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Ideas Concerning the Historical Identity and the Connections of the City of Phaselis an Eastern Mediterranean Port*

Bir Doğu Akdeniz Limanı Olarak Phaselis Kentinin Tarihsel Kimliği ve Bağlantıları Hakkında Düşünceler

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Abstract: This article is based upon ancient sources and numismatic and epigraphic evidence and evaluates the historical identity of Phaselis, located on the border of Lycia-Pamphylia, within the framework of its relations with eastern Mediterranean ports. Phaselis and settlements such as: Gagai, Corydalla and Rhodiapolis had a Hellenic identity in early times and this is compatible with Rhodes' attempts especially in the VII c. to found new colonies in Lycia and Cilicia, reflecting its desire to participate in the ongoing commercial activities in the eastern Mediterranean. When the temporal context of this dominance is investigated, *antroponymic* data interestingly reveals that Phaselis retained its Hellenic characters until the Roman Period, while other Rhodian colonies on the east Lycian coast lost many elements of their Hellenic identity in the V and IV centuries B.C. The second section deals with the inferences drawn concerning the historical identity of the city in the perspective of its connections within the eastern Mediterranean. This section examines the commercial aspects of this relationship in particular through presenting the spread of Archaic Period coins struck by Phaselis in eastern Mediterranean cities such as: Damanhur, Benha el Asl, Zagazig, in Syria, in the Anti-Lebanon and in Jordan. Thus, through extending the observations of these commercial links within the context of *emporion* the city possessed in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods, data concerning the network of regional and inter-regional relations formed by Phaselis in the eastern Mediterranean are examined in detail.

Keywords: Phaselis, East Mediterranean, ancient port, identity, trade, *antroponymi.*

Özet: Buradaki makale, antik kaynaklar, nümizmatik ve epigrafik belgeler ışığında Lykia - Pamphylia sınırında yer alan Phaselis kentinin tarihsel kimliğini Doğu Akdeniz limanlarıyla kurduğu ilişkiler çerçevesinde değerlendirmektedir. Halihazırdaki veriler başta Phaselis olmak üzere, Gagai, Korydalla, Rhodiapolis gibi yerleşimlerin erken dönemlerde Hellen kimliği taşıdığını göstermektedir. Bu olgu, Rhodos'un özellikle VII. yüzyılla birlikte, Doğu Akdeniz'de devam eden ticari faaliyetlerin bir parçası olmak isteğini yansıtan Lykia ve Kilikia'da yeni koloniler kurma çabalarıyla uyumlu görülmektedir. Doğu Lykia kentlerinde İÖ. V–IV yüzyıllarda Hellen kimliğinin pek çok unsuru ile yitirildiği gözlenirken, Phaselis'in Hellenik karakterini Roma Dönemi'ne kadar muhafaza ettiği *antroponymic* verilerle belgelenmektedir. Kentin tarihsel kimliği üzerine ulaşılan sonuçlar, ikinci bölümde Doğu Akdeniz ile kurduğu bağlantılar perspektifinde ele alınmıştır. Burada özellikle, Phaselis darplı Arkaik Dönem sikkelerinin Damanhur, Benha el Asl, Asyut, Zagazig, Suriye, Antilibanon ve Ürdün gibi Doğu Akdeniz kentlerindeki yayılım alanı sunularak bu ilişkinin ticari boyutu irdelenmiştir. Nitekim bu ticari bağlantılara ilişkin gözlemler, kentin Klasik ve Hellenistik Dönemlerde sahip olduğu *emporion* bağlamında genişletilerek Phaselis'in Doğu Akdeniz'de kurduğu bölgesel ve bölgeler arası ilişkiler ağı hakkındaki veriler ayrıntılı bir biçimde analiz edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Phaselis, Doğu Akdeniz, antik liman, kimlik, ticaret, *antroponymi*.

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The ancient city of Phaselis is on the southern coast of Asia Minor on the border between Lycia-Pamphylia. There are two arguments concerning whether Phaselis was founded by the Mycenaeans in the XIV- XIII century B.C. or was established during the Second Colonisation Period (750-550 B.C.) by the Rhodians. The reason for this discussion is the disagreement in the sources providing information about the foundation of the city. Each foundation myth says that Phaselis was founded by someone called Lakios. The confusion arises from the statements made concerning the identity of Lakios. While according to some sources Lakios was from Lindos or from Argos, other sources report that he was one of the colonists who came with Mopsos when Mopsos began the colonization movement after the Trojan War (Ael. Herod. *Pros. Cath*. III 1, 253; Steph. Byz. *Eth*. s.v. Γέλα; Athen. *Deip*. VII. 51; Blumenthal, 1963, 129; Erzen, 1973, 394 pp.; Leschhorn, 1984, 28, 43, 384; Scheer, 1993, 182-187). However, independent of the native Phaselis tradition we usually come across Mopsos in Pamphylia (For Perge: Şahin, 1999, 135-140, nr. 101-107; for Aspendos: Kallimakhos I. 198; Robert, 1960, 177; for Sillyon: Hereward, 1958, 57, nr. 1; Robert, 1960, 177 fn. 5; Selge: Strab. XII. 7. 3; see also Nollé, & Schindler, 1991, T1, no 31). Pamphylian cities, through relating their foundations to a Greek hero, desired through this to obtain certain privileges. In this case, since the foundation of the city of Gella, which was colonized by Lakios' brother Antiphemos, was certainly dated to the VII century B.C., Phaselis was established during the Second Colonization Period by the Rhodians. Supporting this conclusion is the analysis of the epigraphic documents uncovered in Phaselis and on Rhodes, and also the fact that during the excavations conducted in Pamphylia and Lycia to date, no evidence has been discovered to suggest the existence of any Mycenaean settlement.

From the Iron Age onwards the Mediterranean world embarked upon a new financial and economic course. In the period between the VIII and the VI centuries B.C. many cities in Hellas, on the islands and in Western Anatolia founded their own colonies, and Rhodes, especially in the VII century founded colonies in Lycia and Cilicia. Apart from her interests in Lycia, which dated back to as early as the Trojan War, the reason why Rhodes established colonies at the entrance to Pamphylia and in Cilicia was to enable her to participate directly in the commercial activities taking place across the eastern Mediterranean and Egypt. The Rhodians founded Phaselis to serve this purpose on the Lycia-Pamphylia border, on an isthmus possessing three natural harbours. According to the ancient sources during the Second Colonization Period the Rhodian colonists colonized the cities of Gagai (*Etymologicium Magnum* 219.6-11), Melanippion (Adak, 2007a, 42, 2007b, 275), Corydalla (*FGrHist* Ia, 1 frg. 246; Steph. Byz. 376) and Rhodiapolis (*FGrHist* 2b 115, F 103. 15) on the Lycian coast in addition to Phaselis, and, on the Cilician coast, Tarsus (Strab. XIV. 5.12) and Soloi (Strab. XIV. 5. 8). But the Rhodian effect documented for the earlier periods in eastern Lycia was gradually replaced by the Lycians in the V and IV centuries B.C. The inscriptions in Lycian unearthed in the area (Rhodiapolis: *TAM* I 149-150; Corydalla: Neumann, 1979, 14 nr. 302; Asartaş: Tekoğlu, 2002-2003, 107) and the Lycian-type rock tombs show that these cities were under the political control of Lycia (Adak, 2007a, 43). This is clearly evident for the cities of Gagai and Rhodiapolis. *Wedrẽi*, which is found on coins from Rhodiapolis and which means "city" is thought to have been the name of Rhodiapolis in the Classical Period (Keen, 1998, 203; Kolb, & Tietz, 2001, 392). A coin dated to between 430-420 B.C. carries the name in Lycian characters Gaχe refering to Gagai and the coin bears a Lycian legend (Carruba, & Vismara, 2002, 75-88). Based upon this evidence it could be said that these two cities left their Greek origins, adopted Lycian traditions and changed their names. Additionally, recent studies conducted in eastern Lycia have shown that during the Classical Period Lycian rule extended towards the east much further than was previously thought. As was proved from archeological evidence and epigraphic documents, Phaselis succeeded in preserving its Greek character until the Roman Period. Phaselis' geographical location, its separation from Lycia by mountains and its access to the sea, also

played a very important role in Phaselis' retention of these characters.

This situation seems to have enabled the city as an easthern Mediterranean harbour settlement to improve its commercial activities operating independently from Lycia. The first mention of this comes from Herodotus. Herodotus reports that Phaselis also took part in the foundation of Hellenion in Naucratis (Hdt. II.178. 2). Phaselis was the only settlement on the southern coast of Asia Minor that participated in the foundation of Hellonion. Others participating in this foundation included the Ionian cities of: Chios, Teos, Phocaia, Clazomenai, Samos and Miletos; the Dorian cities Rhodos, Cnidos, Halicarnassos, Aigina and the Aeolian city of Mytilene. Herodotus places Phaselis among the Dorian cities. The Ionians had a prominent position in Egypt from an early date. Psammetichos (664-610 B.C.) recruited many Ionian and Carian soldiers for his army in order to secure the eastern border against the Assyrians (Hdt. II. 154) and, in the area near Bubastis, situated on the Pelusian arm of the Nile, he established the headquarters for these soldiers. Strabo says that during the reign of Psammetichos the Milesians fortified a settlement alongside Bolbitine that was called the *Milesion Teichos* (Wall of the Milesians) (Strab. XVII. 1. 18). From archeological finds made at Naucratis (particularly the amphorae) it is clear that the first Greek merchants came to Naucratis in 620 to 610 B.C. (Haider, 1988, 188 fn. 141; Möller, 2000, 32).

One of the most important reasons why the Greeks began commercial relations with Egypt rather than with other places was to sell their products and to buy grain. But not all the settlements taking part in the foundation of Naucratis were poor in grain (at least this is true for Teos, Clazomenae, Halicarnassos, Cnidos and Mytilene). Especially Phocaia, Aigina and Phaselis must have joined in this, primarily through trade (Möller, 2000, 75, 79 no 315). There is no epigraphic evidence concerning Phaselis from Naucratis and from the ceramics found in the region, none have been found that can be regarded as carrying the characteristics of Phaselis. This is also the case for the cities of Halicarnassos, Cnidos and Aigina. However, the merchants of these cities might have brought their commodities in vessels described as, "*Rhodian*" or, "*East Greek* " (Austin, 1970, 26.). But within the coin hoards unearthed in the settlements of Damanhur (*IGCH* 1637), Benha el Asl (*IGCH* 1640), Zagazig (*IGCH* 1645) and Asyut (*IGCH* 1644; Kraay, 1977, 189-198), areas close to Naucratis, coins of the Archaic Period from Phaselis have been discovered (Robinson, 1930, 93-106; Kraay, & Moorey, 1968, 226; Kraay, 1976, 273; Heipp-Tamer, 1993, 31).

In addition to Egypt, coin hoards containing coins from Phaselis have been found in the Anti-Lebanon (*CH* VI, nr. 5 and 6), Jordan (*IGCH* 1482) and Rhodes (*IGCH* 1185). The findings in Egypt and Syria are evidence of the wide field of circulation for the coins struck by Phaselis. Among these coins, the staters, tetradrachms and decadrachms form the majority. Thus it appears that the *naukleros* or *emporios* from Phaselis that came to Egypt was not an ordinary seaman who spent a little money in these harbour cities, but was a merchant who paid for the goods he purchased with his own silver coins (Heipp-Tamer, 1993, 33). Alternatively these coins from Phaselis might have arrived in Egypt through merchants who used the city as a stopover and exchanged some of their commodities for the coin of Phaselis.

According to Egyptian port customs documented in the Akhikar Parchment written in Aramaic and possibly dating from the first half of the V century B.C. Phaselis had then a special commercial reputation in Egypt: in the customs documents no Greek ship was listed and while we come across 6 Phoenician ships, Phaselis (*ywyn psl^{d}ršy*) was documented with 36 ships (Yardeni, 1994; Briant, & Descat, 1998, 62; Rollinger, 2007, 282 no 94; Malkin, 2011, 72). The absence of other Greek ships could be explained by the circumstances following the Ionian Revolt as Egypt was under the rule of Persia during this period. The customs records in question show how the existence of Greeks and Greek trade influenced the Egyptian economy drawing it

out of the eastern Mediterranean. In the records termed the Ahiqar Parchment the products imported to Egypt in the V century B. C. included, in particular: metals, processed wood (panels, plates, etc.), wine, fragrant oils and wool (Briant, & Descat, 1998, 69-72; Bresson, 2000, 68-73). Among the products mentioned, particularly the wood and fragrant oils were among the exported goods from Phaselis. Plinius (*Nat. Hist.* XXI. 24-25) writes that the red lilies of Phaselis are the second most favoured lilies of the ancient world after Laodiceian lilies in Antiocheia and Syria. These lilies must have been used in the production of perfume and medicine. Apart from these lilies, Phaselis' roses were also renowned. Athenaios (*Deip.* XV. 38) says that the rose oil made from the roses of Phaselis is really fine. Plinius (*Nat. Hist.* XIII. 5) notes that Phaselis rose oil is very fashionable and its reputation extends as far as *Neapolis, Capua* and *Praeneste.* Such a wide expansion of rose cultivation and the information provided by Athenaios and Plinius suggests that rose cultivation in Phaselis was of real importance and those roses were turned into a commercial export product after being processed in Phaselis. The trees on Tahtali Mountain rising just behind the city and above all the cedars which were preferred in ship building certainly were important as commercial products. As the Ahiqar Parchment customs records clearly indicate, wood and the materials for ship building brought from the city territory were exported to Egypt through the harbour at Phaselis.

A votive inscription discovered in the city, dated to the V. century B.C. and dedicated by two seamen from Phaselis, *Nikandros, the son of Nikion and Polykarters, the son of Polyainetos* records that one tenth of the profits gained from their sea trade were dedicated to Athena Polias and it is the earliest epigraphic document which provides information concerning the maritime trade of the city (*TAM* II 1184). A text (*IG* I^3 10) of a treaty that is dated to the middle of the V century B.C., containing the regulations regarding the problems that the merchants from Phaselis experienced in Athens shows that the privileges granted to Athens' most important and special ally, Chios, were also granted to the merchants from Phaselis. With the Peace of Callias, Phaselis' significance as a harbour city in the Mediterranean was crystallized. According to this peace no Persian ship was to sail between Cyaneai and Phaselis, they couldn't sail between the exit of the Bosphorus in the Black Sea to the north and the Mediterranean to the South (Isok. *Panegyr.* 117; *Areopag.* 80; *Panath.* 59; Lyk. 73; Diod. *Bibl.* XII. 4. 5; Suda, *Lex.* s.v. Κίμων). Here Phaselis was particulary mentioned as the most eastern trade point of Athens.

Towards the end of the V century B.C. Peloponnesian pirates increased their attacks in the Aegean and the Mediterranean Sea. Faced with trouble which brought the city's grain imports to a standstill, Athens despatched six ships under the command of Melesandros (Thuk. II. 69). This fleet was sent to inspect the Lycia and Caria regions and to ensure the security of the trade ships from Phaselis and the Phoenician trade ships (Phoenicia/Olympos or Porto Genoa harbour). These ships were to protect the trade ships from Phaselis and especially those ships transporting grain to Athens. Demosthenes (*Cont. Lac.* XXXV. 1, 10, 52), one of the most prominent orators of the IV century B.C. said the people of Phaselis are the most fraudulent and the most deceitful merchants in the world. Again it is interesting to find the names on III century B.C. civic coins relating to shipping such as: Nausikles, Nausikrates and Nausinikos (Heipp-Tamer, 1993, series 8a; nr. 88, 89, 155).

The role played by Phaselis in Mediterranean trade seems to have increased especially during the Hellenistic Period. After the conquest of Phaselis and Lycia by Ptolemaios I in 309 B.C. the region stayed, with some intervals, under the dynasty of Ptolemaios for nearly 100 years. Diodorus (*Bibl.* XX. 27. 1) says that when Ptolemaios learnt that his commanders had lost their cities in Cilicia, he sailed towards Phaselis and he captured the city and the Ptolemaios dynasty must always have tried to keep this very important trade city under their rule. Because of this great Ptolemaian interest in the city, Phaselis struck their silver coins during this period

(Heipp-Tamer, 1993, 47-84). The eagle and the lightning bolt depicted on some of them indicate Ptolemaian influence in Phaselis (Heipp-Tamer, 1993, 60 lev. 8 nr. 140-142). While the depictions of Isis openly display the influence of Ptolemaios (Heipp-Tamer, 1993, 22). These coins were minted to a local standard that would enable them to be exchanged easily for other currencies (Heipp-Tamer, 1993, 56, no 295), which shows that the merchants from Phaselis had trading connections, particulary with Athens and Egypt. Three of the coins unearthed at Phaselis carry the portraits of a pair of Ptolemaian rulers (Heipp-Tamer, 1993, 60 lev. 9 nr. 156-158).

As it is understood, during the Ancient Period Phaselis formed close economic and cultural relations in the Eastern Mediterranean and particularly with Egypt. In the Egyptian inscriptions we generally find Phaselisians visiting the Valley of the Kings in Thebes or doing military service. The Phaselisian Neon visited the Temple of Seti I in Abydos (*SEG* XXVI, nr. 1711); while Euktemon, Lykon and Mnasimakhos paid a visit to the tomb of Ramses IV (Baillet, 1926, nr. 265, 276, 615, 1214). At the start of the II century B.C. a man named Nestor from Phaselis performed important duties in the southern part of Thebes (*SEG* XXVIII, nr. 1484). We learn from an inscription of 116 B.C. that Nestor presented a votive offering to Ptolemaios VIII, Euergetes II, Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III and that he was responsible for the security of the area south of Suene-Elephantine-Philae.

It is also striking to find people of Egyptian, Syrian and Eastern Mediterranean origins amongst the names of officials inscribed on Hellenistic Period coins struck at Phaselis. The fact that the names Libykrates, Libys and Libyos are documented on silver coins dating from between 250 - 221 and 20 B.C. and these names were of Libyan origin (Heipp-Tamer, 1993, nr.100, 113-114); and the name Sositimos is documented on another III century B. C. coin (Peus Aktionskat. 340, nr. 416), attested only on this coin and on an Egyptian papyrus (*BGU* X. 1993) of the same century are of critical importance, because they indicate that people from these regions managed to obtain key positions in the city of Phaselis. Furthermore the appeareance of the name Zeniketes, which so far has been documented only in Phaselis and in its surroundings, upon an Egyptian papyrus (*P. Mich. Zen*. 85, Ro 1) dated to the III century B.C. can only be explained by the commercial relations Phaselis formed with these Eastern Mediterranean countries.

In the first half of the I century B.C. following the pirate raids in the Mediterranean, Phaselis' status in the Eastern Mediterranean changed. Publius Servilius Vatia, who was sent to the region by the Roman Senate in 79 B.C. to fight the pirates, punished atrociously those cities collaborating with the pirates, including Phaselis (Cic., *In Verr.* II. 4. 21; Strab. XIV. 5. 7; Orosius V. 23. 22; Flor. *Ep*. I. 41.6; Eutrop. *Ab urb.* VI. 3). According to what Cicero notes (*Leg. Agr.* II. 50) the lands of Attaleia, Olympus and Phaselis were to be sold as *ager publicus.* Phaselis could not for a long time recover from the punishment imposed by Servilius. Lucanus (*Bel. civ.* VIII. 243-55) mentions that in 48 B.C. following the defeat at Pharsalus, Pompeius came to Phaselis on his maritime route fleeing from Mytilene to Egypt and says that the city was a very small settlement at that time. According to him the number of the crew on Pompeius' ship was more than the number of the city residents. A text of a treaty between the Lycian League and Rome (populus Romanus) dated July 24th, 46 B.C. shows that after Phaselis left the League about 100 B.C., it rejoined it about sixty years later (Mitchell, 2005, 209). As the names of people discovered in epigraphic sources indicate, from that time on, while the Greek identity of the city gradually decreased, the native population increased and almost no Phaselisian has been documented abroad during this period.

Consequently, we can say that from its foundation until the Hellenistic Period the city of Phaselis held an important place in Eastern Mediterranean trade. However, following the pirate raids of the Ist century B.C. the city began to lose its prominence in the region, and with its

participation again in the Lycian League in 46 B.C. the city almost completely lost this prominence.

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