

# An Unpublished Fragment of Kleitias

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THE FRANÇOIS VASE, the famous volute-crater painted by Kleitias and potted by Ergotimos, is the masterpiece of the preserved Attic black-figure vases of the middle of the sixth century B.C.<sup>1</sup> Of the sixteen pieces definitely attributed to or signed by Kleitias in Beazley's *Attic Black-figure Vase-painters*, all but two have been published.<sup>2</sup> Of these two unpublished pieces, one (no. 11) consists of two fragments in the Agora Museum in Athens, number P 16325; the other (no. 16) is a fragmentary gorgoneion in the Louvre, numbered C 10246 and probably once part of a Gordion cup.

On a recent visit to the Louvre, I noticed a black-figure gorgoneion on a sherd, numbered only C 167b (PLATE 1 figure 1). The sherd is from a small, delicately turned cup and the gorgoneion which formed the interior decoration is surrounded by a border of black and red tongues between dot-bands and concentric circles.

The proportions, interpositions, and details of the drawing of the eyes, eyebrows, ears, nose, teeth, beard, and hair are similar to those of the gorgoneion on the standlet in the Metropolitan signed by Kleitias,<sup>3</sup> although, of course, the gorgoneion in New York is more elaborately and carefully painted.<sup>4</sup> On the New York fragment, for instance, two curlicues appear on the forehead instead of two simple dots<sup>5</sup> and the hairs of the beard are wigglier (PLATE 1 figure 2). The locks of hair on the Louvre fragment are alternately red and black, as are those of the gorgoneion on Hektor's shield in the Troilos scene on the François vase<sup>6</sup> but unlike those on the standlet, all of which are black. Moreover, the dot-bands, concentric circles, and the black and

<sup>1</sup> Sir John D. Beazley, *The Development of Attic Black-figure* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1951) 25–37. For publications on Kleitias see Antonio Minto, *Il Vaso François* (Florence 1960) 8–10.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John D. Beazley, *Attic Black-figure Vase-Painters* (Oxford 1956) 76–78.

<sup>3</sup> Beazley (above n.1) pl. 11.3

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem* 36.

<sup>5</sup> The two dots are conferable to the two small incised circles on the foreheads of the gorgoneia on the handles of the François vase; see Adolf Furtwängler and Karl Reichhold, *Griechische Vasenmalerei* (Munich 1904–32) plates 1 and 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem* pl. 12.

red tongues of the Louvre sherd are almost identical with the similarly placed borders on the two fragmentary, small, neatly turned Gordion cups<sup>7</sup> in the British Museum signed by Kleitias as painter and Ergotimos as potter.<sup>8</sup> Clearly this Louvre fragment, C 167b, was painted by Kleitias.

On one of the London cups, a small area of black near the concentric circles which surround the interior decoration<sup>9</sup> may have been the lock of hair of a gorgoneion. A palmette in the interior of the other precludes any such animal.<sup>10</sup> But whether or not a gorgoneion decorated the interior of one of these vases, they were both originally small Gordion cups, neatly turned and fired by Ergotimos.<sup>11</sup> Although not enough of the Louvre fragment is preserved to show conclusively that it was once part of a Gordion cup, the coincidence of a small well-turned cup, the painting of Kleitias, and the close parallels to the London cups suggest that the Louvre sherd once formed part of a Gordion cup potted by Ergotimos.

A fragment from a cup, probably Gordion in shape and with an interior gorgoneion painted by Kleitias, fitted so nicely the description of the sherd, Louvre C 10246, which Beazley attributed to Kleitias, that I wrote to the Louvre for a photograph of C 10246. The Louvre authorities confirmed my suspicion by answering "il semble bien que le Campana 10246 soit précisément, nouvellement numéroté par erreur, ce Campana 167b". In other words, the numbers, C 10246 and C 167b,<sup>12</sup> both refer to the same piece, Beazley's number 16. The gorgoneion (figure 1) is then an average day to day work of the painter of the François vase, Kleitias.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Martin Robertson, "Gordion Cups from Naucratis," *JHS* 71 (1951) 143-144.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem* 145, fig. 1 nos. 1 and 2.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem* 145, fig. 1 no. 1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem* 145, fig. 1 no. 2.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem* 143-144.

<sup>12</sup> There is no number 167a in the inventory of the Louvre.

<sup>13</sup> This article could not have been written without the kind help of Pierre Devambez of the Musée du Louvre, for he not only sent the photograph of C 167b but answered my inquiries with promptness, fullness and courtesy. Dr Dietrich von Bothmer kindly gave permission to publish Kleitias' gorgoneion in the Metropolitan.



Figure 1. GORGONEION BY KLEITIAS  
(Louvre C 167b)



Figure 2. GORGONEION SIGNED BY KLEITIAS  
(The Metropolitan Museum of Art 31.11.4, Fletcher Fund 1931)