Why did the Athenians build a temple to Hephaistos overlooking the Agora? The usual answer is that Hephaistos was being honored for his role in the birth of Athena, and that Kolonos Agoraios, the hill on which the temple stood, was the area occupied by metalworkers, for whom Hephaistos was a patron god. An alternative however, is that the temple was dedicated to the god after the Athenians had seized Lemnos, the island sacred to Hephaistos, offering him a new home in Athens. To rest this theory we will look at Herodotus’ stories concerning the Athenians and Lemnians in the mythical times. In addition we will look closely at the friezes and statues decorating the temple. There has never been a universally accepted interpretation of the pedimental statues or the east frieze. If the Hephaisteion has ‘Lemnian’ origins then it may be possible to offer a new interpretation of these enigmatic sculptures.