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“UNSEEN GOD” OR “GIVER OF WEALTH”? IMAGE OF HADES ON ANCIENT COINS

Hades belonged to the deities whose attention mortals did not aspire to attract. However, in archaeological sources there is a sufficient amount of evidence about the monetisation of the deity's cult. Among all the stories about Hades, the story about the abduction of Persephone became the most famous on the periphery of the ancient world (in the Northern Black Sea region or in Asia Minor). Moreover, the city of Nysa in the province of Asia made this plot one of the most widespread in its coinage and culture in general, because it positioned itself as the place where this abduction took place. Thus, the figure of Hades was institutionalised in various coin types, which is extremely interesting.

Key words: Roman province Asia, Nysa, Antiquity, Hades, coins, coinage, emperors, Serapis, abduction of Persephone.

The history of the ancient culture and economy and the history of the construction of a common consciousness closely interconnect in the numismatic materials of the Greco-Roman world. The coins of the Greek cities of the Roman provinces are especially important in this regard. Even in times of the crisis of mythological outlook and the rise of philosophy, a myth continued to be an effective and the most important way of forming a common past for disparate communities and poleis. In the first centuries AD, due to the formation of the national market and increase in money circulation, the decoration of coins with mythological scenes was also a way of self-promotion for social groups. The inclusion of certain scenes in the coinage or the popularisation of local deities helped to attract pilgrims, merchants and other travelers. The cities of Asia Minor could

be proud of having a large amount of myths related both to the Roman history and to the main gods of the Greek pantheon. This primarily concerns the cycle of Trojan myths, the Argonauts' journeys, Dionysus, Artemis-Diana etc. Since the myths stood out by their democratism from the very beginning, the local communities could creatively use their regional potential and “appropriate” the figures of well-known gods. This process can be clearly traced in the analysis of the coins of Greek cities of the Roman period.

In the numismatic materials, one can distinguish the figures of several gods, who have always been the patrons of the local population and were frequently depicted in the coins stamping. Even with the presence of local nominal epithets and cults, there are hundreds of Hellenistic — Roman coins depicting Zeus, Athena, Artemis, Apollo, Hermes-Mercury, Dionysus or Neptune throughout the Mediterranean. In modern historical science, a significant amount of research has been devoted to these gods and their images on the coins. Information on such images is contained in encyclopedic publications (Gruppe 1906; Lengauer 1994; eds. Howgego, Volker, Burnett 2005; ed. Metcalf 2012; Otto 2022), works devoted to the problems of personifications (Hinks 1968; Webster 1954; Tuggey 2017) or concerning the iconography and other aspects of cult (Florenzano 2018; Markowitz 2023a, 2023b).

On the contrary, not all the gods of the so-called Olympic pantheon have got such an honor. This is especially relevant in the case of the protagonist of the proposed study. Despite his genealogically substantiated belonging to the highest class of the Greek pantheon, Hades-Aidoneus appears very rarely in myths and is sometimes not included in the lists of the Dodekathēoi-List (LIMC 1988, 1, p. 367). In the proposed study, the usage of the image of Hades-Aidoneus in the coinage of ancient cities, mainly in the Roman province of Asia and adjacent territories, will be analysed. This topic is practically not presented in modern scholarship, and although it is extremely relevant, it has not been studied at all by Ukrainian historical science.

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The lack of the image of Demeter or Persephone's analysis is due to the fact that the sphere of these women's activities concerned the world of the living, determined their existence, and prolonged the life. Hades-Aidoneus was exclusively associated with the afterlife, and, at first glance, should not have been actively involved in the everyday life of an ancient person.

Surprisingly, many "monetary" aspects are associated with the god of the dead and the king of the underworld, the eldest son of Cronus and Rhea. First of all, it is said that Hades, under the name of Pluto, was the patron of all underground minerals, including raw materials for coinage. The etymology of this name, Πλούτων (Latin PLVTO) is related to Πλοῦτος meaning "wealth", "prosperity". Secondly, Hades, in the broader sense of the word, was associated with the phenomenon of "Charon's obol", a coin that in some regions was put into the mouths of the deceased before being buried as payment for transporting the soul to the realm of the dead. And, more narrowly, on certain coins of the Roman period, we can find the figure of the ruler of the underworld and the scenes from the myth about him.

In general, we should start with the fact that Hades, the ruler of the realm of the dead, was one of those gods whose name people tried not to say aloud, in order not to attract his attention. The figure of this god is associated with the biggest number of euphemisms. He was called Aidoneus (Invisible), Pluto (the one who gives wealth), and Climenus (i.e. Glorious) (Paus. 6.25.2), and Eubouleus (i.e. the Good Counselor). He was often called the Chthonic Zeus. There are some nominal epithets such as "the one who leads" (Hegetes), "the one who rules the Moirages" (Moiragetes), "the one who attracts all people to his kingdom" (Agesilaus), which are unfamiliar to the general public, but very important for understanding the attitude of the ancient people to Hades. In ancient culture, Hades had never been depicted as an evil or frightful god. During the sacrificing to Hades, the adherents of the cult turned their heads away, but this deity can be considered one of the manifestations of unmoved justice. It is difficult to judge the true nature of the feelings of the ancient Greek-speaking inhabitants of Asia Minor, but iconographic sources do not indicate fear or avoidance of this god or the phenomenon he personified.

Although Pausanias describes the Eleans as the only people to worship Hades, he nevertheless mentions statues and altars to the god else-

where. At Elis, as in other cults of Hades hidden behind euphemistic names such as "Klymenos" or "Zeus Chthonios", the deadly nature of the god is to the fore, as opposed to the perception elsewhere of Hades-Pluto as a giver of fertility, a god who carries a cornucopia and is connected with Demeter and Kore. However, these are two sides of the same coin: Hades' wealth lies not only in fertility, but also in weeping (Burton 2018, p. 211).

In general, the myth was an authoritative story, a way to convey some experience (not necessarily an individual one), to teach and to socialise. That is why Classical myths are variable. The symbolism and the metaphorical nature of the myth is always directed at the basic cognitive abilities of a person — self-awareness, memory, imagination or fantasy. From the point of view of a 21st-century person, it is quite difficult to decipher ancient myths. With certain amount of humor, this process can be compared to the practice of interpreting "signals" and "hints" done by the political observers and various experts after the meetings of important politicians or the publication of joint communiqués. Through words and images, ancient myths allowed the individual and the polis communities to see something else apart from themselves and to be where they had not been before. This thesis can be explained through the analysis of the coins minting of the Lydian city of Nysa (Νύσσα or Νύσσα). Nysa in Greek mythology was a mountainous area without a specific location. It was in this region where nymphs of Hyades adopted Dionysus (who was often identified with Zeus of Nysa). In addition, Hades was sometimes called Zeus Infernal (Ζεὺς καταχθόνιος). All this indicates that for the inhabitants of Asia Minor the mythological history remained in an inseparable or branched state and one god appeared under different names. Nysa was considered to be located in Libya, India, Ethiopia, Arabia, and etc. Nysa in Lydia was also located in a mountainous region. What is more, the fields of Nysa appeared in the story of the abduction of Persephone. All this made it possible to claim that the mythical region was tied to the actual one.

The use of the image of Hades in numismatics was almost the same as the use of the image of other deities or personifications. In other words, when analysing coins with the image of Hades, there is both his bust and his full-growth view with the attributes of his power. There are also the depictions of the most well-known mythical scenes in which he appeared. However, numismatic materials do not generally represent the symbols of



Fig. 1. Cistophorus coin from Nysa with jugate busts of Hades and Kore-Persephone: two serpents entwined around bow case; symbol in right field: jugate heads of Hades and Demeter right, after: SNG von Aulock, no. 3039



Fig. 2. Bronze (AE 18) coin (civic issue) from Nysa with jugate busts of Hades and Kore-Persephone on the obverse, after: Kurth 2020, no. 5

Hades or the things associated with him. This can be explained by the fact that, unlike other gods of the Greek pantheon, Hades did not have so many symbols (except for the invisible hat, which was shown). It is important to emphasise that the bust of Hades (and Kore-Persephone) is found on the cistophorus from Nysa (Regling 1913, p. 70). Cistophori were named after the basket of snakes (*cista mistica*) (Mørholm 1991, p. 205) and were used in services in honor of Dionysus. Cistophori continued to be minted in the cities of the west coast of Asia Minor in the Roman period. While in the Hellenistic period their value was equal to four drachmas (therefore they were sometimes called silver tetradrachmas), with the beginning of the Roman rule a cistophorus was equal to three Roman denarii (Noe, Kleiner 1977). Outside the province, the cistophorus was cheaper, so these coins circulated exclusively in the inner market, remaining a pres-

tigious means of payment. The general appearance of the cistophorus was the same for all the cities of the province of Asia. That was a silver coin with the image of a chest, grass snakes, a wreath of ivy and snakes, which were entwined around a quiver on the reverse side of the coin. This side of the cistophorus often contained additional symbols and signs – in our case it is a bust of Hades and Kore-Persephone (fig. 1; von Aulock, Kleiner 1957, nos. 3039–3040). The coin is dated to the most dramatic period in the history of Nysa and the region in general: 134–133 BC, i.e. the last year of Attalus III's reign and the transformation of the kingdom of Pergamum into the Roman province of Asia according to the testament of the king.

In the early years of the province's existence and the rebellion led by Aristonicus from 133 to 100 BC Nysa had also minted copper coins with a bust of Hades on the obverse.

Similarly, the civil issue of coins with a double bust of Hades and Persephone on the obverse is dated to the 1st century BC (fig. 2; Kurth 2020, 5). Taking into consideration the variability of the Greek mythology and the lack of a sufficient number of visual and written images in numismatics, and in archaeological sources as well, it is often difficult to distinguish the figures of Demeter and Kore-Persephone. Only due to the clothing or age characteristics it is possible to identify the Demeter on some of the obverses (Kurth 2020, no. 1). Also, on the reverse side there is a depiction of an ear and a poppy head. Some of the coins with Hades or the busts of the divine couple were accompanied by an image of Dionysus (Kurth 2020, no. 35), showing the connection of references to Nysa in both myths. In my opinion, placing the figure of Hades on coins should not be considered as an act of worship or a cultic gesture. This is exactly where the proposed study contradicts the views expressed in S. Price's work (Price 2005, p. 119).

In general, in the 1st century BC various magistrates continuously repeated this cliché in autonomous or civil coinage. Wavy beard and thick wavy hair, covered with a crown, emphasised the affinity of the image of Hades with the image of Zeus and spoke of divine dignity. A coin with a bust of Vespasian and the legend ΟΥΕΣΠΙΑΣΙΑΝΟΣ ΚΑΙΣΑΡ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΣ is very interesting, as on its reverse side there is a male divinity sitting on a throne, with Nike and a scepter in his hands. It is indicated in the catalogues that this is the figure of Zeus, but describing him with an epithet from the legend on the coin ΠΛΟΥΤΟΔΟΤΗΣ is rather questionable. Based on the well-known sculptures of Hades sitting on a throne from the territory of Asia Minor (LIMC 1988, 2, p. 210, fig. 8), primarily Hierapolis, it can be argued that the figure of Zeus was used in this case and testify in favour of Hades.

The next important scene, which is "written" in the coins stamped at Nysa and other cities in the province of Asia is the abduction of Persephone by Hades. In this case, numismatics is an excellent source for studying the details of this story. In ancient literature there is quite chary and contradictory information about the location and the circumstances of this event. In fact, the events in the Nysa Valley are depicted in the second Homer's hymn to Demeter.

"Apart from Demeter, lady of the golden sword and glorious fruits,

...she was playing with the deep-bosomed daughters of Okeanos and gathering flowers over a soft meadow, roses and crocuses and beautiful

violets, irises also and hyacinths and the narcissus, which Gaia (the Earth) made to grow at the will of Zeus and to please Polydektor (Host of Many), to be a snare for the bloom-like girl – a marvelous, radiant flower. It was a thing of awe whether for deathless gods or mortal men to see: from its root grew a hundred blooms and it smelled most sweetly, so that all wide heaven (Ouranos) above and the whole earth (Gaia) and the sea's (Thalassa) salt swell laughed for joy. And the girl was amazed and reached out with both hands to take the lovely toy: but the wide-pathed earth yawned there in the plain of Nysa, and the lord, Polydegmon (Host of Many) [Hades], with his immortal horses sprang out upon her – the Son of Kronos (Cronus), Polynomos (He Who has Many Names).

He caught her up reluctant on his golden car and bare her away lamenting. Then she cried out shrilly with her voice, calling upon her father [Zeus], the Son of Kronos, who is most high and excellent. But no one, either of the deathless gods or mortal men, heard her voice..."¹

The hymn calls Hades the one who has many names. As can be seen from their cursory analysis, they indicated the functional features of the god and never indicated the location of the sanctuary. However, behind the list of epithets of a particular god stood the unity of his essence (Parker 2003, p. 182).

The scene of Persephone's abduction was well-known throughout the ancient Mediterranean. Primarily, it was used for decoration of burial chambers of crypts (Chugg 2021, p. 73; Живкова 1976, p. 25). Moreover, such monuments were discovered on the periphery of the Classical world — in the north coast of the Black Sea (in Pantikapaion (Crimea), Amphipolis (Bulgaria), Vergina (Macedonia)). The scene of the abduction of Persephone is included in the decoration of four more crypts in the vicinity of Pantikapaion: the crypt of Blaramberg, the double crypt of 1873, the crypt of Ashik, and the crypt of Alkym Hegesipov. Also, a similar monument was discovered in 1928 by Y. Marty at the Citea necropolis (Федосеев 2011, с. 491). Despite the geographical location, painters and artists of that time reproduced this scene. That is why the plots on funerary monuments should be used for the analysis of coin types, since together these monuments constitute a complex of iconographic sources. The figures may have looked different, but their set and main details always remained the same. This is common, given the area of the crypt

¹ Homeric hymn to Demeter, translation by Hugh G. Evelyn-White.



Fig. 3. Semi-autonomous bronze (AE 19) coin from Nysa with scene of the Persephone's abduction, basket of flowers has just fallen from Persephone's hands, after: SNG von Aulock, no. 3044



Fig. 4. Bronze (AE 37) coin from Nysa minted in the reign of Marcus Aurelius with a detailed image of Persephone's basket, after: SNG Cop 1982, no. 317

walls, but when it comes to the limited and small surface area of the coin, this feature is simply amazing. A little composition of the chariot, two figures and a legend were full of symbols that conveyed the expression and tragedy of the moment. Moreover, all of these details preserved the features of the whole story. Due to the study of coins, the conception of the ancient mythology is extremely detailed from the point of view of the present times. For example, it is not typical to see a depiction of a basket under the horses' legs. It was a visualisation of the fact that Kore-Persephone picked flowers and did not form a bouquet with them, but put them into a basket. On the eldest coin of semi-autonomous stamping, dating from 100–0 BC (fig. 3) its author shows the basket falling out of Kore-Persephone's hands (Mattingly, Carson 1923, 16; von Aulock, Kleiner 1957, 3044; Kurth 2020, 21).

In all the following coins of semi-autonomous stamping from Nysa with the scene of the abduc-

tion of Demeter's daughter, the basket was disposed closer to the horses' forelegs. We see such a composition for the first time on the coins of Nysa with a depiction of the busts of such emperors as Claudius (Mionnet 1809, no. 357; SNG Paris 2001, no. 833), Nero (SNG Paris 2001, no. 837; RPC I, no. 2668; Kurth 2020, no. 65), and Marcus Aurelius (fig. 4; Mattingly, Carson 1923, no. 40; SNG Cop 1982, no. 317). This is the type of representation of the abduction of Persephone embodied in the mosaics of the necropoleis around Rome (LIMC 1988, 2, p. 213, fig. 76a-b).

To be fair, it should be mentioned that almost half of the coins from Nysa depicting the abduction of Kore-Persephone are the specimens without a depiction of a basket.

The cistophorus with a bust of Hadrian and with the depiction of the scene of the abduction of Kore-Persephone on the reverse side is of great interest (fig. 6).



Fig. 5. Mosaic with a scene of the Persephone's abduction, Vatican, Necropolis under St. Peter, after: LIMC, 1988, IV, 2, p. 213, fig. 76 b)



Fig. 6. Cistophorus from Nysa with a bust of Hadrian and with the depiction of the scene of the abduction of Kore-Persephone, after: Kurth 2020, no. S536

Firstly, the denomination of the coin itself is surprising. Secondly, it is assumed that the coin was minted rather in Sardis, not in Nysa, but this question is debatable, since a number of coins from the time of Hadrian are represented only by isolated items (Metkalf 1981, p. 185). Finally, the figure of Hades is decorated with the chlamys. Depicting a fluttering cloak, an artist adds some dynamism to the composition. This stylistic technique was used by a Greek artist in the decoration of the Demeter's crypt in Kerch. The god was depicted half-naked, with a torso, half-turned to the right, covered with a chlamys that fluttered behind him. Among

the Roman works, this technique is well-known for the mosaics of the 2nd century AD (Fig. 5) depicting the triumph of Poseidon-Neptune (for example, from the Archaeological Museum of Sousse in Tunisia (Mosaïque d'Hadrumète (Sousse)) (La mosaïque...)) or the triumph of Neptune and Amphitrite from Herculaneum (Jasas-Montinaro 2019, p. 2). On the side wall of a marble sarcophagus of 150–175 AD from the repository of the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence and on the front wall of the 3rd century AD sarcophagus from the Museum of Art History in Vienna (Persephone Sarcophagus...), Hades, with all the other “non-canonical” scenes of the Ho-



Fig. 7. Sarcophagus with scene of the Persephone's abduction, Vienna, Museum of Art History, no. I 1126, after: <https://hellenismo.tumblr.com/post/146596666726/persephones-abduction-on-the-left-side-of/amp>

meric hymn, is also shown with the chlamys fluttering behind him (fig. 7).

It is interesting that the “non-canonical” addition of the figure of Athena in full armour to the Homeric hymn concerning the Persephone's abduction is recorded not only in these sarcophagi. On the reverse (fig. 8) of a coin from the Lydian Hyrcanis from the period of the reign of Commodus (177–192), Eros with a torch at the heads of the quadriga can be seen, as well as the figure of Athena in helmet and armour, who is striking the quadriga's wheel with a spear, trying to stop it. There is also a basket and a snake. The combination of a basket and a snake is sometimes considered to be a reason to talk about the already mentioned *cista mistica*. However, in our opinion, this is wrong, taking to consideration the everyday culture of the Greek population.

A coin of a semi-autonomous stamping of 222–235 from Kyzikos in the Mysia (fig.9) can be considered a variation of this story. Here, instead of Athena, some researchers see a warrior with a spear and a shield running after a quadriga (Lanz 1927, nos. 157, 145). A bust of Kore and the legend ΚΟΡΗ ΚΩΤΕΙΡΑ are depicted on the obverse of the coin.

The attention should be also paid to the chariot and horses. Why is this so important? Because in the case of the scene of the abduction of Ko-

re-Persephone in the crypt of Demeter in Kerch, an ancient artist, despite the large surface of the wall, which allowed painting different details, depicted four horses with only six legs. Art critics suggest that this may have happened to “unload” the overall view of this part of the composition (Иванова 1953, с. 153). The authors of the coin stamp reflected the actual appearance of all horses, despite the small area. However, regardless of the type of the monument, the horses of the chariot were shown with their forelegs raised at a gallop. The coin of the semi-autonomous minting of 81–96 from Nysa (Mattingly, Carson 1923, no. 31–32; SNG Cop 1982, no. 315; Mannsperger 1994, no. 3732–3733; Kurth 2020, no. 45) shows the Hades's skill, who is controlling the movement with one hand, while a autonomous coin of 138–192 (fig. 10, 11; Mionnet 1808, no. 349; Babelon 1898, no. 2494; SNG Paris 2001, no. 828; Kurth 2020, no. 51) shows a less stable composition, but the reins are depicted. In *Description of Greece* Pausanias gives a biography of Pindar and tells the story of the last hymn composed by the artist after his death in honour of Persephone. The deceased Pindar sang this hymn in a dream to his relative and called Hades Chrysenius, i.e. “the one who rules the golden reins.” (Paus. 9.23.2) Thus, this is one more detail of the image depicted on the coins.



Fig. 8. Bronze (AE 38) coin from Hyrkanis minted in the reign of Commodus which shown Athena and Eros in moment of the Persephone's abduction, after: Mionnet 1809, nos. 330-331; SNG Paris 2001, no. 561



Fig. 9. Bronze (AE 35) semi-autonomous coin from Kyzikos with a similar scene, after: Waddington 720

The study of the details of the decoration of funerary crypts (for example, a Demeter's crypt in Kerch (Crimea), a mosaic of the second tomb of the 4th century BC in Amphipolis (Bulgaria), a tomb of the Macedonian king Philip II in Egi (Vergina) (LIMC 1988, 2, p. 216, fig. 104) and the study of the ancient vase painting² allows supplementing the view of the Hades's chariot that was almost not shown on the coins (except for one wheel).

As for the figure of Kore-Persephone, in all known cases she was depicted in a rather homogeneous way. The whole figure (outstretched arms, bent torso and legs, tilted head) emphasised the tragedy of the moment and the fact that it was not her will to become a wife of Hades. A certain plot on the coin with a bust of Faustina II (Fig. 12; Kurth 2020, no. 123) suggests that the artist conveys this myth in such a way that, despite the typical position of her hand, Persephone

seems to be standing next to her husband in the chariot. In a similar way, the tragedy of the abduction is shown on the front of the marble frieze from Hierapolis (LIMC 1988, 2, p. 218, fig. 111).

The scene of the abduction of Kore-Persephone was quite popular in the decoration of coins with the emperors' portraits. Such examples include the busts of Claudius and Agrippina the Younger in 50–54 AD with the legend CEBACTOI (Kurth 2020, no. 63), Nero (with the legend NEPΩN KAICAP) (SNG Paris 2001, no. 837; Kurth 2020, no. 65), Hadrian (Kurth 2020, no. S536), Marcus Aurelius (SNG Cop 1982, no. 317; Mattingly, Carson 1923, no. 40). Very harmoniously, however unexpectedly, the plot with the abduction of Persephone was depicted on the coins of the end of the 1st—2nd centuries AD in the Lydian city of Gordus-Julia. The plot is decorated on coins with busts of such emperors as Trajan (Amandry et al. 2015, no. 2548), Hadrian (Amandry et al. 2015, no. 2553), Lucius Verus (Mattingly, Carson 1923, no. 23) and Septimius Severus (SNG München 1997,

² For example, the so-called Persephone's crater from the British Museum (LIMC 1988, vol. IV, part 2, p. 213, fig. 84–90).



Fig. 10. Bronze (AE 19) semi-autonomous coin from Nysa. Hades standing in galloping quadriga right, abducting Persephone held in his right arm, after: SNG Cop 1982, no. 315



Fig. 11. Bronze (AE 19) semi-autonomous coin from Nysa. Hades standing in galloping quadriga right, abducting Persephone held in his right arm (after: SNG Paris 2001, no. 828; Kurth 2020, no. 51)

no. 190). There is an interesting detail of this scene on the coin of Marcus Aurelius. Under the legs of the horses there is no basket, but a snake.

In a series of coins of semi-autonomous minting from Sardis (fig.13; Mattingly, Carson 1923, no. 89; SNG Paris 2001, no. 1313C; Kurth 2020, no. 309), dated to 198–244 AD, a very high-quality stamp was used, where the artist contained a chlamys, a basket and a snake. Moreover, this item is very close to the paintings of the above-mentioned crypts, because there is even a figure of Eros with two torches in his hands, which illuminated the path of the chariot. The dynamic movement of the chariot is emphasised by the long hair of Kore-Persephone, fluttered by the wind. This detail, as well as the extensive legend ΕΠΙ COYΛ ΕΡΜΟΦΙΛΟΥ Α ΑΡΧ CAΡΔΙΑΝΩΝ Β ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ is explained primarily by the sufficient size of the coin circle. A snake with a basket, or instead of a basket, can be found on similar coins in Sardis, with a portrait of Caracalla.

Coins with the scene of the abduction of Kore-Persephone were also minted in Kyzikos, Mysia (with a bust of Marcus Aurelius), the Lydian cities of Hermocapellia (with a bust of Trajan and in 251–253 AD with a bust of Trebonianus Gallus), Hyrkanis (with a bust of Tamolia), Thyatira (Thyateira) (with the bust of Commodus and Elagabalus), Silandus (with the bust of Septimius Severus), Tralleis (with the bust of Gordian III), Daldis-Flaviopolis (from the time of Philip I), Magnesia ad Maeandrum in Ionia (with the bust of Antony Ioni-us), Hierapolis in Phrygia in honour of the Senate (semi-autonomous minting).

In general, the scene of the abduction of Kore-Persephone occurs in the coin decoration of other territories of Roman Empire as well: Egypt (Alexandria with the bust of Hadrian (fig.14)) Samaria (coins from Sebaste with the bust of Commodus, Septimius Severus, Elagabalus, Julia Maesa), Macedonia (coins with busts of Julia Domna (Assarii) and Caracalla),



Fig. 12. Bronze coin (AE 18) from Nysa minted in the reign of Marcus Aurelius with bust of Faustina II and a scene of rape of Persephone, where she was depicted quite uniformly, after: Kurth 2020, no. 123



Fig. 13. Bronze semi-autonomous coin (AE 41) from Sardes. Hades in galloping quadriga right, carrying off struggling Persephone. He holds a sceptre in his left hand, and his chlamys is fluttering around his head; above the horses' heads, Eros flying, holding two torches; fallen flower basket and a serpent issuing from the ground are beneath the horses, after: BMC 89; SNG Paris 2001, no. 1313C; Kurth 2020, no. 309)

Aeolia (minting of Elaea in the time of Marcus Aurelius (very simplified stamp) and Commodus), Thrace (medallion of the time of Septimius Severus of Perinthos), Cilicia (minting of the cities of Siedra during the reign of Tiborunius, Elagabalus). The number of images with Hades is rather small in comparison with other deities and coin types, but such geography and chronology show that the composition itself, made in Nysa in Lydia, was acceptable and used for a long time in various regions of the eastern part of the empire, as well as the way to unite the world of these eastern provinces. It should be emphasised that the use of the image of Hades as Serapis did not always correspond to this geography and chronology.

All analysed coins with the image of Hades did not contain the name of the god in the legend and only the plot helped the identification. This example is significant, because in the time of Gordian III the abduction of Persephone is shown without the “canonical plot” of the quadriga. Hades simply carrying Persephone in his arms (fig. 15).

Finally, it should be mentioned about another “attribute” of Hades and the realm of the dead, namely the guard at its entrance — Cerberus. In the minting of Nysa, the three-headed dog Cerberus is depicted only on the one coin that is dated to the time of Marcus Aurelius. There is a bust of the emperor on the obverse, the legend AYT KAICAP AYP ANTΩNEINOC CEB, the image of the ruler of the realm of the dead and a dog on the reverse (von Aulock, Kleiner 1957; no. 5063; SNG Paris 2001, no. 859; Kurth 2020, no. 105). In Caracalla's time, there were similar coins from Gordus-Julia (Babylon 1898, no. 4979; SNG Paris 2001, no. 400), Laodicea (Imhoof-Blumer 1897, no. 36), Thyatira (Babylon 1898, no. 5358; SNG Paris 2001, no. 1466; Kurth 2020, no. 199) and etc. This type of Hades's image was typical for sculpture (LIMC 1988, 2, p. 210, fig. 5, 6). In numismatics it is associated with the interpretation of Hades as Serapis. Moreover, due to the presence of Cerberus, it was possible to guess that Hades, not Zeus, was depicted on the



Fig. 14. Obol from Alexandria, Egypt. Minted in the reign of Hadrian. Modius, containing poppies and corn-ears between two filleted torches. The modius is decorated with the depiction of Hades in galloping quadriga right, carrying off Persephone, after: BMC 906 (after: Geissen 1226)



Fig. 15. Bronze coin (AE 31) from Seleukeia ad Calycadnum, Cilicia. Minted in the reign of Gordian III, after: Mairat J., Spoerri Butcher M. 2022, no. 2923. This example is interesting, because in the time of Gordian III the abduction of Persephone is shown without the “canonical plot” of the quadriga. Hades is simply carrying Persephone in his arms

coin. Usually, though quite rarely, Cerberus was depicted in a plot with Hercules to illustrate this heroic deed. In this case, the author of the coin stamp depicted a completely imaginary gate of the palace (or kingdom) of Hades and Hercules, who pulled out the dog. However, such coins were not minted in the Roman province of Asia.

Thus, it can be argued that the figure of Hades was quite popular in the decoration of coins of the Roman province of Asia, and especially in the city of Nysa, which was associated with the story of the abduction of Kore-Persephone. In general, the study of local coinage in the Greek cities in the Roman province of Asia is an excellent “mirror” for finding out the cultural transformations influenced by the political conditions of the Roman world, a direct indication for studying political culture and the level of integration of Greco-Roman world values. The same

materials allow studying the features of the political culture and levels of economic interaction of those times. It should not be assumed that the cult of Hades spread from Asia Minor, but such cities of the Roman province of Asia as Nysa and Hierapolis actively used the stories of the myth of Hades in their coinage and thereby brought this god out of the realm of religion and into the economic realm. And this should be emphasised and noted. It is important that numismatic sources from the province of Asia also record the transformation of the figure of Hades into Hades-Serapis, while in other territories Serapis was more often combined with Zeus. In Homer’s myth of the abduction of Kore-Persephone, Hades is a protagonist with a very limited role, so in the world of the living it was more important to honour Demeter and her daughter as patrons of fertility and agriculture. However, the figure of Hades made it possible to repre-

sent some separate places and nowadays it shows the commonality of beliefs in the large territories. Analysis of the LIMC's information indicates the extremely important value of numismatic materials from the territory of the Roman province of Asia. After a quantitative analysis of the available materials (more than 100 coins), it can be argued that the scene of the abduction of Kore-Persephone in the decoration of coins was most often used by Lydian city magistrates during the reigns of Emperors Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus and Caracalla, where the emperor Caracalla is the undoubted leader (table 1). However, the given table illustrates the comparison of the image of Hades abducting Persephone with the image of the syncretic deity Hades-Serapis in different years and in the so-called non-Greek territories of Roman

Empire. The situation with the image of Hades on the coins of Caracalla is significant. The bust of this emperor was most often combined with the image of the god. A total of 17 coins are known, and only five of them come from the province of Asia. The rest were minted on the territory of Thrace or Macedonia. However, Persephone's abduction scene is depicted on seven coins (of which only three are Asian), while the remaining nine coins depict Hades-Serapis (!).

This period of flourishing coinage and the relative independence of the magistrates shows not only the level of economic growth of the cities of the province, the state of the local market and the economic integration of the region in general, but also the peculiarities of the demonstration of local identities through well-known and established Greek symbols.

Table 1. Quantitative ratio of the frequency of the use of scenes related to Hades in the coinage of emperors from the Antonine and Severian dynasties

Emperor	Total	Asia	Quadrige	Hades-Serapis	Thrace	Moesia	Macedonia
Marcus Aurelius	9	8	6	2	1	—	—
Septimius Severus	8	2	2	6	1	5	—
Caracalla	16	6	3	3	5 (1 quadrige)	2	3 (all with quadrige)

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«НЕВИДИМИЙ» БОГ ЧИ «ПОДАТЕЛЬ БАГАТСТВА»? ОБРАЗ ГАДЕСА НА АНТИЧНИХ МОНЕТАХ

У статті розглянуто те, яким чином представлена постать Гадеса на монетах римської провінції Азія. Міфи, навіть у часи кризи міфологічного світогляду та піднесення ваги філософії, продовжували бути дієвим і найголовнішим способом формування спільного минулого для розрізних обшин і міст. У перші століття нашої ери, у зв'язку зі створенням загальнодержавного ринку й збільшенням грошового обігу, використання міфологічних сюжетів в оздобленні монет було також і способом самореклами громадянських колективів. Вміщення певних сюжетів чи популяризація місцевих божеств сприяла залученню паломників, купців, інших подорожніх. Володар царства мертвих належав до тих богів, ім'я яких намагались не вимовляти, щоб не привертати зайвий раз його уваги. Із постаттю цього бога пов'язано чи не найбільше евфемізмів, однак місто Ніса, керуючись згадкою про те, що саме в цій місцевості сталося викрадення Персефони, стало центром використання образу Гадеса в монетному карбуванні. Важливо, що нумізматичні джерела з провінції Азія фіксують також і трансформацію постаті Аїда-Гадеса в Гадеса-Серапіса, тоді як на інших територіях частіше Серапіса поєднували із Зевсом. У гомерівському міфі про викрадення Кори-Персефони Гадес є героєм першого плану із дуже обмеженою роллю, тому у світі живих більш важливим було пошанування Деметри та її доньки як покровительок родючості й землеробства. Проте постать Гадеса давала змогу репрезентувати окремі місцевості і сьогодні показує спільність вірувань на значних територіях. Після кількісного аналізу наявних матеріалів можна стверджувати, що сюжет викрадення Кори-Персефони в оздобленні монет, окрім автономного та напівавтономного карбування, найчастіше використовували магістрати лідійських міст в часи правління імператорів Марка Аврелія, Септимія Севера та Каракалли. Цей період розквіту монетного карбування та відносної самостійності магістратів показує не тільки рівень економічного зростання міст провінції, стану місцевого ринку та економічної інтеграції регіону загалом, а й інші особливості демонстрації локальних ідентичностей через добре знані й усталені грецькі символи.

Ключові слова: римська провінція Азія, Ніса, античність, Гадес, монети, монетне карбування, імператори, Серапіс, викрадення Персефони

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