



Rhodes, Sunny Side Up

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RHODES, SUNNY SIDE UP

Jiri Frel publishes an interesting little inscription in AAA 8 (1975) 77-8 (see also BCH 100 (1976) 723). Cut on the top of the lip of a bronze kalpis, it is read by Frel ἄθλον ἐγ' Ῥόδο<ι> παραλί(ι)ο. A simple error in this transcription has no doubt been generally noted: the end must surely read παρ' Ἀλίο and then the whole taken as ἄθλον ἐγ' Ῥόδο παρ' Ἀλίο; this obviates the corrections demanded by Frel's interpretation.



Inscriptions on other bronze vases awarded as prizes in the fifth century B.C. have parallel syntax; they are listed by Amandry, BCH 95 (1971) 615ff. On four we find παρά used as on the Rhodian vase for the deity or hero concerned, while ἐκ governs the topographic source on perhaps four also.¹⁾ ἐγ for ἐκ causes no concern (while ἐγ for ἐν does). Genitive in -ο is regular on Rhodes in the fifth century, and the lack of aspirate in Ἀλίο is scarcely unexpected; Rhodian aspiration is irregular (Bechtel 618-9) and the date may allow for Ionic influence moving south. A cursory check reveals no Rhodian inscription in which Ἀλίο and derivatives can be shown to be aspirated.²⁾

Neither vase nor inscription can be closely dated. Frel is content with 'second half of the fifth century' for the vase, while the lettering gives little away; the alphas seem to belong earlier rather than later in this period.³⁾ The precise form of theta cannot be judged from the transcript; as it stands, one would again have thought of an earlier date. Nonetheless, we can scarcely allow ourselves visions of this being one of the prizes won by Diagoras before he embarked on his athletic career celebrated by Pindar in Ol. vii, which is other-

1) Add the -θεν suffixes and also the Thespian prize kalpis, Vokotopoulou, BCH 99 (1975) 751-4, where the use of ἐκ for ἐξ, as normal in Boeotia, is not stressed.

2) There is probably no aspirate in the god's name on the probably Rhodian graffito found at Tell Sukas, Riis, Sūkās I 85 and fig. 26e.

3) The Thespian vase noted above seems close enough to ours and has a form of epsilon used at Thespiai in the polyandron inscription of 424/3, Jeffery, Local Scripts 95, 19a. Most of the inscribed prize vases seem earlier.

wise our earliest secure evidence for the cult of Helios on Rhodes; see RE VIII 66-7 and Jacoby FGH IIIb 334 (Istros) 49. In RE it is suggested that his cult was centred on the site of the later city before 408, while Ialysos is preferred by Morelli, I culti in Rodi 96. It is at best unfortunate that the kalpis was not found or received by the proper authorities since it would obviously have been of great interest to know where it was buried.

London

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