

Euphronios and Memnon?

Observations on a Red-figured Fragment

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IN 1946 JOHN D. BEAZLEY returned to America for the first time since the summer of 1914 to give the Arthur Gillender lectures in the Metropolitan Museum. Arriving in Halifax on August 16, he went straight to New York, his home base for the three months he stayed on the continent. His first visit had been more hurried: he had sailed on the *Cedric* on July 30, 1914, just a few days before the outbreak of World War I, and had to be back at Oxford by September. This time the pace was more leisurely, and he spent many weeks in New York, not only studying all the accessions made since 1914 by the Museum's Greek and Roman Department but also looking afresh at everything in the department. Beazley's prolonged stay led to many new attributions. Those relating to Attic red-figure were in due time typed up for his manuscript paralipomena, which he had begun shortly after his *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters* (published in 1942) had reached the stage when no more additions to the book could be accepted by the Clarendon Press. Copies of this manuscript in progress had been sent to New York regularly, and as the new information allowed us to keep abreast of Beazley's scholarship, these installments were eagerly awaited.

His manuscript paralipomena were continued for fifteen years, until April 1957, when Beazley began to work on the new edition of *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*. The three volumes of this edition were published six years later, and it has sometimes been assumed that they incorporated the material contained in all 2,655 pages of the paralipomena. This brief note, however, may serve to illustrate that the manuscript, like the sketch or *bozzetto* of an artist, often contains thoughts or tentative attributions with which

Beazley did not feel totally comfortable and which were therefore excluded from the printed book.

A fragment of a red-figured calyx krater in the Museum (Figure 1), acquired in 1911 from Paul Hartwig, who said it came from Taranto, has never been published; it was, however, included as "fragment of a red-figured vase" in the complete list of Museum accessions for the period September 20 to October 20, 1911, issued in the same year.¹ The cul of the vase shows remnants of a complex palmette and lotus configuration; what is left of the figure representation gives us the toes of a left foot, a nearly vertical staff or spear, the right foot of a draped figure striding to the right, and the feet of a fallen warrior. The shape of the fragment, the floral pattern, and what remains of the figures clearly mark it as an archaic work, close to 500 B.C. The drawing is excellent. Beazley included the fragment in an installment of his typed paralipomena received in March 1948 (p. 384): "Pp. 15–8 and 948, Euphronios: perhaps late work by him, the fragment of a calyx-krater in New York, 11.140.6, from Taranto (fight—gigantomachy?)."

This entry, which was not incorporated in the second edition of *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*, is a good illustration of Beazley's language. "Perhaps" is less strong than "probably," and the question mark after "gigantomachy" implies a doubt as to the exact nature of the fight; "late work" gives us a hint that if the

A list of abbreviations is given at the end of this article.

1. Acc. no. 11.140.6; preserved H. 3⁷/₁₆ in. (8.8 cm.). See "Complete List of Accessions: September 20 to October 20, 1911," *MMAB* 6 (1911) p. 221.

fragment were by Euphronios it would be late in his career, and as Beazley did not in his published lists of works by Euphronios distinguish early, middle, and late periods, the qualification "late" almost explains the "perhaps." It is as if he meant: "I cannot be sure that the fragment is by Euphronios, being later than the other works attributed to him and hence without a good parallel."

The most conspicuous feature on the small fragment is the left foot of the fallen warrior. Drawn in top view, it is rigidly extended and turned slightly outward. The contours of the lower leg, the ankles, and the foot are drawn in relief lines, as are the toes, the spatulate nails, the interstices of the toes, and short horizontal lines setting off the distal phalanges. Dilute glaze is employed for the greave (two thin vertical lines and two brushstrokes), the inner contour of the ankle bone on the inside, three lines on the instep, and three paired hooks at the end of the tendons. The other three feet are shown in profile: two of them, a left foot (lost save for the toes) and the fallen warrior's right foot, viewed from the inside; the third, a right foot seen from the outside. In the inside profiles the big toes are well articulated, each with the nail and the distal phalanx marked above by two short transverse lines and below by an interrupted curved line. The right foot of the fallen warrior has only a rather faint line in dilute glaze above the arch and no marking of the ankle; the right foot of the advancing draped figure, for the most part overlapped by the fallen warrior's left foot, reveals no dilute glaze.

When Beazley commented on the New York fragment early in 1948, only three feet in top view by Euphronios were known to him: those of the reclining kottabos player on a neck amphora in the Louvre,² and of the javelin thrower on the stamnos in Leipzig³ and his counterpart on the kalpis in Dresden.⁴ Not yet known were the discobolus on a neck amphora in the Louvre⁵ and Thoudemos of the Munich banquet,⁶ let alone Sarpedon of the New York calyx krater,⁷ to which we shall return. The foot of the Dresden acontist is not drawn straight on but slightly foreshortened, like the feet of the acontists by Phintias;⁸ the toes of the acontist on the stamnos in Leipzig are missing. The left foot of the symposiast in the Louvre is roughly drawn, in outline resembling a lozenge, without toenails, though with three tendons drawn in dilute glaze.

Of the three newcomers—the neck-amphora frag-

ments in the Louvre, the calyx krater in Munich, and the Sarpedon krater in New York—Beazley was to know the first two. The Munich banqueter's foot has lost its outer edge and four toes, though it preserves the tendon in dilute glaze above the big toe; the toes of the right foot of the Louvre discobolus are more separated than in the New York example, and the inner markings for ankles and tendons are drawn in relief line, but its toenails are quite similar to those of the foot in New York, even though its big toe is somewhat shorter. Lastly, Sarpedon's left foot on the New York krater (Figures 2, 3): less everted than the foot

1. Fragment of an Attic red-figured calyx krater, late 6th century B.C.: standing male holding a staff or spear; woman striding to the right; feet of a fallen warrior. H. 8.8 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 11.140.6



2. ARV², p. 15, no. 9.
3. ARV², p. 15, no. 8.
4. ARV², p. 16, no. 13.
5. ARV², p. 15, no. 10.
6. ARV², pp. 1619 and 1705, no. 3 bis.
7. Acc. no. 1972.11.10. D. von Bothmer, "Greek Vase Painting," *MMAB* 31:1 (1972) no. 15 (rev. ed., *Greek Vase Painting* [New York: MMA, 1987] no. 19); idem, "Der Euphronioskrater in New York," *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (1976) pp. 484–512; *Greek Vase*, pp. 63–80.
8. ARV², p. 23, no. 1, and p. 24, no. 11.



2. Detail of Figure 3: Leodamas standing by, Hypnos lifting Sarpedon's legs

3. Attic red-figured calyx krater signed by Euphronios as painter and Euxitheos as potter, ca. 515 B.C.: Hypnos and Thanatos with the body of Sarpedon. H. 45.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Joseph H. Durkee, Gift of Darius Ogden Mills, Gift of C. Ruxton Love, by exchange, 1972.11.10





4. Detail of an Attic red-figured cup signed by Pamphaios as potter and attributed to the Nikosthenes Painter, late 6th century B.C.: Sleep and Death lifting the body of a dead hero. London, British Museum E 12 (photo: British Museum)

on the fragment, it shares nonetheless with the latter the careful drawing of the spaces between the toes, of the nails, and of the short tendons above the toes. Of all the contemporary top views of feet, Sarpedon's is closest to that of the fallen warrior on the fragment. Once again we can only marvel at the prescience of Beazley, who in spite of more limited comparisons at hand grasped at once the Euphronian air conveyed by the fragment.

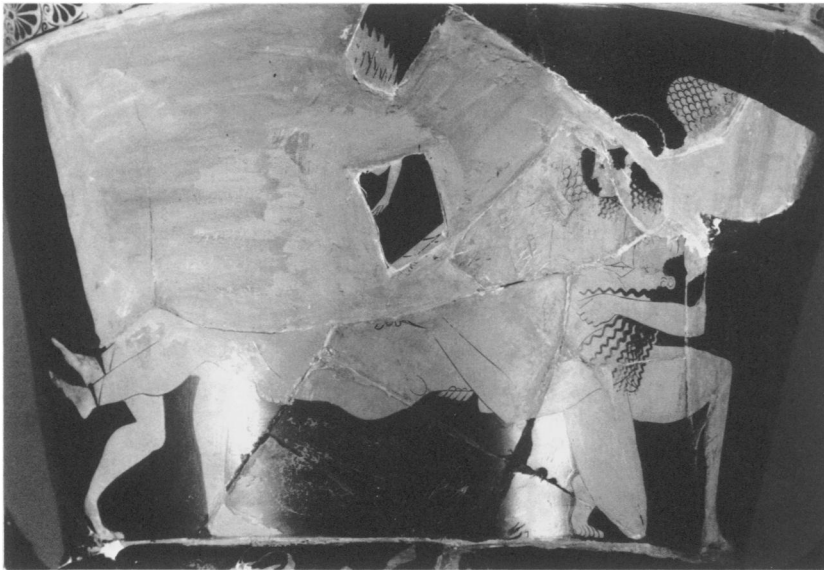
There remains the question of the precise subject: "fight—gigantomachy?" in Beazley's words. The grave of the fallen figure clearly marks him as a warrior, and the long dress of the figure striding to the right behind him may have prompted Beazley to think of Athena fighting a giant, but the figure on the extreme left is hardly in a fighting pose; with his spear or staff held upright, he is reminiscent of Leodamas on the Sarpedon krater. The fallen warrior must be dead, and the draped figure moving to the right may be Eos, the mother of Memnon, bending over his body. The hoplite on the left, in that case, may well be a Trojan on the analogy of the Sarpedon krater, with another Trojan to be thought of as standing guard on the right of the scene. In representations of the duel between Achilles and Memnon, the immortal mothers Thetis and Eos are often shown behind their heroic sons. Though the disposition of the feet of the fallen warrior is strikingly similar to that of Sarpedon's feet on the Euphronios krater, the dead hero can hardly be Sarpedon, whose

removal from the battlefield was not attended by a woman; on the other hand, Eos witnessing the death of her son was there in person, ready to take care of Memnon's body.

In this context the puzzling question of a famous cup in London has to be reopened.⁹ When the cup was first published by Samuel Birch in 1841,¹⁰ the subject of the obverse of the exterior was identified as the removal of Memnon's body from the battlefield (Figure 4). Two winged hoplites lift the naked body, while a woman rushes up on either side. The woman on the left holds a caduceus and hence should be Iris; the one on the right, without attributes, should be Eos. This interpretation receives partial support from the scene on the reverse, seven arming Amazons, since in the epic *Aithiopsis* by Arktinos the battle of Achilles and Memnon followed the victory of Achilles over Penthesilea and her army of Amazons. Birch called the winged hoplites who lift the body Boreas and Zephyros, Memnon's half-brothers. Carl Robert, however, saw in them Hypnos and Thanatos, identified the dead warrior as Sarpedon, and changed the scene from the Trojan battlefield to Sarpedon's return to Lycia, assuming the woman on the right to be either Sarpedon's wife or

9. ARV², p. 126, no. 24.

10. "Explanation of the Myth upon a Fictile Vase Found at Canino, now in the British Museum," *Archaeologia* 29 (1841) pp. 139–144, pl. xvi.



5. Obverse of an Attic red-figured calyx krater attributed to the Eucharides Painter, ca. 490 B.C.: Sleep and Death with the body of Sarpedon; a winged *eidolon* flying downward. Paris, Musée du Louvre G 163 (photo: H. Giroux)

his mother.¹¹ Beazley, in 1918, followed Robert in calling the winged hoplites Hypnos and Thanatos, but he retained Birch's Memnon, naming the painter of the cup "The Painter of the London Sleep and Death,"¹² as did Buschor some years later in publishing Reichhold's drawing.¹³ By 1925 Beazley had detached the London cup from the other works that he had given his painter of the London Sleep and Death, named the artist the Nikosthenes Painter, and appended the London cup, the former name piece, as "related." With his habitual caution he explained: "Diese Vasen habe ich früher um die schöne Londoner Schale mit Schlaf und Tod gruppiert. Jetzt scheint es mir vorsichtiger einen anderen Mittelpunkt zu wählen und die Londoner Schale vorläufig an die Peripherie zu stellen."¹⁴ For the subject, however, he kept his old heading, a compromise between Birch and Robert: "Hypnos and Thanatos mit der Leiche Memnons." By 1942 Beazley had come to accept Robert's interpretation of the cup in full, and the entry then read "Hypnos and Thanatos with the body of Sarpedon," though he still kept the cup somewhat apart, saying that it "might also be by the Nikosthenes Painter, unusually good work of his prime."¹⁵ This statement was further elaborated in 1963: "I think that this splendid cup cannot be denied to the Nikosthenes Painter, in spite of its being on an altogether different level from even the better pieces in the list of his works. The artist would for once be doing his very best; perhaps copying work by another, although to affirm this would not be fair.

For the interior, his inspiration, or his model, failed him."¹⁶

The appearance of the Sarpedon krater in New York, with two armed winged creatures clearly labeled Hypnos and Thanatos lifting the body of a dead warrior identified by the inscription as Sarpedon, gave unexpected confirmation to Carl Robert's interpretation of the London cup. At the same time it reinforced Beazley's suspicion that the Nikosthenes painter was inspired by the work of a greater artist.

Another famous vase, a calyx krater by the Eucharides Painter in the Louvre,¹⁷ had undergone a similar change of interpretation. On the obverse (Figure 5) two winged youths, one of whom is inscribed "Hypnos," lift or deposit a fallen warrior

11. "Thanatos," Berlin *Winckelmannsprogramm* 39 (1879) pp. 9ff.

12. J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-figured Vases in American Museums* (Cambridge, Mass., 1918) p. 25.

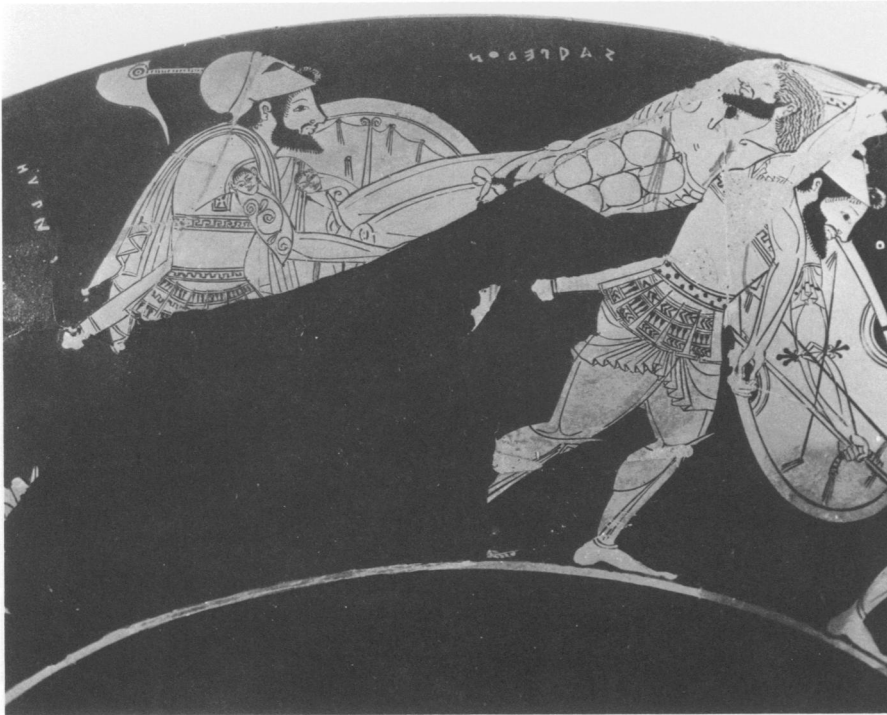
13. A. Furtwängler and K. Reichhold, *Griechische Vasenmalerei III* (Munich, 1925) p. 244.

14. *Attische Vasenmaler des rotfigurigen Stils* (Tübingen, 1924) p. 43 (Beazley's second book was written in German and published in Germany).

15. *ARV*, p. 101.

16. *ARV*², p. 126, no. 24.

17. *ARV*², p. 227, no. 12. Compare Sarpedon's red ankle-protectors with the ones on a fragmentary amphora by the Eucharides Painter in Malibu (J. Paul Getty Museum 85 AE 499). In shape they resemble spats and probably represent ankle-protectors made of leather, differing from the strips of cloth discussed most recently by A. Greifenhagen (*Neue Fragmente des Kleophradesmalers* [Heidelberg, 1972] p. 20, n. 37).



6. Detail of an Attic red-figured cup signed by Euphronios as painter, ca. 520 B.C.: Sleep and Death with the body of Sarpedon. Dallas, Nelson Bunker Hunt Collection (photo: courtesy J. Paul Getty Museum)

whom Beazley, like others before him, first took to be Memnon; he changed his mind sometime before 1942, when he followed Robert in calling the warrior Sarpedon. Robert had argued for this identification on the grounds that only the transport of Sarpedon's body by Sleep and Death was attested in ancient Greek literature. It always puzzled me that the painter had gone to the trouble of naming Hypnos on this krater and yet appeared to have neglected to label the dead hero. Cleaning of the vase (which is quite fragmentary and had been hideously restored) brought to light the missing inscription below the body of the fallen hero: in the summer of 1979 the faint letters were made out by me in a good raking light, and I was not overly surprised that they read "Sarpedon" rather than "Memnon."¹⁸

The genealogy of the iconography has hitherto seemed to be reasonably clear. The young Euphronios painted a cup, now in the Nelson Bunker Hunt collection in Dallas,¹⁹ on which wingless hoplites inscribed "Hypnos" and "Thanatos" carry a dead bearded warrior (Sarpedon, as we learn from the inscription); the warrior is naked, save for his greaves, and still bleeding from two wounds (Figure 6). A few years later, on the krater now in New York, Euphro-

nios created his masterly scene of the body of a beardless Sarpedon lifted by Hypnos and Thanatos. Moved by this work to paint a similar scene on the cup now in London, the Nikosthenes Painter suppressed the wounds and omitted the greaves, but he kept the hero's beard as on the Euphronios cup; at the same time he transformed the bearded Hypnos and Thanatos of Euphronios into young winged hoplites and substituted two women, Iris and the wife or mother of Sarpedon, for the flanking Trojan soldiers of the calyx krater. Lastly, on the calyx krater in the Louvre, the Eucharides Painter kept the youthful appearance of Sarpedon and Hypnos (the face of Thanatos is lost), omitted their armor, and added the winged *eidolon*, likewise unarmed. Instead of greaves as on the Euphronios cup and krater, Sarpedon now only wears ankle guards, and both his legs and feet are in strict profile. The Nikosthenes Painter, on the other hand, kept the top view of one

18. *Greek Vase*, p. 80, fig. 74.

19. *Wealth of the Ancient World: The Nelson Bunker Hunt and William Herbert Hunt Collections*, exh. cat. (Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum, 1983) pp. 54–57.

of Sarpedon's feet with a careful, almost Euphronian drawing of the spaces between the toes and the ends of the tendons.

The fragment of a calyx krater in New York disturbs this straight line of logical iconographic succession, for we must now bear in mind the existence of another scene by Euphronios, similar in overall composition to that on his Sarpedon krater, yet depicting not Sarpedon but Memnon. Those who copied Euphronios or were inspired by him, like the Nikosthenes Painter at his best, drew on more than one model, combining or even conflating two different subjects. Such an artist may well have thought that he was painting the removal or deposition of Memnon's body, being unsure whether it had been carried away by Sleep and Death, like Sarpedon's, or by Eos. As the Nikosthenes Painter did not add names to his figures, perhaps we shall never know the extent of his

conflation, though with luck one day more of the calyx-krater fragment in New York will be found or located, either confirming this tentative interpretation or supplying us with a better one.²⁰

ABBREVIATIONS

ABL—C. H. E. Haspels, *Attic Black-figured Lekythoi* (Paris, 1936)

ARV—J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters* (Oxford, 1942)

*ARV*²—J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1963)

Greek Vase—D. von Bothmer, "The Death of Sarpedon," in *The Greek Vase*, ed. Stephen L. Hyatt (Latham, N.Y., 1981)

7. Detail of an Attic lekythos in Six's technique attributed to the Diosphos Painter, ca. 490 B.C.: Eos in flight with the body of Memnon. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund, 24.97.29



20. A skyphos of Corinthian type in the Louvre (G 66; *ARV*², p. 126, no. 25) attributed to the Nikosthenes Painter gives us another instance of Euphronian influence on him. The chief figures on the skyphos, Athena and Herakles, owe much to the Kyknos krater by Euphronios in the N. B. Hunt collection (*Wealth of the Ancient World*, cover, pp. 58–61), while the fallen opponent of Herakles betrays in the disposition of his legs an unmistakable dependence on conventions established by Euphronios for Sarpedon and Memnon on his krater and krater fragment in New York. This convention remains alive as late as the Eos and Memnon cup in the Louvre attributed to Douris (G 115; *ARV*², p. 434, no. 74) and can also be detected on the Pythoclean glaux in Berlin (2318; *ARV*², p. 36) with the same subject, save that the painter of the Berlin vase has not bothered or attempted to draw the left foot of Memnon in top view, but shows it in profile.

I have not seen the lost lekythos with "Eos lifting the body of Memnon from the battlefield" reported by C. H. E. Haspels and attributed by her to the Sappho Painter (*ABL*, p. 226, no. 21). For black-figured vases with Eos carrying the dead Memnon from the battlefield see: the unattributed neck amphora Louvre CA 4201 (ex Lord Elgin), now on loan in Béziers (*Greek Vase*, pp. 76 and 157 n. 19, fig. 80); the small neck amphora by the Diosphos Painter in New York (*Greek Vase*, pp. 74–75, p. 157 n. 16, fig. 79); and the Diosphos Painter's four lekythoi in Six's technique (*ABL*, p. 236, nos. 80, 85, 86, and 92), of which the one in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (*ABL*, no. 92) is here illustrated (Figure 7). I have not seen the black-figured lekythos, whereabouts unknown, attributed by Miss Haspels from a photograph in the Palermo Museum to the Sappho Painter (*ABL*, p. 226, no. 21), or the much broken lekythos in Nauplia attributed by her to the Emporion Painter (*ABL*, p. 265, no. 41). All of the above are to be added to F. Brommer, *Vasenlisten zur griechischen Heldensage*, 3rd ed. (Marburg, 1973) p. 402, section A.