

THE ROMAN IMPERIAL CULT IN SMYRNA

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Origins of the Cult in Smyrna

In the middle of the third century BC, Smyrna, which had capable troops to defend the cities in its proximity, was rewarded for not giving up on its commitment during the hard times experienced in the absence of Seleucus II (246–225 BC).¹ Besides this loyalty, the existence of the temple of Aphrodite Stratonice,² which attracted Seleucus II's attention as well, was effective in obtaining different privileges. If Smyrna could protect itself with the holiness of its temple and would be considered as "sacred and untouchable", it would gain a great advantage (Bewan 1902: 188; Petzl, 1987: no. 573). Ensuring this recognition was apparently the target of the city. First of all, a pronouncement in favor of the claims put forth was obtained from the Delphic oracle.³

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¹ Smyrna had to stand against several difficulties during the Third Syrian War, which took place between Seleucus II and Ptolemy III during the years 246–241 BC. During the period of the absence of the troops of the Kingdom, the city was left unprotected against the dangers from Ptolemy III's fleet and the threats of a huge military settlement located in Magnesia on Sipylus (Bevan, 1902: 160, 188, 189; Bean, 1955: 51; Schmitt, 1969: no. 492; Ihnken, 1978: no. 1; Cohen, 1978: 60, 63, 77; Petzl, 1987: no. 573; Magie, 2003: 47–48, 223–224; Austin, 2006: 314).

² On the advice of Delphic oracle, in the honor of Stratonice, Antiochus II's mother who died in 254 BC, a cult was established at Smyrna. This cult living the golden age in the Hellenistic period lost its importance a little bit in the imperial times. Seleucus II recognized the independence of the city, just like his predecessor. The cults of Antiochus II and his mother prove the presence of cults in Smyrna in the Hellenistic period, which belonged to the royal family (Tacitus, 3.63; Farnell, 1896: 704; Fontrier, 1902: 191–193; Bevan, 1902: 177; Fontrier, 1907: 117, 119; Büchner, 1929: 763; Cadoux, 154; Klose, 1987: 3, 24; Petzl, 1987: no. 573; Ma, 1999: 37, 38). See also Klose, 1987: 14–15, (R 1–26, Taf. 18); Klose, 1996: 56 about Livia, depicted as Aphrodite Stratonice on Smyrna coins dated in the Augustus reign.

³ There is an enactment regarding the participation in the Soteria held in Aetolia on the inscription uncovered in the south east of the treasury building in Delphi. The twentieth line of the inscription, which is dated to the first years of the reign of Seleucus II (246/245 BC), contains the phrase "*Soteria and the King Seleucus as well as the temple of Aphrodite Stratonice are untouchable and the city itself is sacred and Aphrodite Stratonice is untouchable.*" (Robert, 1930, 326–332; Segre, 1931: 248–252; Petzl, 1987: no. 574).

Such an advantage led Seleucus II to work in line with the target of the city, which had been loyal to him. The King wrote letters to all states of the Greek world, "to kings, rulers, cities and nations" requesting the recognition of the temple of Aphrodite Stratoniceis and the city of Smyrna as sacred and untouchable (Bewan, 1902: 189; Gebhard, 1932: 325; Schmitt, 1969: no. 492; Ihnken, 1978: no. 1; Petzl, 1987: no. 573; Bean, 2001: 24; Ma, 1999: 44, 49–50).

In the following years, when the power of the Pergamum Kingdom increased in the region, the cities of Smyrna and Lampsacus supported Attalus I in 226/225 BC (Polybius, *Histories*: 5.77; Magie, 2007: 29; Ma, 1999: 32; Umar, 1999: 469). The Smyrnaeans, who were among the first ones to recognize Rome⁴, the future ruler of Anatolia, with the same political intuition thirty years later, established the first cult and temple in the name of the Goddess Rome⁵ in Asia before the war against Antiochus III broke out in 195 BC.⁶ This temple was a political symbol, indicating on which side Smyrna stood during the fight between Roma and the Seleucid Dynasty. In a sense, the emergence of the cult of Rome was a product of the political strategy of the Smyrnaeans, who requested the support of Rome against Antiochus III (Mellor, 1975: 15–16; Mellor, 1981: 958, 959; Burrell, 2004: 39, 49; Dmitriev, 2005: 248).⁷

The Cult of Tiberius, Livia and the Senate

Due to the fact that the procurator of Asia, Lucilius Capito, who was found to be exceeding and misusing his authorities, was sentenced

⁴ Antiochus III gained some important victories in 197 BC in Egypt and sailed to Ephesus. Although the majority of the cities submitted, Smyrna and Lampsacus appealed to Rome for help. The resistance of Smyrna, Lampsacus and Alexandria Troas cities played an important role in the deteriorating relationships of Rome and Antiochus III while Smyrna and Rhodes stayed on the Roman side in the war against Antiochus III. At the end of the war, Rome rewarded the cities supporting itself together with Smyrna, and punished the others. For example; while Smyrna was granted land in the agreement made in 189 BC, it was also exempt from taxes (Polybius, 21.13, 14, 17, 48; Livius, 35.16; Ma, 1999: 50; Klose, 1987: 3; Umar, 1999: 469).

⁵ Reid thinks that the Greeks were affected by the connection between Rome and the Greek word *Rómê*, which means power, while designing Rome as a divine creature (Reid, 1913: 379). Whilst Rome, which is a divine creation of the Greek, became a Goddess initially in Smyrna, she was seen on the coins of the imperial period with this title (Pick, 1904: 22, 24; Ferguson, 1970: 89, 90, 93; Klose, 1987: 23, (R 1–17, Taf. 1; R 15–16, Taf. 43).

⁶ The brave attitude of the Smyrnaeans against Antiochus III was imitated by Alabanda, Athens and Pergamum in the following years (Tacitus, 4.56; Cadoux, 2003: 183; Bean, 1955: 51; Bean, 2001: 24; Umar, 1999: 469; Burrell, 2004: 39; Dmitriev, 2005: 248; Doğer, 2006: 102).

⁷ Showing a different approach, Fox asks the question why would the religious forms of a cult with a political origin demonstrate themselves this much (Fox, 1986: 40).

in 23 AD and due to the punishment against C. Silenus the previous year, the Asian cities decided to build a temple in honor of Tiberius, his mother and the Senate. In the same year, permission regarding the construction of the temple was given (Tacitus, 4.15).⁸ However, although three years had passed since the permission, the city where the temple was going to be built could not be determined. In 26 AD, Tiberius regularly attended the Senate for a few days and listened to the discussions of the legates from Asia. Since Hypaepeni, Tralliani, Laodicensi and Magnesians were not an insufficiently strong case, they were passed over. While the Ilians, mentioning Troy as the ancestor of the city of Rome, were underestimated, there was a brief hesitation over the Halicarnassians' assertion. Pergamenes were rejected due to the existence of the Temple of Augustus there, Ephesians and Milesians were rejected since they took over all communities regarding the Apollo and Diana ceremonies. Finally, it was decided that the legates of Sardians and Smyrnaeans should continue with the discussions (Tacitus, 4.55). As the Sardians were reading a decision about Etruria, they highlighted the fact that the names used in western Asia, including Italy, were derived from the names of leaders (Tacitus, 4.55). The Smyrnaeans, on the other hand, reminded them that the city of Rome was the first city for which a temple was built during the consulship of M. Porcius Cato (195 BC). While declaring the first of the two services they made for the people of Rome, they emphasized the naval force they had sent out in the war against Antiochus III in 190/189 BC and in the Social War in 91-88 BC. At the same time, as further evidence of their loyalty to Rome, they stated that Smyrnaeans had given their clothes in order that they be sent to the army at the peak of a crisis caused by the harshness of winter and the lack of clothes in the war

⁸ Romans allowed that all old institutions where the new imperial cult would be infused be kept alive in Asia Minor and in other provinces. A few cities built temples in honor of the deified Julius Caesar on their own initiatives. During the reign of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, temples were built in Pergamum for Rome and Augustus (29 BC), in Smyrna for Tiberius, Livia and Senate (26 AD) and in Miletus for Apollo and Caligula (40 AD). For the construction of these temples and the establishment permission of the provincial cults, Rome had been applied to since the reign of Augustus. Both the Senate and the emperor took part in the decision making process. With this official policy adopted, Pergamum was given permission to build the earliest temple in 29 BC in the name of Rome and Augustus. The provincial temple of Rome and Augustus were built in Pergamum in 27 BC. Due to the priority privilege of this temple, smaller imperial temples were built for the Romans in Ephesus and Nicaea, which were the primary cities (Cassius Dio, 51.20; Reid, 1913: 378; Dräger, 1993: 34; Price, 2004: 127-128; Thomas, 2007: 129).

against Mithridates I in 85 BC.⁹ These realistic reasons caused Smyrna to be selected and awarded the title of neokoros (Tacitus, 4.56).¹⁰ Smyrna based its cult not on genealogy but on Rome and trusted its ties with Rome in this competition, in which a religious rivalry was apparent (Burrell, 2004: 38; Ascough, 2005: 49).

Following the first neokoros¹¹ title, coins struck during the administration of the proconsul P. Petronius (29–35 AD) are likely to represent the opening ceremony of the temple (Fig. 1).¹² On the obverse of these coin series, there are the busts of Senate personalized reciprocally with Livia. On the reverse, the emperor can be seen in the middle of the temple that has a façade with four fluted columns in the Corinthian order, dressed as a priest and wearing a toga.¹³ While being more schematic, the Emperor Tiberius was depicted dressed like a priest on the coins of the third century AD. Livia and the Senate were shown in

⁹ The description of this event by Aristides is as follows: “*The city deserves to be saved not only for its appearance, but also for the goodwill which it displayed toward you Romans at all times, joining you in the war against Antiochus, joining you in that against Aristonicus, enduring sieges and fighting in no small battles, of which there were still now memorials in its gates. Further when your army needed clothing and your general had been slain, they brought the general into the city and buried him within the present gates, and they distributed their shirts to the soldiers, one man giving his to another.*” (Aristides, 19.11).

¹⁰ Praetor Valerius Naso was sent to take over the maintenance of the temple to be built. In this period, the cults established in 29 BC in the provinces Bithynia and Asia were kept alive. Tiberius and Rome were worshipped together at the temples built in the cities (Magie, 1950: 501).

¹¹ The title neokoros (temple-warden), which means the city that has a temple built in the name of the emperor, appeared at the end of the first century. While this title has a great significance in terms of a city’s gaining reputation and being adopted, it also provided the city with the right to organize the festivals in Asia. Such festivals must have attracted numerous visitors that revived the economy of the city as well as several legates from abroad. In terms of the size and reputation of the city, the number of the title was an important basis. The rules for obtaining the title were clearly defined. The final decision was made by the Senate. Yet, the Emperor’s approval was essential. Neokoros was an honorary degree for the places which deserved the imperial cult and many cities had this degree for the second or third time. In the following process, neokoros turned out to be a usual title and a common source of honor showing that a site was successful in the process of election starting from the end of the first century. This degree was seen in the cities of Pergamum, Ephesus and Smyrna in the first century with the special permission of the Rome administration (Magie, 1950: 637; Klose, 1987: 20; Dräger, 1993: 149; Klose 1996: 54-55, 57-58; Tulay 2001: 147; Franke, 2007: 13–14, 24–25; Price, 2004: 124, 127–128).

¹² The title of neokoros has not been found on these coins yet. It appears that this title, which wasn’t seen on the coins before the reign of Caracalla, was not valued much by Smyrna in the first century AD (Pick, 1904: 16–17; Cadoux, 2003: 313; Klose, 1987: 21; Klose, 1996: 57; Burrell, 2004: 39, 41).

¹³ According to Price, there is probably a sculpture of Tiberius depicted as a priest wearing a toga and a head scarf in the temple dedicated to Tiberius, Livia and Senate (Price, 2004: 304).

no way alone on the coins, whereas Tiberius stood alone inside the temple. This is mode of expression indicating the dominance of the cult of the emperor (Burrell, 2004: 325).

The Cult of Zeus Acraeus/Hadrian

In the reign of Hadrian, thanks to the interventions of Polemon¹⁴, Smyrna acquired the title of neokoros for the second time.¹⁵ According to Keil (Keil, 1908: 108), Petzl (Petzl, 1987: no. 697), Halfmann (Halfmann, 1986: 191) and Schorndorfer (Schorndorfer 1997: 175) this title was awarded to Smyrna in 123 A.D. But according to Klose the most probable datings are within the year 124 AD, Hadrian's birthday, 24 January, or Augustus' birthday and the beginning of a new year in Province of Asia, 23 September (Klose, 1987: 21).

Immediately after the second neokoros title the citizens of the city of Smyrna expressed their gratitude by saluting Hadrian as "Olympian Zeus". They honored him with titles like *Ktistes*, *Soter*, "Founder of the City", "Its Saviour" and even "Saviour of Mankind". From this time on new games were held: the "Hadrianeia Olympia".¹⁶ Likewise, an additional title that the city began to use on its coinage was "Hadriana Smyrna".¹⁷ The construction of a temple for Hadrian required the appointment of religious functionaries such as *theologoi ve hymnodoi*.¹⁸ The gratitude of the city was further expressed by its taking of the title *Hadriane* (Magie, 1950: 615; Burrell, 2004: 43; Dmitriev, 2005: 251; Ascough, 2005: 50, Kılıç and Gülbay, 2010: 109).

The façade of a hexastyle temple is seen on the reverse of the city coins struck under the administration of *Strategos Sextus* during the reign

¹⁴ Polemon was born at Laodiceia in Phrygia; he came to the schools of rhetoric in Smyrna as a youth. For details, see: Philostratus, 1.25 (531-544).

¹⁵ Thus, the imperial favor approved the victory of Smyrna against her rival Ephesus (Romeo, 2002: 33).

¹⁶ The sacred agones newly established in the period of the Roman Empire are generally named according to the cults related to them. For instance, the *Sebasta Romaia* in Pergamum is named according to the cult of Rome and Augustus, the *Traianeia Deiphileia* in Pergamum is named according to the cult of Trajan and Zeus *Phlios* and *Hadrianeia Olympia* in Smyrna is named based on the cult of Hadrian and Zeus *Olympios* (Dräger, 1993: 61).

¹⁷ Philostratus, 1.25.1 (531); Krause, 1838: 224-227; Cadoux, 2003: 333; Birley, 1998: 170; Klose, 1987: 16; Price, 2004: 420; Ascough, 2005: 50; Dmitriev, 2005: 251.

¹⁸ In an inscription, dated 124 AD, the cult staff is mentioned. According to Keil, herein is a proof that the new cult was granted the Smyrnaeans during the first presence of Hadrian in Smyrna (Keil, 1908: 108-110). See regarding the issue: (Magie, 1950: II, 1474, n. 15; Petzl, 1987: no. 594).

of Hadrian (Fig. 2).¹⁹ Whether these coins represent the second provincial temple or not is based on the fact that whilst there is no figuration of god or emperor in the temple, there is no *νεωκόρος* title in the legend, which first appeared on the coins struck in the reign of Caracalla at Smyrna, an issue which could not be exactly determined (Pick, 1904: 17). It is not possible to define exactly the temple model as an emperor temple, either from a legend or cult figure (Klose, 1987: 21 (R 1–13, Taf. 33)). At the same time, on another variety of Smyrnaean coins from the reign of Hadrian the enthroned Zeus on the reverse (Fig. 3), through the way he is depicted or through the epithet *Acraeus*, indicates the emperor (Klose, 1996: 58). This last example suggests that beginning from the year 123/124 AD, when the city acquired the second *neokoros* title, the two cults may have been combined (Kılıç ve Gülbay, 2010: 110). As Boatwright also makes clear, throughout the reign of Hadrian and even before Hadrian's restoration of the Temple of Olympian Zeus, the *Olympieion*, in Athens, the emperor was united with Zeus *Olympios* (Boatwright, 2003: 118).²⁰ In Smyrna also Hadrian was identified with Zeus and the emperor was worshipped as the new Zeus, as was the case in many other cities (Klose, 1996: 58).²¹ The portrait of Zeus on the coins struck during the administration of the strategoi Charmos and Polemon clearly reveal the worshipping of the Emperor as Zeus by the Smyrnaeans (Klose, 1987: 16).²²

¹⁹ Pick discovered that the text *CMVPNAIΩN NEΩKOPΩN*, which Mionnet read on the coin that dated to the reign of Hadrian, was retouched. The researcher states that it has not been understood whether the coin, which was struck apparently in the reign of Hadrian, exactly belonged to Smyrna or not (Pick, 1904: 17; Mionnet, 1808: 228, no. 1273; Klose, 1987: 21, (R 1–13, Tafel 33)).

²⁰ The second *neokoros* title of Pergamum was incorporated at the common temple of Zeus *Phlios* and Trajan (Pick, 1904: 23).

²¹ The type of coin struck in the reign of Hadrian and on which there is the figure of the enthroned Zeus was used often in Smyrna in all periods. During this time, the cult of Zeus was closely associated with the Emperor's cult. Hadrian was worshipped in many cities as the new Zeus or approached to the God with some additional names proper for Zeus. For instance, in the temples of Athens, Cyzicus and Smyrna the imperial cult of Hadrian and the earlier existing local cult of Zeus were joined. In a later period a similar situation would be experienced with Smyrna's third *neokoros* title (Klose, 1987: 16 (R 14–35, Taf. 34–35; Boatwright, 2003: 160; Kılıç and Gülbay: 2010: 110)).

²² On the reverse of some coins dated to the reign of Domitian, there is no recognizable cult symbol, while on their obverse one sees the facade of a temple having eight unfluted columns and six steps. On the pediment of this temple, between two standing figures, is probably a seated Zeus. The roof of this striking temple shows resemblance to the Temple of Jupiter on coins from the time of Vespasian and Titus, and it is supposed that it pictures a temple built in Smyrna according to the Roman model. Pick states that the god, to whom the temple was dedicated to, could either be Zeus alone or with Hera and Athena (Pick, 1904: 19, 20; Klose, 1987: 38–39; Klose, 1996: 56–58; Kılıç and Gülbay: 2010: 109). This proof makes the existence of the cult of Zeus in Smyrna stronger.

In the reign of Caracalla, on one group of the medallions struck while Charidemos was strategos (211-214 A.D.) on the pediments of each of three temples having four columns on the facades, one sees the letters TI, AΔ and ΡΩ (Fig. 4). According to the order in which they are mentioned these temples characterize Tiberius, Hadrian and Rome. Here the statues of the two standing and spear-holding emperors and the enthroned cult statue of Rome have all been placed within the temples to which they belong (Kılıç and Gülbay, 2010: 110). According to Burrell, that there was only one armored figure peculiar to the emperor as a cult image placed in the temple was important proof that the structure was only dedicated to him (Burrell, 2003: 41). Whilst this is a correct determination, it is definitely insufficient for proving that the temple was dedicated to the cult of Hadrian only and to explain the historical process. Primarily, the Emperor Tiberius stood alone on the same coin in the temple, which is known to be dedicated to Tiberius, Livia and the Senate. Secondly, whilst Caracalla needed to be the cult image, the goddess Rome and an abbreviation of her name was placed in the central temple. Hence, the cult sculpture inside the temple does not mean that the structure was dedicated to her or serving only her cult. Additionally, as mentioned above, it is likely reflects the common cult at the initial periods that there is no cult image that belongs to either Zeus or the Emperor on the type of coins that were struck during the reign of Hadrian and define a hexastyle temple (see Fig. 2). It is probable that placing a portrait of the emperor on the obverse of the coin, considering the unity of both cults, had eliminated the need to place a cult sculpture inside the temple. But it is clear that Hadrian had risen to a dominant position within the cult since the reign of Caracalla. This can be associated with the developments experienced right after an extensive building activity. Following Smyrna's destruction by an earthquake in 178 A.D., the restoration program applied by the Roman Empire ensured that the city was returned to its former glory, and Aristides, Marcus Aurelius and Commodus were saluted as the new founders of the city (Aristides, XX.5, XXI. 8, 12; Hemer, 1989: 63; Thomas 2007: 141). In the temple, where joint worship of Zeus Acraeus and Hadrian had been performed, the direct worship of the emperor himself perhaps became one of the means by which the city expressed its gratitude towards Rome after these building activities (Kılıç and Gülbay, 2010: 110).

At Smyrna, among the temples of the imperial cult, only the remains that could belong to the Temple of Zeus Acraeus/Hadrian at Değirmentepe²³ could have been observed by travelers²⁴ in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Today, there is nothing left from that temple settlement, of which only remains of the foundation and scattered marble building fragments were seen at those times. The first of the four theses claimed so far tries to prove that the temple here could belong to the Temple of Asclepius, mentioned by Pausanias (Pausanias: 7.5.9), the second one to the Temple of Zeus Acraeus, the third to a temple built in the honor of Hadrian, who gave to the city its second title of neokoros and the fourth to a temple dedicated to the Zeus Acraeus/Hadrian common cult (Kılıç and Gülbay, 2010: 109).

As the current data is not proving that the exact identity of the structure, it was named as the Değirmentepe Temple due to its location. Kılıç and Gülbay, owners of the latest evaluations regarding the name, whom this temple was dedicated. According to the researches, there is no doubt that the Temple of Zeus Acraeus had been located on Değirmentepe (Kılıç and Gülbay, 2010: 110). It is probable that the temple was rebuilt according to the architectural approach and pleasures of the period during the reign of Hadrian. With such an approach it can be thought that the temple on Değirmentepe, which complies with the architectural style of the Hadrian period, was a building which was determined regarding both cults.

The Değirmentepe Temple, dedicated to Zeus Acraeus, had been standing for many years in the last quarter of the 1st century AD (Weber, 1899/2: 174; Petzl, 1987: no. 680). It was probably determined as the neokoros temple after the city received the second neokoros title in 123/124 AD. In the following period, the common worship was developed to Zeus Acraeus and Hadrian. After the restoration program which followed the earthquake of 178 AD probably Hadrian alone was worshiped in the temple at Değirmentepe (Kılıç and Gülbay, 2010: 112).

²³ Above the present day Bahribaba Park, which was formerly a Jewish cemetery.

²⁴ See the observations of travelers: (Osten, 1834: 62 – 63; Osten, 1836: 522; Texier: 2002, 142; Walter, 1924: 232; Wilson, 1895: 74; Arundell, 1834: 410).

The Cult of Rome/Caracalla

During his visit to Pergamum, and probably to Smyrna 214/215²⁵ AD Caracalla gave permission to build temples to worship him in both cities.²⁶ In the reign of the Emperor, while the Temple of Artemis in Ephesus and the Temple of Asclepius in Pergamum were undertaking the third neokoros title²⁷, Smyrna was recognized as the center for the imperial cult in Anatolia (Potter 1992: 74).

The types of coins that mention the title of the third neokoros are struck either under the administration of strategoi Aurelius Charidemos and Tiberius Claudius Kretarios or without the name of any magistrate²⁸. After the third neokoros title had been granted to Smyrna by Caracalla, this title became the constant element of the Smyrnaean coin legend. From that date on, coins mostly started to reflect the title ΣΜΥΡΝΑΙΩΝ Γ ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ (Klose, 1987: 21–22). The examination of the three temples²⁹ on the coins struck under the reign of Caracalla (see Fig. 4), showed that the third neokoros title of Smyrna was associated with the Temple of Rome (Pick, 1904: 22, Fig. 24; Klose, 1987: 22; Burrell, 2004: 50). Although the third neokoros title was confirmed under the name of Caracalla, no new temple was built in the name of the emperor but, in contrary, the Temple of Rome

²⁵ This dating is corrected with a new suggestion by Klose. Klose thinks that Caracalla granted the third Neokoros title to Smyrna on a date between February 212 and the middle of 214 (Klose, 1987: 22). On the other hand, Burrell states that this date should be narrowed down to a date after January 214, when Caracalla was in the region (Burrell, 2004: 49). Ascough suggested a time period between the years of 211 and 217 (Ascough, 2005: 50).

²⁶ (Magie, 1950: 685; Cadoux, 2003: 375; Ascough, 2005: 50; Doğer, 2006: 121–122). Dmitriev proposed an interesting thesis regarding the granting of the third neokoros title. Accordingly, the Smyrnaeans knew Caracalla's obsession with Alexander the Great. The city built by Alexander the Great might as well expect some privileges from the emperor, who was a great fan of his. Beside this, the researcher is of the opinion that the sports competitions that Caracalla was fond of and the relationship of the cult of Nemesis in the city with Victory facilitated his consent (Dmitriev, 2005: 260).

²⁷ The temple on the coins is defined as a Corinthian tetrastyle in the peripteral type (Burrell, 2004: 50, 310–311).

²⁸ On the reverse of the coin types of the goddess Rome holding a temple and of the three temples of Smyrna, gaining the title neokoros three times, soon became a part of Smyrna's numismatic repertoire. The coins showing three temples continued to be struck during the periods of the Roman Emperors Elagabalus, Maximinus, Gordianus III, Valerianus and Gallienus (Klose, 1987: Taf. 49, 51, 52, 54, 55; Burrell, 2004: 49–53).

²⁹ Three temple figures on the coins define the city that was granted the neokoros title three times (Pick, 1904: 22 (Fig. 24); Klose, 1987: 22 (R 11, Tafel 46, R 12,13, 24–26, Tafel 47); Klose, 1996: 61 (Tafel 3, 9).

built in 195 BC was determined to be for the cult of Caracalla.³⁰ At the same time, the type of the goddess Rome (Fig. 5), which bears the temple model, symbolizes that the goddess left her temple to the emperor (Pick, 1904: 24).³¹ The ΣΜΥΡΝΑΙΩΝ ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ ΘΕΑΣ ΡΩΜΗΣ legend on the reverse of the coin belonging to Julia Domna clearly shows that the Temple of Rome had the neokoros title³².

The new title of Smyrna can be seen in several official inscriptions. Among these, the inscription³³ that is dated in the first half of the third century A.D. and which honored Asiarch Iulius Menekles Diophantos, lists the titles of the city successively: “...*the first city of Asia in beauty and greatness, the most famous, the metropolis, three times temple warden of the Augusti as a result of the decisions of the Senate, the ornament of Ionia...*” From then on, the city would claim that it was the first among the Asian cities in terms of beauty and greatness.

Conclusion

It is apparent that political concerns were effective rather than religion at the beginning of the Roman Imperial Cult in Smyrna. Making correct preferences in selecting the power to be supported, the foresighted elites³⁴ of the city preserved the autonomous structure of the city and managed to increase the level of welfare continuously.

Current data demonstrate that such cults began to be established in the period of the Seleucid Dynasty. It is an irrefutable fact that the cult

³⁰ Hence, an imperial cult in the Greek world for the first time was carried to the Rome Temple, which was built in 195 BC (Pick, 1904: 23; Cadoux, 2003: 375; Klose, 1987: 22; Burrell, 2004: 51–53, 326; Ascough, 2005: 50; Doğer, 2006: 121–122).

³¹ This type of coin that started to be seen in the reign of the Caracalla and which was associated with the third neokoros title appeared during the administration of the Strategos Kretarios. Later, it was observed again in the reigns of Alexander and Gallienus, without including the name of the magistrate. This is reminiscent of the regularly repeated festivals at the temples of Rome and Caracalla as it was in the type of Amazon Smyrna (Pick, 1904: 22, 24).

³² This type of coin, on which the enthroned Rome, holding a temple in her right hand, which she has reached out, was struck during the administration of the Strategos Charidemos whilst it is also associated with the title neokoros. After the temple of Rome had been raised to the neokoros degree, the Goddess Rome sitting on a throne was depicted as holding a temple model in her right hand on the coins struck. A Nike sculpture in the temple was rarely included (Klose, 1987: 22–23 (R 50, Tafel 46)).

³³ (Petzl 1987: no. 637; Cadoux, 2003: 375; Klose, 1987: 22; Ascough, 2005: 50; Doğer, 2006: 121–122).

³⁴ For instance, by using his talents and wisdom the sophist Polemon brought influencing the Emperor Hadrian off and as a result ensured that the city obtained the neokoros title as well as the privileges.

of Aphrodite Stratonice formed in the honor of Stratonice, the mother of Antiochus II, was effective on the autonomy and immunity that Seleukos II provided for Smyrna. The same behavior was demonstrated during the formation of the cult of Rome in 195 BC.

The secret was about being able to sense very well the changing balances and taking precautions against this. Being the first or being a model were among the factors considered and emphasized most in the Greek world. In the future, when the supported or the preferred side rose to a strong position, this situation would be used as a great advantage regarding the privileges to be gained. For instance, the legates of Smyrna gave the dangers risked while the cult of Rome was being established in their cities prominence with perfection in the competition made with the other cities in the Senate in front of the emperor in order to obtain the title *neokoros*.³⁵

The Imperial Cult in Smyrna was established first in 26 AD in the honor of Tiberius, Livia and the Senate, followed by the cults of Zeus Acraeus/Hadrian and Rome/Caracalla nearly one century later. Here, it seems that the emperors are sharing their cults with the others on the one hand; on the other hand, Tiberius differs from the other two cults in which the "god-emperor" relationship was revealed as he was sharing his cult with "Livia and the Senate".

The god Zeus in the cult of Zeus Acraeus/Hadrian had been worshipped in Smyrna with the title of Acraeus before Hadrian. So important was its *temenos* for Smyrna that it had been felt necessary to construct an aqueduct from Akpınar to this sacred precinct (Kılıç and Gülbay, 2010: 111).³⁶ The Emperor and the city showed both their respect and commitment to Zeus, who was glorified with the title Acraeus and revealed the association of the two cults on the coins. Indeed, the Smyrnaean coins, which show the portrait of Hadrian on the obverse and Zeus Acraeus on the reverse, must indicate this fact.³⁷ Another type of coin that can represent such an opinion shows the portrait of Hadrian on the obverse and a temple with six columns on the

³⁵ "...they had been the first to establish a temple to the City of Rome in M. Porcius' consulship, when the fortunes of the Roman people were of course already considerable but not yet elevated to supremacy, with the Punic city still standing and kings in power across Asia." (Tacitus, 4.56).

³⁶ The place around Kısık Village which is today located on the city borders of Smyrna.

³⁷ See the city coins dated to second and third centuries AD as for representing Zeus Acraeus: (Klose, 1987: Tafel 7-9).

reverse, in which no cult sculpture was seen to be present.³⁸ These types of coins call to mind that the names of Hadrian and Zeus Acraeus evoked the same concept after the second neokoros title and both were worshipped at the same temple (Kılıç and Gülbay, 2010: 111).

The cult of Rome, which was rooted in Smyrna for many years, shall be crowned with the third neokoros title during the reign of Caracalla. The Goddess Rome, who formed the focus of the cult, was a symbol which revealed the relationship of Smyrna with the state Rome and which was adopted by the population. That Amazon Smyrna³⁹, the founder and namesake of the city, is seen on the coins as an emperor or in relation to the Goddess Rome on one side, and that both goddesses were represented as shaking hands on the coins struck during the reign of Septimius Severus serves as evidence of this (Pick, 1904: 17, 18 (Fig. 21); Klose, 1987: 27, 28 (R 15–16, Tafel 43)). The Temple of Rome in Smyrna protected its reputability and dominant position, even after the emergence of the imperial cult as shown on the coins of second and third centuries AD.

An inscription from the reign of Trajan⁴⁰ probably mentions the temple of the Goddess Rome, which is known to have been built in 195 BC. The inscription includes the decision regarding the fact that the Emperor Trajan emancipated Tiberius Iulianus Attalos from serving the Smyrna temple (Petzl, 1987: no. 593). However, it is not stated which temple was meant there. Reynolds evaluates the mentioned temple as a Smyrnaean temple associated with the city cult and linked to the provincial cult of the imperial (Reynolds, 1982: 113–115). Petzl deems a clear and plain explanation such as, “*The Emperor set Tiberius Iulianus Attalos free from the responsibility of the cult with regards to the provincial temple in Smyrna*” as appropriate (Petzl, 1987: no. 593). Dräger uses more certain statements on this issue. Accordingly, the mentioned temple is definitely not among the cult locations preferred by the koinon in Smyrna, but the neokoros temple dedicated in the name of Tiberius, Livia and the Senate (Dräger, 1993: 148). The temples built in the honor of “Rome”

³⁸ See: Fig. 2.

³⁹ Amazon Smyrna, who was first depicted on the coins struck under the administration of Proconsul L. Mestrius Florus (ca. 87/88 AD) in the reign of Domitian in a sitting position, carries a temple in one hand while holding a double-headed axe in the other (Head, 1892: 274, no. 310; Pick, 1904: 2; Burrell, 2004: 41).

⁴⁰ Petzl's inscription is dated with the years 100/101 or 101/102 AD when Proconsul Q. Iulius Balbus was serving (Petzl, 1987: no. 593).

and "Tiberius, Livia and the Senate" with the date of the inscription were the places where rituals associated with imperial cult were conducted in Smyrna. At that time, the Temple of Rome, which had survived for nearly three hundred years, was identified with the city of Smyrna and the Goddess Rome had become a symbol for the city, just like the Amazon Smyrna. The Emperor Trajan most probably did not even feel the need to mention its name while discussing this temple, which had a significant history for both Rome and the city.

Performed research on the coins struck in the reign of Caracalla confirm that the Temple of Rome was determined as the location of the new cult. Together with this latest title, it is seen that the three times neokoros title was often mentioned on coin legends and in inscriptions. The fact that the coins, on which the three temples representation symbolizing this title are seen, continued to be struck during the reign of Gallienus (254–268 AD), confirms that cult ceremonies were ongoing at the temples that belonged to the imperial cult in Smyrna in the third century AD. However, the imperial cult must have been obliged to leave its place to Christianity as the Emperor Theodosius I abruptly closed all temples in Smyrna in 391 AD, as was the case in all cities of the empire, and prohibited any kind of pagan worship (Roberts (ed.), 2007: 751–752, Theodosius I).

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Fig. 1: Tiberius, Livia and the Senate (BMC: PL. XXVIII, Fig. 8; Klose, 1987: V 7 R34, Taf 19; SNG Hunterian: 1201_1449, 1450; SNG Copenhagen: 1338)



Fig. 2: Smyrna Coin of Hadrian (BMC: 331; Klose, 1987: V 2, R 8, Taf. 33)



Fig. 3: Smyrna Coin of Hadrian (Klose, 1987: V 8, R 21, Taf. 34)



Fig. 4: Smyrna Coin of Caracalla (BMC: 403; Pick, 1904: Fig. 24; Klose, 1987: Taf. 47 R 12; Klose, 1996: Tafel 3, 9; SNG Hunterian: 1201_1583)



Fig. 5: Smyrna Coin of Caracalla (BMC: 410-411; Klose, 1987: R 22, Taf. 47; see also: BMC: 389; SNG Hunterian: 1201_1573, 1574, 1576)