Diadumenian – his coins from Deultum

Only two cities issued coins for Diadumenian in the Province of Thrace. Four types were issued for Byzantium, which are quite scarce, and a multitude of examples were issued at Deultum. The coins issued here seem to fall into two main size categories;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Weight (g)</th>
<th>Diameter (mm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 or 2 assaria</td>
<td>2.9-4.9g</td>
<td>17-19 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or 3 assaria</td>
<td>7.0-9.0g</td>
<td>23-25 mm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, examples at 6g and 21mm also exist, so the distinction between the denominations (assuming there is one) is not clear from this type of analysis alone. A trawl of the available literature indicates that there are some 33 main reverse types known for Diadumenian at this mint, of which the majority will be discussed here.

Deultum was a Roman colony, founded by Vespasian and populated with retired troops – close to the modern town of Burgas in Bulgaria and beside the current village of Debelt. Some of the ‘colonia’ has been preserved to a substantial height, including intact arched doorways, painted plaster on the walls, tiled floor surfaces and street surfaces.

As a colony it had no history of Greek culture and hence all the legends on the coins are in Latin. All the reverse legends are either C F D L, or COL FL PAC DEVLT, both standing for Colonia Flavia Pacensis Deultum (The peaceful Flavian colony of Deultum). Coins bearing the C F D L reverse inscription invariably fall into the small denomination category and the distinction between the two reverse legends seems to provide a good basis for denomination distinction.

The following discussion splits the available examples into the two sizes with the smaller being examined first.

Example 1

Example 1 shows the Aesklepios standing, facing left, with serpent entwined staff reverse type as seen on many provincial coins. In this example he appears to be naked to the waist. The obverse shows a bare-headed and draped bust right - seen from behind. The obverse ‘age’ of Diadumenian being similar to that portrayed at the prolific mints of Moesia Inferior, showing a reasonably mature figure, not as grown as those from say the mints in Cibyra, but much more so than coins issued from say Tripolis where he appears very young.
Example 2

Ob. M OPEL ANTONI-NVS DIADV C  
Rev. C F D L  
Ref. SNG Bulgaria 225-229; Varbanov II. 1906;  
2.88g, 18mm

Example 2 shows Cupid riding on dolphin facing right, the obverse die being the same as that of Example 1.

Example 3

Ob. M OPEL ANTONINVS DIADV CAI  
Rev. C F D L  
Ref. Moushmov 3568;  
4.47g, 19mm

Example 3 portrays Cupid holding goad in right hand, riding lion, advancing right with right foot forward. The obverse die has a continuous legend rather than the break exhibited in the previous two but also shows the bust 'seen from behind'.

Cupid seems an odd reverse type to be used in a town housing ex-soldiers, but undoubtedly the authorities wished the town to grow in a peaceful environment.

Example 4

Ob. M OPEL ANTONI-NVS DIADV C  
Rev. C F D L  
Ref. Yurukova, Deultum 70; SNG Bulgaria 232-235  
4.49g, 19mm

Example 4 shows yet another use of the obverse die seen in Examples 1 and 2. The reverse shows Satir Marsia right, naked, with wine vessel in left hand and raising right arm.
Example 5

Obv. M OPEL ANTON-[NVS DIADV C]
Rev. C F D L
Ref. Yurukova, Deultum 86; SNG Bulgaria 237-240
4.93g, 18mm

Example 5 shows Telephorus standing wrapped in long hooded cloak. Telephorus is the dwarf companion of Hygieia, usually depicted with a cowl on his head, (though occasionally wears a Phrygian cap) who was a symbol or minor god of recovery. According to some myths he was the brother of Hygieia and was a popular deity in Thrace. He appears also to have been known by the names Acesis (Cure) and Euamerion (Prosperity). The obverse die, though worn again seems to be the same as Example’s 1, 2 and 4.

Example 6

Obv. C M OPEL ANTONINVS DIADV
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT
Ref. SNG Cop. Vol.6, 536; SNG Bulgaria 162
7.27g, 23mm

Example 6 shows Apollo standing left holding branch in right hand and in left, a patera over flaming altar. This is a typical reverse type for coins of the region. Apollo was an important god, regularly depicted on the reverses of both imperial and provincial coins. The distinction between Apollo and Bonus Eventus is not always clear, both sharing similar attributes and coins of this type are also attributed to that deity. The coin is noticeably larger than the preceding examples and must have represented a different denomination.

Example 7

Obv. C M OPEL ANTONINVS DIADV
Rev. COL FL PAC DEVLT
Ref. SNG Cop. Vol.6, 536; SNG Bulgaria 162
7.27g, 23mm

Another deity that was extremely popular on the reverses of coins from Thrace and Moesia Inferior was Artemis as shown in Example 7. She was the daughter of Zeus and Leto and twin brother to Apollo. She is the goddess of the hunt, fertility, chastity and wild animals and forests. She is usually depicted holding a bow and accompanied by lions, panthers, hinds and stags. Her worship was predominant in the Greek cities of Asia minor, most notably Ephesus, where her great temple was one of the seven
wonders of the ancient world. This example shows her is a stylised act of loosing an arrow. Again the obverse die is the same as that of Example 6.

**Example 8**

Obv. M OPEL ANTONINVS DIAEV C  
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT  
Ref. SNG Cop. Vol.6, 536; SNG Bulgaria 189;  
7.27g, 23mm

Utilising a different obverse die from the previous 2 coins, this example shows Athena, helmeted, standing holding spear and shield in left hand and resting on an olive tree-trunk with right hand, a coiling serpent (Erichthonios) around it. Athena was one of the twelve main gods of ancient Greece and is, obviously, the chief goddess of Athens, thanks to her gift of olive trees. Her attributes include the Aegis, spear, pomegranate, owl, staff and helmet. Given that Deultum is a Roman colony rather than a Greek one it may seem surprising that this deity is venerated here. However at the time the adoption of Greek culture in to the Roman way of life was so pervasive that depicting imagery such as this was not uncommon.

**Example 9**

Obv. M OPEL DIADO ANTONINVS C  
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT  
Ref. SNG Bulgaria 175-177  
7.30g, 23mm

Example 9 shows Concordia, standing holding cornucopia in left arm and offering patera over lit altar with right hand. Concordia or her Greek counterpart Homonia, are also common reverse types seen on Roman Provincial coins. The obverse die is unusual in that it names Diadumenian before Antonius in the legend.

**Example 10**

Obv. C M OPEL ANTONINVS DIAEV  
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT  
Ref. SNG Bulgaria  
8.96g, 25mm

Example 10 also shows Concordia, this time seated and holding a patera in her right hand and a cornucopia in her left arm. The image is a familiar one to those seen in
Imperial coinage but the seated deity is less often seen in the various issues from the provincial issuing cities.

**Example 11**

![Image](image1.jpg)

Ob. C M OPEL ANTONINVS DIADV  
Rev. COL FL P-A-C DEVLT  
Ref. SNG Bulgaria 166-169; Jurukova, Deultum, no. 77, pl. 7; Varbanov (Eng) Vol.II 2175  
7.30g, 23mm

The reverse of this coin (Example 11) shows Diadumenian in military dress, standing left holding a thunderbolt in right hand and spear in left hand, behind – Victory is placing a wreath on his head with her right hand and holding a long palm in her left hand. The object Diadumenian is holding has previously, been identified as a parazonium or a scroll, but this example clearly shows it as a thunderbolt. This is likely to be Diadumenian on the reverse rather than Macrinus, as the scene is similar to a reverse type used when Geta was elevated to the purple – so it is likely to commemorate Diadumenians investiture as Caesar. The obverse die is an excellent representation of Diadumenian and is possibly the most accomplished engraving of the series, being the same as Examples 6 and 7.

**Example 12**

![Image](image2.jpg)

Ob. M OPEL ANTONINVS [DIADV C]  
Rev. COL FL P-A-C DEVLT  
Ref. SNG Cop. Vol.6, 537; SNG Bulgaria 163-165;  
7.30g, 23mm

The deity on the reverse of Example 12 is not fully explained but is likely to be a depiction of the Emperor, holding aside his drapery with his left hand while holding a patera over a lit altar with his right.

**Example 13**

![Image](image3.jpg)

Ob. M OPEL ANTONINVS [DIADV ]  
Rev. COL FL P-A-C DEVLT  
Ref. SNG Bulgaria 170-172;  
7.64g, 23mm

This particular example shows a strange corrosion on the obverse – on what would have been an otherwise excellent specimen. The reverse depicts Macrinus on
horseback, right, cape flying behind and holding aloft in right hand a spear. Obviously a military type of reverse appealing to the local population the styling is excellent with the reverse design filling the flan. The obverse matches that of Example 8.

**Example 14**

![Image](image1.png)

Ob. M.OPEL ANT DJADVVMENIANVS  
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT  
Ref. SNG Bulgaria; courtesy of Barry Murphy sales  
8.34g, 25mm  

Example 14 shows Hermes, the herald of the gods, on the reverse. Another popular deity to depict on the reverse of coins of this time he is shown holding the caduceus (kerykeion in Greek) in his left arm and a purse in his right hand. While he can be portrayed with winged boots, a winged travellers cap and/or a chlamys cloak it is the caduceus (originally a heralds staff) which is often most recognisable.

**Example 15**

![Image](image2.png)

Ob. C M OPEL ANTONINVS [DIADV ]  
Rev. COL FL PA[-C DEVLT]  
Ref. CNG 147 No. 76 (illustrated with permission);  
8.56g, 23mm  

Example 15 shows the reverse commonly knows as Nemesis- Aequitas. Here she is holding a set of scales in her right hand and a measuring rod in her left. A wheel is at her feet. Sometimes the measuring rod is replaced by a cornucopia. This deity combines the attributes of both Nemesis and Aequitas to create an all-encompassing one relaying how the Emperor brings (and maintains) justice in the city and watches over the commercial transactions to ensure fair play.

**Example 16**

![Image](image3.png)

Ob. M OPEL ANT DJADVVMENIAN C  
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT  
Ref. CNG 108 No. 34 (illustrated with permission); Lindgren III 777a; SNG Bulgaria 209-213;  
8.56g, 23mm  

Example 16 shows Victory (Nike) walking right, holding a long trophy in her hands. Always a popular motif for provincial coinage as well as the imperial series, this coin,
like that of the Emperor on horseback, is unlikely to commemorate a particular military campaign but is generically lauding the successes of the military settlers.

**Example 17**

![Image of Example 17](image1)

Obv. M OPEL ANTONI-NIN(V[S DIAD C]
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT
Ref. AkropolisZ (illustrated with permission); Varbanov 1893
-7g, 25mm

Example 17 is a very rare coin showing Perseus holding head of Medusa in his left hand and unchaining Andromeda with his right; right foot on the body of Medusa. The story of Perseus and Medusa is well known but it is rarely depicted on these type of coins and particularly on one with so small a flan. Usually these types of scenes are reserved for the large and impressive coins, where space allows the engraver to do justice to the scene. The obverse die is the same as Example 12.

**Example 18**

![Image of Example 18](image2)

Obv. M OPEL ANTONI[S DIADV ]
Rev. COL FL PAC DEVL/T
Ref. Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung, Auction 142, October 10th, 2005, Lot number: 1867 (illustrated with permission)
-7.83g, -mm

The priest standing behind two oxen ploughing right is a common reverse type in the provincial series, showing as it does the founding of the city ceremony that is performed. In the Diadumenian from Deultum series it is a much less common coin however. The obverse shares a die with Examples 8 and 13.

**Example 19**

![Image of Example 19](image3)

Obv. M OPEL ANTONI-DIADV-MENIAN C
Rev. COL FL P-A C DEVLT
Ref. Jurukova 64; SNG Bulgaria 198-206; SNG Hunterian 921
-7.39g, 22mm

Continuing with the theme of healing and good health so often found on these coins, Example 19 shows both Salus (Hygieia) on left facing right holding snake and Asklepios (Aesklepios) on right facing left and holding his serpent entwined staff. While not particularly noticeable on this example it can often be seen how the staff is depicted as a crutch with the top resting under the god’s armpit. Devotions to these
two deities, (father and daughter) was undoubtedly intermingled in the city with Telephorus also represented in the coin series.

Example 20

![Example 20 Coin Image]

Ob. M OPEL ANTONINVS DIAD C
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT
Ref. eBay sales August 2006; 2007; 7.93g, 25mm

Example 21

![Example 21 Coin Image]

Ob. M OPEL ANTONINVS DIADV
Rev. COL FL PA-C D-EVLT
Ref. Courtesy of Barry Murphy sales 7.53g, 22mm

Example 20 shows the deity Salus (Hygieia) on her own – holding her left hand out with a patera and allowing the snake carried in her right hand to feed from it. While Asclepius was seen as the god of healing, Salus was thought of more in prevention of illness in the first place. This is the standard depiction for this goddess, though the imperial series often depict her seated. The obverse die is shared with Examples 16 and 12. Example 21 shows the same reverse paired with a different obverse die.

Example 22

![Example 22 Coin Image]

Ob. M OPEL ANT DIADVMENIANVS
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT
Ref. Private collection (Switzerland) 8.10g, 25mm

This example shows Serapis standing facing, wearing modius, holding sceptre, right hand raised. The Hellenistic-Egyptian god was another favorite reverse type among the near eastern provincial cities. Derived as a mix of the Egyptian gods Aphis and Osiris, he the imagery projected plenty, security and fertility.

Example 23

![Example 23 Coin Image]

Ob. C M OPEL ANTONINVS DIADV
Rev. COL FL PA-C DEVLT
Ref. Moushmov 3566; SNG Bulgaria 214-221; Jurukova 73, 78 8.21g, 24mm

This reverse scene (She-wolf suckling Remus and Romulus) depicts one of the most famous of all Roman myths, that of it’s founding. When the last king of Alba Longa was overthrown by his brother, he made his niece a Vestal Virgin to ensure there would be no heirs. When she had the twins (by the god Mars) her uncle cast them adrift on the Tiber. When they came ashore (at Rome) a wolf suckled them until they
were found, and raised by a shepherd. Romulus later killed Remus to become sole ruler and founder of the great city. The obverse die here is the same as that of Example 14.

**Example 24**

Obv. M OPEL ANTONINVS DIA DV C
Rev. COL FL PA C DEVLT
Ref. SNG Bulgaria 174; Jurukova 66, ebay sales 2007
- g, 24mm

This example shows Tyche standing left, holding rudder in left hand and globe in extended right hand. The depiction is slightly different from that seen at other mints where the rudder is in the right hand. The symbolism represents good luck to the emperor (and Caesar) where the globe shows how the rulers have the world in their hands and the rudder is symbolic of their ability to steer their way successfully.

**Example 25**

Obv. M OPEL ANTONINVS DIA DV
Rev. COL FL PAC DEVLT
Ref. Jurakova 67.1 variety, Moushmov 3569; SNG Bulgaria 179;
7.35g, 23mm

The last example shows Zeus enthroned, facing left, holding, patera and sceptre, eagle at feet. The obverse die matches that of Examples 8, 13 and 17. This reverse is common across the Roman world, Zeus representing the most powerful of the gods.

A number of other reverse types can be found associated with this ruler from this mint which have not been illustrated. A founding ceremony with the priests ploughing reverse type can be found for the small (1) assarion coin with the usual C F P D only reverse, the obverse die being the same as Example 1 (SNG Bul. 236). A Satir Marsia reverse type for the (2) assaria coin (SNG Bul. 180) is also found the obverse being the same as Example 11 (the obverse with the most reverse combinations). Both the priest ploughing and the Satir Marsia reverse types appear to have been the only types to be represented on both large and small flan sizes.

The most common Example 11 obverse die can also be found linked to a Hercules (Herakles in Greek) standing, holding lionskin over left arm and resting club on the ground with his right hand (SNG Bul. 178) and a Nemesis-Aequitas reverse type with cornucopia in left arm, holding scales in right hand and wheel at feet (SNG Bul. 192). A second Athena standing beside serpent entwined tree die is also noted (SNG Bul. 188).
The obverse die of Example 12 is also found linked to a Fortuna (may also be described Tyche, though there is no modius evident) reverse type with Fortuna holding a cornucopia in her left arm and a rudder in her right (SNG Bul. 173).

Finally the obverse die of Example 18 is linked to three additional reverse types. The first shows Athena in her more usually encountered stance of standing holding sceptre or spear in her left hand and resting her right hand on a shield (SNG Bul. 191). The second shows Hades seated left holding sceptre in his left and (possibly) a patera in outstretched right hand, Cerberus at his feet (SNG Bul. 193). The final example shows a river god reverse where the god is reclining left his outstretched right hand resting on the prow of a boat (SNG Bul. 194-5).

It must be remembered that this series of coinage did not circulate in isolation but also with that of his father, Macrinus. There would also have been coins from previous emperors also circulating, so the amount of diversification of types in everyday coinage must have been substantial. Distinguishing between denominations seems to be based on the brevity of the reverse legend but that still suggests that each coin would have to be individually examined when conducting everyday commerce.

Malcolm Megaw
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