Three Weights of Lampsacus

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Oğuz TEKİN*

THREE WEIGHTS OF LAMPSACUS

Located on the southern coast of the Sea of Marmara near the Dardanelles, Lampsacus (the modern-day Lapseki) was settled by colonists from Phocaea (Foça) and Miletus. Under the control, successively, of Lydia and Persia, Lampsacus paid a tax of 12 talents (approximately 300 kg of silver) to the Delian League established by Athens to counteract the Persian threat. The city also minted gold coins in the 4th century B.C., which was a rarity for Anatolian cities in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. Both the large tax paid by the city to the Delian League and the fact that it minted gold coins indicates that Lampsacus was among the region's wealthiest cities. The city was also the home of Priapus, a god of fertility and reproduction, as well as producing a number of philosophers who put their print on the intellectual world of their time.

Lampsacus began to mint coins in the early 5th century B.C., with its earliest electrum *staters* and then gold ones being known as *Lampsakenoi*. The city continued minting throughout the Classical and Hellenistic periods, but it did not mint only its own coins: it was one of the mints of Alexander the Great¹ and after the death of Alexander the Great, it also produced coins in the name of King Lysimachus², who ruled in Thrace and in the Marmara region. Lysimachus, like Alexander's other successors, copied the images used on coins minted in Alexander's time, thus continuing to produce Alexander's coins even after his death.

On the coins of Lampsacus, there are various types but the common type is the *Hippalectryon*, which occurs frequently on Lampsacene coins³. So this type, *Hippalectryon*, was also used as a symbol on the market weights of Lampsacus. This type was also used by Adramyteum on its coins⁴, so the attribution of every weight bearing a *Hippalectryon* to Lampsacus is not certain since these weights do not bear the ethnic on them. The following three weights are from various collections: while the first one is from Germanisches Zentralmuseum at Mainz, the other two are from a private collection in Şarköy (Edirne)⁵; none of them were published previously.

The first weight (Fig. 1)⁶ is almost a thick square in form with bevelled edges but the bottom is larger than the top; it measures 32x30x11 mm and weighs 122.5 g. On the obverse is a *Hippalectryon* facing left with curved right; below, the denominational mark T which stands for τέταρτον, all in relief. The reverse is blank. It is a *tetarton*, i.e. quarter *mna* (*mna* of 490 g). Although the exact find place is unknown, it is stated in the inventory book that this weight was bought from a private collector in Istanbul in 1984.

The second weight (Fig. 2)⁷ is square in form too. It measures 26x25x11 mm and weighs 66.1 g. On the obverse there is an *Hippalectryon* facing left as the previous one. The figure is worn. We can not be sure of its denomination since there is no denom-

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1) Thompson 1991.

2) Thompson 1968: 170 ff.

3) For the *Hippalectryon* on the Lampsacene electrum, gold, silver and bronze coins see Baldwin 1924, esp. Plates I-III; *BMC Mysia*, n^{os} 1-9; 23-31; 46-49; 50-67. But unfortunately, this creature is misdescribed as *Pegasus* in the above mentioned publications although it is a *Hippalectryon* with its rooster tail.

4) Fritze 1910: pl. I, n^{os} 1-5; Gaebler 1924: pl. XVIII, n^{os} 1-12; Stauber 1996: n^{os} 11-15 (many examples).

5) I would like to thank Falko Daim, head of the Early Medieval Department of the Germanisches Zentralmuseum, for permitting me to publish the weight and Ute Klatt, head of the Image Archive of the same museum, for sending me the photo of the weight and Jörg Drauschke for sending me the technical info of the weight. I also thank Mrs Remziye Küçük, wife of the late collector, for permitting me to publish these two weights.

6) Germanisches Zentralmuseum Mainz, inv. n^o O.40402.

7) RK 004 (tentative number).

1

2

3

inational mark on the weight. But its mass corresponds to an *ogdoon*, i.e. one-eighth of a *mna* (*mna* of 528.8 g). This weight was acquired in Tekirdağ in 1990s⁸ or later.

The third weight (Fig. 3)⁹ is also square in form: it measures 23x23x8 mm and weighs 39.5 g. On the obverse is an *Hippalectryon* again but this time facing right and its head looks like a camel's head due to deformation. Below, a large O may be either an *omicron* or rather a wreath. If we assume it as an *omicron*, then it might be the initial of the denominational name, i.e. *ogdoon* but its mass does not correspond to an *ogdoon* (1/8 of a *mna*) since it is too light for an *ogdoon*. Then it may be a wreath. The mass of the present weight corresponds to a one-twelfth of a *mna* (*mna* of 474 g) but it may be a unit in *stater* standard, maybe a *distateron*? (*stater* of 19.75 g). This weight was acquired in Tekirdağ in the 1990s or later.

The main reason attributing the weights above-mentioned to Lampsacus is the *Hippalectryon* since it was the civic badge of that city. It is an hybrid creature with half-horse and half-rooster with wings and tail. Thus, the type on the weights is not a *Pegasus* but a *Hippalectryon* as it was stated previously by Weiss¹⁰. They differ from each other by their peculiar characteristics. Although *Hippalectryon*, is a civic badge for Lampsacus, this type was also used by other cities in Mysia and Troas¹¹. But – beside Lampsacus – the nearest candidate to attribute the weights bearing a *Hippalectryon* is Adramyteum since this creature was used as a common type as

well as the owl on the coins of this city¹². We prefer to attribute the present weights and the weight with *Hippalectryon* in general to Lampsacus since the *Hippalectryon* was nearly a constant civic badge of Lampsacus during the Classical and Hellenistic periods.

Only a few weights of Lampsacus survived today. When we compare Lampsacus with Cyzicus, both important cities of the Propontis, one expects more weights of Lampsacus. But, anyway, the survived examples of Lampsacus may help to understand the standard of *mna* and its subunits. One of the known examples of Lampsacene weights bears the denominational mark M which stands for $\mu\nu\tilde{\alpha}$ and it weighs 499 g¹³. This example is important since it bears the denominational mark. The *mna* of 499 or 500 g is quite common in the Aegean world. The neighbouring city of Cyzicus also used a *mna* of ± 500 g¹⁴. The first weight (Fig. 1) presented in this article is a *tetarton*, i.e. quarter *mna* and weighs 122.5 g. Its mass corresponds to the mass of the *mna* mentioned above. When we multiply 122.5 g by four we get 490 g. or – vice versa – when we divide 499 g by four we get 124.75 g; both figures (122.5 g and 124.74 g) are quite near to each other and they give a *mna* of 490-500 g for Lampsacus¹⁵. But the *hemimnaion* examples does not strictly correspond to a *mna* of 490-500 g since they are lighter. Of the two *hemimnaion* units, one is 236 g¹⁶, another is 237.10 g¹⁷; both give a *mna* of ca. 472/474 g. On the other hand, there are also three *ogdoons*, one is presented here (Fig. 2), the other is in a private col-

8) Since the collector passed away long ago it was impossible to learn the acquisition date or find place of the two weights.

9) RK 008 (tentative number).

10) Weiss 2008: 714.

11) Weiss 2008: 714-715.

12) For the *Hippalectryon* on the coins of Adramyteum see Fritze 1910: n^{os} 1-5; *Roma Numismatics Ltd. Auction 4*: 1487; *Münzen und Medaillen Deutschland GmbH, Auction 30*: 327-328; *Dr. Busso Peus Nachfolger, Auction 380*: 459.

13) Weiss 2008: 713, n^o 1.

14) Weiss 1990: 125 ff; Tekin 2013: 172.

15) Weiss 2008: 715.

16) *CPAI Turkey 3*: n^o 29.

17) Weiss 2008: 713, n^o 2.h

lection¹⁸ and another one is in the Pera Museum¹⁹. While the masses of the first two *ogdoons* are quite close to each other (66.1 g and 62.82 g, respectively), the one in Pera Museum²⁰ with 56.90 g is lighter than these two examples. So, while the first two give a *mna* of 528.8 g and 502.56 g, the *ogdoon* in Pera Museum gives a *mna* of 455.2 g. Although the third weight (Fig. 3) is a 1/12 *mna* (*mna* of 474 g), the smallest unit of the Lampsacene weights is

20.65 g which is in Pera Museum²¹. It is either a 1/24 of a *mna* (*mna* of 495.6 g) or a *stater* weight. We may conclude that the *mna* of Lampsacus was previously about 470-480 g but the standard was raised to 490-500 g in time (may be in the Late Hellenistic Period). The three weights in question date to the Hellenistic Period.

O.T.

Table: A Compilation of the Weights of Lampsacus.

<i>Mna</i>	499 g	MNA	Weiss 2008, p. 713, n° 1
<i>Hemimnaion</i>	237.10 g	H	<i>CPAI Turkey</i> 3, n° 29
<i>Hemimnaion</i>	236 g	H	Weiss 2008, p. 713, n° 2
<i>Tetarton</i>	122.5 g	T	Here, Fig. 1 (Mainz)
<i>Ogdoon</i>	66.1 g	–	Here, Fig. 2 (RK)
<i>Ogdoon</i>	62.82 g	O ?	Weiss 2008, p. 713, n° 3
<i>Ogdoon</i>	56.90 g	ΟΓ[ΔΟ]?	<i>CPAI Turkey</i> 3, n° 30
1/12 <i>mna</i>	39.5 g	–	Here, Fig. 3 (RK)
1/24 <i>mna</i>	20.65 g	–	<i>CPAI Turkey</i> 3, n° 31

18) Weiss 2008: 713, n° 3.

19) *CPAI Turkey* 3: n° 30.

20) *CPAI Turkey* 3: n° 30.

21) *CPAI Turkey* 3: n° 31.

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