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*Маслякова А.И.***ПАМЯТЬ МОНЕТ В КОНТЕКСТЕ МИРОВОЙ ИСТОРИИ**

Аннотация: несмотря на то, что популярность безналичных расчетов в современном мире возрастает, значение металлических монет невозможно переоценить. В статье рассматриваются монеты через призму всемирной истории.

Ключевые слова: память, переходные периоды, монеты, история.

MEMORY OF THE COINS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE WORLD HISTORY

Abstract: despite the fact that the popularity of non-cash payments in the modern world is increasing, the importance of metal coins cannot be overestimated. The article examines coins through the prism of world history.

Keywords: memory, transitional periods, coins, history.

Nowadays, when new digital payment methods are gaining more popularity, silver coins have become a luxury. Numismatic collections of the so-called «universal museums» such as The Bode Museum in Berlin [1] or The Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg [2] amaze us with their beauty. Without any doubt, the history of each and every coin is fascinating. And the aim of this research is to analyze the «memory of the coins» through the prism of those historical events that took place at the time when this or that particular coin was created on the example of the numismatic collection belonging to our family.

First and foremost, practically all the coins in question were minted in St. Petersburg, yet, surprisingly enough, they were discovered in Smolensk Region. Unfortunately, it is simply impossible to trace the ownership history of each and every coin that entered our collection. Nevertheless, what we could do is to find out what historical events each of these coins witnessed, metaphorically speaking.

For example, the coin in the Fig. 1, richly decorated with representations of an eagle and a crown, was minted in 1759, during the reign of the Empress Elisabeth. And

if one considers this coin in a wider spatiotemporal context, one may find out that, for instance, The British Museum, housing the famous Rosetta Stone, which became key to deciphering the Egyptian hieroglyphs, was opened to the public in the very same year, on the 15th of January. While on the 12th of August the army under the command of Pyotr Saltykov defeated the Prussian troops at the Battle of Kunersdorf, which became the crown of Russian victories in the Seven Years' War.



Fig. 1. Coin minted during the reign of the Empress Elisabeth

Moreover, in the Fig. 2 there is another coin which was minted in 1776, under the reign of the Empress Catherine the Great. The Spanish-Portuguese War, known in the Portuguese history as the Fantastic War since there were numerous movements of the troops, yet no battles were fought, began in February. While on the 12th of July James Cook sailed on his third and final voyage during which he discovered the Sandwich Islands (the Hawaiian Islands) named after one of Cook's patrons, the Earl of Sandwich.



Fig. 2. Coin minted in 1776, during the reign of the Empress Catherine the Great

The Rosetta Stone, mentioned earlier, was found in July 1799, the year in which the coin in the Fig. 3 was minted, by French officer Pierre-François Bouchard during the Napoleonic campaign in Egypt. Whereas on the 15th of August the Austro-Russian army under the command of Field Marshal Alexander Suvorov defeated the French army at the Battle of Novi. The Coup d'état of 18 Brumaire that brought Napoleon Bonaparte to power as the First Consul of France occurred on the 9th of November. And Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 (known as «Sonata Pathétique») was also published in 1799.



Fig. 3. Coin minted in Ekaterinburg in 1799, during the reign of the Emperor Paul I

Furthermore, in the Fig. 4 one can see a coin that was created in 1818, during the reign of the Emperor Alexander I who, as we all know, defeated Napoleon. And, surprisingly enough, Karl Marx, a famous advocate of communism, was born in the same year, on the 5th of May. Jane Austen's novel «Persuasion» was published on the 20th of December, whereas on the 25th of October Felix Mendelssohn performed his first public concert, aged only nine, in Berlin.



Fig. 4. Coin minted during the reign of the Emperor Alexander I

The next coin is of particular interest since it was minted in 1861 when Russian serfs were emancipated. The Manifesto on serfdom abolishment was signed on the 30th of March, and a little bit earlier, on the 17th of March, Victor Emmanuel II, in whose honor Vittoriano or Altare della Patria («Altar of the Fatherland») reminding of a wedding cake or a typewriter was built in Rome between the Piazza Venezia and the Capitoline Hill, became the First King of the United Italy. The American Civil War, depicted in Margaret Mitchell's novel «Gone with the Wind», started on the 12th of April, while Fyodor Dostoyevsky's work «Humiliated and Insulted» was published in July. And, interestingly enough, the Manchurian hare (*Lepus mandshuricus*) was recognized as a separate species in 1861.

There is another coin in our collection connected with the reign of the Emperor Alexander II. It was minted in 1879, when the third attempt on the life of the Tsar took place (see Fig. 6). That is to say, on the 2nd of April a member of a secret revolutionary society «Land and Freedom» Alexander Solovyov tried to shoot the Tsar with a revolver right on the Palace Square, where the latter used to walk, but missed. On the 21st of October American inventor Thomas Edison tested his first incandescent lamp with a carbon filament. On the 8th of February the Peace of Constantinople was signed between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires. The Fourth Impressionist Exhibition was held in Paris from April to May. And on the 18th of December Paul Klee, who did a lot for the development of the Bauhaus School, was born.



Fig. 5. Coin minted during the reign of the Emperor Alexander II



Fig. 6. Coin minted in 1879, under the reign of the Emperor Alexander II

In the Fig. 7 there is a coin minted in 1911, under the reign of the last Russian Emperor Nicholas II. The infamous Titanic was launched on the 31st of May. On the 29th of September Rome declared war on Turkey and started a full-scale invasion of the Libyan coastal cities, whereas in October there was a nationalist democratic revolt in China aiming to overthrow the Qing dynasty and create a republic.



Fig. 7. Coin minted during the reign of the Emperor Nicholas II

As for the last coin, it was minted 100 years ago, in 1923, in the Soviet Russia (see Fig. 8). The Republic of Turkey was established on the 29th of October, while on the 19th of April the Egyptian Constitution was adopted, proclaiming the country a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral parliament. On the 1st of September there was the Great Kantō earthquake, one of the most destructive earthquakes in the World.

And the Beer Hall Putsch, staged by Adolf Hitler and his followers, took place in Munich from the 8th of the November to the 9th of November.



Fig. 8. Coin minted in the Soviet Russia

From time to time, it may be rather difficult to accurately determine the year in which this or that coin was minted. However, in cases where the manufacture date is not indicated on the coin, one should turn to a more thorough analysis of the texts depicted on it. Let us take as an example silver coins of Ivan the Terrible (see Fig. 9). In 1547, the Grand Prince of Moscow Ivan IV the Terrible became the First Russian Tsar, which could not help but affect the design of the coins. In other words, if earlier the title «grand duke» («КНЯЗЬ ВЕЛИКИЙ») was indicated on the coins, after 1547 it was supplemented with the word «ЦРЬ» («Tsar»). And thus with a high degree of probability, we can say that the coin mentioned above was produced after the transformation of the Grand Duchy of Moscow into the Tsardom of Russia. On the 29th of September 1547 Miguel de Cervantes, the author of «Don Quixote de la Mancha», was born. On the 20th of February Edward VI of England was crowned King of England at Westminster Abbey. And one should not forget that Mark Twain's book «Prince and the Pauper» is set in 1547, too.



Fig. 9

By the way, sometimes the principle of building a collection of coins of Ivan the Terrible is based not on periods, but on the hallmarks of the masters who made them. And it is believed that coins with the designation «ГА» («GA») are the least common and therefore highly valuable (see Fig. 10).



Fig. 10

Last but not least, as historical events succeeded each other, the design of the coins also changes. On the one hand, the coins of the Imperial era differ greatly from the more restrained style of the coins of the Soviet period. Yet on the other hand, they have something in common. That is to say, if we look closely, we may notice that the design of the coins of 1911 (see Fig. 7) and 1923 (see Fig. 8) are almost identical for the obverses of both coins are decorated with a wreath comprising a laurel branch (on the left) and an oak branch (on the right) with the only difference that in the first case the wreath is surmounted by a crown, whereas in the second case it is crowned with a shining star. And when we reflect on it, that should not surprise us since it is said that on the whole, during that transitional period of Russian history the coins were minted

on «royal equipment». What is more, there are the so-called «transitional errors» occurring the mint changes from one metallic composition to another and a previous planchet with the old composition ends up getting struck as newly dated coins (for example, the 1943 Lincoln Cents struck on 1942 bronze blanks) [3].

To sum it up, we have scrutinized the «memory of the coins» in the context of the World History which allowed us to see them in a completely new perspective. One may argue that the old coins should be cleaned and polished to a shine, yet, it seems to me that all those «imperfections» are an integral part of their memory. And it is patina of time that makes each coin unique and inimitable.

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