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The Statue of Apollo Smintheus by Skopas of Paros in the Troad Region: Reviving a Past Style

In the Classical period, a number of renowned Greek sculptors created famous sculptures for the city of Parion on the Propontis and the Troad area [11, pp. 495–500]. First among these masterpieces made for the city of Parion, was a bronze statue of Herakles, mentioned by Pliny (*NH* 34.78) as a work of the Greek sculptor He(a)gesias (Ἡγησίας) of the early 5th century B. C. In the 4th century B. C., and particularly in the period following the Peace of Antalkidas in 387/86 B. C., two new masterpieces were set up in Parion: a marble statue of Eros by the famous Athenian sculptor Praxiteles and a bronze statue of the Trojan prince Paris by the sculptor Euphranor from the Isthmus. The third celebrated work of the era, a statue of Apollo with a mouse (Apollo Smintheus) was made for the sanctuary of the god at Chryse in the Troad by a most renowned sculptor of Classical Greece, Skopas from the island of Paros.

Skopas introduced in ancient Greek sculpture the representation of *pathos*, a style expressing the strong emotions of the soul — τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πάθος —, and his art had a profound effect on sculptors of contemporary and later generations. Almost exclusively a sculptor of marble, Skopas made only one work in bronze, an Aphrodite Pandemos seated on a bronze goat, for the goddess' precinct in Elis (Paus. 6.25.1). He was a reputed cult image-maker mentioned among the greatest sculptors of the Classical world, together with Pheidias and Praxiteles (*Laterculi Alexandrini* col. 7, 3–5). Ancient writers refer to a great number of cult statues made by Skopas for temples and sanctuaries in different parts of the ancient world, where he travelled and worked. These include the following:

Three cult images of Aphrodite for her temples in Elis (Peloponnese), Samothrace, and elsewhere (later in Rome). In Samothrace, Aphrodite formed a group of two with Pothos or even three, if Phaethon is to be added depending on the different versions of Pliny's manuscripts [4, pp. 396–399; 18, p. 110].

Two images of Athena, one in Thebes (Central Greece) and another in Knidos in Asia Minor.

One statue of Dionysos in Knidos (Asia Minor).

One statue of Ares (later in Rome).

One statue of Artemis in Thebes (Central Greece).

Two images of the Venerable goddesses (Σεμναί) in Athens.

Two groups of Asklepios and Hygieia for the temples in Tegea and Gortys in Arcadia.

One statue of Hermes (unknown place).

One cult statue of Hestia for her sanctuary on Paros (later in Rome).

One group of Leto and Ortygia in Ephesos.

One statue of Hekate for her temple in Argos (Peloponnese).

Two cult statues of Apollo, one for Rhamnous in Attica (later in Rome) and another for his sanctuary at Chryse in the Troad.

The creation of the cult statue of Apollo Smintheus for his sanctuary at Chryse by a renowned sculptor like Skopas, first indicates that in the 4th century B. C. the sanctuary was a well-known cult place, where a famous work of art was housed. The findings from the excavations at Smintheion, including coins of the Classical period, support the hypothesis of the temple's existence and importance in the 4th century B. C. [3, pp.95–97]. The discovery of a significant number of coins of the Hellenistic Alexandria Troas (the former Antigoneia founded by Antigonos the One-Eyed ca. 310 B. C.) at Smintheion compared to just two coins from more distant places, one from the island of Chios and another from Mytilene, indicates that Smintheion at the time had become primarily a place of pilgrimage for neighboring areas [3, p. 100].

The predominance of Alexandria Troas becomes even greater in the Roman period, when more than 82 % of the Roman coins found at Smintheion come from this city. The next highest presence concerns the city of Parion represented by 7,79 % [3, p. 101]. These two places are also predominant among the coins included in the Smintheion Treasure discovered in 1998. Numismatic evidence from Smintheion shows that the sanctuary prospered in the Roman period attracting many visitors continuing down to the 7th century A. D., with the exception of the period of the Gothic invasion in 261/62 A. D.

It is probable that before the Skopaic image was made, an earlier statue of the god existed at Smintheion. The foundation legends suggest a much earlier date for the sanctuary since it was built by Apollo's priest Krinis in Chryse to thank the god for saving the city from the mice that devastated the crops (the mice were sent by Apollo who was angry with the priest for an unknown reason). As exemplified by Strabo (13.1.48), the epithet of the god Smintheus originates from the mouse, an animal controlled and used by the god to punish and destroy those committing impiety. Apollo's anger and consequent punishment is marvelously described in the first book of the *Iliad* (1.1–317), when he sent the plague against the Achaeans to take revenge of the capture of Chryseis.

The foundation legend of the Smintheus cult involves the finding of a cave and of a statue of Apollo by the priest's herdsman named Ordes to whom the god appeared and promised to kill the mice. The scenes of the legend are represented on Roman Imperial coins: Apollo's epiphany to Ordes and the cult place of Apollo Smintheus in the form of a cave, where inside the cult statue of the god is shown. It is noted that recent surveys in the region of Smintheion resulted in locating a cave about 200m south of the Hellenistic temple [3, p. 99].

To capture the iconography of the Skopaic Apollo made for the sanctuary at Chryse, first we consider the available literary evidence. Strabo says (13.1.48) that the cult statue of Apollo Smintheus in his sanctuary at Chryse included the symbol of the god's epithet, i.e. the mouse lying beneath his foot; this information is also preserved in Eustathios (34.16). The geographer refers to the image as a xoanon but we should bear in mind that the term 'xoanon' in his time referred to cult statues not necessarily associated with wood as material and a certain primitive form of an image. In fact, only in the 3rd/2nd century B. C., the term began to denote especially cult statues, whereas before referred to high craftsmanship in a variety of objects and from the



Fig. 1. Bronze coin showing the cult statue of Apollo Smintheus, Alexandria Troas, ca. 300 BC (after Ozgunel, 2015 [14, p.95, fig. 1])



Fig. 2. Silver coin showing the cult statue of Apollo Smintheus, Alexandria Troas, 2nd century BC (after Ozgunel, 2015 [14, p.95, fig. 2])



Fig. 3. Bronze coin showing the cult statue of Apollo Smintheus receiving worship, Alexandria Troas, Roman period (after Grace, 1932 [7, p. 229, fig. 2])

end of the 5th century onwards mainly to high quality images of gods regardless of age, material and style [5, pp. 53, 67– 68].

Strabo's information about the cult image is supported by numismatic evidence from the region. Apollo Smintheus is represented on a great number of Alexandria Troas coins, where two basic types prevail. Naturally, our attention is first turned to the only coin type of the Early Hellenistic period (ca. 300 B. C.) showing Apollo with the mouse (Fig. 1). In this image, the god is shown in profile to the right, with quiver on his back, and holding a phiale and a bow; by his foot at the lower right, the mouse mentioned by Strabo is portrayed. In the same attitude and bearing all three attributes, but without the mouse, Apollo appears on Hellenistic coins of the 2nd century B. C. with the inscription ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΟΣ ΣΜΙΘΕΩΣ (Fig. 2), as well as on the earliest depiction of the 4th century coin of Hamaxitos (400–310 BC). Further, in Hellenistic and Roman coins, Apollo Smintheus appears with the addition of a tripod in front of him. Notable among these coins is the example showing the statue inside the temple, receiving worship as befits a cult statue (Fig. 3).

Considering these depictions (with or without the mouse), we observe that they share the same stiff archaic appearance in stance, drapery, and hairstyle. The god is shown in profile to the right, the free leg pulled back, clad in a himation; the right hand is outstretched holding the phiale, the left slightly bent up to hold the bow, quiver over the shoulder. On one of the coins, dated to the Caracalla period, two locks of hair fallen down the nape on the back can be distinguished and perhaps, over the forehead, the hair is shaped in two rows of curls, in a Late Archaic/Early Classical date fashion.

The second type, illustrated on this coinage, comes in stark contrast to the one just examined. Apollo is here shown naked to the left, with right foot resting on a pedestal, left firmly on the ground, holding in the right hand branch while the left rests on his left hip, and occasionally with a raven before him (Fig. 4). This type, although missing the most important symbol of Apollo Smintheus, the mouse, stylistically follows traits compatible with the 4th century B. C. sculpture, as opposed to the archaistic type of Apollo (with or without the mouse) of the earlier 4th century/Hellenistic coins. In this type, some scholars following Richter's view [16,

p.274] have recognized a reproduction of the Skopaic Apollo Smintheus. However, the main reason for rejecting the archaic type of Apollo as the work of the Parian sculptor on the coinage from Alexandria Troas, is the insistent association of his style exclusively with the expression of *pathos*. But such an approach is defective for a number of reasons.

Skopas was a composite personality of an artist, a sculptor, and an architect, therefore his works include elements of both tradition and innovation. For example, in his architectural masterpiece, the all-marble temple of Athena Alea at Tegea in Arcadia, the Parian artist succeeded in combining strict Peloponnesian traditions with progressive elements, resulting in a temple built in a mainland Doric tradition, however embellished with the rich use of ornaments revealing a more progressive Cycladic origin [15, pp. 181–183]. The idea, therefore, of reviving a past style for certain subjects in sculpture, as in the archaic character of Apollo Smintheus, naturally would attract the interest of such a complex artistic personality. And, indeed, we can detect this more traditional aspect of Skopas' style, as opposed to *pathos*, in a significant number of his cult statues.

In a recent study of mine on sculptures made by Skopas for the Korinthia/Argolid region in the Peloponnese, I reconsidered the cult image of Hekate made by the Parian sculptor for her temple in the city of Argos, as a possible representation of the Hekate Triformis type [10, pp. 216–218, figs 4, 5] on the basis of a three-figured statue of the goddess reproduced on Roman coinage of the Hadrianic period from Argos and in sculptural works of the Roman period from the Argolid and the Korinthia region (Fig. 5). The type of Hekate Triformis goes back to a prototype by Alkamenes on the Acropolis of Athens, probably represented in an archaistic style similar to the Hermes Propylaios by the same sculptor. Pausanias (2.22.7) makes clear that the marble cult image of Hekate for her temple in Argos was made by Skopas and that two other bronze statues opposite from it, were constructed by Polykleitos the Younger and Naukydes of Argos. Naturally, the most famous statue of all three housed in the temple, reproduced on the coinage and sculpture of the Roman period, i. e. the Hekate Triformis type, must have sprung from the cult image of the goddess created by Skopas. The three-figured archaistic type of Hekate would be fitting a more profound religiousness in connection with the triple capacity of the goddess as chthonic,



Fig. 4. Bronze coin showing Apollo standing with foot on pedestal, Alexandria Troas, Roman period (after Ozgunel, 2015 [14, p. 95, fig. 8])



Fig. 5. Marble statue of Hekate Triformis, Roman period (after Katsonopoulou 2016 [10, p. 217, fig. 5])



Fig. 6. Cult statue of Apollo Palatine, Roman period, coin of Antoninus Pius (after Rizzo, 1932 [17, pl. D])

ghostly, and of the underworld, a representation compatible with Skopas' interest in reviving past styles.

The creation of Apollo Smintheus for the sanctuary at Chryse falls into the Skopaic oeuvre of the decade 360–350 B. C., when the sculptor was in Asia Minor executing a number of works for Knidos, Ephesos, and Halikarnassos. Shortly before, is dated another cult image of Apollo by this sculptor, Apollo on the Palatine mentioned by Pliny (36.25) and identified with an Apollo from Rhamnous in Attica by Skopas transferred later in the Palation in Rome, as mentioned in the *Notitia: descriptio urbis Romae* of the late antiquity. The mention by a third source, the poet Propertius (2.31.15–16) present at the dedication of the temple in the year 28 B. C., of the image of Apollo with the lyre (the Kitharodos type) on the Palatine, has led to the recognition

of the Apollo Palatine in the type represented on the Sorrento base between his mother Leto (by the sculptor Kephisodotos the Younger) and his sister Artemis (by the sculptor Timotheos) [17, pp. 51–57]. The type was reproduced on coinage of the Augustan era (Fig. 6). The close similarity between the Sorrento base Apollo and the late 4th century Apollo Patroos of Euphranor has provoked the discussion of dependency of one type on the other, the Skopaic Apollo finally considered an earlier creation dated before the Patroos [18, pp. 93–94, 141, pl. 33b].

The 5th century features of the Palatine (the shorter section of the peplos' overfold below the belt, the drapery with many evenly spaced folds, the broad frontal pose, the free leg drawn to the back) indicate the choice of the sculptor to shape its iconography in a past style, perhaps to retain a religious tradition. Therefore, the rejection of this style as alien to Skopas by some scholars simply because it does not conform with the stylistic expression of passion is ungrounded. Fragments from the head and foot of a destroyed marble colossal statue discovered in the excavations on the Palatine hill by Caretonni in the mid-1960's, are now identified with the Skopaic cult statue of Apollo Palatine. The fragment of the head, made of Parian marble of the excellent quality, preserves the left eye, cheek, forehead, and part of the hair. The fragment of the foot covered by the long drapery of the figure, is made of Pentelic marble and has footwear showing a filleted sole [19, p. 47, figs 26–27; 1, pp. 56–58, pls. II–III]. The features on these fragments — in short, the hair pulled back showing that it could be either tied up or partly tied up and partly falling down on the back and the filleted sole appearing from the late 4th century on — show traits similar to the Palatine Apollo or the Kitharodos type.

Skopas was highly regarded in Rome, particularly in the Augustan Age, and his works seem to have influenced the archaistic style of the era. The Apolline triad is shown in a series of Archaistic reliefs of the Imperial period from Rome, one of the best preserved in Villa Albani (Fig. 7). The scene illustrated here with Apollo receiving a libation takes place outside a temple interpreted as the temple of Apollo on the Palatine. Thus, the god's figure is considered as springing from his cult statue housed in the temple. Apollo standing flanked by his mother Leto (right) and his sister Artemis (left), is depicted on one of the seven sculptured column drums discovered at the Hellenistic Smintheion [14, pp. 35–36].

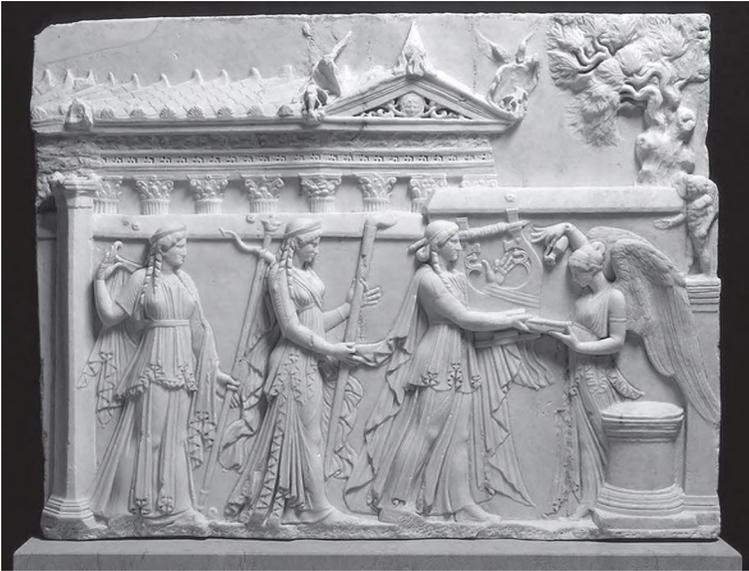


Fig. 7. The Apolline Triad, Archaistic marble relief. Villa Albani, Rome (after Calcagni, 2021 [2, p. 62, fig. 8])

Returning to Apollo Smintheus for the temple at Chryse, the last observation concerns the engagement of Skopas in the Troad in a broader sense, possibly as a sculptor and an architect. The great Parian artist was involved under this capacity in a number of projects in Greece proper and elsewhere. Above all, he was the mastermind behind the construction of the most impressive temple in the Peloponnese, the temple of Athena Alea at Tegea of Arcadia, and its sculptural decoration (Paus. 8.45.4–7). Before Tegea perhaps ca. 375–365 B.C., we find him working in his homeland, the island of Paros, as architect of the Prytaneion of Paros and sculptor of the cult image of the goddess Hestia for her temple [9, pp. 161–162]. The temple of Hestia included in the Prytaneion built near the Agora of the capital city of Paros, was recently reconstructed based on Classical architectural members from the islands of Paros and Naxos, re-used in later monuments [8, pp. 307–311, fig. 7]. Similarly, Skopas was most probably responsible for the architectural design and sculptural decoration of the Hall of Choral Dancers in Samothrace, as proposed by the excavators [13, pp. 67–71]. And perhaps he was involved in the same twofold capacity in Chryse, as suggested long before by Leaf [12, p. 242].

Actually, a possible engagement of Skopas as the designer architect of the temple at Smintheion and the sculptor of the new cult image of the god finds support in the relative passage of Strabo (13.1.48): *Ἐν δὲ τῇ Χρύσει ταύτῃ καὶ τὸ τοῦ Σμινθέως Ἀπόλλωνός ἐστιν ἱερόν καὶ τὸ σύμβολον τὸ τὴν ἐτυμότητα τοῦ ὀνόματος σώζον, ὃ μῦς, ὑπόκειται τῷ ποδὶ τοῦ ξοάνου. Σκόπα δ' ἐστὶν ἔργα τοῦ Παρίου.* The use of the plural *ἔργα* denotes both the sanctuary (*ἱερόν*) and the cult image of the god (*ξοάνου*) with the mouse, i. e. the symbol from which the epithet of Apollo Smintheus results. And, as noted long ago, although overlooked, [6, p. 177] it is most unlikely that a famous artist would have been commissioned to create just the animal-symbol

of a statue but not the statue itself. It is also improbable that the ancient geographer would record the information on the creation of the mouse alone and not of the cult statue of the god.

If the ancient text reference would apply only to one of the projects undertaken by Skopas for Chryse, i. e. the creation of the cult image for the temple, the singular ἔργον would have been used. Therefore, Leaf's suggestion about Skopas' dual engagement in the Troad, as designer of the temple of Apollo Smintheus and creator of the cult statue, although basically gone unnoticed, is entirely plausible.

In conclusion, the cult image of Apollo Smintheus for his temple at Smintheion can be enlisted on good grounds among Skopas' creations, whose iconography was shaped after the sculptor's choice of reviving past forms, thus showing his capability to easily move between two opposite stylistic elements, tradition and novelty. Apparently, the style selected each time was dependent on the particular subject represented and the message to be emitted. And certainly, the choice made by the sculptor of a rather stiff figure of Apollo Smintheus is more appropriate for the depiction of a divine image expressing majesty and power, intentionally distant from the humanized appearance of gods characterizing the artistic tendency of Skopas' age. The cult image of Apollo Smintheus with the mouse, executed in an archaic fashion, was intended to portray Apollo's identity of the Savior god for the city and the people of Chryse.

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Title. The statue of Apollo Smintheus by Skopas of Paros in the Troad Region: Reviving a Past Style

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Abstract. In the early 5th–4th centuries B. C., a number of famous sculptures by Classical Greek masters were set up in the region of the Troad in Asia Minor. Among them are included a bronze statue of Herakles by the sculptor Hegesias who worked in Athens in the early 5th century B. C., a marble statue of Eros by the famous Athenian sculptor Praxiteles, and a bronze statue of the Trojan prince Paris by the Greek sculptor Euphranor from the Isthmus near Corinth, all created for the city of Parion on the Propontis. In addition to the sculptures made for Parion, the marble cult image of Apollo Smintheus for his sanctuary at Chryse was created by the renowned sculptor and architect of the 4th century B. C., Skopas of Paros. Skopas was a reputed cult image-maker. A great number of cult statues created by him for temples and sanctuaries in the ancient world are mentioned in the ancient sources. Focusing here on the Skopaic work for Smintheion, the article presents the history and iconography of the cult image of Apollo Smintheus for Chryse based on a) literary b) numismatic and c) recent archaeological evidence from Smintheion. It also examines and discusses the iconographic conception of this particular cult image indicating the artist's choice of an archaistic representation, in comparison with other cult statues by Skopas. This group of sculptures suggests another stylistic approach taken by the sculptor, as opposed to the unique expression of pathos introduced by Skopas in ancient Greek art.

Keywords: Classical Greek sculpture, Skopas of Paros, Ancient Troad, Smintheion, Cult images, Asia Minor, marble statuary, ancient Greek religion

Название статьи. Аполлон Сминфей из Трояды работы Скопаса: архаизация культовой статуи в IV в. до н.э.

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Аннотация. В начале V–IV вв. до н.э. в Трояде в Малой Азии было установлено множество знаменитых скульптур работы мастеров классической Греции. В их числе бронзовая статуя Геракла скульптора Гегесия, работавшего в Афинах в начале V в. до н.э., мраморная статуя Эрота работы знаменитого афинского скульптора Праксителя и бронзовая статуя троянского царевича Париса работы греческого скульптора Евфанора из Истма близ Коринфа. Все они были созданы для города Парион на Пропонтиде. Также известным скульптором и архитектором IV вв. до н.э. Скопасом была создана мраморная статуя Аполлона Сминфея для его святилища в Хрисе. Скопас был известен своими культовыми статуями, о чем свидетельствует большое количество упоминаний его работ в античных источниках. Фокусируясь на скульптуре Аполлона Сминфея работы Скопаса, в данной статье автор представляет историю и иконографию культового образа Аполлона Сминфея для Хрисы на основе литературных, нумизматических и новых археологических источников из Сминтейона. Рассматривается иконографическая концепция Аполлона Сминфея, сравнение с другими работами Скопаса позволяет выявить в этом образе архаические черты. Эта группа скульптур демонстрирует иной стилистический подход, свободный от экспрессии и пафоса, которые отличают творчество Скопаса.

Ключевые слова: классическая греческая скульптура, Скопас, Трояда, Сминтейон, культовый образ, Малая Азия, мраморная пластика, древнегреческая религия