



Summary :

Gangra was originally a bishopric see subjugated to the metropolis of Ankyra, and later a metropolitan see of the province of Paphlagonia, until early 20th century. It was under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. During the Byzantine period it was in charge of initially five, then four and finally three bishoprics. During the 7th century it ranked 15th among the metropolises of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In the 13th century it was demoted to the 18th position. In the 14th century it briefly assumed the administration of the sees of Ankyra (twice), Sebasteia, Pompeiopolis and Gerane.

Other Names

Metropolis of Gaggra

Geographical Location

Northern central Asia Minor, today northern central Turkey

Historical Region

Paphlagonia

Administrative Dependence

Province of Ankara, Patriarchate of Constantinople

1. Ecclesiastical administration

The city of [Gangra](#) was the see of the name-sake ecclesiastic metropolis of the [province of Paphlagonia](#) from the 3rd quarter of the 4th until the beginning of the 20th century, and was under the jurisdiction of the [Patriarchate of Constantinople](#). During the Byzantine period it was in charge of initially five, then of four and finally of three bishopric sees. The bishoprics of [Pompeiopolis](#) and Amastris which were subjugated to Gangra were elevated into autonomous archbishoprics in the mid-6th and the mid-9th century respectively, and subsequently they became metropolises. Ionopolis, Sora and Dadybra remained under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Gangra.¹

During the Ottoman period (from 1361 onwards) the metropolitan of Gangra had no bishopric under its jurisdiction. The metropolis of Gangra assumed “*kat’ epidosisin*” the administration of the [metropolis of Ankyra](#) twice in the 14th century, under the patriarchs of Constantinople Nephon (1310-1314) and Neilos (1380-1388), as well as the administration of the metropolis of Pompeiopolis and of the bishopric of Gerane, towards the end of the 14th century. During this period the metropolis of Gangra was for some years united with the [metropolis of Neocaesarea](#).

In the *ecclesiastic notitiae* the metropolis of Gangra is ranked 15th among the metropolises of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, with the exception of the *notitiae* no. 3 (of the 9th century), where it is ranked 19th. In the 14th century it fell to the 18th position, according to the *notitiae* nos.17 and 18. In the *notitiae* nos.19, 20 and 21, which date to late 14th- early 15th century, it has returned to the 15th position.

2. Ecclesiastical history

2.1. The seat

We do not know precisely when was the ecclesiastic see at Gangra first established. The foundation of a bishopric in the city should therefore ascend in the period 325-340, since it is not mentioned in the records of the [First Ecumenical Council](#), which was organized in [Nicaea](#) in 325, whereas the first dated mention to a bishop of Gangra is of the year 340. Given however the existence of certain



vague references, it is considered possible that Gangra became a bishopric during the first quarter of the 4th century.² The bishopric of Gangra belonged to the metropolis of Ankyra of the [province of Galatia](#). In the *Acta* of the First Ecumenical Council the provinces of Paphlagonia, with Gangra as its capital, and of Galatia, with Ankyra as its capital, are presented together, since, after all, they were both founded by [Diocletian](#) (284-305) about the same time.

Some time between 365 and 373 a council of bishops was convened, in order to examine issues concerning the asceticism of certain monks, with the occasion of the relative teaching by Eustathius (he was probably the bishop of Sebasteia), who was also condemned in the council for the extreme severity of his stance. The synodic epistle was addressed to the Church of Armenia.³

Gangra was the metropolitan see of the province of Paphlagonia from the third quarter of the 4th century onwards, after the metropolis of Paphlagonia passed under the direct jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Constantinople, by decision of the [Second Ecumenical Council](#) of Constantinople (381). Gangra's relation of dependence with Ankara was preserved in the privilege the metropolitan of Ankyra had to ordain the metropolitan of Gangra until the 5th century. This privilege was finally abolished in 451 by decision of the [Fourth Ecumenical Council](#) of [Calchedon](#), and from then onwards the metropolitan of Gangra was ordained by the Patriarch of Constantinople. The metropolitan of Gangra Peter, who became metropolitan before 446, was ordained by the Patriarch of Constantinople, since the metropolitan of Ankyra Eusebius strictly refused to do the consecration.⁴ After that the metropolitan of Gangra went to Constantinople. From the six predecessors of Proclus in the metropolitan throne of Gangra, three were ordained by the Patriarch of Constantinople and three by the metropolitan of Ankyra.

2.2. The people

According to the ecclesiastical tradition, the first known bishops of Gangra are believed to have been Athanasios and Hypatios (the former was to be canonized later), who has supposedly risen to the see of Gangra in the 4th century. There is no mention of Hypatios in the lists of the bishops, there are, however, relative references in the hagiological texts. It is assumed today that he was the same Hypatios who participated in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325, without a see, and to the council of the thirteen bishops which was held in Gangra in mid-4th c., in the records of which he is mentioned in the second position after the bishop of [Caesarea](#), without, however, any reference to his see.

The first properly documented metropolitan of Gangra is Bosporios, who took the see before 431. Metropolitans of Gangra took part in the [Third Ecumenical Council](#) of Ephesus (431), the [Sixth and the Quinisext of Constantinople](#) (681/691) and the [Seventh Ecumenical Council](#) of Nicaea (787). The metropolitan Marcellinus was deposed in 743 because he had supported the [monostrategos](#) and son of the usurper [Artabasdos](#) (741-743), Niketas. In 860 the metropolitan Methodios traveled to Rome with the Patriarch of Constantinople Photios and [Michael III](#) (842-867). In the records of the Council of Constantinople of 879, two metropolitans of Gangra are mentioned, one of which was obviously ordained by the Patriarch of Constantinople Ignatios (847-858/867-877) and the other by Photios (858-867/877-886). In the end of the 11th century the former metropolitan of Gangra Nicephoros held the see of Amastris, whereas later he assumed as an abbot the administration of the monastery of Saint Anargyroi at Kosmidion, near Constantinople.

2.3. Heterodox Christians in Gangra

In the year 375/6 there was an effort to establish an [Arian](#) church in the city of Gangra. This attempt of the Arian prelate Basilides failed.

During the 5th and the 6th centuries the city was the usual place of exile for the heterodox prelates. The monophysite patriarch of Alexandria Dioscoros was exiled to Gangra and died shortly after, in 454. Timotheos was exiled to Gangra and then to [Cherson](#) of Crimea. In 519/20 the monophysite Philoxenos from Mabbog of Syria was temporarily exiled to the city by order of [Justin I](#) (518-527). The patriarch of Constantinople [Makedonios](#) retreated to Gangra to avoid the expected invasion of the [Huns](#) in [Euchaita](#), where he had been exiled in 515. He died in Gangra and was buried in the church of St Kallinikos.



3. Worship

3.1. The churches

The cathedral of Gangra was housed in the sanctuary of Dionysus during the first half of the 4th century. [John II Komnenos](#) (1118-1143) prayed in this church when he took the city from the [Danishmenids](#). In the 12th century the same church was dedicated to the Virgin, whereas during the Early Christian period it was supposedly dedicated to Hagia Sophia. Churches of Gangra were dedicated to St Hypatios, Kallinikos (inside the city walls) and George (in a nearby village). A monastery of St George (or of St Mamas) is mentioned to stand near the city in the 10th century.

3.2. Saints related to the city

There is no information concerning the conversion of the people of Gangra to Christianity, although the number of Christian martyrs related to the city or to its wider area in Late Antiquity is great. From Gangra came St Mamas, who was martyred in [Caesarea](#), and St Hypatios, who according to tradition was the bishop of Gangra during the first half of the 4th century. Hypatios' *Vita* contains many inaccuracies and it is not considered a safe source for the ecclesiastical history of Gangra. For the same saint we know he died after an attack of [Novatians](#) and that he was buried in a church near the city's cathedral. The most famous saint related to the city is saint Kallinikos who came from Ankyra and was martyred in Gangra. Less famous saints of Gangra were the brothers Eustathios, Thepeshios and Anatolios, who were martyred in [Nicomedeia](#) and Gordianus who was martyred in Paphlagonia. Saint Stylianos (Paphlagon) of Gangra is considered to be a double of Saint Alypios.

4. The metropolis of Gangra under Muslim rule

The life of the Christian community of Gangra was particularly difficult during the rule of the Danishmendids from the beginning of the 12th century onwards, when the Christians were forced to move outside the city's walls or to become Muslims. Notwithstanding the difficulties, the people of Gangra were able to donate a golden liturgical book to the church of St. Michael at [Chonai](#), and the [templon](#) to the church of St. George at the village of Didia.⁵

Judging by the signatures of the metropolitans of Gangra in the records of the [Permanent Synod](#) of [Constantinople](#) during the 14th century, we conclude that most of them lived almost exclusively in Constantinople since obviously their travelling to Gangra was difficult or even impossible. During the same period, towards the end of the 14th century, Gangra's metropolitan see was temporarily moved to Amastris.

1. The bishopric seats of Ioanopolis, Dadyvra and Soroi are reported until the 13th century under the metropolitan of Gangra. From them Dadyvra were deserted from their Christian population in 1196/1197 and Sora probably lacked any Christian population already from the previous period. See Belke, K. – Mersich, N. (ed.), *Paphlagonien und Honorias* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 9, Wien 1996), s.v. «Ionopolis», «Dadyvra», «Sora».

2. In the records of the First Ecumenical Council of Nice three cities of Paphlagonia have been documented as ecclesiastic seats, Pompeinopolis, Ioanopolis and Amastris. Also the bishop Hypatios took part without a seat; he is probably identified with Hypatios of Gangra. See Honigmann, E. (ed.), "La liste originale des pères de Nicée (A propos de l'évêché de Sodoma: en Arabie)", *Byzantion* 14 (1939), pp. 17-76.

3. Schaff, P. - Wace, H. (ed.), *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. ser. II, vol. 14: The Seven Ecumenical Councils*, pp. 89-101.

4. See *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* 19 (Paris 1981), column 1096, see "Gangres" (R. Janin – L. Stiernon): the metropolitan of Ankara Eusebius was forced to use his privilege in the case of the christening of Callinicus, after pressures of the inhabitants of Gangra, who apparently maintained their previous regime by custom.



5. Βρυώνης, Σπ., *Η παρακμή του μεσαιωνικού ελληνισμού στη Μικρά Ασία και η διαδικασία Εξισλαμισμού (11ος έως 15ος αι.)*, transl. Γαλαταριώτου, Κ. (Αθήνα 1996), p. 299, n. 464.

Bibliography :

	Fedalto G. , <i>Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis 1: Patriarchatus Constantinopolitanus Series Episcoporum Ecclesiarum Christianarum Orientalium</i> , Padova 1988
	Belke K., Mersich N. , <i>Paphlagonien und Honorias</i> , Wien 1996, Tabula Imperii Byzantini 9
	Βρυώνης Σ. , <i>Η παρακμή του μεσαιωνικού ελληνισμού στη Μικρά Ασία και η διαδικασία του εξισλαμισμού</i> , MIET, Αθήνα 1996, Γαλαταριώτου, Κ. (μτφρ.)
	Janin R., Stiernon L. , "Gangres", <i>Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques</i> , IX, Paris 1961, 1096

Webliography :

	CHURCH FATHERS: Synod of Gangra (4th Century) http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3804.htm
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Glossary :

	endemousa synodos (permanent synod) of Constantinople A consulting synod of ecclesiastic officials dwelling in Constantinople, convened every year in the capital to discuss current matters, the demands of bishops and prelates etc.
	Fourth Ecumenical Council (Chalcedon, 451) The Fourth Ecumenical Council assembled in 451 at Chalcedon in order to retract the interpretation of the council of Ephesus (449) on the nature of Jesus Christe.
	monostrategos A term used in Byzantine sources to denote a theme's general when the latter, apart from leading his own troops, also took command of neighbouring themes, either to better organise defence in a broad front or to conduct offensive operations under a unified command.
	Notitia episcopatum The Notitiae episcopatum are official documents of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and Antioch, containing the ecclesiastical dioceses in hierarchical order. These documents were modified regularly.
	Novatianism A Christian sect named after priest Novatianus in Rome; they were also called Katharoi (the pure). They believed there was no redemption for Christians who had sinned after their baptism. They survived until the 7th century.
	service (kat epidosisin) The term "service" in canonical law signifies the temporary commission of one ecclesiastical see to another, in order to ensure the function of the see for the sake of the people; the service used to be arranged if it was inevitable for the ordained bishop to attend the site, due to force majeure. Service could not break the ecclesiastical rank.
	Sixth Ecumenical Council/ Quinisext/ Dome (Constantinople, 681/ 691) The Sixth Ecumenical Council (also called: Quinisext<Penthekti or Dome Council<in Trullo, mean. in the dome) assembled at Constantinople twice, the years 680/1 (the Sixth) and 691/2 (the Quinisext/Dome), to discuss the restoration of the association with the Holy See of Rome as well as to clarify practical issues of everyday life for the Christians.
	templon or iconostasis A structure separating the sanctuary from the main church. At first, it simply divided the nave from the presbytery, but later it



became higher, with small columns and an epistyle. From the 11th century onwards, icons were placed between the templon columns and, somewhat later, icons were also placed above the epistyle, thus forming the iconostasis. The templon were originally from marble. Wooden iconostases appeared from the 13th century.

Sources

Honigmann, E. (ed.), "La liste originale des pères de Nicée (A propos de l'évêque de Sodoma: en Arabie)", *Byzantion* 14 (1939), σελ. 17-76.

Συνέκδημος Ιεροκλή, Honigmann, E. (ed.), *Le Synekdèmos d'Hiérokès et l'opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre* (Bruxelles 1939).

Εκκλησιαστικά Τακτικά, Darrouzès, J. (ed.), *Notitiae episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin 1, Paris 1981).

Guillard, J. (ed.), "Un Chrysobulle de Nicéphore Botaneiates", *Byzantion* 29-30 (1959-1960), σελ. 29-41.

Mc Geer, Er. – Nesbitt, J. – Oikonomidès, N. (eds), *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art, 4: the East* (DORLC, Washington D.C. 2001).

Miklosich, F. – Müller, J. (eds), *Acta et Diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana* 6 (Wien 1860-1890).

Schaff, P. - Wace, H. (ed.), *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. ser. II, vol. 14: The Seven Ecumenical Councils*, pp. 89-101.

Quotations

1. Chrysobul of Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078-1081), of the year 1079:

κ(α)τ(α) τ(ο)ν δεκέ(μβριον) μήνα τ(ης) (τρίτης) (ι)ν(δικτιώνος) εν έτει τω ςφπη' ενιαυτώ κ(αι) το ημέτερο(ν) ευσεβ(ές) και θεοπροβλητ(ον) εσημήνατο κρατ(ος)

Νικηφό(ρος) εν Χ(ριστ)ω τω Θ(ε)ώ πιστό(ς) βασιλ(ευς) και αυτοκράτ(ωρ) Ρωμαι(ων) ο Βοτ(ανειά)τ(ης). Κ(οσ)μ(άς) ελ(έω) Θ(ε)ού αρχιεπίσκοπ(ος) Κων(σταντινου)π(ό)λ(εως) Νέ(ας) Ρώμης κ(αι)

Οικουμ(εν)ικ(ός) Π(ατ)ριάρχ(ης) ..

[ακολουθούν οι υπογραφές 35 ιεραρχών]

στίχος 11. Νικηφό(ρος) Γάγγρ(ας)...

Guillard, J. (ed.), "Un Chrysobulle de Nicéphore Botaneiates", *Byzantion* 29-30 (1959-1960), pp. 29-41, esp. pp. 30, 31.

2. Administrative predicaments in the metropolis of Gangra in the 14th c.:

ἐπει οὖν καὶ τῆς ἀγιοτάτης μητροπόλεως Γάγγρας θανάτῳ τὸν οἰκείον ἀπολαβούσης ποιμένα, ὁ ἐκείσε ἅπας εὐρισκόμενος τοῦ κυρίου λαοῦ ἐδεήθησαν δι' οἰκείων γραμμάτων τῆς ἡμῶν μεριότητος, ὥστε προστάτην αὐτῆς καὶ ἀρχιερέα ἐγκαταστήσαι, διὰ τὸ πολλαχόθεν αὐτοὺς ἐπηρεάζεσθαι καὶ κινδυνεύειν περὶ τὰ καιριώτερα παρὰ τῶν ἄλλοφύλων, ...καὶ ἐκλεξάμενον τὸν ἀπεκείσε σταλέντα πρεσβύτερον κύρ Γεώργιον τὸν Κοντοφῆ ὡς καλὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ ἐνάρετον καὶ πολλοῖς πνευματικοῖς προτερήμασι κεκοσμημένον παρὰ θεοῦ...

Miklosich, F. – Müller, J. (eds), *Acta et Diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana* 6 (Wien 1860-1890), p. 491.

Auxiliary Catalogues

1. List of the bishops of Gangra subjugated to the metropolis of Ankyra:

Athanasios (?)

Hypatios (325 ?)



Dios (340)

2. List of the metropolitans of Gangra:

Bosporios (431)

Kallinikos (434)

Peter (436)

Proklos (446)

Theodotos (518)

Prokopios (536)

Alexander (553)

Alypios (681)

Sergios (691)

Marcellinos (742)

Konstantios (787)

John (8th century)

Methodios (860)

Basil (870)

Nicolas (879)

Stephanos (879)

Nicolas (932)

Christopher (941)

Peter (997)

John (1030)

Nikephoros (1079)

John (1166)

Theodore (1197)



Kalogeropoulos (1224)

Michael (1260)

Fokas (1285)

Constantine (1315)

George Kondofes (14th century)

Arsenius (1385)

Joachim (end of 14th century)

Germanos (1400)

Dorotheos (1467)

Pachomios (1499)

Parthenios (1604)

And following: Daniel, Christopher, Samuel, Kyrillos, Arsenios, Timotheos, Byzantios

3. Bishops of the Arian church of Gangra:

Basilides (375/6)

4. List of the monks of the monastery of St George (St Mamas):

Timotheos (932)

Nikephoros (932)

5. List of the saints of Gangra:

Hypatios

Kallinikos

Mamas

Theophilos

Eustathios

Thephesios

Anatolios

Stylios (Paphlagon)



6. List of the saints of the areas under the jurisdiction of the metropolis of Gangra:

Peter the Miraculous

Niketas the Paphlagon (Niketas David)

Sergios Magistros

Lazaros (Galesiotes)

These catalogues were compiled according to Fedalto, G., *Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis. Series Episcoporum Ecclesiarum Christianarum I. Patriarchatus Constantinopolitanus* (Padova 1988), pp. 85-86 and Belke, K. – Mersich, N. (eds), *Paphlagonien und Honorias (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 9*, Wien 1996), s.v. «Gangra».