ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΜΕΙΖΟΝΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΥ

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Summary :

The Early Byzantine province of Armenia II of the diocese of Pontica was founded in eastern Asia Minor, during the reign of Theodosius I, with Melitene as its metropolis. It was renamed to Armenia III in 536 and into Armenia I in 591; by the latter name it is refered to in the *notitiae episcopatuum*. In the Middle Byzantine period various parts of it were successively annexed to the themes of Armeniacon, Sebasteia, Lycandus, Mesopotamia and Melitene.

Other Names

Province of Armenia I, province of Armenia III

Geographical Location

Eastern Asia Minor - Armenia, modern Eastern Turkey

Historical Region

Cappadocia, Armenia

Administrative Dependence

Diocese of Pontica

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1. Establishment – Setting into the geographical unit of Pontus

The Early Byzantine province of Armenia II of the diocese of Pontica, in eastern Asia Minor, was founded during the reign of Theodosius I (379-395) on the south lands of the region known as Armenia Major (a province probably since 314),[1] and on the eastern lands of the region of Cappadocia. The limits of the province were probably fixed in 387, when the issue of the administration of the Armenian districts that had been annexed into the empire was finally settled. Melitene, an important city and an episcopal see, became the metropolis and the seat of the Armenia II province's praeses and of the metropolitan of Melitene.[2]

From 390 onwards, the provinces of Armenia I, Armenia II, Helenopontos and Pontos Polemoniakos formed a military district under the purview of a dux, whose occasional seat was the city of Melitene. Leo I entrusted the military administration of the four provinces to a comes, the comes *Utriusque Ponti et Utriusque Armeniae*, in 472/3.

2. Administrative reforms (6th century)

During the reign of Anastasius I (491-518) and Justinian I (527-565), fortification works were carried out in Armenia II and walls were raised. Melitene was fortified during this period. In the *Synekdemos* of Hierokles, which was composed during the first quarter of the 6th century, six cities are attested in the province of Armenia II.[3]

Early in the reign of Justinian I (527-565), the praesidial province of Armenia II was elevated to the status of a consular province, i.e. under the jurisdiction of a consularius. Later, in the year 536, the Armenian lands underwent an administrative reform and were concomitantly renamed. The province of Armenia II was renamed and became the province of Armenia III, while its administration was entrusted to a comes.[4] The magister militum per Armeniam had already assumed duties as the top-ranking military official in the extended province of Helenopontos and in the provinces of Armenia since 528, replacing the comes. His seat was probably the city of Theodosioupolis of the Justinianic Armenia I.[5] At that time five duces were responsible for the defence of the Armenian provinces, two of which were seated in Armenia II. Justinian sought to romanize Armenia. For this reason he imposed the rule of Roman hereditary law in the region and strengthened political institutions so as to gradually absorb the ancient Armenian aristocratic houses through the obligatory participation of their representatives in the hierarchy of Early Byzantine administration.

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During the 3rd quarter of the 6th century, the former Armenia II (now Armenia III) was invaded by the Persians; in the year 575 its metropolis, Melitene, was temporarily captured. In the year 591, after the administrative reform/rename of Emperor Maurice (582-602), the province of Armenia III, former Armenia II, now formed the province of Armenia I.[6] According to the notitiae episcopatuum of the Constantinople Patriarchate, which follow the administrative division of Maurice, the metropolis of Melitene was responsible for the five bishoprics in the province of Armenia I.[7]

3. Contiguous regions

Armenia II bordered to the east with Inner Armenia and the Persian Empire (during 502-532); later it also bordered with the Province of Armenia IV, from 536 onwards. To the west it always shared borders with the province of Cappadocia I. To the north, it bordered with Armenia I (founded in the same period and renamed to Armenia II in 536), whose capital was Sebasteia. To the south it bordered with the provinces of the Diocese of Oriens, and with Cilicia Pedias and Cilicia II.

4. The lands of Armenia II during the Middle Byzantine period

The province of Armenia I (pre-Justinianic Armenia II) was absorbed into to the theme of Armeniakon during the second half of the 7th century, after 667, and subsequently, in the 10th century, its lands were absorbed into the themes of Sebasteia, Mesopotamia, Lycandus and Melitene. We should notice that during this period (7th-10th centuries) the Arabs conquered various parts of the former Early Byzantine province for long periods of time.

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1. Zuckerman, C, "Sur la Liste de Vérone et la province de Grande Arménie, la division de 1' Empire et la date de création des dioceses", in: *Mélanges Gilbert Dagron, Travaux et Memoires* 14 (2002), pp. 617-638, esp. p. 628ff.

2. The organization of the Armenian provinces is dated to 363, during Jovian's reign (363-364), and has been correlated with the loss of the conquests of 296/7. According to the earlier bibliography, the limits of the provinces had been fixed before 378, during Valens' reign (364-378); see also the views of modern scholarship: Blockley, R.C., "The Romano-Persian Peace Treaties of A.D. 299 and 363", *Florilegium* 6 (1984), pp. 28-49, and Garsoïan, N.G., «Αρμενία Μεγάλη και επαρχία Μεσοποταμίας», in: *Ευψυχία, Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler I*. Byzantina Sorbonensia 16 (Paris 1998), p. 239 and n. 1, p. 240.

3. *Συνέκδημος Ιεροκλή*, Honigmann, E. (ed.), *Le Synekdémos d'Hiéroklès et I'opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre* (Bruxelles 1939) p. 37,703.7-12.

4. R. Scholl - G. Kroll (ed.) *Corpus Juris Civilis, III. Novellae* (Berlin 1895, reprinted Dublin - Zürich10 1972), pp. 235-240.

5. During the first years of Justinian I's reign (527-565), the military official was responsible for the Armenian and the two Pontus provinces (*magister militum per Armeniam Pontem Polemoniacum et Gentes*) see Jones, A.H.M., *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces* (Oxford 1971), p. 225ff, 281; Garsoïan, N.G., «Αρμενία Μεγάλη και επαρχία Μεσοποταμίας», in: *Ευψυχία, Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler I*. Byzantina Sorbonensia 16 (Paris 1998), pp. 248, 249.

6. Dölger, F., *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des ostromischen Reiches von 565-1453, I* (Corpus der Urkunden des mittelalters und der neuren Zeit. Reihe A. Abt. 1, 5 Bd, München - Berlin 1924-1965), p. 13 no. 104). See also Γυφτοπούλου, Σ. «Πολεμωνιακός Πόντος - Λαζική: οι εκκλησιαστικές έδρες, οι εκκλησιαστικές επαρχίες», *Ιστορικογεωγραφικά* 10 (2003/4), p. 138: A suggestion on the naming of the provinces of Armenia by Justinian I and Maurice. For the convenience of the reader, the provinces of Armenia created by Maurice (and mentioned in the notitiae episcopatuum) are described as «Νέες» (=new), see ibid. pp. 111.

7. Hild, F.-Restle, M., *Kappadokien (Kappadokia, Charsianon, Sebasteia und Lykandos)* (Tabula Imperil Byzantini 2, Wien 1981), s.v. Melitene; Γυφτοπούλου, Σ. «Πολεμωνιακός Πόντος - Λαζική: οι εκκλησιαστικές έδρες, οι εκκλησιαστικές επαρχίες», *Ιστορικογεωγραφικά* 10 (2003/4), p. 111

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- **Zuckerman C.**, "Sur la Liste de Vérone et la province de Grande Arménie, la division de l'Empire et la date de création des diocèses", *Mélanges Gilbert Dagron*, Paris 2002, Travaux et Mémoires 14, 617-638
- **Garsoïan N.**, "Αρμενία Μεγάλη και επαρχία Μεσοποταμίας", *Ευψυχία, Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler*, Paris 1998, Byzantina Sorbonensia, 16, 239-264
- **Hild F.**, **Restle M.**, *Kappadokien. Kappadokia, Charsianon, Sebasteia und Lykandos*, Wien 1981, TIB 2
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- **Βλυσίδου Β.**, **Λουγγής Τ.**, **Λαμπάκης Σ.**, **Σαββίδης Α.**, **Κουντούρα-Γαλάκη Ε.**, *Η Μικρά Ασία των θεμάτων. Έρευνες πάνω στη γεωγραφική φυσιογνωμία και προσωπογραφία των βυζαντινών θεμάτων της Μικράς Ασίας (7ος-11ος αι.)*, Αθήνα 1998, Ερευνητική Βιβλιοθήκη 1
- **Shaw B.**, "Bandit Highlands and Lowland Peace: the Mountais of Isauria-Cilicia", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 33, 1990, 199-233, 237-270
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http://soltdm.com/sources/mss/hierocl/harta1.htm

- Provincial Reorganisation

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/secondary/BURLAT/21*.html#2

Glossary :

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	comes
1. A title in the Roman and the Byzantine Empires, designating an official with political but mostly military jurisdiction. Especially the *comes Orientis* held the position corresponding to that of a vicar in Early Byzantine period. In the years of Justinian I, the comes in head of wider provinces assumed political and military powers, while in the Middle Byzantine period the Opsikion theme was one of the few themes which was the jurisdiction of a comes instead of a strategos. 2. A nobility title in medieval Europe.	
	consularis
Provincial governor. According to the later roman and the early byzantine administrative organisation, the provinciae consulariae belonged to the jurisdinction of the consuli and later the consularii (consularis, vir clarissimus as far as the senatoral rank is concerned). The dignity of consularios had been an administrative innovation of Constantine I, relating to the exercise of the politcal authority.	
	doukas (lat. dux)
Antiquity: Roman military commander who, in some provinces, combined military and civil functions. Buzantium: a higher military officer. From the second half of the 10th c. the title indicates the military comander of a larger district. After the 12th c., doukes were called the governors of small themes.	
	magister militum per Armeniam
Military commander of the byzantine army that defended the armenian and the pontic lands of the empire. The dignity was founded by Jusstinian I.	
	Notitia episcopatuum
The Notitiae episcopatuum are official documents of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and Antioch, containing the ecclesiastical dioceses in hierarchical order.These documents were modfied regularly.	
	praeses
Provincial governor. According to the later roman and the eraly byzantine administrative organisation, the praeses (praeses, vir perfectissimus as far as the senatorial rank is concerned) served as a governor in certain provinces, expressly intented to exercise political autority.	

Sources

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Schöll, R. - Kroll, G. (ed.) *Corpus Juris Civilis, III. Novellae* (Berlin 1895, repr. Dublin-Zurich ^{10}1972), pp. 83, 144-146, 235-240.

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Quotations

1. The contribution of Armenia's II governor to the officials of the Empire, under Justinian I (527-565):

Από του άρχοντος Αρμενίας Δευτέρας ούτως·
τοις περιβλέπτοις χαρτουλαρίοις τρισί του θείου κουβουκλείου νομ.(ίσματα) θ΄(= 9)
τω πριμικηρίω των λαμπροτάτων τριβούνων νοταρίων νομ.(ίσματα) ιδ΄(= 14)
τω αυτώ βοηθώ νομ.(ίσματα) γ΄(= 3)
τη τάξει των ενδοξοτάτων επάρχων υπέρ προστάγματος νομ.(ίσματα) μ΄(= 40)

R. Schöll - G. Kroll (ed.) *Corpus Juris Civilis, III. Novellae* (Berlin 1895, repr. Dublin-Zurich ^{10}1972), p. 83.

2. The province of Armenia III (former Armenia II) accordind to the administrative reform of Justinian I (527-565):

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επί δε τούτοις τε τρίτην Αρμενίαν κατεστησάμεθα την πρότερον δευτέραν, ης ηγείται Μελιτηνή, πόλις αρχαία, πόλις επίσημος, εν καλώ τε γης και αέρος κειμένη και ουδέ πόρρω διεστώσα των του Ευφράτου ρευμάτων. ταύτην ωήθημεν δειν κατά το παρόν αυξήσαι και εις το των σπεκταβιλίων μεταστήσαι σχήμα, τον τε άρχοντα ταύτης Ιουστινιανόν ονομάσαι κόμητα, δούναι τε αυτώ και υπέρ σιτήσεων *solidos septingentos* και τω γε αυτού παρέδρω …

R. Schöll - G. Kroll (ed.) *Corpus Juris Civilis, III. Novellae* (Berlin 1895, repr. Dublin-Zurich [10]1972), p. 236.

Auxiliary Catalogues

1. The cities of Armenia II according to the Synekdemos of Hierokles:

Melitene

Arka

Arabissos

Koukousos

Comana

Ariaratheia

E. Honigmann (ed.), Le Synékdemos d'Hiéroklès et l'opuscule géographique de Georges de Chypre (Bruxelles 1939), pp. 37, 703.7-12.

2. The ecclesiastical sees in Armenia I (pre-Justinianic Armenia II) according to the *notitia episcopatuum* of Constantinople no. 1:

Melitene

Arke

Koukousos

Arabissos

Ariarathe

Comana

J. Darrouzès (ed.), *Notitiae episcopatuum Ecclesiae Constantincrpolitanae* (Paris 1981), nos. 1.274-279.