated the creation of a truly public water supply.

The sixth century BCE saw the rise of the fountain house as a public architectural structure meant for recreational use. While the Athenian statesman Solon is reported by Plutarch to have reorganized the city's water system by allowing wells within a half mile to be used by the general public during the early sixth century BCE, it was not until the latter half of the century that we see the creation of a truly public water distribution center with the creation of the *Enneakrounos*.¹¹⁴ The fountain house was erected between 530 and 520 BCE by the Athenian

¹¹⁰ American School of Classical Studies at Athens and Thompson, *Waterworks in the Athenian Agora* 2.

¹¹¹ American School of Classical Studies at Athens and Thompson, *Waterworks in the Athenian Agora*, 2; Crouch Water Management in Ancient Greek Cities, 275.

¹¹² Young, *Late Geometric Graves and a Seventh Century Well in the Agora*, 139-194.

¹¹³ Young basis this theory on the prior research of Dorothy Burr Thompson who published a votive deposit found at the site of a Geometric house in Athens. It does not seem to have gained much traction in the scholarly world, however, I decided to include it in my discussion in order to highlight both the associations between water and ritual sites as well as the frequent assertions made by archaeologists to connect the two entities together in the archaeological record.

¹¹⁴ Plut. Sol. 23. 5.

tyrant Peisistratos, although some suggest it may have been constructed by his sons Hipparchos and Hippias.¹¹⁵ Based on Thucydides's account of the *Enneakrounos*, it is thought that the fountain house possessed nine spouts through which water flowed, hence why its name contains the prefix *ennea* meaning nine and the suffix *krounos* meaning spout or nozzle.¹¹⁶ The ancient travel writer Pausanias echoes this sentiment and notes that the *Enneakrounos* was the only fountain house in the city of Athens during his time.¹¹⁷ The creation of the fountain house had a profound effect on the urban topography of Athens as well as the social landscape of Athenian life. Prior to the construction of the fountain house, there were few monumental public buildings in the city which catered to the general public.¹¹⁸ The Peisistratid building campaign was an active agent of urbanization that erected both temples and religious monuments throughout the city and transformed the *agora* into a permanent public space.¹¹⁹ In response to the new structures, Athenian social habits were modified to incorporate the new architectural entities into their daily routines. Both Herodotus and Thucydides note that the *Enneakrounos* was frequented by women who gathered its water for domestic use in the home and for rituals associated with marriage.¹²⁰ The topic of women and the Peisistratid fountain house will be addressed more in-depth in the next chapter in relation to gender in ancient Athens and the interpretation of the fountain house motif. Overall, the cultural impact of the *Enneakrounos* on Athenian life was without question a major sociopolitical achievement of the Archaic Period.

¹¹⁵ Peisistratos first came to power during the 560s before being forced out of Athens by his political opponents. He later returned and was able to reestablish his rule in 545 BCE, which lasted until his death in 527 BCE. The dates of the fountain house's construction and Peisistratos have led some to speculate as to the whether he or his sons were responsible for creating the *Enneakrounos*. Although ancient authors tend to attribute the structure to Peisistratos, there is no conclusive evidence to suggest this.

¹¹⁶ Thuc. 2. 15. 5.

¹¹⁷ Paus. 1. 14. 1.

¹¹⁸ Camp, *The Archaeology of Athens*, 30.

¹¹⁹ Camp, *The Archaeology of Athens*, 32.

¹²⁰ Hdt. 6.137. 3 and Thuc. 2. 15. 5.

The structure often thought by scholars to be the Peisistratid fountain house is located in the southeastern area of the *agora*, along the Panathenaic Way (fig. 2.4). Later renovations and quarrying have largely stripped the building of its original facade. While most of the superstructure has been reduced to ruin, the building's foundations, which are composed of gray limestone, remain largely intact. The presence of terracotta pipes underneath the ground show that water was diverted to this structure, thereby leading archaeologist to associate this building with the *Enneakrounos* when it was discovered in 1952. It is noted by John Camp that these pipes are part of a larger subterranean network which runs from east to west across the *agora*.¹²¹ Other artifacts found to be associated with the structure include marble floor slabs, several water basins, a single z-clamp on the northeast corner of the building, and numerous pot sherds.¹²² While the finds confirm that this structure was indeed a fountain house, many have begun to question its identification as the Peisistratid *Enneakrounos*. The work of Jessica Paga has attempted to change the narrative surrounding the southeast fountain house by reconsidering the archaeological evidence in an effort to propose a later date for this building. She notes that Thucydides and Pausanias, who both discuss the structure in their respective texts, describe different locations for the fountain house, with the former locating it outside of the Classical *Agora*, near the Ilissos River, and the latter placing it near the *Odeion* of Agrippa which is where the ruins of the southeast fountain house sit.¹²³ When faced with this textual discrepancy, it appears most scholars in the past have chosen to take Thucydides's word over that of Pausanias due to corresponding information coming from Herodotus who places the fountain house south

¹²¹ Camp, *The Water Supply of Ancient Athens from 3000 to 86 B.C.*, 81.

¹²² Camp, *The Water Supply of Ancient Athens from 3000 to 86 B.C.*, 75.

¹²³ Paga, *The Southeast Fountain House in the Athenian Agora: A Reappraisal of its Date and Historical Context*, 359-361; Thuc. 2. 15. 5 and Paus. 1. 14. 1.

of the Acropolis, near the Ilissos River.¹²⁴ Paga argues further that the building techniques, as evident through the appearance claw chisel marks and the z-clamp, could suggest a construction date between 480 and 450 BCE.¹²⁵ Based on this new critical evaluation of the textual and archaeological evidence it is apparent that the southeast fountain house is not the Peisistratid *Enneakrouns*, thus it is highly unlikely that this is the structure frequently depicted on Attic *hydriai*. The tension between the archaeological record and the representation of fountain houses on these vessels has created a lacuna of information concerning the interpretation of the fountain motif and its meaning in antiquity.

Now with a firm grasp of the development of fountains from simple water conduits into public architecture, we turn to the appearance of fountain-houses in Archaic Attic vase-painting. In order to extrapolate meaning from depictions of fountain houses in Attic pottery it is first necessary to contextualize them. Prior to the sixth century BCE there is no significant architecture depicted in Greek vase-painting. Protoattic vases from the seventh century BCE largely emulate Corinthian decorative schemes, focusing primarily on repeating registers of both human and animal friezes.¹²⁶ Geometric motifs, such as cable patterns, lozenges, and rosettes, are used to fill empty space and the decorative friezes are arranged in registers. An example of this Orientalizing style appears on an Early Protoattic *hydria* attributed to the Mesogia Painter (fig. 5) dating approximately between 700 and 675 BCE. The vessel's surface decoration is largely composed of geometric patterning and the main panels on the neck and body depict sphinxes and

¹²⁴ Owens, *The Enneakrounos Fountain-House*, 223; Hdt. 6. 137. 3.

¹²⁵ Paga arrives at this date range by comparing the building techniques and architectural features of the southeast fountain house with other structures in Athens and Attica at large. She specifically looks at the late Archaic Eleusian Telesterion, the Archaic temple of Dionysos, and the Archaic temple of Poseidon at Sounion. Paga states that the similarities in "building materials, masonry style, and the use of Z clamps" help to date the fountain house to approximately 500 BCE or sometime during the early fifth century BCE. Jessica Paga, *The Southeast Fountain House in the Athenian Agora: A Reappraisal of its Date and Historical Context*, 364-367.

¹²⁶ Boardman, *Early Greek Vases*, 85-88.

lions respectively. By the end of the century, however, we begin to see the introduction of more complex iconographic programs with detailed human figures and identifiable myths appearing on Attic vases.

The earliest signs of architecture in Attic vase-painting appears in works by the vase-painter Sophilos, whose career spans approximately the first two decades of the sixth century BCE.¹²⁷ As seen on a *dinos* in the British Museum (fig. 6), the painter depicts the marriage of Peleus and Thetis with the mythological couple preparing to enter a home as they are followed by a procession of gods and goddesses. The façade of the house is rendered frontally with the door facing the viewer and two Doric columns shown frontally. Arguably this manner of depicting architecture conveys the structure to the viewer in its most identifiable form. This method of rendering architecture is also seen on a *dinos* fragment attributed to Sophilos (fig. 7). Here the painter depicts spectators watching a chariot race while seated in the stands. Inscriptions on the vessel tell the viewer that Sophilos created the scene and that the scene being shown is the funeral games of Patroclus from Book 23 of the *Iliad*.¹²⁸ Much like the previous example, the rendering of the stands is meant to show them in their most identifiable form. This optical refinement of architectural structures in Greek vase painting begins in the sixth century and evolves as buildings become more prevalent in the corpus of Attic vase iconography.

Fountain house imagery begins to appear on Attic pottery during the first quarter of the sixth century BCE with a depiction of the ambush of Troilos by Achilles on the François

¹²⁷ It should be noted that Sophilos is the first vase painter to sign a vessel in the canon of Greek art and Boardman casts him as the end of the early Attic vase painters following in the tradition of the Gorgon Painter; Boardman, *Athenian Black-Figure Vases*, 18-19.

¹²⁸ The chariot race at the Funeral Games for Patroclus is one of the oldest identifiable scenes from the *Iliad* to appear in Attic vase painting. This fragmentary *dinos* showing the mythological episode was discovered in 1931 near Pharsalos which is located in the region of Thessaly, the home of Achilles. Alan Shapiro notes that the inscription on the vessel reads "Patroclus Atla" which translates to games in honor of Patroclus. This scene also appears later on the neck frieze of the François Vase. Johansen, *Iliad in Early Greek Art*, 86-88; Shapiro, *Myth into Art: Poet and Painter in Classical Greece*, 32-38.

Vase (fig. 8). While the main actors of the scene are shown on the right side of the register, a fountain house is present in the far-left corner. The structure itself is depicted with supreme frontality and is shown with a repeated triglyph and metope decoration, Doric columns, and zoomorphic spouts. Two *hydriai* are located on the platform beneath the spouts, one in the process of being placed into position and another filling with water as its owner looks toward the main actors of the scene. Although this fountain house scene is clearly mythological in nature, it offers us insight into the ancient Athenian attitudes towards the fountain house as a site of social interaction. In one respect, this scene from the François Vase shows that the fountain house serves a distinct utilitarian function by including the vessels needed to retrieve water. In another respect, this frieze also shows how the fountain house can become the scene of violent which is conveyed by the actions and gestures of those present. These opposing views of the fountain house highlight the unpredictability associated with public spaces, a sentiment that is echoed in later literary accounts and vase painting imagery.

Intermittently throughout the sixth century BCE, fountain house scenes appeared on a variety of ceramic vessels. A *kylix* attributed to the C Painter (fig. 9), dating approximately between 570 and 565 BCE, offers another depiction of Achilles ambushing Troilos at the fountain. Here the grand mythological scene is abbreviated in order to fit the Siana cup's limited amount of surface area, showing only the fountain house itself and the siblings Troilos and Polyxena fleeing, the former on horseback and the latter on foot, from a fully armed Achilles.¹²⁹ This image of the Homeric myth continues to be popular throughout the century with examples of this iconographic program appearing on numerous types of vessels. Additionally, it appears

¹²⁹ Siana cups owe their name to a village on the island of Rhodes where *kylikes* of this type were first discovered. They are characterized by two styles of decorative scheme: the first is called double decker, which involves different decorative motifs on the lip and handle area, and the second is termed overlap, which simply has figures that overlap the body and lip. Cook, *Greek Painted Pottery*, 78; Boardman, *Athenian Black-Figure Vases*, 32.

the popularity of this mythological fountain scene is mirrored in Etruria where it appears quite frequently on native decorated pottery and tomb painting. An example can be seen on the shoulder of an amphora (fig. 10) attributed to the Pontic Group which dates to approximately 540 to 530 BCE.¹³⁰ The execution of the myth on the vessel, much like that of the Attic *kylix*, is simplified to its bare essentials, namely the presence of the fountain house and the main actors in the mythological narrative. Although this vase was discovered in an Etruscan tomb at Vulci, the image of the myth presented on this vessel shows strong similarities to a wall painting (fig. 11) from the Tomb of the Bulls at Tarquinia which dates stylistically between c. 530 and 520 BCE. The popularity of this subject matter between Attica and the Italian Peninsula suggests a common interest in fountain house imagery. This cross-continental interest in the fountain house motif will be explored further in a subsequent chapter concerning the meaning of these scenes in Athenian and Etruscan society.

Just after the middle of the sixth century BCE there is a noticeable shift in fountain house imagery in Attic vase painting as scenes of everyday life begin to appear on decorated pottery. The rise of genre scenes is thought to be connected to the growth of Athenian society in conjunction with the expansion of the Attic visual repertoire, however, there is no conclusive evidence to confirm this assertion. As a result of this new orientation in vase decoration, the mythological images involving fountain houses give way to mundane scenes which supposedly depict daily life. Initially these fountain house scenes appear on a number of different vessel

¹³⁰ Boardman suggests that the Pontic Group, although Etruscan in nature, was probably started by a Greek immigrant from the Ionia because the vessels attributed to this collective possess many Ionian stylistic elements which are distinctly different from native Etruscan decorated pottery. Vases from the Pontic Group have a similar color and subject matter, however, Boardman notes that towards the end of the sixth century their imagery becomes increasingly more tailored for an Etruscan audience. Boardman, *Early Greek Vase Painting*, 222.

shapes, with *amphorae*, *lekythoi*, and *hydriai* being the most popular.¹³¹ An example of this new approach to fountain house imagery can be seen on an unattributed *lekythos* (fig. 12) which dates approximately to 530 BCE. In contrast to the violent mythological narrative displayed in the Achilles and Troilos scenes, this depiction of two women at the fountain house is a calm image of domestic activity. As a woman fills her hydria at a lion headed spout, another woman on the other side of the vessel performs the same activity in the company of a male escort.¹³² The inclusion of an ithyphallic herm suggests this work was done under the reign of Hipparchos and Hippias because ancient texts reveal that the former was responsible for erecting images of herms along roadways and in demes throughout Attica.¹³³ This social context of the herm suggests that this scene takes place within the boundaries of a city, thus speaking to the urbanization of the ancient water supply during the late Archaic period.

Around 530 BCE is when fountain house imagery becomes most prevalent on Attic *hydriai*. Looking at an example attributed to the Priam Painter (fig. 13), the fountain house is shown to be an ornate architectural structure which bolsters the characteristic zoomorphic spouts, colonnaded façade, and eloquent superstructure. These scenes at the fountain have a high degree of consistency in their visual composition, with many of them possessing nearly identical renditions of the same subject matter. A comparative example can be seen on a *hydria* attributed to the manner of the Antimenes Painter (fig. 14), dating to approximately 520 BCE. Much like the previous example attributed to the Priam Painter, this vessel shows similar visual conventions used to depict the architectural elements of the fountain house, with the structure rendered in

¹³¹ *Alabastra*, *hydria*, squat *lekythoi*, *pyxides*, and *loutrophoroi* are vessels that are often associated with women and often times this gendered use is connected to the vessel's iconography. Webster, *Potter and Patron in Classical Athens*, 227.

¹³² "Black-figure lekythos." Museum of Cycladic Art. Accessed October 30, 2019. <https://cycladic.gr/en/exhibit/ng1104-melanomorfi-likithos?cat=archaia-elliniki-techni>.

¹³³ Pl. Hipparch. 228d.

profile in order to showcase its colonnaded porch and two spouts. The similarities in these scenes, compounded with the compressed date range, may even suggest the presence of a pottery workshop specializing in this subject matter.¹³⁴ Likewise, the repetition of similar decorative elements in the form of tongue patterns and lotus-palmette borders on the shoulder and body suggest a common artistic collective behind these vessels. The prospect of a workshop also may allude to the possibility of these images being produced specifically for a foreign market. Sheramy Bundrick notes that at least 20 of these vessels have been unearthed in Etruscan tombs and that the popularity of this motif in Etruria likely motivated the production of these images.¹³⁵ While we cannot be certain about this situation, it offers a plausible explanation for the appearance of this image on exported Attic pottery.

The reoccurrence of fountain house imagery on these vessels has led some to believe that these images are a direct reflection of the *Enneakrounos*. This notion, however, has been refuted by scholars who note inconsistencies in the architectural elements of these fictive fountain houses.¹³⁶ The differences are most notable in the column orders, the superstructure, and the decorated spouts. While many of the examples previously discussed show fountain houses with Doric columns, an unattributed *hydria* in the British Museum (fig. 15) depicts a fountain house with Ionic capitals. Additionally, this particular vessel shows a rounded pediment adorned with a akroterial disk, an architectural feature not seen in other renditions of this motif. Another unique example is a *hydria* attributed to the AD painter (fig. 16) dating approximately between 520 and 510 BCE which shows two spouts that depict two equestrian riders on horseback, an ornate

¹³⁴ Although Boardman does not directly assert the possibility of fountain house imagery being the product of a specific workshop, he notes that many of the pot painters working in late sixth century Athens have similar styles, subject matter, and often times decorated the same types of vessels. Boardman suggests that more connoisseurship needs to be done on the painters of this period in order to better structure the Athenian pottery industry of the late 500s BCE. Boardman, *Athenian Black-Figure Vases*, 109-111.

¹³⁵ Bundrick, *Athens, Etruria, and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery*, 159-169.

¹³⁶ Camp, *The Water Supply of Ancient Athens from 3000 to 86 B.C.*, 76-77.

decoration that contrasts the typical lion head that we have seen in previous fountain house motifs. Overall, the nuances in the architectural layout of these fictive fountain houses contradict the perception that vase imagery is a direct reflection reality. The only conclusive assumption that can be made about late Archaic fountain houses from these images is that they were colonnaded structures outfitted with spouts and, typically, covered by a superstructure. Overall, the picture of Attic fountain houses painted by decorated pottery is quite vague.

These fountain house scenes remain in vogue until after c. 500 BCE when there is a dramatic decrease in the motif throughout the fifth century BCE. There are few red-figure examples of this motif, an example attributed to the Berlin Painter (fig. 17), dating approximately to 480 BCE, offers the best insight into the final stage of this iconographic evolution of the fountain house motif. Instead of the elaborate architecture and complex grouping of figures seen in earlier depictions of this subject matter, here the fountain house motif has been reduced to a single spout projecting out of a wall. Two women appear to chat as a *hydria* overflows with water from the spout. While the aesthetics of this image align with both John Beazley and John Boardman's descriptions of the Berlin Painter's style, also it represents a significant change in the composition of fountain house imagery because it reduces the scene down to bare essentials, leaving a significant amount of empty space surrounding the forms. Throughout the remainder of the fifth century BCE fountain house imagery declined in popularity and all but vanishes from archaeological assemblages in Etruscan tombs, thus suggesting it fell out of favor with domestic and foreign audiences.

In the context of late Archaic Athenian society many have sought to connect the fountain house motif with the rise of Peisistratid political power. In some respect this assertion has merit. It is without a doubt, based on the textual and archaeological evidence, that the *Enneakrounos*

was constructed for political purposes because it created a centralized distribution center for water which catered to the general public and it is one of the earliest examples of elite patronage in Athens. The political nature of the Athenian waterworks is further supported by later textual accounts from Plutarch which assert that the fifth-century statesman Kimon performed acts of patronage by funding the rerouting of water channels in order to transform the Academy from an arid plot of land into a lush grove of trees.¹³⁷ Additionally, the appearance of similar fountain house structures in Corinth and Megara, both of which were the product of elite patronage from each city-state's respective tyrant, would suggest that these public centers of water distribution were intrinsically tied to the political climate of the late Archaic *polis*.¹³⁸ While a propagandistic reading of the *Enneakrounos* itself is within the realm of possibility, it is a mistake to attribute this same interpretation to late Archaic fountain house imagery. Arguably, this view of Attic vase painters is highly anachronistic and fundamentally misrepresents the social status of craftsmen in ancient Athens. In direct contrast to the picture of vase painters as artists, largely set forth by Beazley and his development of artistic personalities via connoisseurship, it is more appropriate to view them as skilled workers thriving on the lower end of the Athenian socioeconomic ladder. This social reality makes it unlikely that Athenian vase painters were of sufficient intellectual or social privilege to knowingly implant Peisistratid propaganda into their decorative schemes. Likewise, decorated pottery was not viewed as a major art form in antiquity, thus its ability as a vehicle for propaganda is quite limited.

¹³⁷ Plut. Cim. 13. 8.

¹³⁸ Both the Peirene and Glauke fountains at Corinth and the fountain at Megara were constructed in the sixth century BCE. The need for a more centralized water supply is likely a symptom of the growing urbanism and political complexity of the Archaic Greek world. Theagenes of Megara and the Kypselids of Corinth, seeking to strengthen their popular support amongst the people, funded these constructions in order to appeal to the innate human need for clean drinking water. Camp, *The Water Supply of Ancient Athens from 3000 to 86 B.C.*, 66; Robinson, *Histories of Peirene: A Corinthian Fountain in Three Millennia*, 131-132.

Rather than viewing images of fountain houses as a symbol of Peisistratid power, it may be argued that these scenes are more likely to have a religious meaning. The interconnection between water and religious sites in the Greek world - a topic touched upon earlier in this chapter - can be traced back to the Bronze Age where water displays are thought to have been used in cultic activity. Religious rites typically required water for the purpose of libation pouring, ritualistic cleansing of both the living and dead, as well as to mix with wine for consumption during festivals.¹³⁹ In Athens specifically, a major religious rite involving water was the *hydrophoria*. This rite began during the Archaic period as part of the *Anthestia* festival and required women to draw water from the *Kallirhoe* Spring, which later became the *Enneakrounos* fountain house, before journeying to a deep chasm near the temple of Zeus Olympios.¹⁴⁰ Once at this cultic site, the women were reported to empty their vessels into the rift in order to reenact the end of a mythological flood.¹⁴¹ This ritual coincides with the *Choes*, which is the second day of the *Anthesteria*, and may possibly serve as libations to the god Hermes Chthonios.¹⁴² The associations between the fountain house and Athenian religious activity is also illustrated in the pre-marriage rituals of Athenian women. As previously noted in reference to Thucydides's discussion of the *Enneakrounos*, the women of Athens used water from the fountain house for the bridal bath.¹⁴³ These examples highlight the connections between the fountain house and

¹³⁹ Boardman and Kurtz, *Greek Burial Customs*, 144; Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion*. (Oxford: Blackwell), 70-73 and 75-80; Robert Parker, *Polytheism and Society at Athens* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 292-294.

¹⁴⁰ Robert Parker notes that the *Anthesteria* is difficult to reconstruct because of conflicting reports in ancient sources and the inability of scholars to know which activities took part place on which days of the festival took place. From what we can tell, the *Anthesteria* occurred over the duration of three days and there seem to have been multiple variants throughout the Greek world. Parker, *Polytheism and Society at Athens*, 290-295.

¹⁴¹ Robert Parker notes that this claim originates from a fragmentary text by the ancient Greek historian and rhetorician Theopompos (c. 380-315 BCE), who in turn attributes the information to Aristophanes. Parker, *Polytheism and Society at Athens*, 295-296.

¹⁴² Parker, *Polytheism and Society at Athens*, 297.

¹⁴³ Thuc. 2. 15. 5.

Athenian religious activity, thereby offering a more nuanced reading of late Archaic fountain house imagery on black-figure *hydriai* than the overtly political interpretation suggested by some scholars.

We may conclude this chapter on the fountain house in Attic vase painting by noting that they are the byproduct of urbanism and political patronage in the Archaic period. At Athens the Peisistratid *Enneakrouns* served a symbolic and utilitarian function within the city's sociopolitical landscape by supply the general public with water for domestic use as well as for use in ritual activity. While the political function of the fountain house itself is clearly illustrated by its function and source of patronage, this is not true of fountain house motifs in Greek vase-painting. Both the social circumstances surrounding the vase painters themselves and the nature of their work makes it highly unlikely that fountain house imagery was intended to be political. Arguably, a more appropriate interpretation of the fountain house motif, based on the discussion of water and its role in ancient Athenian religious life, is that of a religious scene. The strong iconographic similarities between the various examples of the fountain house motif have led some to argue for a more direct association with the *Enneakrouns* itself, but, as illustrated in previous examples, the inconsistency in the architecture depicted in vase-painting strongly refutes this notion. Likewise, the fact that the archaeological record does not yield conclusive evidence for the nuances of Archaic fountain house architecture, as seen in the discussion of the southeast fountain house, makes any attempt at using visual imagery to reconstruct them little more than conjecture at best. Rather than looking at these fountain house depictions as direct reflections of Archaic Athens, it may be more appropriate to view these scenes as idealized depictions of religious activity. These issues of idealization and religious practice will be further

addressed in the following chapter which will discuss the identity and status of the women at the fountain house.

CHAPTER 3: IDENTIFYING WOMEN AND ATTRIBUTES IN FOUNTAIN HOUSE IMAGERY

The women who populate the fountain-house scenes on late Archaic Athenian *hydriai* are the subject of much scrutiny surrounding our understanding of gender roles and women's history in ancient Greece. Neither classics nor art historical scholarship have come to a consensus as to the identity of these enigmatic women, with many researchers opting instead to frame them within a larger discussion of women in the social structure of Athenian society. This approach tends to oversimplify fountain-house scenes by painting them as direct reflections of everyday-life and offering no critical insight into the complex relationship between visual culture and Athenian social mores. Rather than continuing to generalize these figures, this discussion of the women depicted in late Archaic fountain-house scenes will use iconographic and iconological methods to identify and contextualize the female motifs that populate these motifs.

A black-figure shoulder *hydria* attributed to the Priam Painter (fig. 1) offers the standard iconographic program of the archetypical late Archaic fountain-house scene. The Doric columns in the foreground signal to the viewer that the scene takes place within the confines of an architectural structure and the fountain spouts, which are decorated with lion and donkey heads, confirm that this is in fact a fountain-house. As noted in the previous chapter, the fountain house is often viewed as a political structure due to its Peisistratid connections. In this instance, however, the fountain-house serves as the physical and temporal backdrop of a scene centered solely on women. These women in question are shown holding their *hydriai* as streams of water flow into the vessels from the spouts. The flowing drapery of the *chiton* obscures the women's bodies, leaving only their feet visible. Each garment is elaborately decorated with geometric

patterns and the women wear ornate jewelry. These iconographic features have led many scholars to question the identities of these women in an effort to better understand the context of these so-called genre scenes.

It was previously held by scholars that the women who populate these fountain house scenes were slaves fetching water for use in the household.¹⁴⁴ This interpretation is largely based on the accounts of ancient authors whose descriptions of women in ancient Greek society suggest that respectable Greek women lived cloistered lives away from the outside world. The phenomenon of female social seclusion is first documented in Homer's *Iliad* where women are largely relegated to the domestic sphere. A prime example can be seen in book four as the Trojan prince Hector utters his last words to his wife Andromache, saying:

But go into the house and attend to your own work,
the loom and the distaff, and tell the servants
to set to work; as for fighting, that will be the concern
of all the men, especially myself, who are sons of Troy.¹⁴⁵

This passage presents a polarized dichotomy between the gendered activities of women, which involve the upkeep of the home and the production of household goods, and those of men, which involve maintaining the external business and social affairs of the home. We see a similar attitude towards women presented in the *Odyssey* where Telemachos banishes his mother Penelope to her chambers, saying:

“You should go back upstairs and take care of your work,
Spinning and weaving, and have the maids do theirs.
Speaking is for men, for all men, but for me
Especially, since I am the master of this house.”¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ John Oakley provides a list of the most common interpretations of women in fountain house imagery. John Oakley, *The Greek Vase: Art of the Storyteller* (The British Museum Press, 2013) 102.

¹⁴⁵ Hom. *Il.* 6. 490-493. Translation by A. T. Murry.

¹⁴⁶ Hom. *Od.* 1. 376-379. Translation by A. T. Murry.

While the epic poems of the late Iron Age present an idealized view of women as permanent residents of the domestic sphere, scholars question how these texts inform us about the gendered seclusion of the Archaic Greek world. The absence of historical texts from the Archaic period require the use of epic and lyric poetry to comprehend the moral values and social conventions of early Greek society, yet these literary sources often times present a fictionalized view of everyday life which can skew our understanding of the lives led by ancient Greek women. In the case of Athens, however, the reforms of Solon offer the earliest historical evidence of laws specifically geared toward the control of women within the social landscape of the early *polis*. Although these legal codes were originally inscribed on tablets which were set up in the *agora* so the general public could read them, the best surviving description of them comes much later from the Greek biographer Plutarch's *Life of Solon*. In the text Plutarch notes that:

But in general, Solon's laws concerning women seem very absurd. For instance, he permitted an adulterer caught in the act to be killed; but if a man committed rape upon a free woman, he was merely to be fined a hundred drachmas; and if he gained his end by persuasion, twenty drachmas, unless it were with one of those who sell themselves openly, meaning of course the courtesans. For these go openly to those who offer them their price."¹⁴⁷

The unfair distribution of punishments along gender and socioeconomic guidelines, being particularly harsh on female sex-workers, would suggest that proper Athenian women were expected to remain within the confines of the home in order to avoid the ills of society. In this respect, the goal of these social reform appears to be twofold. On the one hand, Solon's laws regarding women was meant to reinforce the patriarchal power structure of the *polis* which effectively mirrors that of the Athenian household, known as the *oikos*.¹⁴⁸ On the other hand,

¹⁴⁷ Plut. *Sol.* 23. 1. Translation by Bernadotte Perrin.

¹⁴⁸ It is noted by Maryiln Arthur that Solon's reforms are likely the codification of moral values and social practices that began earlier in the Archaic period. She suggests that the Homeric epic poems and Hesiod's *Works and Days* shed light on this growing phenomenon and speak to the solidification of the *oikos* as a physical and conceptual entity. Likewise, she notes that these literary sources are the origin of misogyny in the Greek world because they

Solon's reforms seem to be aimed at preventing social conflict over women, stemming from the legal and physical repercussion of issues related to adultery, child paternity, and sexual assault, by removing them from the public sphere of Archaic Athenian society.

The social impact of Solon's reforms can be seen in the historical writings of later authors who echo this dualistic sentiment of female social control. An example of this can be seen in the writings of Thucydides, who, speaking about Athenian women during the early years of the Peloponnesian War, remarks:

“On the other hand, if I must say anything on the subject of female excellence to those of you who will now be in widowhood, it will be all comprised in this brief exhortation. Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character; and greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men whether for good or for bad.”¹⁴⁹

The conflation of female modesty with social seclusion highlights the patriarchal nature of Athenian society and, moreover, the way in which women were controlled by way of social mores. Arguably, Xenophon offers the most comprehensive view into the social expectations of Greek women of the Classical period. His text, titled *Oeconomicus* because it concerns itself with the economy of the home, illustrates the complexities of domestic life by explaining how best to maintain a productive household. Framed as a dialogue between the Athenian philosopher Socrates and Crito, a stock character used to symbolize the average Athenian man, Xenophon uses the ancient philosopher as a mouthpiece to convey his attitudes about women. On the nature of Athenian women, Xenophon, speaking as the Athenian Ischomachos, remarks that:

“your duty will be to remain indoors and send out those servants whose work is outside, and superintend those who are to work indoors, and to receive the incomings, and distribute so much of them as must be spent, and watch over so much as is to be kept in store, and take care that the sum laid by for a year be not spent in a month. And when

present women as the root cause of social and political strife. This is particularly evident in the works of Hesiod. Arthur, “Origins of the Western Attitude Toward Women” in *Women in the Ancient World: The Arethusa Papers*, edited by John Peradotto and J.P. Sullivan, (1984) 22-27.

¹⁴⁹ Thuc. 2. 45. 2. Translation by Richard Crowley.

wool is brought to you, you must see that cloaks are made for those that want them. You must see too that the dry corn is in good condition for making food.”¹⁵⁰

This discourse on the role women within the home is often used by scholars of Classical Athens to argue that Athenian women rarely interacted with the outside world.¹⁵¹ While this may be true of elite women, it was certainly not the case for women on the low end of the socioeconomic ladder of Athenian society. Aristotle makes note of this situation in his *Politics* where he questions how a democratic assembly could hold poor women, who left their homes to acquire money and sustenance, to the same standard of gendered seclusion as their elite counterparts, who lived luxurious lives that afford them the ability to remain indoors.¹⁵² Overall, the picture of Athenian women painted by literary sources suggests that female seclusion, rather than being a uniform practice, was in fact dependent on socioeconomic status.

Those who subscribe to the literalist interpretation of these ancient texts liberally apply this view of gendered seclusion to visual imagery, hence the unidentified women in fountain house scenes were thought to be slaves. This reading of fountain house imagery has been refuted by several scholars who note that the ornate clothing and jewelry worn by the women in these scenes are not indicative of the attire worn by slave women.¹⁵³ Furthermore, this iconographic discussion highlights the inherent ambiguity of vase imagery. John Boardman notes that the genre scenes of late Archaic Attic pottery present a courtly view of Athenian life that erases almost all signs of social status.¹⁵⁴ As a result of this predicament scholars often rely on visual

¹⁵⁰ Xen. Oec. 7. 35-36. Translation by Sarah Pomeroy.

¹⁵¹ Xenophon's text is an idealization of the Athenian oikos made in light of the social changes that gripped Athenian society in the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War. Pomeroy, *Xenophon*, 31-39.

¹⁵² Arist. Pol. 4. 1300a

¹⁵³ In the Classical Period, female slaves were typically identified by their cropped hair and simple clothing which set them apart from free-born Athenian women. Sian Lewis notes that this hairstyle would have been common amongst prostitutes as well because most of them were enslaved women. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*, 83; Hannestad, *Slaves and the Fountain House Theme*, 253-255; Lewis, *The Athenian Woman*, 104; Bahl, *An Investigation of Women at the Fountain House*, 42.

¹⁵⁴ Boardman, *Athenian Black Figure Vases*, 205.

context informed by literary sources to identify slaves in genre scenes. While ancient literary texts supply crucial information on the activities of slaves, they also present a biased and sometimes contradictory picture of Athenian slave labor. This is particularly evident in the case of fountain house activity. As previously noted, sources such as Aristophanes and Thucydides offer seemingly contradictory claims about the visibility of women and show that both slaves and free-born women visited public fountains for domestic and religious reasons respectively. Herodotus even notes that Athenian women once fetched their own water before domestic slaves became common in the city.¹⁵⁵ Arguably the contradictions between literary texts and visual imagery highlights the inherent tension between the Classicist readings of word and image relationships and art historical approaches to ancient visual culture.

Some scholars have distanced themselves away from the slave focused interpretation by suggesting instead that the women who populate these fountain house scenes are *hetairai*.¹⁵⁶ In ancient Athenian society these courtesans engaged in long-term romantic relationships with male citizens. While often times these relationships were sexual in nature, later literary accounts of the Classical Period suggest that these women were also sought after for companionship due to their artistic skills and philosophical training.¹⁵⁷ This situation is noted by the Athenian orator Demosthenes who, in his *Speech Against Neaera*, remarks:

“One maintains a hetaera not only for pleasure, as a mistress, but also for the daily care and service of one’s person. One marries a respectable woman, on the other hand, to beget legitimate children of equal birth and to have a faithful watch-dog in the house.”¹⁵⁸

As residential aliens, known as *metics*, these women lacked privileges afforded to their Athenian-born counterparts, such as being able to marry an Athenian citizen and birthing

¹⁵⁵ Hdt. 6. 137. 3.

¹⁵⁶ Williams, *Women on Athenian Vases: Problems of Interpretation*, 103-105.

¹⁵⁷ Verena Paul-Zinserling, *Women in Greece and Rome* (New York: Universe Books, 1972), 39.

¹⁵⁸ Dem. 59. 122. Translation by Norman DeWitt.

legitimate children.¹⁵⁹ However, unlike Athenian matrons, *hetairai* were permitted to move freely throughout the city and, in some cases, to own property. The level of social independence that *hetairai* possessed is what leads some to argue that the women depicted in these fountain house scenes are courtesans. This interpretation, in a similar manner as the previous one, has come under scrutiny because it hinges on textual accounts to explain ambiguous visual imagery.

The iconography of *hetairai* in late Archaic Attic vase painting is highly ambiguous due to the idealization of black-figure genre scenes, which results in these figures being identified based on their visual context. Unlike married Athenian women, *hetairai* are said to have frequented the male-dominated world of the *symposium*. This ancient Greek drinking party took place in the male dining area of the household, known as an *andron*, and involved the consumption of wine while being entertained by various games, musical performances, and philosophical discussions.¹⁶⁰ Within this space, *hetairai* served as both the guests and sexual companions of the male revelers. As a result of the literary descriptions and the historical circumstances surrounding the lives of these courtesans, scholars tend to identify all women depicted in symposium scenes, and almost all depictions of nude women in genre scenes, as *hetairai*. An example of this identification can be seen in scholarly interpretations of an Attic red-figure psykter (fig. 3.2) signed by Euphronios which dates approximately to 510 BCE. Four women are shown engaging in typical sympotic behavior around the outside of the vessel. One of

¹⁵⁹ This circumstance is due in part to Perikles's introduction of new citizenship laws which stipulated that legal citizens must have Athenian parentage on both sides of their family, not only from that of the father as it had been in earlier times. Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece*, 120.

¹⁶⁰ The men's quarters of the ancient Greek household are referred in literary sources as both the *andron* and *andronitis* while the women's quarters are referred as the *gunaikon* or *gunaikonitis*. Lisa Nevett notes that although these names correspond with the ancient Greek terms for man and woman, we are not sure how this terminology relates to the full range of activities that took place within these spaces. Literary sources are largely silent about both the furnishings and location of the women's quarters within the home. The most informative source on women's domestic space comes from Attic red-figure vase-painting which offers insight into the decoration and arrangement of objects found there. Nevett, *House and Society in the Ancient Greek World*, 11-19; Morgan, *The Classical Greek House*, 118-126; Ault and Nevett, *Ancient Greek Houses and Households*, 160-163.

the women is shown to be reclining on a pillow and playing the *aulos* pipes as another woman, who faces the viewer directly, drinks from a cup while holding a second *kylix*. The other two women are shown holding *skyphoi*, with one appearing to spin a cup with one of her fingers, alluding to a popular drinking game known as *kottabos*, and the other holds out a second *skyphos* towards a wine skin to refill her drink. Sian Lewis notes that nudity for women can have multiple meanings in the visual vocabulary of Attic vase-painting, but within the context of this red-figure symposium scene it seems quite likely that nudity is meant to convey the identity of the women involved.¹⁶¹ It has also been argued by some that the *sakkos*, a women's headpiece akin to a modern-day snood, is an identifying feature of *hetairai*.¹⁶² This notion, however, is also refuted by Sian Lewis who notes that women's hairstyles vary significantly in Attic vase-painting.¹⁶³ Both the women in the previous symposium scene and the fountain house scene attributed to the Priam Painter wear *sakkoi*, but the context of each image affects the way in which we interpret them. This method for identifying *hetairai* succeeds in the context of symposium imagery, however, it fails to offer a conclusive identity for the women who appear in late Archaic fountain house motifs. These unknown women neither take part in sympotic activity nor do they appear nude, hence the assertion that they are courtesans is highly unlikely.

¹⁶¹ Sian Lewis further problematizes this topic by noting that it is difficult to conclusively identify a *hetaira* in Attic vase-painting. She notes that representations on pottery show nude women engaged in bathing, sympotic, and ritual activity which would suggest, like depictions of nude men, that images of the nude female form are more nuanced than many scholars have previously believed. Lewis, *The Athenian Woman*, 101-112.

¹⁶² Fischer, *The Prostitute and Her Headdress: The Mitra, Sakkos, and Kekryphalos in Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painting, c. 550-450 BCE*, (Ph. D Dissertation, University of Calgary, 2008), 45.

¹⁶³ Sian Lewis cites several examples where images of women engaged in sexual activity show them with their hair styled into top-knots, short bobs, and wrapped within a *sakkos*. When taken in conjunction with Marina Fischer's discussion of the different headdresses of prostitutes in Archaic and Classical vase-painting, it seems that the diversity in these garments is the result of shifting fashion trends in the late Archaic and early Classical periods. Fischer makes note of this by suggesting that head garments like the *sakkos* were introduced to mainland Greece via *hetairai* from Ionia. While initially a courtesan's headdress, it seems these garments came into fashion and were worn by Athenian women as a luxury item. Lewis, *The Athenian Woman*, 104. Fischer, *The Prostitute and Her Headdress*, 66.

More recently scholars have begun to concede that the women in these fountain house scenes are in fact free-born Athenians. The research of Nicole Bahl has addressed this question in depth by examining the female figures in these fountain house motifs and arguing, based on iconographic features and historical sources, that they are citizen women. Bahl notes specifically that the clothing worn by these women is not indicative of slaves or *hetairai*, thereby suggesting that these are free-born Athenian women whose families are not wealthy enough to own slaves.¹⁶⁴ Our knowledge of slavery in ancient Athens is incomplete because of historical biases in the ancient literary sources and the lack of sufficient archaeological evidence to further delineate upon the lives of enslaved individuals in ancient Athens. It is theorized by some that approximately 200,000 slaves resided in Athens, however, these numbers are highly speculative.¹⁶⁵ While this assertion that the women depicted in these fountain house scenes represent a possible middle class of ancient Athenian society, not wealthy enough to own slaves nor shown to be impoverished, another reason for their appearance at the fountain could be for ceremonial or religious reasons. Bahl suggests that free-born Athenian women may have performed these physical activities out of religious tradition.¹⁶⁶ This offers an alternative explanation, excluding basic needs, as to why these women would visit the fountain house. Common rituals, such as the previously mentioned bridal bath and libations, involved the use of water for the purpose of purification and sacrifice. Although we from visual evidence and

¹⁶⁴ Bahl, *An Investigation of Women at the Fountain House*, 44.

¹⁶⁵ These figures are based on T.B.L. Webster's interpretation of textual evidence, particularly Thucydides, from the Classical and Hellenistic periods. However, it should be noted that the institution of slavery allowed for the growth of the Athenian democratic system because it allowed male citizens the ability to take part in the Athenian Assembly, known as the *Ekklesia*, rather than working to sustain the household. At the height of Athenian silver mining in the fifth century it is estimated that approximately 40,000 slaves worked in the Laureion mines at the height of the Classical period. T.B. L. Webster, *Athenian Culture and Society* (London: Bastford, 1973), 41. Robin Osborne and the Joint Association of Classical Teachers, *The World of Athens: An Introduction to Classical Athenian Culture*, (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 185-188.

¹⁶⁶ Bahl, *An Investigation of Women at the Fountain House*, 44-50.

ancient literary descriptions that special vase shapes, such as the *loutrophoros*, *lekythos*, and *phiale*, were used to perform this cultic activity, we do not know how they attained the necessary water. It is quite possible that a *hydria* was used to gather the water and afterward it was poured into the ritual vessel of choice. If this situation is the case, then it seems likely that free-born women would have visited the fountain house in order to acquire water for these religious tenets. In this respect, Bahl's proposition that free-born Athenian women visited the fountain house for domestic and religious reason holds firm. Subsequently, the iconographic studies of Cynthia Kosso and Kevin Lawton have continued this assertion and, although not universally accepted within the field, this view of Athenian women in vase-painting has begun to gain traction.¹⁶⁷

With the social status of the women in the fountain house motif secure, we now turn to the nature of their activity. Scholars have long believed these images to be reflections of everyday domestic activity, however, it may be argued that some of these scenes possess visual elements that suggest a religious interpretation. Unlike the previous discussions on fountain house and female status which centered on single iconographic entities, this section will highlight multiple features in an effort to extract meaning from the ambiguous activity of the women in the late Archaic fountain house motif. Due to the fact that a significant number of late Archaic black-figure *hydriai* exist in both museums and private collections, this analysis will use specific case studies in order to highlight common iconographic features that suggest a more nuanced reading of these scenes. Far from a comprehensive study, the goal of this short analysis is to connect the free-born status of the female figures with their actions in order to propose a plausible meaning for these ambiguous fountain house scenes.

¹⁶⁷ Kosso and Lawton, *Women at the Fountain and the Well*, 94-95.

As noted in the previous chapter, there is a strong religious connotation to these fountain scenes which stems from the cultural connections between water and ancient Greek religion. This connection was first highlighted by Erika Diehl in her study of fountain house imagery which argued that there may be a religious interpretation of these scenes due to the iconographic nuances that appear in some of these scenes. An unattributed hydria in the British Museum (fig. 3.3), which dates approximately between 510 and 500 BCE, offers insight into this suggestion. The scene shows four women gathering at a fountain house in order to fill their *hydriai*. Each one of these women is dressed in an ornate *chiton* that is decorated with stripes and star-shaped motifs in added red and white pigment respectively. Unlike many depictions of Greek women in public, these female figures wear their hair down with fillets to keep it out of their faces. The two women on the far left and right of the composition balance empty *hydriai* on their heads as they converse with another set of women who wear cushions on their heads, which likely make it easier for them to balance these water jars when they are full. While the outward appearance of this scene seems to be domestic in nature, a closer analysis of several iconographic features strongly suggests an active religious component is present in this image. In the midground of the composition we see a pair of deer who seem to be drawn toward the fountain, thereby suggesting this scene does not take place within the urban center of Athens itself, but most likely one of the more rustic *demes* of the Attic Peninsula. All four women in the scene are depicted holding long tree branches which are accented by a multitude of flowers rendered in added white pigment. Additionally, the woman on the far left of the composition is shown grasping a single flower bud in her hand and holding it up to her face.

Similar images of women holding tree branches appear throughout late Archaic Attic vase-painting of the sixth century BCE. One example of this visual phenomenon is present on a

black-figure *escharis* (fig.3. 4), dating to approximately 530 BCE, which depicts a religious festival in honor of the goddesses Demeter and Kore, who are identified in the scene based on their high *polos* headdress.¹⁶⁸ In the scene we see a group of men and women taking part in the ritualistic activity. Several of the women, including Kore herself, hold small tree branches as they gather around Demeter who sits enthroned and holding out a wreath. In this instance, the branches function as cultic accoutrement within the context of this visual representation of a festival. The religious iconography of this imagery is indicative of scenes depicting cultic activity in Archaic Attic vase-painting. An earlier Attic *pinax* (fig. 3.5) dating to approximately 550 BCE shows women engaging in similar religious behavior while holding tree branches and a flower bud, thereby confirming that these objects have a distinct meaning connected to Athenian cultic activity in the sixth century BCE.¹⁶⁹ Some scholars have gone so far as to suggest that these religious images directly reference the festivals connected to the Athenian celebration of the Anthesteria. As noted in the previous chapter, this festival to the gods Dionysos and Hermes was a major religious event in ancient Athens and its observance required the use of water for the purpose of libations to the gods as well as the souls of the dead. A *hydria* attributed to the Priam Painter (fig. 3.6), dating approximately to 510 BCE, is often cited to support this interpretation. The vessel shows three women at the center of the composition filling their *hydriai* at spouts underneath the superstructure of the fountain house. To the left of the fountain house is the figure of Dionysos, who is identified by his *katharos* and ivy crown, and on the right is the figure of Hermes, who is identified by his articles of clothing, which are the wide brimmed *petasos* hat,

¹⁶⁸ This vessel was discovered at the archaeological site of Eleusis which was famous in antiquity for its cult to Demeter, Kore, and Hades, known as the Eleusinian Mysteries. Based on this archaeological context and the fact that two female deities are present in the scene, many believe this vessel to be a depiction of Demeter and Kore being worshipped at Eleusis. However, there is still a sense of ambiguity present in this scene due to the lack of identifying inscriptions. Kaltsas and Shapiro, *Worshipping Women: Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens*, 146.

¹⁶⁹ Kaltsas and Shapiro, *Worshipping Women: Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens*, 169.

loose fitting *chalmys* cloak, and winged sandals, and his staff, the *kerykeion*. The nature of these divine figures and the interpretation of this scene has caused disagreement within the scholarly community. While Erika Diehl has suggested that these may be images of the gods overseeing preparations for the Anthesteria, it has been proposed by Cynthia Kosso and Kevin Lawton that these may in fact be depictions of statues that resemble the two deities.¹⁷⁰ The lack of specific iconographic details makes it difficult to determine which of these two competing interpretations is more plausible. Regardless of whether the two gods are present in primary or secondary form, their inclusion within the iconographic program strongly indicates a religious elements.

This suggestion that fountain house imagery may allude to the cultic activity of the Anthesteria is highly contentious. Much like the notion of the Peisistratid *Enneakrounos* being the subject of every late Archaic fountain house scene, this argument relies too heavily on the literary record to interpret vase iconography. Arguably the scholarly arguments proposed by Sian Lewis and both Cynthia Kosso and Kevin Lawton present a more reasonable interpretation of these ambiguous images. They believe these scenes at the fountain house to be generic depictions of ritual activity due to the lack consistent evidence that would suggest a specific religious event.¹⁷¹ This argument is supported by the fact that libation pouring and ritual bathing, as previously noted, were performed at major festivals as well as everyday religious events, such as marriages and funerals. In some respects, this argument against a strict Anthesteria-based interpretation of late Archaic fountain house imagery is similar to that of Gloria Ferrari, who suggests in her 2003 essay that these genre scenes depict fictionalized versions of the ideal Athenian woman, being both pious and productive.¹⁷² However, unlike Ferrari, who believes that

¹⁷⁰ Diehl, *Die Hydria*, 59 and Kosso and Lawton, 98.

¹⁷¹ Lewis, *The Athenian Woman*, 73-75.

¹⁷² Gloria Ferrari. "Myth and Genre on Athenian Vases," in *Classical Antiquity*, 22, no. 1 (2003), 44-48.

these scenes do not reflect the practices of actual Athenian women, Lewis, Kosso, and Lawton argue that these images serve as a guide into the lived experience of Athenian women.

Although some of these images of women at the fountain house are meant to be religious in nature, others have no iconographic indications of a religious context. An example of this can be seen in an unattributed fountain house scene in the British Museum (fig. 3.7) which dates approximately between 520 and 500 BCE. Unlike the previous examples which convey a religious connotation due to the attributes held by the women and the presence of gods, this fountain house image has no indication of ritual activity. A group of five women are shown visiting a fountain house, with four of them balancing their water jars on their heads as a single woman, whose short stature suggests she is much younger than the others, watches her vessel fill with water from a zoomorphic spout.¹⁷³ The hand gestures performed by the older women suggests that they are speaking to one another as they wait their turn at the fountain. Despite the fact that this scene bears many similarities to the previous examples, the lack of iconographic features indicative of religious activity mean we cannot say definitively that this is religious imagery. It is because of this visual ambiguity that many believe this scene to be an image of Athenian women's domestic activity. Similar images of women's domestic activity beings to appear in Attic vase-painting around 540 BCE. A black-figure lekythos by the Amasis Painter (fig. 3.8), dating approximately between 540 and 530 BCE, serves as an example of this growing phenomenon. The group of women depicted on the vessel are shown in the midst of textile production. As the two women in the center work the loom, one woman to the left appears to spin wool using a distaff and another woman on the right weighs finished cloth.¹⁷⁴ Much like fountain house scenes, this image of women's domestic activity is devoid of blatant religious

¹⁷³ Lewis, *The Athenian Woman*, 76.

¹⁷⁴ Lewis, *The Athenian Woman*, 56.

iconography and is often viewed as a direct reflection of daily life. It is noted by Claude Bérard that these depictions of women often times do not correspond completely with the literary picture of Athenian wives depicted in ancient text.¹⁷⁵ He suggests that images of working women could be viewed as performing domestic tasks to better the household, rather than for financial gain, as a means of reorienting these genre scenes back to the socioeconomic sphere of the *oikos*.¹⁷⁶ While this interpretative model provides a compromise between the conservative literary depictions of Athenian wives and the liberal freedom they possess in visual culture, it largely relegates images of women at work to the realm of fantasy. The literary and visual evidence reviewed in this chapter would strongly suggest that these images of women at the fountain house reference the domestic and religious activities of Athenian women, thereby it seems less likely that these are purely fantastical images of women performing labor.

Based on this iconographic analysis and iconological contextualization of the women who populate late Archaic fountain house imagery, it seems that a multivalent reading of these genre scenes is necessary. The inherent ambiguity of fountain house imagery makes it difficult to know the context of the scene or even the identities of the women who appear in it. However, as illustrated by this inquiry into the female figures depicted in fountain house imagery, a close analysis of the clothing worn by the women as well as the objects they hold provides us with a testament to the lived experience of female domestic activity and religious behavior. This academic position holds that fountain house imagery is far more nuanced than many scholars have cared to acknowledge and the interplay between religious and domestic imagery suggests

¹⁷⁵ Claude Bérard, "The Order of Women," in *A City of Images: Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*, edited by Claude Bérard (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 89.

¹⁷⁶ Bérard, *The Order of Women*, 90.

that ancient Athenian society was far more flexible in its designation between these two spheres of influence than we care to admit.

CONCLUSIONS

This study of late Archaic fountain house imagery has provided a critical analysis of these common visual motifs in an effort to better understand their meaning within the sociopolitical landscape of the ancient Greek world. While the main audience for this imagery was likely Athenian, the presence of approximately seventy-five examples of *hydriai* bearing fountain house scenes in Etruscan tombs suggests a wider market for these images.¹⁷⁷ Often times studies of visual motifs in Greek vase painting tend to only focus on the Attic context of the images. Throughout this thesis I have attempted to incorporate suggestions for Etruscan responses to these common scenes. The use of an iconographic and iconological approach to topic, this study has deconstructed and analyzed the visual and cultural elements that make up the typical late Archaic fountain house scene in an effort to decrease the amount of ambiguity that surrounds these images and to strengthen our understanding of ancient Athenian women.

Beginning with an overview of the *hydria*'s form, decoration, and function, this study highlights the vessel's unique role in the ancient Greek domestic and funerary realms. More than just a water receptacle, literary texts and archaeological evidence show that *hydriai* were also used as ballot boxes in the political arena and grave goods for the deceased. However, scholars generally agree that decorated *hydriai* were created for use in the context of the Greek symposium. Additionally, this section highlighted the complexities of the Athenian vase trade between Greece and Etruria. The scholarly debate over whether these vessels were traded for their aesthetic quality or contents continues to divide academia, yet the large number of decorated pottery discovered in Etruscan tombs and the visual representations of Greek vases in

¹⁷⁷ Sheramy Bundrick notes that about twenty-six of the total number of *hydriai* bearing fountain house imagery can be securely traced back to Vulci, while the other forty-nine examples have no definite archaeological context. Bundrick, *Athens, Etruria, and the Many Lives of Greek Figured Pottery*, 154.

Etruscan wall-painting would suggest that vessels were valued for their appearance as well as their utilitarian function. This revelation also sheds light on the use of Attic *hydriai* in Etruscan society. As a decorated water receptacle, it seems quite likely that these black-figure *hydriai* served as a role within a banquet context, likely supplying water which was mixed with wine for consumption. However, like other classes of Greek pottery, they seem to have undergone adaptive reuse and were retooled as grave goods for wealthy Etruscans. Although we have no way of knowing how the Etruscans perceived these *hydriai* with fountain house imagery, the fact that most examples of these genre scenes come from vessels in Etruscan tombs would suggest that it was popular amongst them. This discussion served as a launching point for an inquiry into Attic *hydriai* bearing fountain house imagery because it raises the issue of the variability of meaning between cultures.

The second chapter focuses on the correlation between images and reality by examining the cultural history of the fountain house in early Athens. Archaeological inquiry shows that the manipulation of water has defined Greek civilization since the Bronze Age because it allows for the congregation of large populations into urban centers. This historical trend is most evident at Athens where we see fountains and wells appearing throughout its early history in order to supply the growing population with fresh drinking water. The inherent connections between water and politics come to a head during the late sixth century BCE with rise of the Peisistratids in Athenian politics and their subsequent construction of the *Enneakrounos* as patronage to the general public. While many have sought to argue that the representations of fountain houses on late Archaic black-figure *hydriai* are the direct result of the Peisistratids *Enneakrounos*, the lack of consistent visual features in the rendering of architecture in these fictive fountain house scenes would suggest that this is not the case. The relationship

between visual imagery and reality is far more complex and often times not a direct correspondence.

With a firm understanding of the social and religious aspects of Attic fountain houses, we then turn to an analysis of the women who populate these generic fountain house scenes. Scholars have long debated the social status of these enigmatic women due to the inherent ambiguities in late Archaic vase-painting. While some scholars have attempted to argue that these women are slaves or courtesans, the lack of conclusive evidence to support such reading make these interpretations unlikely. Instead, it is now believed that these unknown female figures are in fact free-born Athenian women performing ritual activity. This religious interpretation of fountain house imagery should not be taken as a uniform statement because, as illustrated in discussion of fountain scenes lacking clear religious iconographic features, it seems likely that some of these images are representations of domestic activity. This polarization of fountain house imagery most likely reflects the ancient Athenian conception of domestic and religious life being intertwined, which is why these two types of fountain house imagery exist. It is because of this unique circumstance that a multivalent reading of late Archaic fountain house imagery is necessary.

Based on this iconographic and iconological inquiry of late Archaic fountain house imagery, it may be argued that these scenes represent two distinct visions of ancient Athens. On the one hand, some of these scenes on black-figure *hydriai* depict Athenian women engaged in ritualistic activity. This interpretation is supported by iconographic evidence that shows religious imagery, in the form of handheld objects often shown in processional scenes, and textual sources which describe women taking part in specific ritual activity for events, such as funerals, weddings, and festivals. On the other hand, fountain house scenes without these visual nuances

can only be viewed as domestic in nature because there is no specific iconographic attribute that can determine the meaning of these genre scenes. This multivalent interpretation allows for these two parallel readings of fountain house imagery to exist by making both interpretations relevant in the larger conversation of women's lived experience in ancient Athens. While this study is far from a comprehensive analysis of late Archaic fountain house imagery, it has resulted in the reassessment of previously held notions about Athenian women and the visual ambiguity of women in Attic black-figure vase-painting. It is with this revelation that we conclude our study of Attic black-figure *hydriai* showing women at the fountain house.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1.1. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, c. 520-500 BCE, Attributed to the Leagros Group.

Image Source: The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago. Accessed September 27, 2019.

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AMICO_CHICAGO_1031149684;prevRouteTS=15696060849



Figure 1.2. Red-Figure Hydria (Kalpis), c. 460-450 BCE, Attributed to the Leningrad Painter.

Image Source: The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago. Accessed September 27, 2019.

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AMICO_CHICAGO_1031149719;prevRouteTS=15696060849



Figure 1.3. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, c. 510-500 BCE, Attributed to the Class of Hamburg 1917.477

Image Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. Accessed September 27, 2019.

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/247244>



Figure 1.4. Proto-Attic Neck Amphora, c. 675-650 BCE, Attributed to the Polyphemos Painter

Image Source: Archaeological Museum of Eleusis, Elefsina. Accessed September 27, 2019.
https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AIC_960038;prevRouteTS=1569607167419



Figure 1.5. Black-Figure Panathenaic Amphora, c. 570-560 BCE, Attributed to the Burgon Group.

Image Source: The British Museum, London. Accessed September 27, 2019.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Panathenaic_amphora_BM_B130.jpg



Figure 1.6. Red-Figure Hydria (Kalpis), c. 460-450 BCE, Attributed to the Painter of the Berlin Hydria.

Image Source: Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge. Accessed September 27, 2019.
<https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/290759?position=58>



Figure 1.7. Red-Figure Hydria (Kalpis), c. 350 BCE, Attributed to the Choephoroi Painter.

Image Source: Staatliche Antikensammlungen, Munich. Trendall, A. D. *Red-Figure Vases of South Italy and Sicily*. (New York, N.Y: Thames and Hudson, 1989), 71.



Figure 1.8. Black-Figure Pinax, c. 580 BCE

Image Source: Altes Museum, Berlin. Accessed September 27, 2019.

<http://www.smb->

[digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=direct/1/ResultLightboxView/result.t1.collection_lightbox.\\$Ts](http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=direct/1/ResultLightboxView/result.t1.collection_lightbox.$Ts)
[pTitleImageLink.link&sp=10&sp=Scollection&sp=SfieldValue&sp=0&sp=0&sp=3&sp=Slightb](http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=direct/1/ResultLightboxView/result.t1.collection_lightbox.$Ts)
[ox_3x4&sp=0&sp=Sdetail&sp=0&sp=F&sp=T&sp=2](http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=direct/1/ResultLightboxView/result.t1.collection_lightbox.$Ts)



Figure 1.9. Black-Figure Pinax, c. 575-550 BCE

Image Source: Altes Museum, Berlin. Accessed September 27, 2019.

[http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=direct/1/ResultLightboxView/result.t1.collection_lightbox.\\$Ts pTitleImageLink.link&sp=10&sp=Scollection&sp=SfieldValue&sp=0&sp=0&sp=3&sp=Slightbox_3x4&sp=0&sp=Sdetail&sp=0&sp=F&sp=T&sp=5](http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=direct/1/ResultLightboxView/result.t1.collection_lightbox.$Ts pTitleImageLink.link&sp=10&sp=Scollection&sp=SfieldValue&sp=0&sp=0&sp=3&sp=Slightbox_3x4&sp=0&sp=Sdetail&sp=0&sp=F&sp=T&sp=5)



Figure 1.10. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, c. 520-510 BCE, Attributed to the Leagros Group.

Image Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. Accessed September 27, 2019. <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/153447>.



Figure 1.11. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, c. BCE, Attributed to the Leagros Group.

Image Source: Keuls, Eva. "Attic Vase-Painting and the Home Textile Industry" in *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography*, edited by Warren Moon. (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 211.



Figure 1.12. Tomb of the Painted Vases, c. 510-500 BCE, Tarquinia, Right Wall.

Image Source: Steingraber, Stephan. *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting*. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 69.



Figure 1.13. Tomb of the Ship, c. 450 BCE, Tarquinia, Left Wall.

Image Source: Steingraber, Stephan. *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting*. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 154.



Figure 1.14. Tomb of the Leopards, c. 480 BCE, Tarquinia, Right Wall.

Image Source: Steingräber, Stephan. *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting*. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), 133.



Figure 2.1. Fountain Basin at Zakros, Crete

Image Source: Angelakis, A. N. “The History of Fountains and Relevant Structures in Crete, Hellas.” in *International Journal of Global Environmental Issues* 14 (2015), 204.

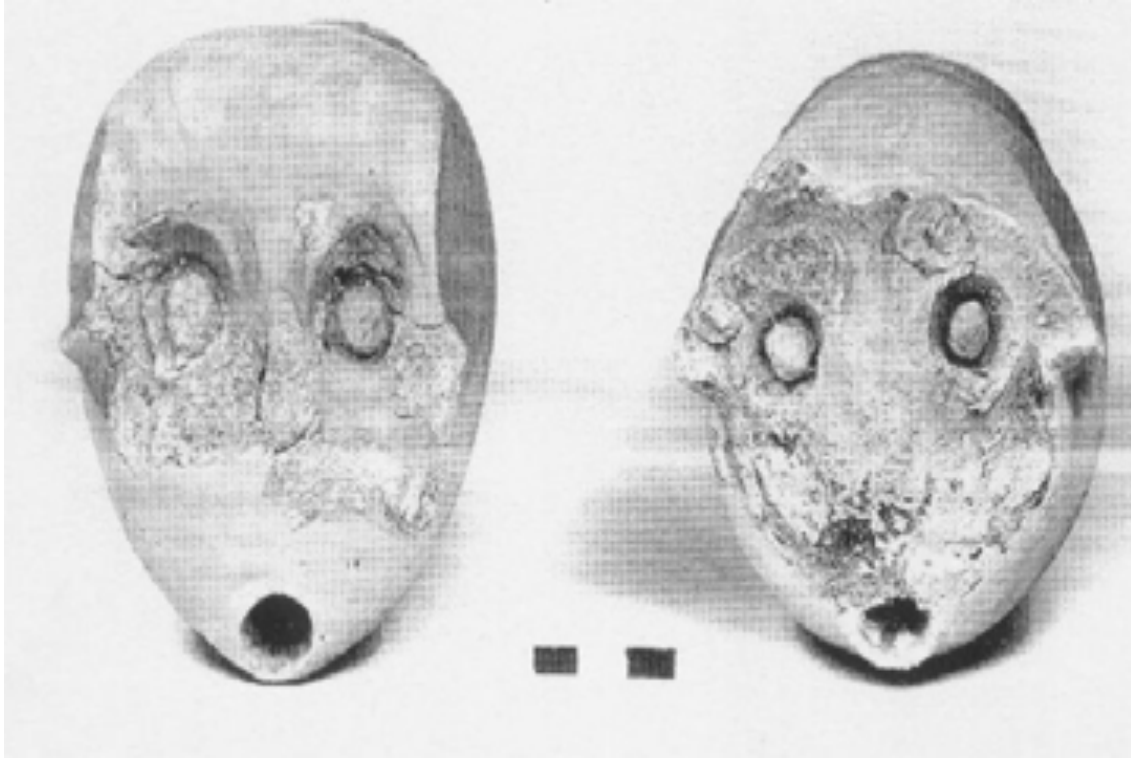


Figure 2.2. Zoomorphic Fountain Spouts at Zakros, Crete

Image Source: Angelakis, A. N. “The History of Fountains and Relevant Structures in Crete, Hellas.” in *International Journal of Global Environmental Issues* 14 (2015), 204.

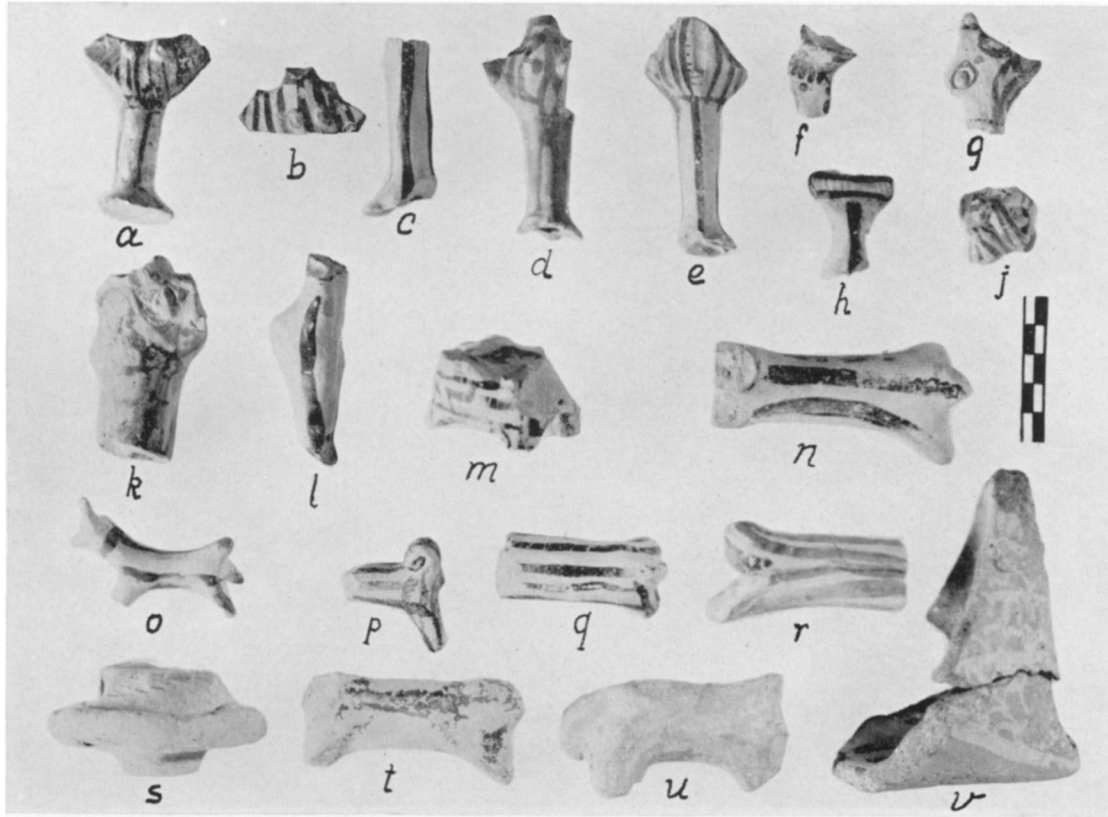


Figure 2.3. Figurine Assemblage from the Mycenaean Fountain on North Slope of the Akropolis

Image Source: Broneer, Oscar. "A Mycenaean Fountain on the Athenian Akropolis" in *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 8 (1939), 407.

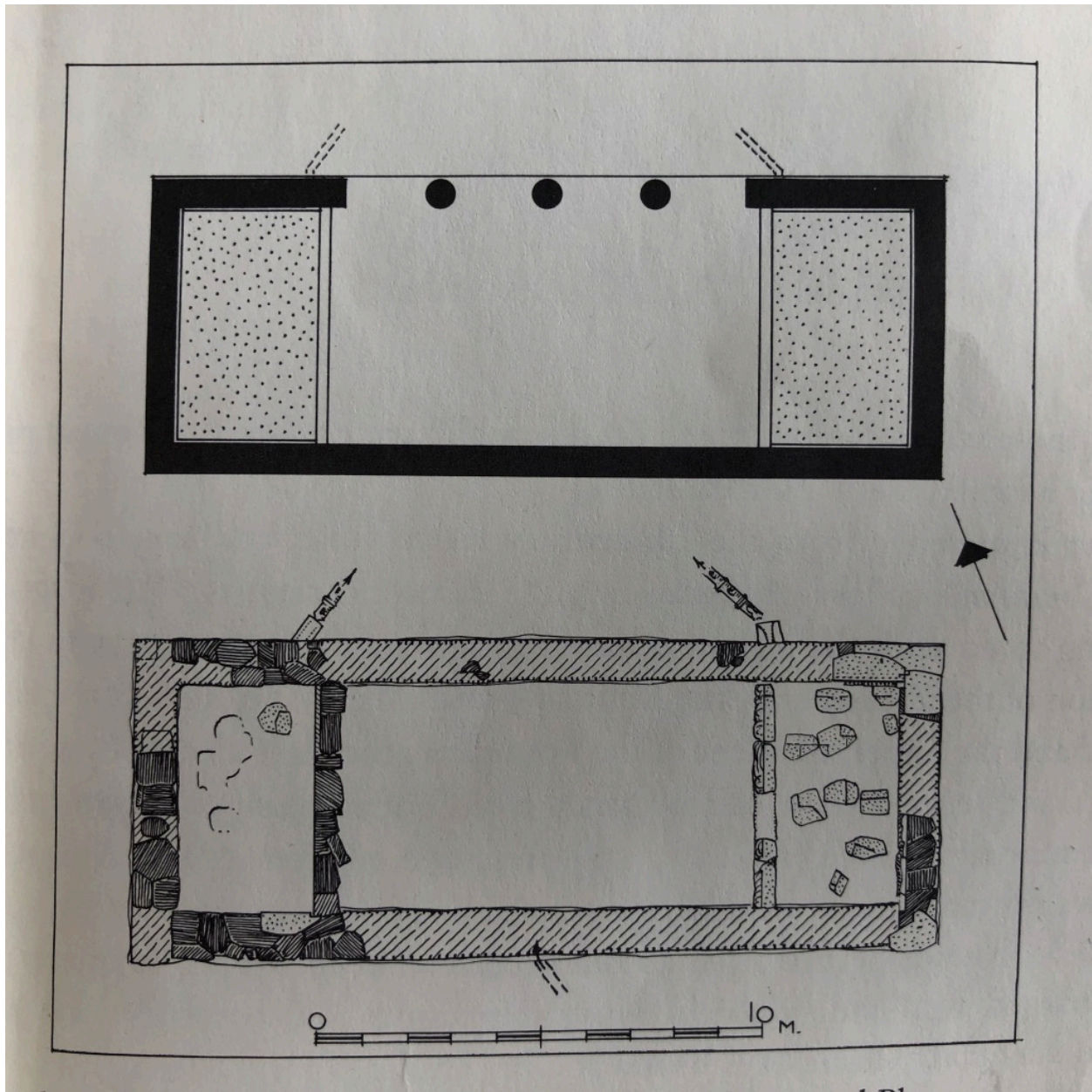


Figure 2.4. Archaeological Drawing and Plan of the Southeast Fountain House

Image Source: Lang, Mabel. *Waterworks in the Athenian Agora*. (Princeton, New Jersey: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1968), 2.



Figure 2.5. Neck-Amphora, Protoattic Orientalizing, c. 700-675 BCE, Attributed to the Mesogeia Painter

Image Source: Boardman, John. *Early Greek Vase Painting*. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1998), 101.



Figure 2.6. Black-Figure *Dinos*, Attic, c. 580 BCE, Signed by Sophilos

Image Source: The British Museum, London, Accessed October 31, 2019.

https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?partid=1&assetid=1237366001&objectid=399358



Figure 2.7. Black-Figure Dinos Fragment, Attic, c. 580-570 BCE, Signed by Sophilos

Image Source: National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Athens. Accessed October 31, 2019.

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/AWSS35953_35953_31683861;prevRouteTS=1572807208593



Figure 2.8. Black-Figure Volute Krater, “François Vase,” Attic, c. 575 BCE, Potted by Ergotimos and Painted by Kleitias

Image Source: Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Firenze, Florence, Accessed October 31, 2019.



Figure 2.9. Black-Figure *Kylix*, Attic, c. 570-565 BCE, Attributed to the C Painter

Image Source: Musée du Louvre, Paris. Accessed October 31, 2019.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ee/Polyxene Troilos Louvre CA6113.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ee/Polyxene_Troilos_Louvre_CA6113.jpg)
and [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/95/Akhilleus Louvre CA6113.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/95/Akhilleus_Louvre_CA6113.jpg)



Figure 2.10. Black-Figure *Amphora*, Etruscan, c. 540-530 BCE, Attributed to the Pontic Group

Image Source: Musée du Louvre, Paris. Accessed October 31, 2019.

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/72/Akhilleus_Troilos_Louvre_E703.jpg



Figure 2.11. Tomb of the Bulls, “Achilles ambushes Troilos,” Fresco, Etruscan, Tarquinia.

Image Source: In situ at Tarquinia. Accessed October 31, 2019.

https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/SCALA_ARCHIVES_1039779265;prevRouteTS=1572813235900



Figure 2.12. Black-Figure *Lekythos*, Attic, c. 530 BCE, Unattributed.

Image Source: Museum of Cycladic Art, Athens, Accessed October 31, 2019.

<https://cycladic.gr/en/exhibit/ng1104-melanomorfi-likithos?cat=archaia-elliniki-techni>



Figure 2.13. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, Attic, c. 520-510 BCE,

Image Source: Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Accessed October 31, 2019.

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/image?img=Perseus:image:1991.10.0094>



Figure 2.14. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, Attic, c. 520 BCE, Attributed to the Manner of the Antimenes Painter.

Image Source: The British Museum, London. Accessed October 31, 2019.

https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?assetId=87953001&objectId=398770&partId=1



Figure 2.15. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, Attic, c. 520-500 BCE, Unattributed.

Image Source: The British Museum, London. Accessed October 31, 2019.

https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=399929&partId=1&place=35026&object=22144&matcult=16099&view=list&page=2



Figure 2.16. Black-Figure Shoulder *Hydria*, Attic, c. 520-500 BCE, Attributed to the AD Painter

Image Source: The British Museum, London. Accessed October 31, 2019.

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collectionimages/AN00373/AN00373852_001_1.jpg



Figure 2.17. Red-Figure *Hydria Kalpis*, Attic, c. 490 BCE, Attributed to the Berlin Painter.

Image Source: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid, Accessed October 31, 2019.
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/83/Hidria_ática_con_mujeres_en_la_fuente._Pintor_de_Berl%C3%ADn_-_M.A.N.jpg



Figure 3.1. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, Attic, Attributed to the Priam Painter.

Image Source: Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Accessed November 15, 2019.
<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/153445>



Figure 3.2. Red-Figure Psykter, Attic, c. 510 BCE, Signed by Euphronios.

Image Source: State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Accessed November 20, 2019.
https://library.artstor.org/#/asset/ARTSTOR_103_41822000402907;prevRouteTS=15740233003
 67



Figure 3.3. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, Attic, c. 520 BCE, Attributed to the Priam Painter.

Image Source: Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Accessed November 20, 2019.
<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/153445>



Figure 3.4. Black-Figure *Escharis*, Attic, c. 530-520 BCE, Unattributed.

Image Source: Tiverios, Michalis. "Demeter," in *Worshipping Women: Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens*, edited by Nikolaos Kaltsas and Alan Shapiro (New York, N.Y: Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation in collaboration with the National Archaeological Museum, 2008), 146.



Figure 3.5. Black-Figure *Pinax*, Attic, c. 550 BCE, Unattributed.

Image Source: Shapiro, Alan. "Cult of Heroines in Ancient Athens," in *Worshipping Women: Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens*, edited by Nikolaos Kaltsas and Alan Shapiro (New York, N.Y: Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation in collaboration with the National Archaeological Museum, 2008), 169.



Figure 3.6. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, Attic, c. 510 BCE, Attributed to the Priam Painter.

Image Source: https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?assetId=967231001&objectId=398765&partId=1

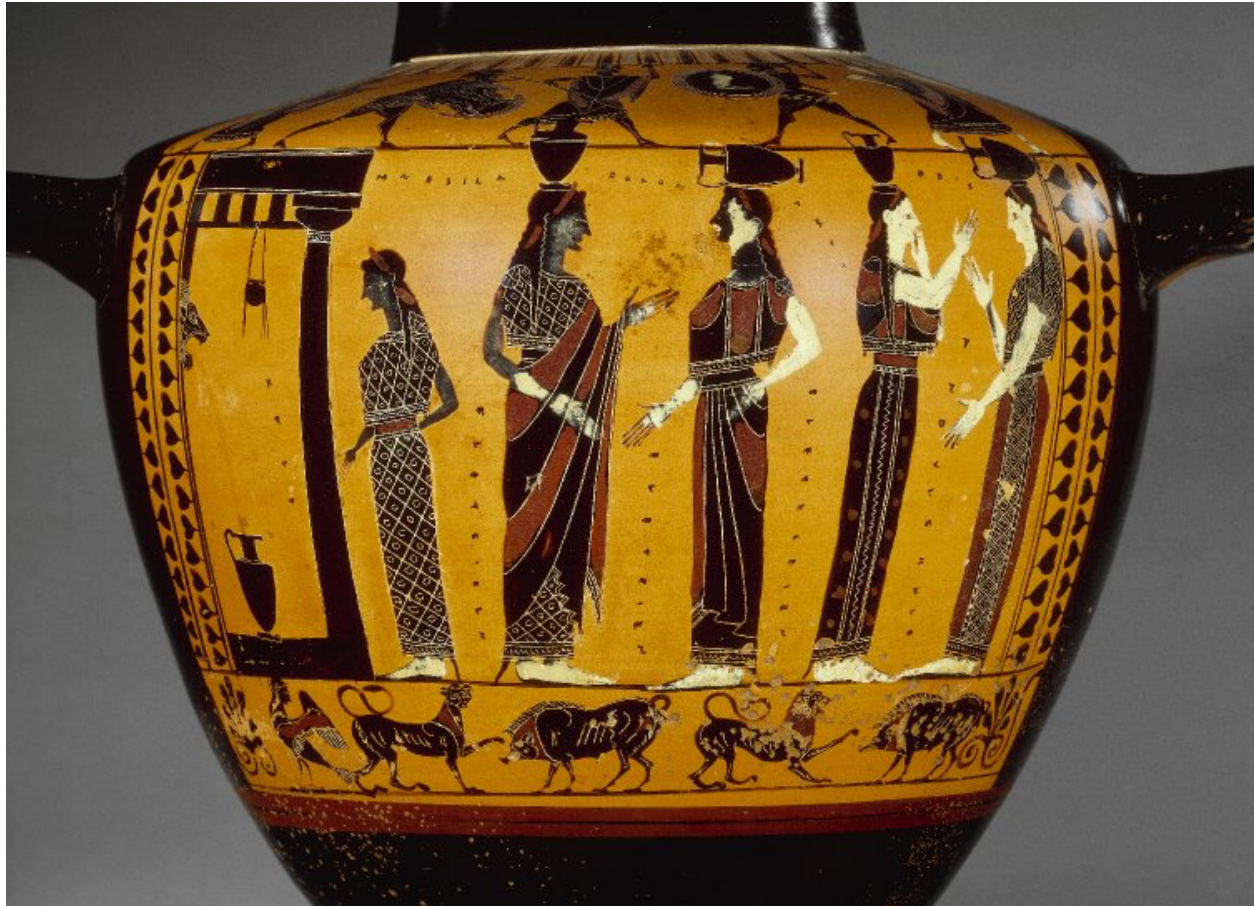


Figure 3.7. Black-Figure Shoulder Hydria, Attic, c. 520-500 BCE, Unattributed.

Image Source: https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery_.aspx?assetId=90865001&objectId=399938&partId=1



Figure 3.8. Black-Figure *Lekythos*, Attic, c. 550-530 BCE, Attributed to the Amasis Painter.

Image Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. Accessed December 5, 2019.
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/253348>

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