



ELECTRYONE
ΗΛΕΚΤΡΥΩΝΗ



**Però, Anna. *La statua di Atena. Agalmatofilia nel
«Cronaca» di Lindos [Il Filarete, 278], Milano,
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Posted in the Classical Philology section of the series “Il Filarete”, published by the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Milan, by the University Press LED, the monograph by Anna Però, is the result of re-elaboration of her Ph.d thesis on the theme of ‘falling in love with the statue (*agalmatophilia*) of Athena at Lindos’.

In her Introduction devoted to the chronological classification and textual analysis of the so-called *Chronicle of Lindos* discovered by the Danish archaeological mission in 1904 and first published by Christian Blinkenberg¹, the Author (A.) examines the famous epigraph that in reality should be defined, as Felix Jacoby himself suggested, as *anagraphé*. In it, in fact, are not even mentioned all the donations. Because the Lindians are driven by a clearly propagandistic intent, the compilation of the the document was entrusted to two local scholars, one of whom

¹ Blinkenberg (1941).

identification we are certain of: Timachidas from Lindos, the son of Hagesitimos, philologist author of a miscellaneous work (*Deipna*) where he comments theatric plays and linguistic *glosses*.

The Lindian Chronicle has two of the characteristics of a historical work: the desire to preserve the memory of the past and the citation of documents in support of the validity of its reconstruction.

It is itself an *Anathema* and it means to reaffirm the ancient and venerable lindian shrine, not only in rhodian but also in Panhellenic environs. The Chronicle is also a document for internal use, not for travelers (as Shaya and Higbie believe)² but the *manifesto* of nostalgia as the ability to use those past glories at the service of the present.

Of the three *epiphaniai* mentioned in the text, the first one, taking place during the Persian siege to the island probably in the early 5th century BC, shows how the protection of the Goddess had rescued from the barbarian yoke and how there could be a peaceful coexistence between Greeks and Barbarians, not necessarily a clash. Indeed, the very power of the lindian shrine is so assumed to be greater than the Athenian because without being destroyed, it was able to stop the Persian armed forces.

The list of gifts begins with Lindos, the eponymous hero, ignoring Kerkaphos and Helios (because they are linked to the ialysian environment), relegates the oecist Tlepolemos in 6th place obviously after Herakles, his father (5th). This choice can be attributed to the compiler's will to consolidate the lindian identity which was created by the encounter-clash with Kameiros and Ialysos at first and with Rhodes afterwards. In the first of the five chapters of which this this monograph is constituted, the A. analyzes the second epiphany of the goddess (D2), the text of which is incomplete and can be reconstructed according to the scheme of the story, preserved intact with regard to the first epiphany³. The motivating cause of the second divine apparition was the mysterious suicide of a man, who hanged himself in the temple of the goddess, in the third quarter of the 4th century BC.

² Higbie (2003)242-243, 287, 290; Shaya (2005) 434-435.

³ Although there have existed other collections of epiphanies in antiquity, the Chronicle of Lindos is the only example of a collection that associates them with the *anathemata*.

In the second chapter, on the basis of the few extant ancient sources, the A. claims that the appearance of the primitive wooden statue of Athena Lindia, gift of the exile Danaos, founder of the sanctuary, was similar to that of the contemporary Hera in Samos, but "smooth", ie, it lacks the traits outlined by chisel and chisel, although partially worked. The thesis of Blinkenberg, according to which the lindian cult statue offered by the tyrant Cleobulus had been the prototype and model for the abundant Siceliot coroplastic production, appears today disproved by recent studies that attribute authorship to the rich acragantine workshops instead⁴. The fate of the cult statue was fulfilled in the new capital of the Roman Empire, where it was transferred as a work of art, destined to embellish a public place or a rich private residence. The Byzantine chronicles do mention at least three statues of Athena from Lindos and exhibited in Constantinople but if the first (A) was certainly an *anathema*, the second one (B) and the third one (C) may be, although different, the cult statue dedicated to the goddess in the temple of the Hellenistic age, whose iconography was attempted to be restored by Blinkenberg on the basis of a few votive terracottas of the 3rd century BC, found in the votive deposit on the acropolis⁵. The second statue, probably made of marble, is dated between 392 (fire of the sanctuary) and approximately 350 (completion of the second temple) and, following the phidian model, should be separate and almost unarmed, but adorned with a golden tiara and necklaces. The suicidal, who remains anonymous to us, would have hanged himself on the wooden beam that held up the statue from behind on the wall of the cell.

In the eyes of the civic community, as evidenced by the strict analysis in the third chapter, the suicide is a dishonored (*atimos*) and cowardly (*anandros*) man that arouses condemnation and contempt (hence the anonymity). Involved in an illicit affair, perhaps of erotic nature, driven by the unsuccessful outcome, he choses to end his days by hanging himself and becoming, in the end, wicked (*hybristes*), undermining the *polis* with his gesture.

The A. believes that suicide would be the tragic consequence of the only non-literary case of *Agalmatophilia*, as Blinkenberg himself had guessed at his time⁶, a

⁴ Albertocchi (2004).

⁵ Blinkenberg (1917).

⁶ Blinkenberg (1941) c. 186.

phenomenon the origin of which is due to Pandora in Hesiod's *Theogony*⁷ and goes up to Pygmalion sung by Ovid in his *Metamorphosis*⁸. The assumption that the brief reference to suicide in the Chronicle of Lindos can hide a similar case would hence be confirmed not only by the mythical and iconographic elements, but also by the doubtless structural and stylistic similarities of the step (D2, rr. 1-5).

The answer of the goddess Athena to the priests, finally, clearly indicates that as she alone has managed to preserve her sanctity (being a *parthenos*), all the same she will continue to protect Lindos of which she is the goddess "*Polias*". To overcome the crisis it is the goddess herself who provides the solution: once the corpse is removed, the Lindians have to remove the roof of the temple to allow for the purification of the *agalma* by the rain, sent by Zeus for the next three days. After the decontamination of the entire sanctuary, «according to traditional methods» (aspersion and fumigation), there will finally be celebrated the sacrifices of thanksgiving to the Father of the Gods, «according to ancestral customs»⁹.

The rain as a means of purification, in itself unique in the rich heritage of Greek ritual, would confirm the inviolability of the Goddess, immune from any offense or *hybris* inflicted on her *agalma*. The distance between the divine and the human world remains unbridgeable and then only in Lindos, thanks to the testimony of the Chronicle, it is stated that it was, in a few and brief moments, annulled through the will of the Everlasting who thus showed their love for the rhodian *polis*.

⁷ Hesiodus, *Theog.*, 570-590.

⁸ Ovidius, *Met.*, X, 243-297.

⁹ The gap next to the name of Zeus, unfortunately, does not allow the exact identification of its epiclesis and, therefore, the A. proposes two hypotheses. The first candidate might be Zeus *Meilichios*, often in connection with the world Greek cathartic rituals that Chirassi (1968, pp. 58-59) identified with Zeus *Sykasios* (*of figs*) and a gloss of Eustathius (*Od.*, 1572.58) also defines *Katharsios*. The A. is inclined instead to *Atabyrios*, worshipped not only at Kameiros since the 7th century BC but even in the capital and in the rhodian (in truth Rhodian-Cretan) sub-colony of Akragas in Sicily, according to the famous passage of Polybius (IX, 27.7-8), also based on the mention of the golden rain sent by Zeus on the island of Rhodes on the occasion of the birth of Athena, as accounted in the poems of Pindar (VII, 34-38 and 49-50). On the troubled step of Polybius, see at least Adornato (2011) 31-37. Elaboration of the myth in the Olympic VII of Pindar, see Konstantinopoulos (1993) and (1997) and for last Gentile (2013). About the worship of Zeus *Atabyrios* at Akragas, see Scirpo (2013). The cult of Zeus *Sykasios* (who was also present at Kameiros in the 6th century BC, as evidenced by the type of coins and for whom I personally believe that should be the recipient of the lindian sacrifices), see Scirpo *in press*.

In a more than decent editorial format, although a bit poor in illustrations, reduced to the bare minimum, however, the monograph stands out as an important focus on the chosen theme, full of interesting ideas and clarifications, often implied elsewhere, which administer justice to the neglected topic of the debate in the Hellenistic period on the nature of the gods and their relationship (even physical) with humans. Thanks also to the correct use of the ancient sources (whose translation is mostly by the A.), as well accompanied by a fairly updated bibliography and a useful index of names, the booklet, lacking an abstract in any foreign language, it is considered an indispensable approach of the great and still somewhat mysterious "Lady of Lindos".

SUMMARY

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