

## A curious Large Hermes Head - by Ruud Verberne

Discussing forgeries is a common practice during our Study Group meetings. Frans van Limpt recently brought in a cancelled **blue** 1 Lepton Large Hermes head for the forgery collection.



The **format** corresponds to that of a real LHH stamp, but is enlarged here.

The **cancellation** is far too modern. A flag-cancel from the 60's, maybe 70s. Accompanied on the right by something that looks like lipstick markings. Possibly, the stamp may have been affixed next to a regular stamp, and have remained undetected before entering the automatic cancellation machine.

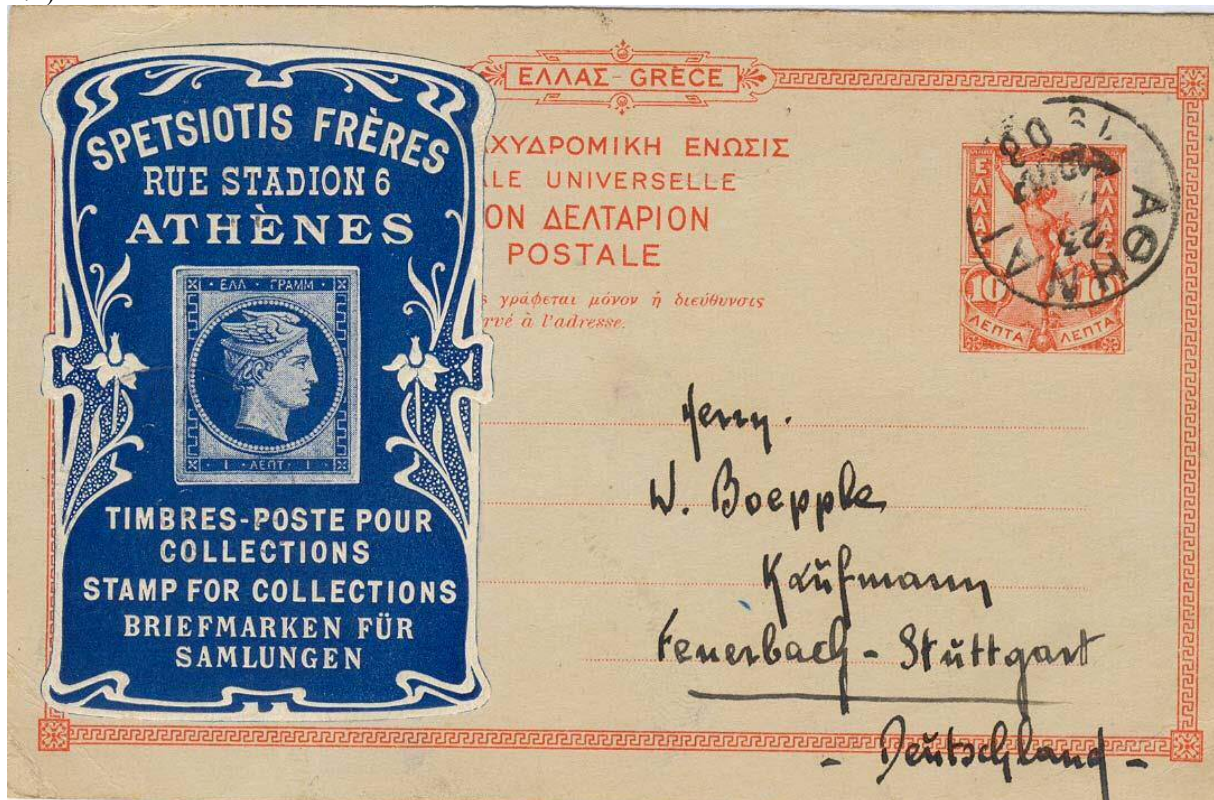
The **genuine stamp** of this value does not exist in this blue colour, not even as a proof.

If we take a closer look, we immediately detect a grid that we know from a photographic process.

Looking at **the edges** of the stamp it seems there are the remains of paper on the backside. That is an illusion. The whole item is one single piece of paper, a copy made by photographic means.

At first, I couldn't recognize it. Still, it looked familiar. And... a few months later the penny dropped when I was browsing through my collection of postal stationery and the card below showed up, a 10

Lepta Flying Hermes, orange on grey beige, with shadowy lines in the background of the effigy (Stratoudakis D 17e).



Sent in 1908 by the Spetsiotis brothers to a merchant in Feuerbach, near Stuttgart, then in the kingdom of Württemberg. In the text they made the promise that after a cash deposit the addressee would receive four times as much value in stamps of his choice, with a request to recommend Spetsiotis to others as stamp dealers as well. The card has a particularly attractive advertising label on the front, with in the centre: the same 1 Lepton blue! So, it is not a real forgery in itself, but a cut-out of a replica from an advertising label from 1908 ..... Although: the fact that a cancellation was added to this cut-out afterwards makes it a forgery anyway, with the aim of misleading and / or disadvantaging collectors ...