

# Statues of Gods, Demigods and Mortals in Korinthia and the Argolid by Skopas of Paros

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Skopas of Paros was one of the most renowned sculptors of Classical Greece. He introduced in sculpture the representation of *pathos*, a particular idiosyncratic style with a profound effect on sculptors of both contemporary and later generations. Skopas was born on the island of marble and came from a family of sculptors. His father Aristandros collaborated with the great Polykleitos of Argos at Amyklai on the dedication of the trophy from the spoils of the victory at Aigospotamoi.<sup>1</sup> An older Skopas, a contemporary of Myron and Pythagoras, is mentioned by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* 34.49-50) as a sculptor who worked exclusively in bronze, perhaps the grandfather of our Skopas of the 4th century BC. Two other sculptors named Skopas II and Aristandros, a father and a son respectively, most probably members of posterior generations of the same old famous family are known in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC.

Almost exclusively a sculptor of marble, Skopas made only one work in bronze, an *Aphrodite Pandemos* seated on a bronze wild goat, for the goddess' precinct at Elis (Paus. 6.25.1). The image is known from reproductions on Roman coins of Elis from Hadrian to Caracalla and from other artefacts mainly associated with feminine beauty. The island of Paros must have exerted strong influence on Skopas' artistic personality and involvement with the art of sculpture.<sup>2</sup> Paros not only possessed the natural environment for the evolution of the art of sculpture, being the island of marble, but also developed already in early times important workshops of sculpture and raised skilful artists who produced such exquisite pieces as the Archaic *Gorgo* or the Classical *Nike* from Paros.<sup>3</sup> Parian artists already in the Archaic period traveled outside the island and produced excellent works of art. Aristion, active in the third quarter of the 6th century BC, created several works in Athens and Attika, among them the famous statue of *Frasikleia*, one of the most beautiful examples of korai.<sup>4</sup> In the second half of the 5th century, Parian masters were engaged in the Parthenon or other Attic workshops, among them Agorakritos, the pupil and favourite of the great Pheidias. Continuing on this tradition, in the early 4th century BC, Thrasymedes of Paros made the gold and ivory cult image for the temple of Asklepios at Epidauros. Skopas, a very young artist at the time most probably engaged in his

own homeland, soon became a renowned master who traveled to many different places of the ancient world from Attika and the Peloponnese to Central and Northern Greece and farther to Asia Minor in the East, where he made admirable works both as architect and sculptor.

In the Peloponnese, Skopas worked in many places and left praiseworthy tokens of his great artistic talent. In Tegea in Arkadia, he created the most magnificent temple of the Peloponnese dedicated to Athena Alea, far superior to all other temples of the country according to Pausanias (8.45.4-6). For this temple, Skopas made the cult images of *Asklepios* and *Hygieia*; a second group of the same divinities he carved for the town of Gortys, also in Arkadia. For the city of Argos, he created the cult statue of goddess *Hekate*, and for Sikyon he made a statue of *Herakles* and in all probability the *Maenad*, one of the most admired statues in antiquity. For Elis, he produced his only work in bronze, the cult statue of *Aphrodite Pandemos*.

### THE FAMOUS MAENAD

Skopas' celebrated *Maenad* is minutely described by Kallistratos, a sophist of the late 4th century AD, in his work *Ekphraseis* - descriptions in prose of fourteen statues by various artists - entitled *Εἰς τὸ Βάκκης Ἄγαλμα* (*Stat. Descript.* 2). First, the author tells us that the work was of Parian marble, transformed into a real maenad: ἦν βάκκης ἄγαλμα ἐκ λίθου παρίου πεποιημένον ἀλαττόμενον πρὸς τὴν ὄντως βάκκην. The maenad is shown as χιμαροφόνος, that is in the attitude of divine frenzy (θειασμός), at the moment she has just slaughtered the small goat which she carries over her left shoulder held by her left arm, the knife in her right hand. She is dancing Dionysos' dance moving in a remarkably complex posture, her body contorted and with an extreme arching of the back, and the head, showing dramatic facial features, ecstatically thrown back. The impossible of such a body movement in real life, however dared and achieved by Skopas, is emphatically described by Kallistratos who notes how incredible is what you see and how visible what you do not believe: οὕτως καὶ τὸ ὀρώμενον ἄπιστον καὶ τὸ μὴ πιστὸν ὀρώμενον. Skopas' technical ability to express in his marble work so vividly and convincingly one of the most violent moments in a maenad's life is also highly praised by Kallistratos who makes specific mention to the sculptor's skill to show on one and the same block of marble both situations: of death, in the figure of the killed animal, and of life, in the frenzied maenad: καὶ μίαν οὕσαν τὴν ὕλην εἰς θανάτου καὶ ζωῆς διήρει μίμησιν, τὴν μὲν (the maenad) ἔμπνουν στήσασαν καὶ οἶον ὀρεγομένην Κιθαιρῶνος, τὴν δὲ (the goat) ἐκ τοῦ βακχικοῦ θανατωθεῖσαν οἴστρου καὶ τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἀπομαραίνουσαν τὴν ἀκμήν.<sup>5</sup>

Skopas' *Maenad* has been generally recognized in the marble statuette of a maenad in the *Dresden Albertinum und Staatliche Kunstsammlung* (Fig. 1) purchased in 1901 from a collector in Prague who had gotten it in Rome, and published by Georg Treu in 1903. Despite later opposition to the identification of the statue as a copy of the famous Skopaic work, based mainly on the apparent absence of the young goat included in the description of the statue by Kallistratos, the style of the Dresden *Maenad* clearly places the type in the mid-4th century BC and in association with Skopas. Most recently, all relative arguments on the subject were thoroughly reviewed and a full reconstruction, after autopsy of the Dresden statue, with a goat supported and carried by the maenad's missing raised left arm was convincingly proposed by Beryl Barr-Sharrar,<sup>6</sup> showing that the Dresden statuette may in fact copy Skopas' *Maenad* quite accurately and that the complexity of its daring

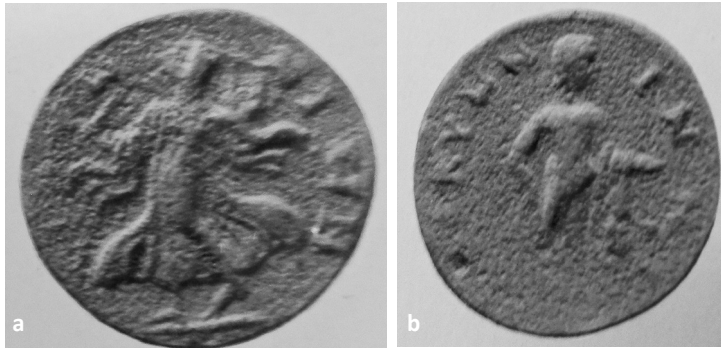


**Figure 1.** The Dresden Maenad. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Skulpturensammlung (from Barr-Sharrar 2013, figs. 1, 3-4, 322-323).

carving could well explain the rarity of this only known copy of the master's famous work.

The statue of the *Maenad* was most probably carved for the city of Sikyon. Pausanias (2.7.5) informs us that a temple dedicated to Dionysos was located near the theater of the city and that white marble statues of maenads stood by the gold and ivory cult image of the god. He also mentions (2.7.6) that Bacchic rites were performed in Sikyon in association with Dionysos' worship in the city as Βάκχειος, i.e. as the divinity whose orgiastic worship culminates to religious paroxysm - the divine ecstasy. The god was honored in annual celebrations including a religious procession of his image through the city and orgiastic rites involving participation of maenads who are sacred to Dionysos and honor him in the state of divine *mania* as Pausanias explicitly notes (2.7.5): ταύτας τὰς γυναῖκας ἱερὰς εἶναι καὶ Διονύσῳ μαίνεσθαι λέγουσιν. It is exactly this moment of Dionysiac possession of a maenad that Skopas expressed in his reputed marble statue of the *Maenad*, highly praised in antiquity.<sup>7</sup>

On Roman coinage of Sikyon<sup>8</sup> of the period of Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus, a maenad in attitude of frenzy is represented (Fig. 2a). The figure is dancing to the left, holding a knife in the right hand and in the raised left perhaps a small animal (kid?). Although the image



**Figure 2.** (a) Roman coin of Sikyon, representation of Maenad. BMC 1887, pl. IX.19 (b) Roman coin of Sikyon, representation of Herakles. BMC 1887, pl. IX.22.

on the coin seems to reflect a later stylistic type, probably of early Hellenistic date, the overall depiction of a frenzied maenad and the attributes held - knife and animal - must have taken inspiration from Skopas' work, whose impact in sculpture can be appreciated via similar representations of figures in violent movement in the late Classical and early Hellenistic periods. The city of Sikyon, where Dionysos' orgiastic worship held such a strong place, was most probably the proper location for the celebrated *Maenad* by Skopas<sup>9</sup> or even maenads by the same sculptor since Pausanias mentions more than one marble statues of these devotees standing next to the god's image in the Sikyonian temple.

Based primarily on stylistic grounds and connections with the Tegea sculptures and the Maussoleion, the *Maenad* is generally included among the creations of the earlier phase of Skopas' career, dated ca 370-360 BC.<sup>10</sup> In the same period, the cult statue of a seated *Hestia* for her sanctuary on Paros<sup>11</sup> and most of the sculptor's works for cities in the Peloponnese should be placed, namely the cult statue of *Aphrodite Pandemos* for Elis, the cult image of *Hekate* for the city of Argos, and the statue of *Herakles* in Sikyon.<sup>12</sup>

### MARBLE STATUE OF HERAKLES

For the city of Sikyon, Skopas carved a stone statue of Herakles which was set up in the gymnasium near the agora (Paus. 2.10.1). In a different place of the city, was located a sanctuary dedicated to Herakles including his ancient *xoanon*. In this place, specific rites were performed to honor Herakles in both his natures, of the god and of the hero. The rites still performed in Sikyon in the travelers' days, included sacrifice of lamb which was consumed in ways suitable to honoring both a god and a hero; the first day of the celebrations named *Olympia*, was dedicated to Herakles the god, and the second named *Herakleia*, to Herakles the hero (Paus. 2.10.1). The slaughter and sacrifice of lamb in association with the festival in honor of Herakles brings to mind the representation of the Skopaic *Maenad* shown precisely at the moment she has just killed the small goat to be offered as a sacrifice to the god, in her case Dionysos. In an indirect way, the performance of the *Olympia/Herakleia* festival in Sikyon further supports the view expressed above about associating the Skopaic *Maenad* with the city of Sikyon.



**Figure 3.** Roman coin of Sikyon, representation of Herakles. BCD 2006, 105, no. 373.10.

The type of the Skopaic *Herakles* for the gymnasium at Sikyon has been sought in a number of copies, more specifically in three particular types of statues of Herakles. First, in the Herakles Lansdowne in London (now in the Getty Museum), showing affinities with the Tegean sculptures.<sup>13</sup> To the known examples of the type was added more recently another Roman copy of the statue, however headless, found in the Villa of Herodes Attikos at Eva in Arkadia. According to the excavators, the statue copied the Skopaic *Herakles* and stood in the so-called Garden-Stadion of the Villa most probably on the opposite side of another statue of Herakles, holding in his left hand the apples, possibly by Lysippos, forming one of symmetrical pairs displayed in the Garden.<sup>14</sup> I find it quite intriguing that such an arrangement of the Villa's sculptural decoration was probably planned with the purpose of exhibiting and comparing works of art by known famous sculptors. Especially, to viewers and admirers of these statues, a comparison of artistic works portraying the same subject and made by two great sculptors of the era, Skopas and Lysippos, would have been very instructive. In particular, if the Lysippic Herakles in exhibition in the Garden was of the type copying the bronze original that the artist made for his birthplace, the city of Sikyon (Paus. 2.9.8), where also the Skopaic *Herakles* stood.

The second type suggested as copying the Skopaic version, is the Genzano-Hope type<sup>15</sup> on the basis of close resemblance to a Herakles representation on a Sikyonian coin of the period of Geta, where the hero is shown standing facing right, holding in right hand the club and with lion skin over his left arm (Fig. 2b).<sup>16</sup> Resemblance is even clearer on another Sikyonian coin of the same period of Geta, more recently published,<sup>17</sup> where Herakles is shown in similar pose standing, leaning with right hand on club and holding lion skin with his left arm (Fig. 3). A third more recent proposal suggested the Copenhagen-Dresden type of a bearded Herakles as the one depicting the Skopaic statue, primarily based on its close similarity to the bearded head of Herakles with lion skin cap from Tegea and the more pathetic appearance, characteristic of the Skopaic style.<sup>18</sup> However, this type is rather closer to a Lysippic version of the weary Herakles, such as the Farnese type, than a Skopaic one<sup>19</sup> and should be rather removed from a possible candidate for the Skopaic statue of Herakles for Sikyon. And although it is difficult to conclude with certainty on the particular type of statue which could be associated with the Skopaic version for the city of Sikyon, the Herakles Lansdowne and its many copies and variants remaining a secure statuary type of the hero in the powerful style



**Figure 4.** Representation of Hekate Triformis on the reverse of Roman coin from Argos. BCD 2006, 283, no. 1187.

of Skopas, numismatic evidence seems to support the Genzano-Hope type suggestion.

Chronologically, the work as already mentioned should be placed in the first phase of Skopas' artistic creation ca 370-360 BC, in which also the *Maenad* belongs, a date further supported by the possibility that the *Maenad* was carved for the temple of Dionysos in the city of Sikyon, as I have suggested above.

#### THE CULT STATUE OF HEKATE

In the city of Argos, Pausanias (2.22.7) saw beyond the sanctuary of Eileithyia a temple dedicated to Hekate. The cult statue of the goddess, made of marble, was a work of Skopas; opposite from it stood two other bronze statues of Hekate by Polykleitos and Naukydes of Argos. Skopas was the most eminent among the three sculptors, a reputed cult image-maker in antiquity together with Pheidias and Praxiteles: ΑΓΑΛΜΑΤΟΠΟΙΟΙ, ΦΕΙΔΙΑΣ Ο ΠΡΑΞΙΤΕΛΗΣ ΣΚΟΠΑΣ.<sup>20</sup> Ancient sources refer to an impressive number of cult statues made by him for temples and sanctuaries in various places of the ancient world. These include the following: *three* cult images of Aphrodite for her temples in Elis, Samothrace and elsewhere (later in Rome); *two* images of Athena in Thebes and Knidos correspondingly, *one* of Dionysos in Knidos, *two* cult statues of Apollo in Rhamnous (later in Rome) and Chryse in the Propontis, *one* of Ares (later in Rome), *one* of Artemis in Thebes, *two* of the Venerable goddesses (Σεμναί) in Athens made in Parian lychnites, *two* groups of Asklepios and Hygieia for the temples in Tegea and Gortys in Arkadia, *one* of Hermes (unknown place), *one* of Hestia for her sanctuary on Paros (later in Rome), *one* of Leto and Ortygia in Ephesos, *one* of Hekate in Argos. And although both Argive sculptors were authors of famous works including the gold and ivory statue of Hebe by Naukydes standing next to Polykleitos' famous Hera at Argos, and the cult image of Zeus Philios by Polykleitos, most probably the Younger, for the temple of Demeter and Kore at Megalopolis, Skopas' indisputable fame as cult image-maker apparently drove the decision of the Argives to commission the Parian master on the making of the cult statue of Hekate for her temple in their city. The bronze statues of Hekate by the other two sculptors obviously preceded the making of the marble cult image of the goddess by the Parian sculptor: Naukydes of the school of the elder Polykleitos, from the family of Patrokles who may have been a brother of Polykleitos, was active around 400 BC, and Polykleitos the Younger, who was also an architect,



**Figure 5.** Representation of Hekate Triformis. (a) Archaeological Museum of Sikyon (*Hellenismo - Religione Greca e Antiche Tradizioni album*) (b) Relief from Aigina (from Papachatzis 1994, 236, fig. 276).

perhaps a younger brother or pupil of Naukydes belongs to the next generation and worked in the first quarter of the 4th century BC.<sup>21</sup>

One of the statues of the goddess in this temple most probably represented a three-figured Hekate, as suggested by the depiction of Hekate *Triformis* on Roman coinage of the Hadrianic period from Argos. On the reverse of the coins, a three-bodied image of Hekate holding torches is shown and on the obverse the bust of Hadrian's wife Sabina to right (Fig. 4). The first sculptor to have represented such an image of the goddess seems to have been Alkamenes, the famous pupil of Pheidias. His image of a three-figured Hekate called *Epipyrigia* by the Athenians, stood by the temple of Athena Nike on the Acropolis of Athens (Paus. 2.30.2) and was probably represented in an Archaistic style similar to another work of the sculptor, the Hermes called *Propylaios* (before the Gates) which stood also on the Acropolis of Athens and

was seen by Pausanias. The type of *Epipyrgidia* is perhaps reproduced on a number of small votive images of the goddess discovered in Athens.<sup>22</sup>

The three-figured image of Hekate was most probably inspired by and associated with her property, among others, of the goddess of the crossroads (*Enodia*), i.e. having to look in many directions at the same time. In this capacity, representing simultaneously all three powers: chthonic, ghostly and of the underworld, she was particularly worshipped in Boeotia, Thessaly and the island of Aigina, where numerous celebrators from the neighboring regions of the Peloponnese and Attika traveled in order to take part in the annual festival held to her honor. And although the ancient statue (*xoanon*) of the goddess in her famous temple in Aigina depicted Hekate in one figure, as Pausanias explicates distinguishing it from the first three-figured statue by Alkamenes, this type of representation of the goddess, generally a popular type in Korinthia and the Argolid in particular in Roman times (Fig. 5a), is also known from Aigina via analogous depictions in reliefs (Fig. 5b), and coins of the Roman period.

Returning to Argos, it is difficult to conclude regarding the sculptor who created a three-figured image of Hekate for her temple, reproduced on Roman coins of the city. Pausanias who saw the three statues in the temple does not offer any information on the connection between statuary types and their creators. And although the depiction of Hekate *Triformis* on the Roman coinage from Argos may be in all probability depended on one of these three statues, it is presently not possible to associate the type with a particular one among the three masters.

Skopas' cult statue of Hekate for Argos, despite the lack of any concrete data concerning its dating, could be placed plausibly in the first phase of his career ca. 370-60 BC, when he worked for various cities in the Peloponnese<sup>23</sup> before his engagement with the Mausolleion at Halikarnassos and the undertaking of the great architectural project at Tegea in Arkadia. His further involvement in the neighboring Korinthia with the carving of the statue of Herakles and of the Maenad for the city of Sikyon would point to the same chronological phase also.



**NOTES**

1. Paus. 3.18.8. Aristandros made the figure of a woman holding a lyre, representing Sparta, and Polykleitos an Aphrodite called “the Aphrodite of Amyklai”.
2. On influences and connections between Skopas’ art and artistic tradition of the island of Paros, see Katsonopoulou 2004 and more recently 2013.
3. Zafiropoulou 2000; Katsonopoulou 2015.
4. For a most recent and full discussion of this statue, see Barlou 2013.
5. For a detailed analysis of the statue’s description by Kallistratos, see Petropoulos 2013.
6. Barr-Sharrar 2013, on the reconstruction especially figs. 16-22, 331.
7. Kallistratos, *Stat. Descript.* 2; *Anthologia Planudea* 60; *Anthologia Palatina* 9.774.
8. *BMC Peloponnesus* 1887, 55, pl. IX.19.
9. Such an association has been suggested in the past by Furtwängler 1893, 650 although practically ignored by scholarship since then.
10. Stewart 1977, ch. 7, 92-93; Calcani 2009, 68.
11. For a discussion of the statue and its location in Hestia’s sanctuary on Paros, see Katsonopoulou 2000, 205-6 and 2004, 158-59. Especially on the sanctuary and its architecture by Skopas, see Gruben 1996 and 1999.
12. Stewart 1977, 91 and Calcani 2009, 47.
13. The type was proposed as representing the statue made by Skopas for the gymnasium at Sikyon by Furtwängler 1893, 515-20; Graef 1889, 189-226.
14. Spyropoulos 2010, 65-6.
15. Stewart 1977, 90-1.
16. *BMC* 1887, 57, pl. IX. 22.
17. *BCD* 2006, 105, no. 373.10.
18. Todisco 1993, 81, fig. 146.
19. So noted by Rolley 1999, 274.
20. *Laterculi Alexandrini*, 7.3-5.
21. Pliny (*NH* 34.50) dates Naukydes in the 95th Olympiad (400 BC) together with the sculptor Patrokles who is attested by inscriptional evidence as his father. For a list of sources on both sculptors, see Pollitt 1990, esp. 79-80, 106, 195-6.
22. Fullerton 1986, 669-75; see also Harrison 1965, 86-107 about *Hekataia* found in the Agora.
23. See also Calcani 2009, 22 and 47.

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## ABSTRACT

### STATUES OF GODS, DEMIGODS AND MORTALS IN KORINTHIA AND THE ARGOLID BY SKOPAS OF PAROS

One of the most celebrated statues of Classical antiquity, the marble statue of a maenad carved by the famous sculptor Skopas of Paros and recognized in the *Dresden Maenad* statuette, was most probably set up in the city of Sikyon in the second quarter of the 4th century BC and was in all probability one of the marble statues of maenads seen by Pausanias next to the chryselephantine cult statue of Dionysos in his temple, situated near the theater of the city. For Sikyon, the renowned Parian artist also made a marble statue of *Herakles*, seen by the traveler in the gymnasium of Sikyon near the Agora. A third work of Skopas, set up in this part of the Peloponnese, was the marble cult statue of *Hekate* for her temple in the city of Argos, where also stood two other bronze statues of the goddess created by Naukydes and Polykleitos. In the paper, I discuss the type, style, and dating of these works in the light of available literary sources and most recent archaeological evidence, and in connection with Skopas' long prolific career and oeuvre.

## ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

### ΑΓΑΛΜΑΤΑ ΘΕΩΝ, ΗΜΙΘΕΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΘΗΗΤΩΝ ΣΤΗΝ ΚΟΡΙΝΘΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΓΟΛΙΔΑ ΑΠΟ ΤΟΝ ΣΚΟΠΑ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΡΟΥ

Ένα από τα πιο φημισμένα έργα της κλασικής αρχαιότητας, το μαρμάρινο άγαλμα μαινάδας που φιλοτέχνησε ο διάσημος γλύπτης Σκόπας της Πάρου, αντίγραφο του οποίου αναγνωρίζεται στην *Μαινάδα* της *Δρέσδης*, είχε στηθεί πιθανότατα στην πόλη της Σικυώνας στο β' τέταρτο του 4ου αιώνα π.Χ. και ήταν ένα από τα μαρμάρινα αγάλματα μαινάδων που είδε ο Πausανίας κοντά στο χρυσελεφάντινο λατρευτικό άγαλμα του θεού Διονύσου στο ναό του, κοντά στο θέατρο της πόλης. Για την Σικυώνα, ο περίφημος παριανός γλύπτης φιλοτέχνησε επίσης μαρμάρινο άγαλμα *Ηρακλή* που είδε ο Πausανίας στο Γυμνάσιο της Σικυώνας, κοντά στην Αγορά. Ένα τρίτο έργο του Σκόπα σε αυτό το τμήμα της Πελοποννήσου, ήταν το μαρμάρινο λατρευτικό άγαλμα *Εκάτης* για το ναό της στην πόλη του Άργους, όπου επίσης βρίσκονταν δύο άλλα χάλκινα αγάλματα της θεάς, έργα των Ναυκύδη και Πολύκλειτου. Στο άρθρο, συζητώ τον τύπο, την τεχνοτροπία, και τη χρονολόγηση αυτών των Σκοπαδικών έργων, υπό το φως διαθέσιμων φιλολογικών πηγών και νεότερης αρχαιολογικής μαρτυρίας, και σε σχέση με το γόνιμο και μακρόχρονο έργο του Σκόπα.

