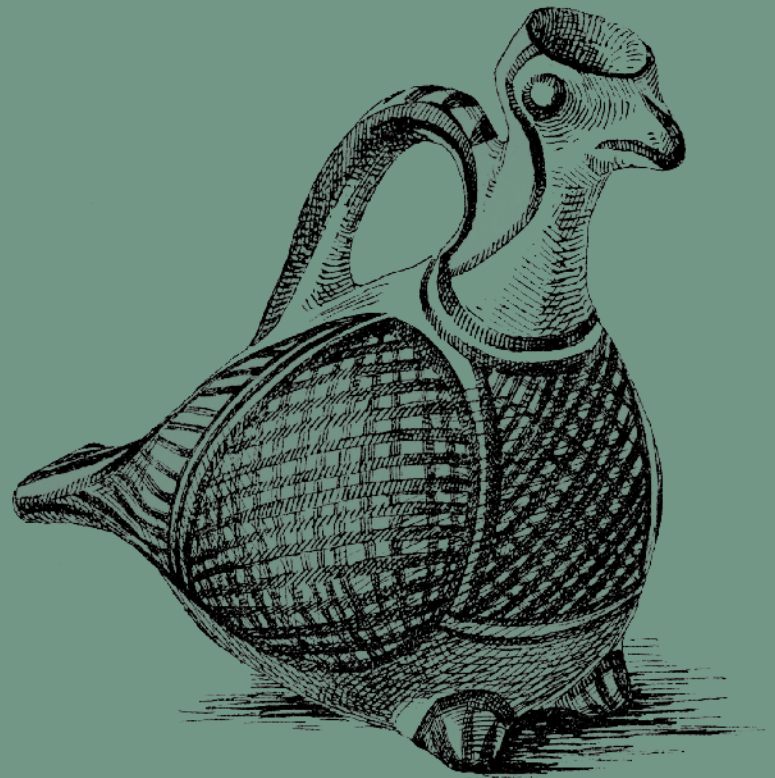


Helvig Kinch: A Danish Painter and Member of the Danish Expedition to Rhodes

BY BODIL BUNDGAARD RASMUSSEN



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The painter Helvig Kinch (1872-1956), born Amsinck, was a member of the Danish Expedition to Rhodes between 1902 and 1914 (Fig. 1).¹ Her task was to draw the objects found in the excavations, but at the same time she recorded the archaeological sites and the surrounding landscape in paintings. In 1903 she married Karl Frederik Kinch, one of the directors of the expedition. Her paintings and her drawings of the many finds were an important contribution to the expedition, and the meticulous and beautiful drawings play a major role in the publications.² Helvig Kinch was also, however, a painter in her own right, and she was a very active voice in the Danish art community for the recognition of women artists.

EDUCATION AND EARLY CAREER

Being born into the upper bourgeoisie, Helvig Amsinck's wish to pursue her interest in painting presented no problem. From 1888 to 1890 she studied at the Drawing and Fine Arts School for Women in Copenhagen. The school had been established in 1876 in order to further the education of women in the arts.³ At the time women were not admitted to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. Several women artists campaigned fervently for the acceptance of women at the Royal Academy, and in the autumn of 1888 they obtained political support; the Art School for Women was established at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts.⁴ Helvig Amsinck was accepted into this school in 1891 and graduated in 1894.⁵ By 1896, she had a painting accepted at the Charlottenborg Spring Exhibition.⁶ In the 1890s she was awarded several prizes from the Royal Academy, which perhaps helped her travel to several cities in Europe.⁷ Her favourite motifs were landscapes and animals, especially horses, hens and chickens (Figs. 2-3). Her special interest in painting horses in movement was perhaps inspired by her upbringing close to the Royal Stables in the centre of Copenhagen. In addition to pursuing an education as a painter, Helvig Amsinck had an interest in ancient art and from the age of 18 attended the lectures on Ancient



Fig. 1. Helvig Amsinck. No year. Photograph. Archives of the National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

Greek art given by Professor Julius Lange.⁸ In 1902 she was invited to join the Carlsberg Foundation's archaeological expedition to Rhodes as a guest.⁹ Her decision to join the expedition would become a defining factor in her life.

TRAVELLING TO RHODES

On a day in late September 1902, a group of people met at the Central Station in Copenhagen. Years of preparation had finally made it possible to send a Danish archaeological expedition to Rhodes to initiate archaeological fieldwork at Lindos, on the east coast of the island.¹⁰ The group consisted of members of the expedition, their families and members of the Carlsberg Foundation, which supported the expedition financially. The small team comprised two archaeologists,¹¹ an architect,¹² a surveyor¹³ and the painter Helvig Agnete Amsinck (Fig. 4).¹⁴ She kept a diary from the first day of their journey to Rhodes.¹⁵

1 Born 10 December 1872 into the upper bourgeoisie in Copenhagen as the daughter of Titular Councillor Conrad Amsinck and his wife Caroline Amalie.

2 Kinch 1914; Blinkenberg 1931; Johansen 1958.

3 In 1880-1881 a building designed by the architect Vilhelm Klein was erected in central Copenhagen to house the school. It still stands, displaying the name of the school, on H. C. Andersen's Boulevard, close to the City Hall in Copenhagen.

4 Most prominent in this movement were the painters Johanne Krebs (1848-1924) and Augusta Dohlmann (1847-1914). Johanne Krebs was a student at the Drawing and Fine Arts School 1880-1881 and head of the Arts School for Women at the Royal Academy 1888-1908. Augusta Dohlmann was mainly educated in Paris, where she studied at the Académie Julien.

5 The teacher at the school was the painter Viggo Johansen (1851-1935), appointed at the request of the women campaigning for the



Fig. 2. *Bright Nights*. Helvig Amsinck 1897. Oil on canvas, 74 x 94 cm. Photo courtesy: Randers Art Museum.



Fig. 3. *Cockerel and Hen*. Helvig Kinch. No year. Acquired 1923. Photo courtesy: Randers Art Museum.



Fig. 4. Helvig Amsinck's travel pass. State Archives, Copenhagen.

- establishment of the school at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. He left this position in 1906 when he was appointed professor at the Royal Academy.
- 6 The Charlottenborg Spring Exhibition, founded in 1857, is housed at the Royal Academy at Charlottenborg Palace and functions as the official gallery of the Academy. The exhibition is an open juried exhibition and is to this day one of the most important open submission exhibitions in Northern Europe.
 - 7 Especially in England and Germany.
 - 8 Julius Lange (1838-1896). Professor of art history at the University of Copenhagen.
 - 9 Probably at the recommendation of her teacher Viggo Johansen.
 - 10 For a short description of how this enterprise came about see Dietz & Trolle 1986, 9-11.

- 11 The archaeologist/philologist Karl Frederik Kinch and Christian Sørensen Blinkenberg, curator at the Danish National Museum. At a planning meeting in the Carlsberg Foundation it had turned out that neither of the two would take on the responsibility of being the director of the expedition. So they became joint directors - to the Foundation not a wholly satisfying solution.
- 12 Hans Henrik Koch (1873-1922).
- 13 First lieutenant Juul Bagger. Bagger left the expedition in March 1903 and did not join later campaigns. It turned out that he did not like working in the mountainous landscape.
- 14 Helvig Agnete Amsinck, later Kinch, (1872-1956): Weilbach, *Dansk Kunstnerleksikon* 1995, 268; *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon* 1936, 445-446.
- 15 Travel diary in papers from K. F. Kinch and wife, H. Kinch born Amsinck, the State Archives, Copenhagen.

The group set out from Copenhagen on 19 September 1902, made a short stop in Berlin, then moved quickly on, passing Prague to make a stop in Vienna, where they arrived on 21 September. While in Vienna Helvig notes that she is getting to know her fellow travellers better.¹⁶ The expedition continued by train from Vienna to Constantinople, where they spent another few days before embarking on the sea voyage that would take them to Rhodes. The then 29-year-old Helvig Amsinck described their arrival on Rhodes thus:¹⁷

Rose early in order to see all the islands we pass – Chios we had passed during the night. [Now] Padmos, Tenedos and many others. Beautiful weather. The water as blue as ever. We passed Halikarnassos and watched the site through binoculars. Later a wind came up... Around three thirty p.m. we finally reached Rhodes, 'our' island, which I have been thinking of now for half a year. A strange feeling.

Well, we disembarked – and it was all very lively, many boats and much shouting, so we had to be practical. From the sea you get a good view of the town's old walls and fortifications. And here are as usual many white houses up the hillsides. We are staying in a hotel with the most beautiful stone mosaics. Now we have to stay here for eight days to await our baggage from Trieste – not much fun, but necessary.¹⁸

During the eight days of waiting for their baggage, the group had much help from the French consul. He had also been very helpful when K. F. Kinch was negotiating the permission for the excavation project. On their second day he arranged a visit to the Pasha: "Went in the morning with the consul to buy table and chairs. It is very hot. At 10 o'clock we went with the consul on a visit to his excellency the Pasha".

The expedition members quickly settled into a routine. In the morning shopping for furniture, blankets, cloth for sheets and other domestic necessities for their stay in Lindos, and in the afternoon going their separate ways. Helvig often went to paint, one day in the Rue des Chevaliers, the 'Street of the Knights' (Fig. 5):

I went out early shopping with Koch. Bought a few headscarves and later went to Rue des Chevaliers to sketch. I sat on a stone doorstep and made a sketch of the old



Fig. 5. The French church in Street of the Knights. Rhodes town. Helvig Amsinck 1902. Drawing. After Amsinck 1903.

French church with the pulpit outside on the façade... After three o'clock we went to a tennis party with the French consul and his English wife. She is beautiful, fashionable and very kind to me.¹⁹

That same evening a peculiar episode took place, which is also recorded in the diary:

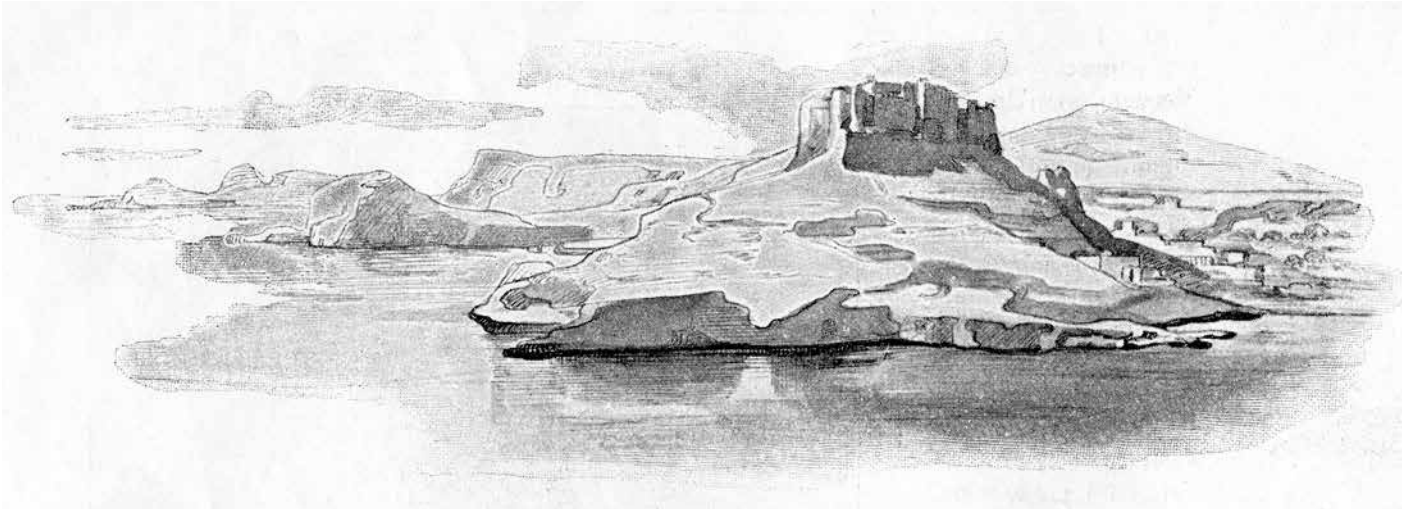


Fig. 6. Lindos acropolis seen from the harbour. Helvig Amsinck 1902. Drawing. After Amsinck 1903.

Having come home in the evening we sat after dinner talking in the garden Kinch, Koch and I. Kinch went off to get a French Konstantinopel newspaper and read us an article about the Rhodes expedition which contained the following paragraph: "Among the members there is even a lady, a painter, who will play a very interesting part".²⁰ We spoke at length about this. I was rather angry and upset, but they were both so very good to me. Kinch had read it before and he would just say that in the whole town of Rhodes I was welcomed and respected – that was why he had made an effort to present me everywhere and recommend me. I spoke briefly about going home, but they would not listen to me, they would put me in chains if necessary. Moreover, it was just naughtily written about someone whom the writer never knew. They were both so good to me – like brothers. That night I got to know Kinch as a very sensitive man and I told them I trusted them both completely.

To the French, apparently, it was inconceivable that a woman – and a painter at that – should be part of an archaeological expedition! But it seems the incident was instrumental in the team members getting to know each other better and establishing mutual trust. Helvig calmed down and stayed on as a member of the expedition.

WORKING AT LINDOS

12.10 Arrival at Lindos (Fig. 6). A beautiful entry into the large harbour, the townspeople came running to see us. All 'the uniforms' came at once. We went ashore and were quickly taken to our houses, it was good after our long time at sea. Koch and I live across from each other, Kinch further on. We went quickly to Kinch to help with the unpacking. Were quite busy. Then back to do our own unpacking... I was quickly done and went with Kinch and Koch to pay the Mudria a visit. He was very forthcoming and said he would

16 After a strenuous visit to the Dom of Vienna, St. Stephen's Cathedral, which included climbing to the top of the church tower and a thorough tour of the tomb monuments in the church, she writes: "From the hotel we went to Rathauskeller. We had a nice time, the food was fine and there was plenty to look at. Had much fun on the walk back. That evening I began to get closer to my travel mates".

17 The main character of this first campaign was Karl F. Kinch; Christian S. Blinkenberg, philologist/archaeologist and curator at the National Museum, did not join the expedition until January 1903 but he and his wife had been among those who saw the others off in Copenhagen.

18 Diary entry 2 October 1902.

19 Diary entry 6 October 1902.

20 'Parmi les membres se trouve meme une dame, peintre, qui aura a jouer un role des plus interessant!!!'



Fig. 7. Donkey and mules at work. Helvig Kinch, no year., unfinished. Oil on Canvas, 31 x 46 cm. Privately owned. Photo: John Lee, National Museum of Denmark.



Fig. 8. Karl F. Kinch, probably engaged in copying an inscription on Lindos acropolis. Helvig Kinch. Oil on canvas, 28 x 38 cm. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. Photo: John Lee, National Museum of Denmark.

regard me as his daughter during my stay. His son Hussein is sweet and good. It is the quaintest little town with shiny white streets, with views and reflections – all most pleasing to the eye. Beyond the town the castle towers splendidly lit by the evening sun (Figs. 9-10).

Helvig started working right away, dividing her day between sketching or painting and visiting the excavations, but she also found time to pursue her favourite motif (Fig. 7). She also assisted the architect and the surveyor in their work. Often she would walk or be taken by boat to the peninsula Milianos, across from the acropolis, in order to paint there. She rarely mentions drawing any of the finds from the excavations. The exception is on 20 and 21 October, when she records in her diary that she drew a water spout in the shape of a lion's head that had been found – and that she was happy about how the drawing turned out.²¹ Quite often Helvig would join Kinch in his study of the many inscriptions that came to light (Fig. 8). From her diary it seems the work was carried out in a very companionable atmosphere, and on many evenings when they had finished their dinner together Kinch would read to the others from the Letters of Julius Lange.²²

Fig. 9. The little town of Lindos below the acropolis, Helvig Kinch no year. Oil on canvas, 93 x 126 cm. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. Photo: John Lee, National Museum of Denmark.



Fig. 10. Lindos town and acropolis. Photo: Stine Schierup, 2016.



21 However, this drawing is not to be found in the publication, Blinkenberg 1931.

22 Georg Brandes, *Julius Lange, Breve fra hans Ungdom. Med en Indledning og en Ramme* (Letters from his Youth. With an Introduction and a Context), 1898. Julius Lange and Georg

Brandes knew each other from their student days and both became prominent members of the intelligentsia in Denmark, Lange (1838-1896) as a professor of art history and Brandes (1842-1927) as a scholar and critic of literature. Brandes's major work "Die Hauptströmungen der Litteratur des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts" (1891) was translated into ten languages.

HELVIG AMSINCK BECOMES HELVIG KINCH

October and November passed, but the diary ends on 29 October.²³ Up to this date Helvig writes nothing about how the working relationship with Karl Kinch developed into a love affair. But many years later, on a summer evening in Copenhagen while Helvig was visiting relatives in the country, Kinch wrote her a letter that tells us some of the story:

12 July 1912. Sweet darling. Saturday night when the storm raged I stayed in. This is the only evening I have not taken a long walk. I then pulled out all my notebooks and diaries from Lindos once again. In my diary I did not write much about us, but what is there is good. It is all from November and beginning of December 1902. Short and warm about you and our relationship. Honest and true words; they could not be more so. I have read them over and over these days; perhaps you remember them – here is one – the most important: "Back [from Rhodes to Lindos] I at once brought Miss A. her letter. Astonished by her beauty and contentedness". (I had, you know, been anxious that you were angry with me). "Joy showed in her eyes. I could not possibly quench my infatuation and not tell her how happy I was to see her like that. She said she had no reason not to be content. She too was happy about my return. For as long as I live I shall remember this moment. My ideal of a woman". This I wrote down the very same day in the morning. What this warmth led to, you know: a kiss. Was it on the same day or the next?? As I again became anxious about how our relationship would develop, I talked to you and on 2 December I made this brief entry: "Miss A. and I made an agreement that hopefully will put both of us at ease".

Apart from this development the work seems to have gone on in much the same way as before until early spring 1903. Helvig left Lindos in April and travelled to Athens. An entry in her new diary shows it was not without difficulty: "20 April. Up early. Went later to the shops [in Smyrna]... This whole day I have missed Karl terribly – everything has been rather difficult".

HELVIG IN ATHENS AND ON TOUR

In Athens Helvig met with a group of Danish women artists that had come to Athens in order to record the Archaic coloured sculptures that had recently come to light on the Acropolis.²⁴

Carl Nielsen came by and asked me to join them in the evening.²⁵ His wife was on the Acropolis until 6 pm. I went there – it was wonderful. Almost like a revelation. All the colours are splendid. I met Mrs. C. N. and Miss Kjær, she looked sad as if she had a hard time.²⁶ She is copying a male head.²⁷ Mrs. C. N. the Typhon group in its actual size.²⁸ Marvelous things in the museum. I shall work there when I come home to Athens. The two of them were very pleasant. Carl Nielsen joined us – had retsina outside the Acropolis – everything was very beautiful.

The real purpose of Helvig's trip to Athens was to join an excursion under the guidance of the German archaeologist Wilhelm Dörpfeld. The tour took her first to Olympia and Delphi and then back to Athens: "2 May ...went in the evening to Acropolis and met the others, had dinner with them and was at Carl Nielsen's. We have a nice time. Still, I do not yet like Athens, I long to get home now, I do not feel really at home here".

After a short sojourn in Athens the tour started again on 4 May 1903 and Helvig seems to have quickly forgotten she wanted to go home, recording all the details of their first stop with great enthusiasm in her diary:²⁹ "We sailed to Kap Sunion. Magnificent temple there. Sunion is close to being the most beautiful of all I have seen". On the tour Helvig kept a personal diary, as well as transcribed Dörpfeld's lectures at the various sites they visited.³⁰ On 14 May the tour group returned to Athens, where Helvig also began work on the Acropolis, both in the museum and in the Parthenon.³¹ In the museum Helvig chose to do a watercolour of a not very large but elegant horse and rider. Taking into account Helvig's interest in horses in movement, she must have been drawn to this which has been described as follows: "The artist has an understanding of the underlying muscular structure... In most areas, the muscular structure appears to originate from within the animal... the horse and rider are very graceful and elegant in appearance. The body of the horse is long and slender... The surface of the flanks is modulated by gently swelling muscles..."³² (Fig. 11).

At the end of May the group of Danish artists had a visit from the king – the former Danish Prince Vilhelm of Schleswig-Holstein and Glücksburg, who in 1863 had been appointed king of Greece under the title King Georg I of the Hellenes.³³ Helvig was involved in the preparations in the days up to the visit on 28 May. About a week after, she had an appointment at the royal palace:

Fig. 11. *Horse with rider*. Athens, Acropolis Museum no. 700. C. 500 BC. Helvig Amsinck 1903. Watercolour, 89,5 x 58,5 cm. Photo courtesy: National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen.



6 June. In the morning on Acropolis, worked till noon. Went home early, rested, dressed and went off for the audience with the King. I was admitted at once. The King came to greet me and then we stood for about ten minutes and talked about this and that. The man is very kind. I was not the least nervous.

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- 23 The pages after 29 October have been torn out of the diary.
 24 Found in the Greek excavations 1885-1890. Because of the colours copies had not yet been made. Eventually such copies were made, which of course caused a lot of the colour to disappear.
 25 This trip is recorded in another diary on loose pages stuck in the Travel Diary, State Archives, Copenhagen. Carl Nielsen was a Danish composer (1861-1931), and his wife Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen (1863-1945) a well-known sculptor. See Christensen 2013.
 26 'Miss Kjaer' is the sculptor Ingrid Kjaer (1870-1948). She was one of the first Danish artists to come to Athens in order to create copies of the newly found sculptures on the Acropolis. In 1899 she got permission from the Greek Archaeological Society to make a copy of the Kore no. 674, found in 1888. This kore had well preserved traces of colour especially on the face and the border of the short Jonian himation. For the design of the borders, see Richter 1968, no. 127, 82, figs. 411-414; Karakasi 2001, 122-124, Tafel 270-272. Miss Kjaer soon had more than 20 orders for painted copies. See Pedersen 2012, 58-59.

- 27 Probably the Blond Boy found on the Acropolis of Athens in 1887. A painted copy of this head made by Miss Kjaer is housed in the high school in the town of Ribe in Denmark.
 28 Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen would model the sculpture in clay. Then a cast would be taken and from this a plaster copy was made, which Mrs. Carl-Nielsen then painted. She had to leave Athens before all this was done and came back late in 1904 to finish the work. The copy, together with others, was sent to Denmark and exhibited in Copenhagen in 1906. See Pedersen 2012, 59-75.
 29 From the diary it transpires that the tour lasted from the end of April to the end of May. The transcriptions of Dörpfeld's lectures might also have been for the benefit of Kinch. Diary in the State Archives, Copenhagen – loose pages in the Rhodes diary. The Dörpfeld lectures are recorded in a separate notebook, State Archives, Copenhagen.
 30 The tour took her to Eretria, Andros, Tinos, Delos, Paros, Thera and Crete.
 31 "16 May. Went to the post office and some shops, then to Acropolis. Stayed all day and worked. 28 May. Went first to the museum. Went home and later to the Acropolis. Painted in the cella [of the Parthenon], then finished in the museum".
 32 Eaverly 1995, 110-115, quote 112-113.
 33 Clogg 2013, 55-59. When Prince Vilhelm went to Athens to become King of the Hellenes he was accompanied by a former head of the Copenhagen Police, Cosmus Braestrup. He spoke modern Greek and was made part of the diplomatic mission accompanying the Prince to Athens. While in Athens he made a few acquisitions of antiquities, which he later donated to the Cabinet of Antiquities at the Danish National Museum, Williams & Rasmussen 2015, 123-143.

But Helvig missed Karl – "1 June. How it came about I do not know, but today I told her [Mrs. Carl-Nielsen] about K. and myself. I had just received a long letter from him, so warm and full of longing – I could think of nothing else that day..." – and she was anxious to get home.³⁴ Finally, on 9 June she embarked on the journey to Denmark. Coming home, however, did not mean meeting Karl; Helvig still had to wait several months before he arrived from Rhodes.³⁵ Back in Copenhagen she went one day to see Professor Heiberg:³⁶ "He was very kind. He told me that they [the Carlsberg Foundation] wanted to ask me to join the expedition next winter on the same conditions as the others this year... Blinkenberg wants one to draw the finds and thinks I can do it. At home they liked the idea. It seems I have done fairly well. Wrote at once to Kinch".

The Carlsberg Foundation was very committed to the expedition and between 1902 and 1908 there was a field campaign every year, each lasting several months. Kinch and Helvig married in October 1903 and Helvig joined the second campaign, lasting from October 1903 to June 1904, as Heiberg had suggested. After the birth of their daughter in September 1904 Kinch left on 1 November for Rhodes for another campaign and Helvig stayed behind with the baby living with her mother and her sister, Rigmor. In December Helvig also left for Rhodes, leaving the little Gunild in the care of Rigmor and her mother.

"Soon Helvig will leave, I do think that it will be difficult for her to leave "Little Girl", she is so fond of her and understands instinctively what she wants and what is best for her. But then I must step in and do my best, and you can be sure I shall do all I can for the sweet little girl".³⁷

WORKING AT LINDOS AGAIN

During this campaign, which lasted until the middle of June 1905, an exedra in the cliff at the bottom of the stairs leading to the sanctuary was cleared. In November 1903 the workers had reached a point where, due to the surface of the cliff, Kinch expected to find a monumental inscription to Athena. However, when the work continued in 1905 it turned out to be not an inscription but the upper part of a large relief.³⁸ As the clearing progressed, a Greek ship emerged (Fig. 12).³⁹ The relief was restored in order to make it possible to make a cast of the relief, with the assistance of a specialist in cast-making, who had come to Lindos from Athens.⁴⁰

Helvig was by now fully dedicated to the work at Lindos. So much so, that she played a major role in settling a

dispute that erupted in spring of 1905 between Blinkenberg and Kinch. They were both philologists and naturally they were both interested in the inscriptions that were found in large numbers at Lindos.⁴¹ Apparently they had failed to reach an agreement as to which inscriptions they should each work on. The disagreement arose from the report Blinkenberg had submitted to the Carlsberg Foundation but which Kinch – for unknown reasons – had not seen. When he realised this he became very upset, telling Blinkenberg that a lot of the work on the inscriptions presented in the report was his, and that his name should be on the report too. This disagreement led to a debate about how to divide the inscriptions for the final publication. After what seems to have been a heated discussion Blinkenberg wrote Kinch a letter summing up the situation and concluding: "16 March 1905 ... Consequently, I must now withdraw from all further participation in the work of the Carlsberg Foundation on Rhodes. I shall as soon as possible forward a telegram to Prof. Holm [in the Carlsberg Foundation] and naturally at my return present the board with my reasons for my withdrawal..."⁴²

Helvig was present at this discussion without taking part. But she wrote Blinkenberg a letter explaining how she had talked over the situation with her husband and urged him to relent: "The work here with which you both are entrusted is so important that personal matters must be put aside. You have rather to disregard that you have been wronged and accordingly tomorrow send a telegram to Copenhagen, this you owe the Carlsberg Foundation".⁴³

Letters were sent off to the Foundation but in the end the two combatants reached an agreement and Kinch wrote to Blinkenberg: "Dr. Blinkenberg. ... I have agreed to the reached agreement out of respect for the Carlsberg Foundation, for our work, for Ussing and due to my wife's fervent desire".⁴⁴

The storm died down – Blinkenberg remained on Rhodes until the end of May, but never returned. The Carlsberg Foundation planned to have the results published 1905-1906 and required a plan for this work and an estimate of the expected expenses for the years 1905-1906 by November 1905.⁴⁵

During the months Helvig and Kinch worked in Lindos, Rigmor not only took care of their baby daughter but also organised the retrieval of Helvig's paintings from the autumn show of 1904. Just before Christmas she writes Kinch a letter with news of Gunild, with this

Fig. 12. Ship relief cut into the cliff-side at the foot of the stairs to the Acropolis in Lindos. Helvig Kinch 1905. Ink on paper, 64,5 x 73 cm. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. Photo: John Lee, National Museum of Denmark.



addition: "... and Helvig's paintings must be fetched from Charlottenborg and her money from the bank – and all must be done before the 24th".⁴⁶ Helvig also had paintings at the spring exhibition at Charlottenborg in 1905, which

34 Diary entry, 1 June 1903.

35 A letter from J. L. Ussing to Helvig makes it clear that after closing down the excavation Kinch went to Konstantinopel to negotiate with the Turkish archaeological service J. L. Ussing (1820-1905) philologist and archaeologist. Professor at the University of Copenhagen, 1849-1895; 1887-1902 member of the board of the Carlsberg Foundation 1851-1905 member of The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters. On behalf of the Society he kept up with the work of the Rhodes expedition 1902-1905: See letters in the Royal Library, Copenhagen, NKS 3914.

36 Johan Ludvig Heiberg (1854-1928) was a professor of philology at the University of Copenhagen and a member of both the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters and the board of

the Carlsberg Foundation. He played a major role in getting the support of the Carlsberg Foundation for the expedition.

37 Letter of 24 November from Rigmor Amsinck to Kinch.

38 Blinkenberg & Kinch 1907, 31.

39 Reproduced in the report Blinkenberg & Kinch 1907 as fig. 52. For a photograph see Blinkenberg 1938, fig. 4.

40 Helvig documented the restoration in another drawing, reproduced in the report as fig. 53. The cast and copy were sent to Denmark.

The copy was later placed in the entrance to the then newly built Royal Library (1906), where it can still be seen.

41 Blinkenberg 1941.

42 Letters in the Royal Library, Copenhagen NKS 3914.

43 Letter in the Royal Library, Copenhagen NKS 3914.

44 The letters in the Royal Library, Copenhagen NKS 3914 also comprise other letters that recount the dramatic incident of March 1905 between Blinkenberg and Kinch.

45 Letter of 30 June 1905 from J. L. Ussing to Kinch reports on a meeting in the Foundation about the publication. The Royal Library, Copenhagen NKS 3914.

46 The money might be payments for works sold at the show. Neither Rigmor's letters to Helvig nor Helvig's letters to Rigmor are preserved.

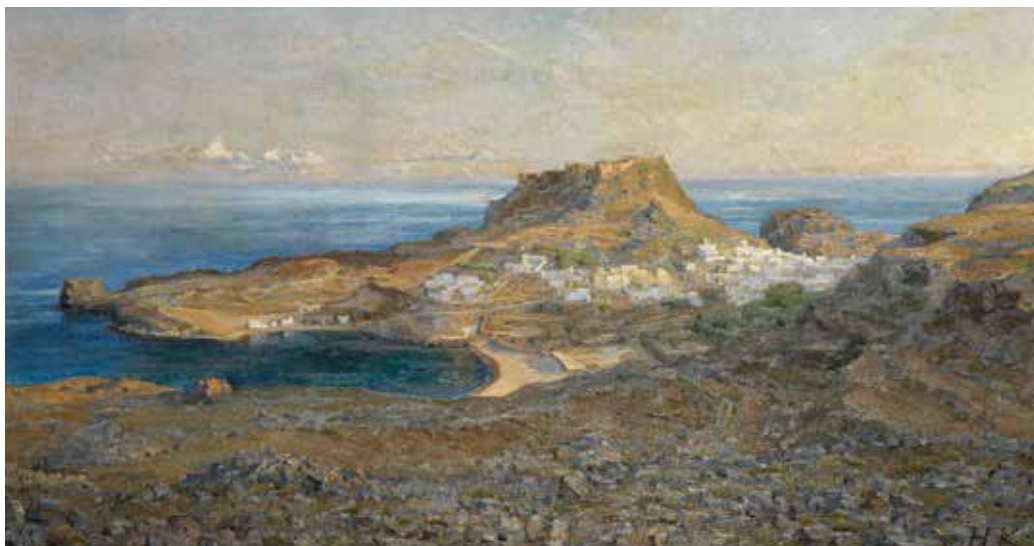


Fig. 13. View of Lindos town and acropolis. Helvig Kinch, no year. Oil on canvas, 56 x 107 cm. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. Photo: John Lee, National Museum of Denmark.



Fig. 14. View from Lindos acropolis towards the north. Helvig Kinch 1903-1905? Oil on canvas, 21 x 33 cm. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. Photo: John Lee, National Museum of Denmark.

Rigmor saw to: "Both Helvig's paintings have now been framed and are ready to be submitted, 13 March they go. I have gotten the reviews – a sure sign that spring is coming".

Helvig left Lindos in the middle of June 1905 after being away for almost six months. During both her first and second stay she found time to do several paintings in addition to drawing the archaeological finds (Figs. 13-

16). Kinch, however, stayed on another year. He was busy organising the transport of the casts and having the finds stored in the museum in the castle at the acropolis. He also made several excursions into the countryside of Rhodes, surveying for archaeological sites. In January Rigmor wrote him a New Year's letter:

Fig. 15. Man ploughing below the Lindos acropolis. Helvig Kinch 1903-1905? Oil on Canvas, 23 x 42 cm. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. Photo: John Lee, National Museum of Denmark.



Fig. 16. The castle built c. 1500 on the acropolis of Lindos. Helvig Amsinck-Kinch 1903. Oil on canvas, 95 x 126 cm. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen. Photo: John Lee, National Museum of Denmark.



16-1-1906. Dear Brother-in-Law, I suppose the news about the fulfilling of your wishes was a welcome New Year's message. Now you and Helvig can continue the work there for all of two years. I will be unselfish and noble enough

to congratulate you with this result. For you and Helvig, of course, it is splendid. But to be perfectly honest I cannot say that I myself am so happy, it means a long separation from you both and especially from Little Girl, who is my



Fig. 17. Kinch and little Gunild. Athens or Lindos 1907/1908. Photograph. Archives of the National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

one and all, and the mere thought of not seeing her for years (it will surely be more than two, if I know you) no, I dare not think about that.⁴⁷

EXCAVATING AT VROULIA

As it turned out Rigmor's forebodings were not unrealistic. Kinch finally came to Denmark in the middle of June 1906 and stayed for the rest of the year, but in spring of 1907 he and Helvig again travelled to Rhodes, this time bringing their little daughter (Fig. 17). They worked for a few months in Lindos but in late June they went to the southern part of



Fig. 18. Karl Frederik Kinch. Helvig Kinch 1907. The signature to the right is a later addition. Pencil on paper, 36 x 25 cm. Photo courtesy: National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen.

Rhodes to excavate the site of Vroulia on the southernmost tip of Rhodes. This excavation was to become Kinch's major publication of the Danish Rhodes Expedition. The excavations revealed an Archaic town with an interesting and well-preserved lay out.⁴⁸

Kinch and Helvig worked at Vroulia the whole summer of 1907, occasionally returning to Lindos. At one of those visits they had to wait several days for a boat to take them to Lindos and Helvig put the time to good use doing a portrait of Kinch (Fig. 18). They spent the winter and spring working in Athens and returned to Vroulia in May 1908 to finish the work. Helvig must have been very busy as much

Fig. 19. Helvig and Gunild, Athens or Lindos. Photograph. Archives of the National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.



material came to light both from the excavations in the settlement and from the graves, but she also found time for little Gunild (Fig. 19).

PUBLISHING THE VROULIA EXCAVATIONS

Kinch's interpretation of the site and the finds were published in 1914.⁴⁹ The publication was lavishly illustrated with drawings and watercolours by Helvig Kinch, done in the very best and newest reproduction techniques (Figs. 20-22).⁵⁰ In a review the publication is characterized as an international work – "written by a Dane in French and printed in Germany. All the illustrations are Danish work".⁵¹ The reviewer was especially interested in the reproduction techniques used for the illustrations.⁵²

For the illustrations four methods of reproduction are used: Autotypy for text illustrations, photo-lithography and a photo type process for the black and white illustrations and colour-litography for the coloured illustrations. Everything is done either from the excavated pots and figures or from the drawings and watercolours done by Mrs. Helvig Kinch. It has to be said that the illustrations form an important part of this majestic work.

Vroulia will not only in regard to archaeological research

but also in regard to the reproduction techniques used do Denmark proud. It is altogether a comprehensive and well produced work we have before us... Especially the reproductions in colour get as close to the originals as is possible in reproduction.

Some of the plates were presented at an international exhibition on book production and graphic design in Leipzig in 1914,⁵³ set up to celebrate the 150th anniversary

47 Letter in the State Archives, Copenhagen see n. 15.

48 Kaninia & Schierup 2017; Kaninia in this volume.

49 The work was printed and ready for publication in 1914 in Berlin, but due to the outbreak of World War I was not published until 1916 (though it still bears the year 1914).

50 On the title page of the publication it is stated that the work includes 47 plates and 139 figures in the text. A thorough count has revealed that altogether there are 624 drawings, 280 in the text, and 24 illustrations in colour: Kragelund 2013. For other plates see Bagh *et al.* 2007, 88-89.

51 Nygaard 1919, 175. Nygaard was not concerned about the scholarly value of the work but commented only on the plates, especially the coloured ones.

52 The work was done at the reproduction firm Pacht and Crone established in 1874. Nygaard, 1919, 175.

53 Internationale Ausstellung für Buchgewerbe und Graphik, *BUGRA*. Mai-Oktober. Leipzig 1914.

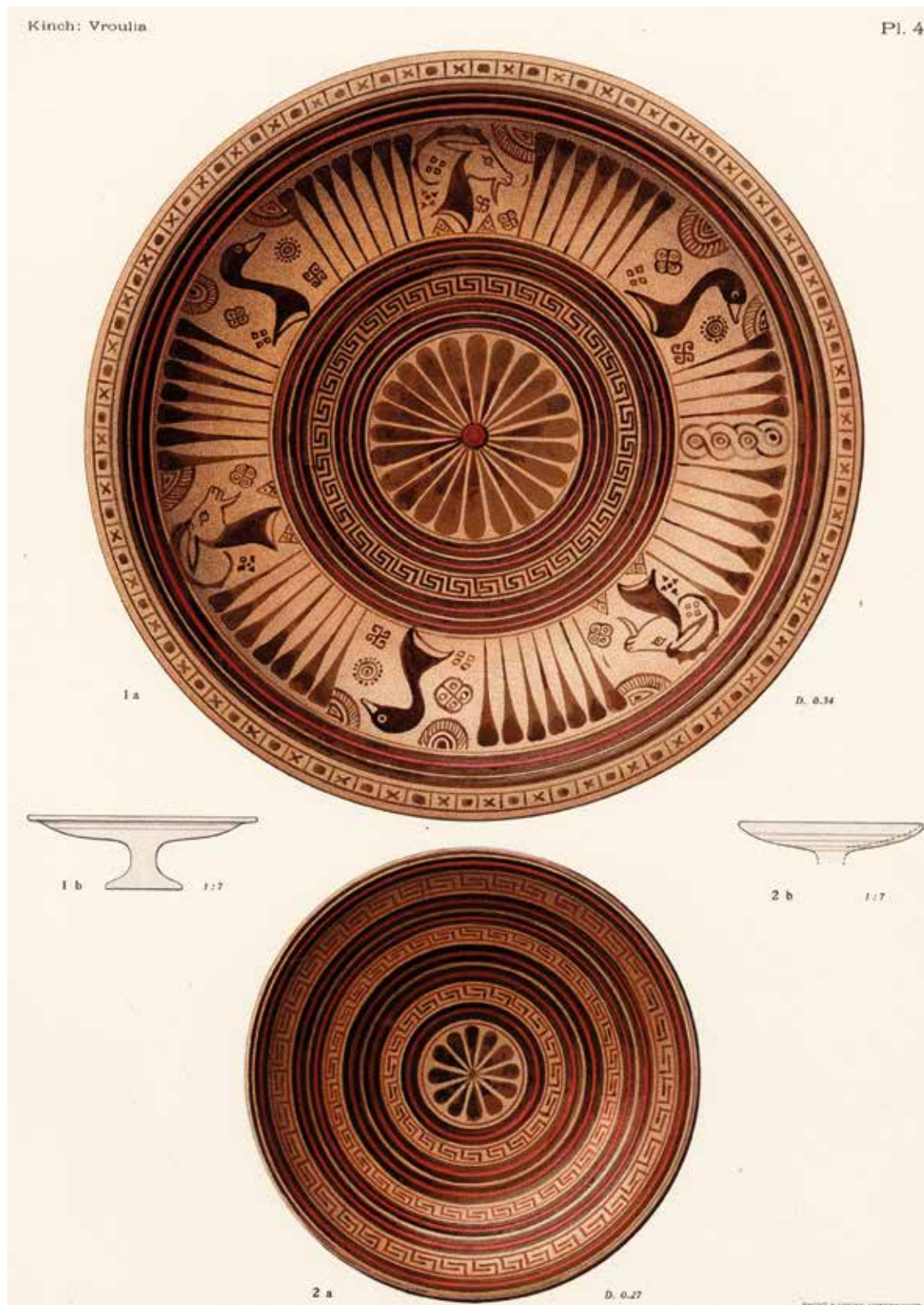


Fig. 20. Two stemmed dishes decorated in Wild Goat style. Found in Vroulia. C. 625-600 BC. Helvig Kinch, Watercolour. From Kinch 1914, pl.4.



Fig. 21. Three oinochoai and two large stemmed cups decorated in Wild Goat style. C. 600 BC. Found at Vroulia. Helvig Kinch, Watercolour. From Kinch 1914, pl.11.

of the Königlische Akademie für Graphische Künste und Buchgewerbe (Fig. 23).⁵⁴ It was modelled on the world exhibitions and comprised several pavilions. The Vroulia plates were exhibited in the International pavilion, which Denmark shared with Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Spain. Other countries had their own pavilions. The Vroulia plates attracted interest from the visitors and reviewers and were mentioned in favourable terms in the German press.⁵⁵ An article in *The New York Times* by a professor at Columbia University entitled *Sixteen Nations unite to tell the Story of Books* reflects the importance of this exhibition.⁵⁶ Another testimony is the exhibition

staged by the Museum of Books and Writing in Leipzig in 2014, on the 100-year anniversary of the 1914 exhibition.⁵⁷

At the end of December 1913 Kinch and Helvig embarked

⁵⁴ The exhibition covered an area of 400,000 square metres.

⁵⁵ Nygaard 1919, 175.

⁵⁶ Braun 1914.

⁵⁷ *Die Welt in Leipzig. Internationale Ausstellung für Buchgewerbe und Graphik, BUGRA 1914. Ausstellung des Deutschemark Buch- und Schriftmuseums der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek in Leipzig, März-August 2014.*

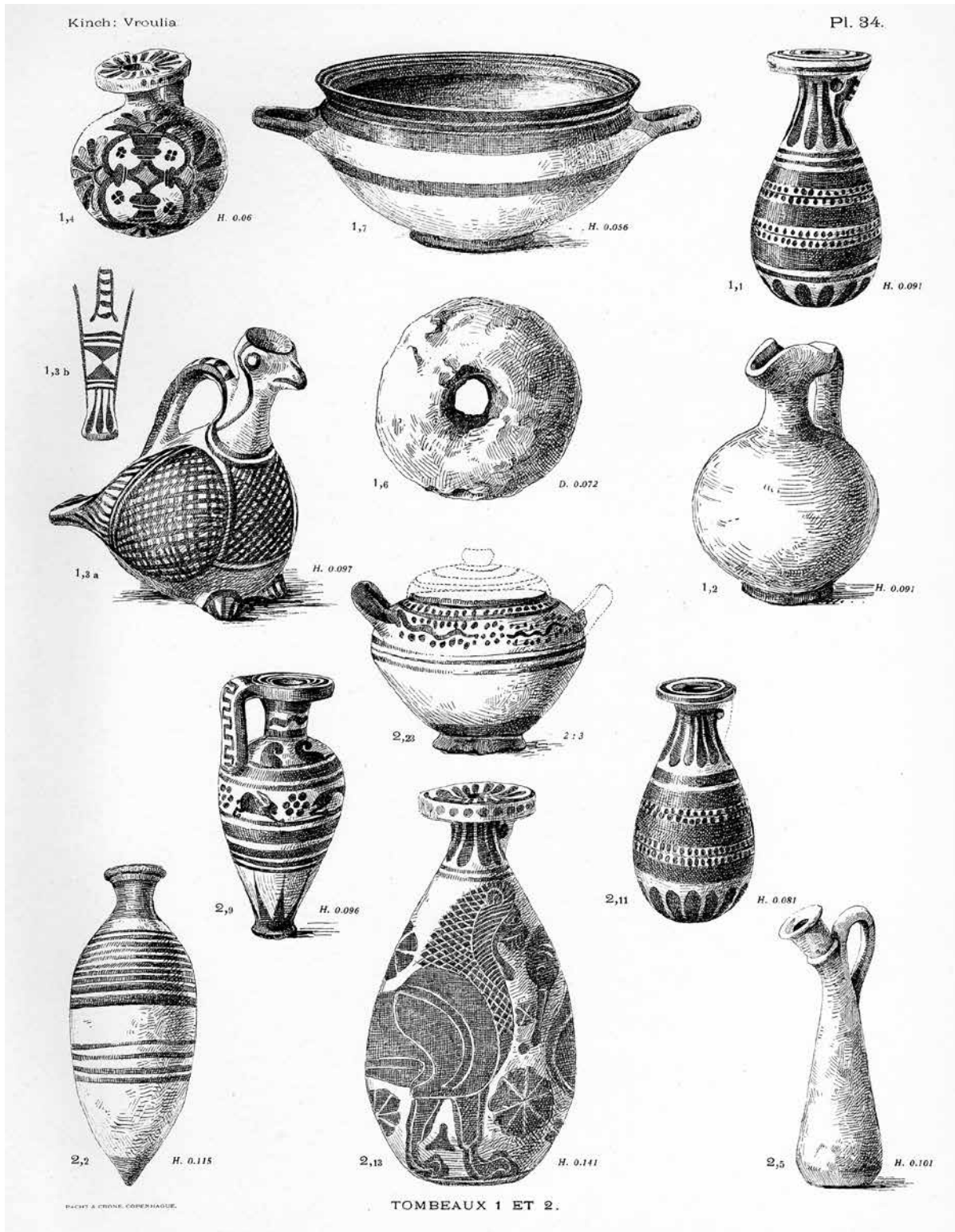


Fig. 22. Corinthian pottery found in tombs at Vroulia. From Kinch 1914, pl.34.

on what was to be their last journey to Rhodes. The first month was spent at Lindos, and though they were very busy Helvig kept up painting (Fig. 24). In February and March they staged new excavations near Lardos at the site of Exochi, a necropolis from the Geometric period west of Lindos. Helvig describes in a letter to Gunild how the work progressed:

I have been several times to a village called Lardos two hours away, where Papa is having some tombs excavated. He does not have time himself, so I have been going there to see to the work. I set off in the morning riding with a man who will look after the mule. I bring lunch and sit on a hilltop and watch until two o'clock when I must go back home again. Along the way I enjoy the many little birds, the flowers and butterflies, it is already spring here... Mama is accompanied by such a funny man, his name is Stefanis. He has great respect for Papa and looks after the mule and Mama well because Papa has told him to take good care of Mama.⁵⁸

The tombs at Exochi yielded interesting geometric pottery produced locally but Kinch never got to publish the results of the excavation.⁵⁹ The many years of travelling and working in often unsafe and strenuous circumstances had taken their toll on his health, and his last years were marked by illness.⁶⁰

HELVIG KINCH AND THE DANISH ART SCENE

All through her years of working on Rhodes, Helvig had kept up with the art scene in Copenhagen. Here she belonged to a group of women artists later called the 'Pioneer Generation'.⁶¹ It was due to pressure from a group of these artists that in 1888 the Royal Academy established the Art School for Women, so women could graduate from the Academy.⁶² Even so the women did not get full recognition – while the teachers employed to teach the men were called professors, those employed at the Art School for Women were simply called teachers.⁶³ The school was closed in 1908; one would have thought this gave men and women equal rights within the Royal Academy, but this was not the case at all. Women artists had their work accepted for the annual



Fig. 23. Promotion postcard for the exhibition, BUGRA. Leipzig 1914. Photo courtesy: Getty Images.

⁵⁸ Letter of 10 February 1914, the Archives of the National Museum.

⁵⁹ This task fell to Professor K. Friis Johansen; see Johansen 1958. This publication also contains illustrations by Helvig Kinch.

⁶⁰ Kinch's constitution was generally not strong and both in his youth, when he travelled widely in Northern Greece for many months, and during the time he spent on Rhodes, he was quite often sick. He died in 1921. See Heiberg 1922.

⁶¹ This group counted about 130-140 female artists born between 1840 and the 1870s. They belonged to the bourgeoisie and were educated in private schools in Denmark and abroad. See Laulund 2014, 2-45.

⁶² In January of 1888 23 women artists sent an address to the Danish Parliament pointing out the discrepancy in the education system regarding women artists – and in October the Art School for Women Artists was established. Cf. n. 4.

⁶³ Furthermore, croquis drawing from nude models was not allowed at the school.



Fig. 24. The temple ruins on Lindos acropolis. Helvig Kinch 1914. Oil on canvas, 53 x 63 cm. Privately owned, acquired at an auction in 2009. Photo: Jane Fejfer.

juried exhibitions at the Academy but they were hardly ever admitted to the jury or the various other committees that organised the exhibitions and gave out grants.⁶⁴

Perhaps it was this injustice that Helvig herself had experienced in her youth that induced her to act in order to remedy the situation of women artists. In January of 1916 she and the painter Marie Henriques took steps to found the Society of Women Artists.⁶⁵ The invitation sent out in January 1916 was signed by Helvig Kinch and Marie Henriques and 23 other women artists, among them Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen.⁶⁶ After the establishment of the Society and the election of Helvig Kinch as the first chairman, Helvig elaborated on its purpose:⁶⁷

A group of women artists a while ago issued an invitation to form a society of women artists in order to work for equal rights in the art community for men and women, to work for and organise votes and get women represented in the Academy and exhibition committees.... The purpose

of the Society is not to get women a special position within the art world, where the collaboration between male and female artists is already well established, but the situation makes it desirable that the about 150 women artists organise themselves as has been done already in Sweden and Norway.... We plan through this society to organise and gather votes for suited candidates, female or male, who will work for women's interests.⁶⁸

Helvig signed this notice, as preliminary chairman of the Society.⁶⁹ The initiative was not welcomed with open arms in the artist community,⁷⁰ but the Society had immediate success and in its first year succeeded in getting members elected both to the jury for the spring show at Charlottenborg Palace and to the exhibition committee for the autumn show.⁷¹ They also quickly formed good relationships with one of the leading societies of male artists, who were impressed that the women stood so steadfastly together when voting.⁷²

HELVIG KINCH AS A PAINTER

As has been noted, during her years in Rhodes Helvig continually submitted works to the annual exhibitions in Copenhagen. In 1916 she had her first individual show. In the catalogue the paintings take pride of place, covering nos. 1-50. Nos. 51-71 are drawings and nos. 72-74 are sculptures.⁷³ Ten of the 50 paintings are from Rhodes, of these seven are from Lindos and one from Vroulia. Two are from the Acropolis in Athens and one from Konstantinopel; the rest represent her favourite motifs – horses and fowl. Among the drawings we find heads from the Parthenon, streets of Lindos (Fig. 25) and horses pulling trams in Athens. The three sculptures are all horses.⁷⁴ A work shown at the Society's exhibition in 1926 is in yet another medium: A large complicated motif of horses contained across the small area of a pillow.⁷⁵

In 1925 Helvig had her third individual exhibition. A newspaper review gives a good impression of her range and the contemporary appreciation of her work:

Helvig Kinch. Among our women painters Helvig Kinch manifests herself by her classical, distinctive way of painting, her rare talent for composition and the superior competence with which she engages with the job which is far from the ordinary. The grandly seen Greek landscapes and the lively pictures of work horses and horse races frame the large field Helvig Kinch's talent cover. In between we find the still lifes and the flowers among which "Sun flowers" transmits both freshness and power, and works like "Diana in Fredensborg Palace Garden"⁷⁶ and "Venus and the Peacock" are both spiritual and funny.

A lot of watercolours and drawings show the secure and careful hand with which Mrs. Kinch does her preliminary studies. It is always a pleasure to meet this cultured and special artist.⁷⁷

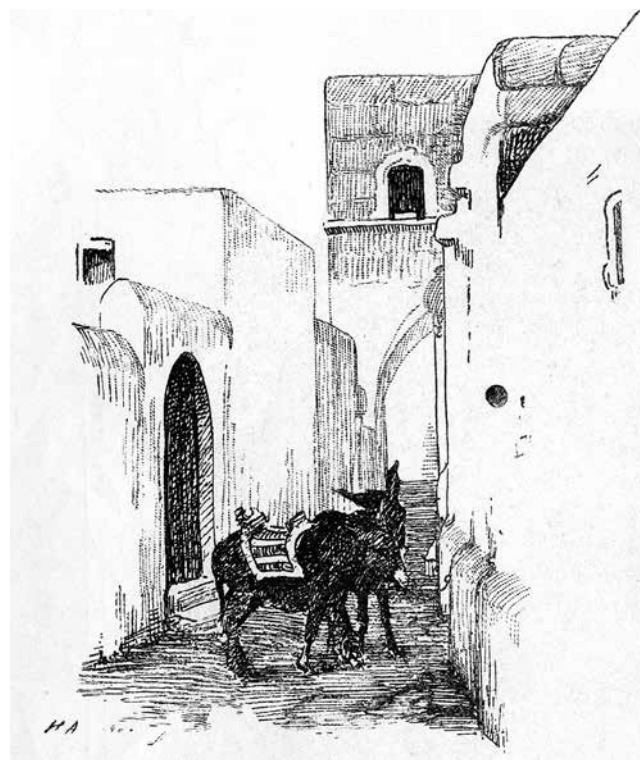


Fig. 25. Street in Lindos. Helvig Kinch, pencil on paper. 1902-1903. From Amsinck 1903.

64 In the 1915 spring exhibition 90 women presented their work side by side with the men, but not a single woman was on any of the organising committees.

65 Marie Henriques (1866-1944) was privately tutored in Copenhagen and travelled widely in Europe in her youth, painting and studying with various painters. She attended the Art School for Women at the Royal Academy of Art 1888-1893; between 1910 and 1913 she stayed for periods in Athens painting watercolours of the korai in the Acropolis Museum. See Hvidt 2017.

66 Høgh-Jensen 2014.

67 Kinch 1916, 71.

68 Helvig here argues that men could also work for the women's cause, something that was also stated in the invitation but was not included in the final declaration of the purpose of the Society. However, the women did have support from some male artists.

69 Helvig Kinch, however, remained chairman until 1918, when Marie Henriques took over.

70 Katz 2014, 14.

71 Manuscript for Helvig Kinch's speech at a meeting after the Society had existed a year, where she sums up their achievements. www.kks-kunst.dk/pdfsam-kks1895-1919 (Accessed 14 December 2018).

72 Cf. n. 64. The foremost association of male painters was *De malende Kunstnere* (The Painting Artists), an association that did not accept women as members, but now collaborated with the new women's Society.

73 The exhibition took place at the gallery of art dealer Christian Larsen in Copenhagen. See Larsen 1916.

74 Two are ceramic works and one is done in plastelina – an oil and wax-based modelling material.

75 Kragelund 2013. Kvindelige kunstneres udstilling af kunsthåndværk. Kunstindustrimuseet (now Designmuseum Denmark), 1926.

76 This painting was also shown in the exhibition in 1916.

77 Review in *Nationaltidende* (*The National Paper*), 13 November 1925, evening edition. Signed "Fbg".



Fig. 26. Horses pulling cart with sand. Brittany, France. Helvig Kinch 1928. Oil on canvas, 57,5 x 82 cm. Photo courtesy: Vejen Art Museum/Pernille Klemp.



Fig. 27. Young horses feeding in an oat field. Helvig Kinch 1917. Oil on canvas, 68,5 x 93,5 cm. Photo courtesy: Museum Sønderjylland.



Fig. 28. Calvary of St. Philibert at Chapelle de St. Philibert, Moëlan-sur-Mer, Brittany. Helvig Kinch 1926. Pencil and watercolour, 450 x 315 cm. Photo courtesy: Vejen Art Museum/Pernille Klemp.



Fig. 29. Calvary of St. Philibert at Chapelle de St. Philibert, Moëlan-sur-Mer. 16th century. Photo courtesy: Roy Lucien, 1916. Société Française d'Archéologie et Ministère de la Culture, France – Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine – diffusion RMN.

After Kinch's death Helvig did not go back to Greece, but in the 1920s and 1930s went on trips to Bretagne, Normandy and Italy. In Bretagne and Normandy she pursued her favourite motif: horses at work or grazing in a field (Figs. 26-27). In the town of Moëlan-sur-Mer she chose to record the 16th century monument commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in front of Chapelle Saint-Philibert – Calvaire de St. Philibert (Figs. 28-29).⁷⁸

In her choice of motifs – especially horses at work in the fields or resting in lush meadows – as well as in her acute sense for transmitting to the viewer horses in movement and in her choice of colour, she comes close to the group of

Danish painters called “Fynboerne” – a group centered in and around the town of Faaborg on the island of Funen.⁷⁹ Her work comes closest to that of the painter Peter Hansen in its choice of motifs, composition and colour schemes.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ I thank PhD fellow Nadia Kristensen for assistance in locating the photograph, fig. 29.

⁷⁹ Several of the painters were trained as house painters before they went to Copenhagen for further training as artists. In 1910 the businessman Mads Rasmussen (1856-1916) founded a Museum in Faaborg to house the paintings of Fynboerne. See Truelsen 2015.

⁸⁰ Peter Hansen (1868-1928). Truelsen 2015, 91-116, see esp. 98.

Her prolific output of paintings mainly went into private hands, were sold at exhibitions and auctions in Denmark and abroad, and are still found at auctions today (Fig. 24).⁸¹ Some of the paintings with motifs from Rhodes are in the National Museum of Denmark and a few picturing other scenes have gone into art museums in Denmark.⁸²

In 1936 Helvig Kinch had her last individual exhibition, at the same gallery as the first in 1916. It received this review:

The Painter of Horses

The horse, the good, the strong and heavy work horse, has always been a favourite motif for the painter Helvig Kinch. And in the exhibition she has right now at Kunsthandler Chr. Larsen, Højbroplads, you find a series of paintings of horses, the heavy horses from Normandy that are apparently close to the work horse from Jutland – as the Normans are close to us Danes. Helvig Kinch knows these horses and every one of their movements, and she can draw! There are excellent drawings in the exhibition of both the horse and the cat. Her colours may get a little bland and it can get somewhat dry; they come out best in her studies like “A Harvest Load” or “Horses in the Meadow, Sunset”. However, among the paintings her architecture paintings stand out as the finest. Like in the old gateway of Gu’rande with its massive towers and the castle Virtré with its beautiful shining silver grey colour.⁸³

Helvig Kinch continued to present paintings at the Royal Academy’s spring and autumn exhibitions at Charlottenborg Palace all through her life.⁸⁴ She managed to have two equally successful careers – one in archaeology with the archaeological expedition to Rhodes, and one as a very active member of the Danish art community. Her work in the publications of the archaeological excavations on Rhodes will stand for years to come as a major contribution to archaeological literature, and her contribution to the art scene and her work in obtaining equal rights for women artists stand out; neither should be forgotten or underestimated.⁸⁵ Many artists of the Pioneer Generation suffered this fate, but, thanks to the work of the Society of Women Artists and recent papers and monographs on individual artists, several have now obtained their rightful place in the history of Danish art.⁸⁶

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- 81 Works that have been up for auction in recent years include ‘Chicken, chicks and duckling’, Gorrings fine Art Antiques & Collectables, Auction 2014, ‘A sunlit Landscape at Lindos’, Rhodes, Christies, South Kensington, no year, ‘Brood mares with a foal in a paddock’, Christies, auction 9130, Sporting Art & Dogs, June 2001, and ‘Ploughing scene with man and two horses’, Bruun Rasmussen, Copenhagen, 2010.
- 82 The following Danish art museums hold paintings by Helvig Kinch: National Gallery of Art, Copenhagen, Randers Art Museum, Vejen Art Museum and Museum Sønderjylland – all are presented in this article. For further works see photographs held in the Danish National Art Library, Copenhagen. .
- 83 Berlingske Tidende 5.11.1936. Signed K.-r. The review is illustrated with the painting ‘Three Horses in a Field’.
- 84 Charlottenborg, spring 1896-1956. Charlottenborg, autumn 1904-1905; 1907-1909; 1911; 1922; 1940 and 1945.
- 85 Helvig Kinch died 31 August 1956 aged 83.
- 86 Abildgaard 1994, 53-57 *et passim*. Papers in Glahn & Poulsen (eds.) 2014; Debois, Funder & Poulsen (eds.) 2012; Christensen 2013; Hvidt 2017.