

Four Hellenistic Weights of Alexandria in Troas

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Alexandria Troas, the modern-day Dalyan Köyü, is located at the strategic site where the Sea of Marmara connects the Aegean Sea to the Black Sea. Before Alexandria Troas, there was another settlement named Sigia at this site (Strabon: XIII.I.47). Sometime towards the end of the fourth century BC, Antigonus I Monophthalmus -one of the successors of Alexander the Great- brought the people of a neighboring city here in a process known as *synoikismos*, literally “bringing together units of settlement”, and founded a new city known as Antigoneia. The city was a member of the League of Ilion, also founded by Antigonus. In 301 BC Lysimachus –another of Alexander’s successors- changed the name of the city to Alexandria, in memory of Alexander (Strabon: XIII.I.26). Following the Roman defeat of the Seleucids, Alexandria Troas became an independent city. The changing of Alexandria Troas into a Roman colony occurred towards the end of the 1st century BC (c. 12 BC), during the time of Augustus, and the city’s official name then became *Colonia Alexandria Augusta Troas*. After this, the city was no longer a polis or a city-state, but rather a Roman colony, in which capacity it would henceforth continue. Alexandria Troas was one of the most important centers securing communications between the Roman Empire and its eastern provinces.

On the Hellenistic and colonial coins of Alexandria there is a grazing horse, standing to left or to right. The depiction of a horse on the coins of the city most likely indicates that horses were raised in the city and its environs. In fact, the horses seen on the coins of Alexandria Troas are an allusion to mythology. According to Homer (*Iliad*, XX.219-230), King Erichthonius, who ruled in Troas, had many thousands of horses grazing in the pastures of his land. Another myth (*Iliad*, V.265-66) has it that Zeus abducted Ganymedes, the son

of King Tros, so as to have the boy serve him drinks on Mount Olympus, and Zeus left the king a pair of immortal horses as compensation. The Troas took its name from King Tros, who was the son of King Erichthonius and the father of Ganymedes. Like its coins, the weights of Alexandria bear also a grazing horse with AAE, the abbreviated ethnic of the city. So one may say that the horse is a civic badge (*parasemon*) of Alexandria in Troas. Among the known weight denominations are six-*mna* (Michon 1907: 554; Robert 1966: 51; Rochesnard: 55, third; Weiss 1990: 138, 3 a; Weiss 2008: 179, 1), heavy *mna* (Weiss 2008: 719, 1), *mna* (Robert 1966: 51; Weiss 1990: 138, 3 d; Weiss 2008: 720, B-C; Kruse – Stumpf 1998, no. 8), *hemimnaion/triton* (Weiss 2008: 719, 2), *tetarton* (Michon 1907: 554; Ridder 1915: no. 3334; Weiss 1990: 138, 3 b; Weiss 2008: 719, 4; Weiss 2008: 720, D-E; *CPAI Turkey* 3, no. 35; Dorigny 1883: 100-102; Robert 1966: 51; Rochesnard: 55, first), *distateron* (Michon 1907: 554; Ridder 1915, 3334; Rochesnard, p. 55, second; Weiss 1990: 138, 3 c; Weiss 2008: 720, F). The following weights of Alexandria Troas date from the Hellenistic period or a little later (c. 300-12 BC).

This article¹ deals with the four weights of Alexandria in Troas with short descriptions; one is from the Athens Numismatic Museum² and three are from the private collections³. They are a *mna*, a *tetarton*, a *hektemorion* and an *ogdoon*. The first weight (Fig. 1) is from the Athens Numismatic Museum (inv. no. SM 25). This is a rectangular bronze weight measuring 76x69x5 mm and weighing 381,5 g. It is good in condition and exact. On the obverse is a grazing horse standing to left on a ground line; above, AAE(ξανδρέων); on the top left corner is a bunch of grapes; below the belly of horse is a circular mark. This mark was discussed by Weiss in his article (Weiss 2008: 721). The reverse of the weight is blank. This weight was first mentioned by Varoucha-Christodouloupoulou⁴ among the other weights acquired by the Athens Numismatic Museum (Varoucha-Christodouloupoulou 1962: 429,

1 Some of the weights in the present article were presented in the Second Greek-Turkish Epigraphy Symposium in Adrasan (Antalya), May 22-27, 2102, but the papers of the symposium were not published. For a detailed study of the weights of Alexandria Troas see Weiss 2008.

2 I would like to thank Dr. Georgios Kakavas, director of the museum, who permitted me to study and publish the weight. I would also to thank Alexandros Andreou, curator of coins, who facilitated my work in the museum.

3 I would like to thank Özkan Arıkantürk and Garo Kürkman, collectors, who permitted me to publish the weights in their collections.

4 She says that there are forty weights in the collection of Dr. Mordtmann which was formed at the beginning of the twentieth century in Constantinople and presented to the Athens Numismatic Museum by Jordan-Bassermann. In the list of Varoucha-Christodouloupoulou there is a weight of Alexandria Troas but there is no more information.

no. 17). Then L. Robert gave a short description of it with a photo in his work (Robert 1966: 51). But, the photo in Robert's article is misleading since all corners of the weight are missing; in fact it was not an original photo but a cast (moulage)⁵. The same photo was used by Weiss (Weiss 2008: pl. 87, B). All three authors (Varoucha-Christodouloupoulou, Robert and Weiss) didn't mention of its mass and material. On the other hand, it is hard to know the original mass of the Alexandrian *mna* since the masses vary from c. 380 g to c. 430 g (except the one which weighs 622 g: Weiss 2008: 719, no. 1). But the mass of the present weight corresponds to a *mna* (μνᾶ). There are two tetartons which weigh 99,78 g and 99,6 g, respectively (Weiss 2008: 720, D-E) and one tetarton of 99,6 g which all gives a mass for *mna* of c. 399 g. This figure corresponds to the mass of the present weight (i.e. 381,5 g)⁶.

The second lead weight (Fig. 2) is almost square measuring 43x40x9 mm and weighing 105 g, worn (coll. Arıkantürk, inv. no. 429). On the obverse is a grazing horse to right on a ground line; above, ΑΛΕ(ξανδρέων); below the ground line, T[E](ταρτον) or T[E](ταρτημόριον). The reverse is blank. As the unit mark indicates it should be a *tetarton*, i.e. quarter *mna* (*mna* of 420 g).

The third weight (Fig. 3) is a lead square weight with rounded corners. It measures 32x32x7 mm and weighs 65,14 g and it is worn (coll. Kürkman, inv. no. 27). There is a grazing horse to right on the obverse; above, ΑΛΕ(ξανδρέων); below the ground line, no unit mark or illegible. Below the belly of the horse is an obscure symbol (dot?). The reverse is blank. Its mass corresponds to a *hektemorion* (έκτημόριον), i.e. one-sixth of a *mna* (*mna* of 390.84 g).

The fourth and the last lead weight (Fig. 4) is almost square in form with rounded corners measuring 31x28x7 mm and weighing 55 g, worn (coll. Arıkantürk, inv. no. 368). On the obverse is a grazing horse to right on a ground line; above, ΑΛΕ(ξανδρέων); below the ground line, no unit mark or illegible. The reverse is blank. Its mass corresponds to an *ogdoon* (ὄγδοον), i.e. one-eighth of a *mna* (*mna* of 440 g).

5 Robert says that Mrs Varoucha-Christodouloupoulou had sent him the cast of the weight in question.

6 But one should consider that there is a *mna* of 428,23 g and *hemimnaion* of 217,05 g (Weiss 2008, p. 720, C and p. 719, 2, respectively) which may show that the Alexandrian *mna* may be about 430 g. This different figures may indicate the change in the weight standard in time.

Alexandria Troas'tan Dört Hellenistik Ağırlık

Aleksandreia Troas, Antigonos Monophthalmos tarafından Antigoneia adıyla kurulmuş ancak Lysimakhos tarafından adı –Büyük İskender'in anısına– Aleksandreia'ya çevrilerek yeniden kurulmuştur (MÖ c. 301). Augustus zamanında ise kent, bir Roma kolonisine çevrilerek (MÖ c. 12) adı *Colonia Alexandria Augusta Troas* olarak anılmaya başlanmıştır. Bu makalede Aleksandreia Troas'ın Roma kolonisi yapılmadan önceki dönemine (diğer bir deyişle Hellenistik döneme) tarihlenen dört adet ticari ağırlığı ele alınmaktadır. Ağırlıklardan biri Atina Numismatik Müzesi koleksiyonunda, diğer üçü ise özel koleksiyonlarda bulunmaktadır. Ağırlıklar arasında bir adet *mna*, bir adet *tetarton* ($1/4 mna$), bir adet *hektemorion* ($1/6 mna$) ve bir adet de *ogdoon* ($1/8 mna$) bulunmaktadır. Ağırlıkların ön yüzünde ise kentin sembolü olan at figürü yer alırken, arka yüzleri boştur.