



Summary :

The diocese of Chalkedon was one of the oldest of Asia Minor, as Chalkedon was an important ecclesiastical centre already from the Early Byzantine Period. The Greek-Orthodox population of the area was exempted from the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1923. As a result, the diocese remained one of the very few active Greek-Orthodox ecclesiastical provinces in Turkey.

Other Names

Geographical Location

Asian coast of Bosphorus

Historical Region

Bithynia

1. Historical Background

1. 1. 14th-17th c.

The ecclesiastical authority of Chalkedon was a bishopric under the metropolis of Nicomedia until the Fourth Ecumenical Council (451) convened there, on the Asian coast of Bosphorus, when it was promoted to a metropolis. It was the third oldest metropolis of the province of Bithynia, the oldest being those of Nicomedia and Nicaea, while it enjoyed considerable prestige thanks to the Ecumenical Council it held. Thus, the metropolis of Chalkedon followed the two previous metropolises in order of importance (9th position, while those of Nicomedia and Nicaea held the 7th and 8th position respectively), and its prelate had the title of 'Exarch of all Bithynia', like the prelates of the two previous metropolises.¹ In the Byzantine period the metropolis of Chalkedon was the ecclesiastical authority of the settlements of the Asian coast of Bosphorus, that is, the Asian outskirts of Constantinople. This fact influenced both the development of special relations with the Ecumenical Patriarch, which were often difficult, and the development of the metropolis throughout history.

Developments in the 14th century, which brought about the disintegration of the ecclesiastical administration in Asia Minor, affected the province of Chalkedon as well. As a result, the metropolis became inactive in the second half of the 14th century, although this did not result only from the decline in Christian population, caused by Turkish raids, but also from the peculiar relations with the Patriarch. According to a synodal document of 1389, in the years of Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos (1353-1354 and 1364-1376), it was decided that the metropolis of Chalkedon would remain without a metropolitan from then on.² This must have been decided between 1370, when metropolitan Iakovos (1351-1370)³ is last reported, and 1376, the last year Patriarch Philotheos was in office. Given the vacancy in the metropolitan throne, officially attributed to the decline in population and, as a result, the shrinkage of the flock, the province of Chalkedon was ceded to the metropolitan of Cyzicus in 1387.⁴ However, apart from the reasons related to the Ottoman conquest, e.g. the subsequent decline in population and the fact that only a small flock of Orthodox Christians remained in the area, these decisions also reveal a traditional dispute between the Patriarchate and the previous metropolitans of Chalkedon.

There was a long tradition that martyr Euphemia was associated with the area of Chalkedon; so its metropolitans claimed and occasionally succeeded in managing and controlling the churches and shrines dedicated to the martyr, mainly the church today preserved in the area of the Hippodrome of Constantinople (Istanbul), as well as the namesake church in Drys, within the settlement of Chalkedon.⁵ The claim of the Patriarchate for the church of St. Euphemia in Constantinople must have played some role in the decision about the vacancy of the throne of Chalkedon in the years of Philotheos Kokkinos. In 1389 it was decided that Chalkedon should have a new metropolitan, who would not have any rights over the church of St. Euphemia nor any jurisdiction over the



province (ceded to the metropolitan of Cyzicus already from 1387), and would have to remain permanently in Constantinople.⁶ The metropolitan of Chalkedon, who was then elected and regularly participated in the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate in the years 1389 and 1390, was actually a **titulary** and had no relations with the province appearing in his title. Besides, according to evidence, in 1394 the see of Chalkedon was soon vacant again, as the “area of the prelate of Chalcedon was held” by the metropolitan of Thessaloniki.⁷

The metropolis (from now on: diocese) of Chalkedon was reorganised in the 15th century, possibly after the Fall of Constantinople and after the Ecumenical Patriarchate was incorporated into the Ottoman institutional system. The first known metropolitan of the time, Joseph, is recorded in 1477. The overconcentration of dioceses in Bithynia (Chalkedon, [Nicomedia](#), [Nicaea](#), [Prousa](#) and [Cyzicus](#)) in a period when only a few dioceses covering extensive areas survived in the entire Asia Minor was due to the prestige of some of these dioceses (having held Ecumenical Synods) and to their high position in the hierarchical order (Chalcedon, Nicomedia, Nicaea). Furthermore, the more practical side was that Bithynia was near the Ottoman capital, which gave the metropolitans easy access to Constantinople in that difficult period for the Church. They could even live there, participate in the Holy Synod and at the same time be in close contact with their territory. However, there was still the problem of each province’s resources and whether these were ample enough to back an active ecclesiastical authority and a metropolitan. In the case of Chalkedon, given the small number of Christians in the traditional territory of the diocese, extension was the solution. The jurisdiction of the province of Chalcedon was extended to the east, in the area of the former provinces of Claudioupolis - Honorias and Herakleia Pontike, as well as to the west in Princes’ Islands (Kızıl Adalar).

The metropolitan of Chalkedon is recorded in the **berat** of 1483, but not in that of 1525, which Zachariadou arguably considers a coincidence, since there seems to have been no reason for a new, even temporary, deactivation of the diocese.⁸ In the berat of 1483 the see of the metropolitan is reported to have been in [Chalkedon](#), which in the original script appears under its corrupted Greek name (Halkidin) and not under its Turkish name Kadiköy (name attributed to the city after the Fall because it was ceded by the Sultan to Hidir Bey, the first **kadi** of Constantinople). The exact year the see of the diocese was transferred to Kuzguncuk, where it remained until 1855, is unknown. This may have happened in the mid-16th century, when the local church of St. Euphemia, point of reference and concentration for the Christians of the wider area, is believed to have been abandoned.⁹ The transfer of the religious centre of the area to Kuzguncuk (Ermoulianai, Chrysokeramos) is proven by the establishment of monasteries in the area until the early 17th century, when one of them, the monastery of St. Panteleemon, was declared **stauropegian**.¹⁰

1. 2. 18th - mid-19th c.

A significant advantage the diocese of Chalcedon and the rest of the Bithynian dioceses had was their proximity to Constantinople, which enabled the metropolitans to regularly participate in the Synod without being away from their territory for a long time. Thus the dioceses were considered to have high prestige and power, and the most eminent and ambitious men of the Church aimed to hold their sees. This preferential situation was unofficial until 1757, when a sultanic berat established the so-called ‘principle of *gerontismos*’.

The so-called “elderly” (*gerontes*) metropolitans were the five ones coming from the provinces closest to Constantinople (Herakleia, Cyzicus, Nicaea, Nicomedia and Chalkedon), who could live permanently in Constantinople. Upon the decree of 1757 they had to be always present in the Holy Synod. Moreover, they formed a body superior to the plenum and they had immediate access to the Sultan, to whom they announced the election of the Patriarch or proposed his dethronement. They theoretically represented the will of all the synodal prelates, although in practice the patriarchs were under the unofficial guardianship of this body and the interest groups connected to it.¹¹

The inclusion of the metropolitan of Chalkedon into the board of the five metropolitans resulted naturally from the geographical position of the province and the upgraded role he actually played in the matters of the Patriarchate.

1. 3. Mid-19th - 20th c.



From the mid-19th century onward the diocese of Chalkedon prospered thanks to the significant demographic growth and economic development of the Christian Orthodox population of the province. At the time the diocese of Chalkedon seems to have been one of the wealthiest dioceses in Asia Minor, as evidenced by its contribution to the "National Fund" (Ethnikon Tameion) of the Patriarchate in the period 1860-1862, which funded schools and charities. Therefore, the diocese of Chalkedon should pay 70,000 kuruş to the National Fund and 2,700 kuruş to the Patriarch. The amount the diocese of Chalkedon paid was the third largest in comparison with the amounts paid by the rest of the Asia Minor provinces. The same amount was paid by the dioceses of [Smyrna](#) and Prousa, while those of [Ephesus](#) (100,000 kuruş) and Cyzicus (90,000 kuruş) held the first two positions.¹² The settlement of wealthy Greek-Orthodox in Kadiköy contributed to the return of the metropolitan to his historical see in 1855, during the primateship of Gerasimos. A newly built church of St. Euphemia became the cathedral. The metropolitan building was built near the cathedral in 1902.¹³

Perhaps the most important development in the history of the diocese of Chalkedon took place in 1923, when the Treaty of Lausanne was signed. The exception of the Greek-Orthodox living in the Asian outskirts of Constantinople from the Greek-Turkish [exchange of populations](#) made Chalkedon one of the four dioceses of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey that remained active and preserved their congregation (apart from those of Derkon, Princes' Islands, and Imbros (Gökçeada) and Tenedos (Bozcaada), while it was the only one that remained in Asia Minor. In this framework, the Princes' Islands were detached in 1924 from the area of its jurisdiction and formed their own diocese.

However, the subsequent decline in the Greek population of Constantinople, especially from 1964 on, has left the diocese of Chalkedon with a very small congregation today.

2. Geography and Demography

From the Byzantine years the province of the diocese of Chalkedon traditionally comprised the settlements on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus, an area that became the centre of its reorganisation in the second half of the 15th century. However, the decline in Christian population made the extension of the diocesan jurisdiction necessary, in order to have the population needed for its preservation and to cover the ecclesiastical matters of areas where the Christian Orthodox people were so few that they could not maintain the ecclesiastical authorities they used to have. This must have been the reason why the jurisdiction of the metropolitan of Chalkedon was decided to be extended to Paphlagonia, by incorporating the former provinces of Herakleia Pontike and Claudiupolis of Honorias. In the [sancak](#) of Bolu, which generally covered the area of these two former provinces, the evidence from the 1520-1535 records shows that there were no Christians at all and only in the 16th century appears a small number of Christians (134 households in 1570-1580).¹⁴ The extension of the province of Chalkedon to the east brought it next to the diocese of Gangra with the boundary being estimated somewhere between Pontoirakleia (Ereğli) and Amastris (Amasra), while from the 17th century it bordered the province of [Neocaesarea](#), which incorporated Gangra.

In the area of Mesothynia (Koca-ili), the core of the diocese of Chalkedon, Barkan reports the existence of only 27 (!) Christian households in the period 1520-1535, a number difficult to accept, despite the significant decline in Christian population. Between 1570 and 1580 the respective households increased to the more reasonable number of 1,993.¹⁵ As the above numbers refer to the entire province of Koca-ili, it is impossible to know the proportions of the Christian populations of the area that were under the dioceses of Chalkedon and Nicomedia, which also covered part of the area of Mesothynia.

The exact boundaries of the province of Chalkedon may be given only for the Late Ottoman period (late 19th - early 20th century). The province covered an extensive but narrow, mainly coastal zone, extending from Rysion (Aretsou) of the Propontis to [Zonguldak](#) between Pontoirakleia (Ereğli) and Amastris (Amasra), where it bordered the province of Neocaesarea. The province of Chalkedon included the Princes' Islands since the diocese was reorganised in the 15th century.

Until 1922-1923 there were 38 Greek Orthodox communities recorded in the province of the diocese of Chalkedon,¹⁶ mainly in Mesothynia rather than in Paphlagonia. In Mesothynia was the core of the diocesan congregation, significantly increased since the



mid-19th century, when the progressive increase in the Greek Orthodox population of Constantinople led a great part of the population to settle on the outskirts of the capital. According to the complete records on the populations of Asia Minor's dioceses compiled by the Club "Anatoli" of Asia Minor Greeks in 1931, considered to reflect the situation in 1912, the diocese of Chalkedon seems to have been one of the most robust dioceses, with a congregation amounting to 154,920, which brought it in the fourth position behind the dioceses of Ephesus (288,658), Smyrna (258,600) and Amaseia (173,683).¹⁷

Although the above numbers are certainly much exaggerated, they are strong evidence of the demographical strength of the diocese of Chalkedon in comparison with the rest of Asia Minor's dioceses and particularly those of Bithynia. Anagnostopoulou provides more accurate numbers concerning the Greek Orthodox population in the Mesothynian part of the province of Chalkedon concerning the same period (see table in catalogues).¹⁸

According to Anagnostopoulou, the Greek Orthodox population in the Mesothynian part of the province of Chalkedon and in Princes' Islands, where the main part of the population of the province lived, is estimated at 61,134. This means that the total population of the province was much smaller than that provided by the Club "Anatoli" of Asia Minor Greeks. The Greek Orthodox population was allowed to remain in the **kazas** of Skoutari and Princes' Islands after the Treaty of Lausanne. The Greek Orthodox population must have been smaller than the above numbers already from 1923, while throughout the 20th century the number was in decline. After the large-scale decline of the Greek population in 1964, only a few Christians have remained in the diocese of Chalkedon.

-
1. Darrouzès, J., *Notitiae Episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (Paris 1981), p. 419.
 2. Miklosich, F. – Müller, J., *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi. Sacra et Profana*, vol. II (Vienna 1862), pp. 132-133.
 3. Fedalto, G., *Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis. I. Patriarchatus Constantinopolitanus* (Padua 1988), p. 100.
 4. Miklosich, F. – Müller, J., *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi. Sacra et Profana*, vol. II (Vienna 1862), pp. 109-110.
 5. Θεόδοτος, Σ., «Εκκλησιαστικά σελίδες της νεωτέρας ιστορίας της ορθοδόξου κοινότητας Χαλκηδόνος», *Ορθοδοξία* 26 (1951), p. 157.
 6. Miklosich, F. – Müller, J., *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi. Sacra et Profana*, vol. II (Vienna 1862), pp. 132-133, 137.
 7. Fedalto, G., *Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis. I. Patriarchatus Constantinopolitanus* (Padua 1988), p. 100; Βουώνης, Σ., *Η Παρακμή του Μεσαιωνικού Ελληνισμού στη Μικρά Ασία και η διαδικασία εξισλαμισμού από τον 11ο στο 15ο αιώνα* (Athens 2000), p. 258.
 8. Ζαχαριάδου, Ε., *Δέκα Τουρκικά Έγγραφα για την Μεγάλη Εκκλησία (1483-1567)* (Athens 1996), pp. 114, 131.
 9. Θεόδοτος, Σ., «Εκκλησιαστικά σελίδες της νεωτέρας ιστορίας της ορθοδόξου κοινότητας Χαλκηδόνος», *Ορθοδοξία* 26 (1951), p. 157.
 10. Αποστολόπουλος, Δ.Γ. – Μιχαλάκης, Π.Δ., *Η Νομική Συναγωγή του Δοσιθέου. Μία πηγή και ένα τεκμήριο* (Athens 1987), pp. 220-221.
 11. Κονόρτας, Π., *Οθωμανικές Θεωρήσεις για το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο. Βεράτια για τους προκαθημένους της Μεγάλης Εκκλησίας (17ος-αρχές 20ού αιώνα)* (Athens 1998), pp. 128-134.



12. Αναγνωστοπούλου, Σ., *Μικρά Ασία, 19ος αι.-1919. Οι ελληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες από το Μιλλέτ των Ρωμιών στο Ελληνικό Έθνος* (Athens 1997), p. 394. The provinces of Pontos are not registered.
13. Θεόδοτος, Σ., «Εκκλησιαστικά σελίδες της νεωτέρας ιστορίας της ορθοδόξου κοινότητας Χαλκηδόνος», *Ορθοδοξία* 26 (1951), p. 157, 160; Γεννάδιος μητρ. Ηλιουπόλεως, «Σκιαγραφία της ιστορίας της Μητροπόλεως Χαλκηδόνος και ο επισκοπικός αυτής κατάλογος», *Ορθοδοξία* 19 (1944), pp. 17-20; Σταυρίδης, Β., «Χαλκηδόνος μητρόπολη», *ΘΗΕ*, vol. 12, 52-53.
14. Barkan, Ö.L., "Essai sur les données statistiques des registres de recensement dans l'empire ottoman aux Xve et XVIe siècles", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 1 (1958), p. 30.
15. Barkan, Ö.L., "Essai sur les données statistiques des registres de recensement dans l'empire ottoman aux Xve et XVIe siècles", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 1 (1958), p. 30.
16. Ιορδανίδης, Κ.Σ., «Οι εγκαταλειφθέντες εν Τουρκία των 1922 ελληνικοί οικισμοί», *Αρχαίον Πόντου* 34 (1977-1978), pp. 108-109.
17. Σοφιανός, Α.Γ., «Πίνακες στατιστικοί εμφανίζοντες την Μικρασιατικήν Ελληνικήν εκπαίδευσιν εις τας 23 επαρχίας του Οικουμενικού Θρόνου», *Αρχαίον Πόντου* 13 (1948), p. 254. When composing this table we didn't take into account the detachment of the province of Kydonies from Ephesus (1908).
18. Αναγνωστοπούλου, Σ., *Μικρά Ασία, 19ος αι.-1919. Οι ελληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες από το Μιλλέτ των Ρωμιών στο Ελληνικό Έθνος* (Athens 1997), tables: Ανεξ. Σαντζάκι Ιζμίτ, Βιλαγιέτ Κων/πολης.

Bibliography :

	Αναγνωστοπούλου Σ. , <i>Μικρά Ασία, 19ος αι.-1919. Οι Ελληνορθόδοξες Κοινότητες. Από το Μιλλέτ των Ρωμιών στο Ελληνικό Έθνος</i> , Ελληνικά Γράμματα, Αθήνα 1997
	Αποστολόπουλος Δ., Μιχαηλάρης Π. , <i>Η Νομική Συναγωγή του Δοσιθέου, μία Πηγή και ένα Τεκμήριο</i> , Αθήνα 1987
	Βρώνης Σ. , <i>Η παρακμή του Μεσαιωνικού Ελληνισμού στη Μικρά Ασία και η διαδικασία του εξισλαμισμού από τον 11ο στο 15ο αιώνα</i> , Αθήνα 2000, Γαλαταριώτου Κάτια
	Ζαχαριάδου Ελισάβετ , <i>Δέκα Τουρκικά Έγγραφα για τη Μεγάλη Εκκλησία (1483-1567)</i> , Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών/Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών, Αθήνα 1996
	Θεόδοτος Σ. , "Εκκλησιαστικά σελίδες της νεωτέρας ιστορίας της ορθοδόξου κοινότητας Χαλκηδόνος", <i>Ορθοδοξία</i> , 26, 1951
	Ιορδανίδης Κ. , "Οι εγκαταλειφθέντες το 1922 εν Τουρκία ελληνικοί οικισμοί", <i>Αρχαίον Πόντου</i> , 34, 1977-1978, 88-131
	Κονόρτας Π. , <i>Οθωμανικές Θεωρήσεις για το Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο. Βεράτια για τους προκαθήμενους της Μεγάλης Εκκλησίας (17ος-αρχές 20ού αιώνα)</i> , Αλεξάνδρεια, Αθήνα 1998
	Σοφιανός Α. , "Πίνακες στατιστικοί εμφανίζοντες την Μικρασιατικήν Ελληνικήν εκπαίδευσιν εις τας 23 επαρχίας του Οικουμενικού Θρόνου", <i>Αρχαίον Πόντου</i> , 13, 1948, 248-254
	Barkan Ö.L. , "Essai sur les données statistiques des registres de recensement dans l'empire ottoman aux Xve et



	XVIe siècles", <i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i> , 1, 1958, 9-36
	Darrouzès J. , <i>Notitiae Episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae</i> , Paris 1981
	<i>Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi. Sacra et Profana</i> , τόμ. 1, Miklosich, F. – Müller, J., Vienna 1860
	<i>Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi. Sacra et Profana</i> , τόμ. 2, Miklosich, F. – Müller, J., Vienna 1862

Glossary :

	berat
	A sultanic decree that bestowed an office or a set of privileges on an individual or a group of people. They were given not only to all state officials, but also to the members of the high clergy, including patriarchs and metropolitans.
	kadi
	Office that combined judicial, notarial and administrative duties. The kadi, who held court at the kaza's seat, registered all legal acts and documents in the court's codices (sicil). The kadi passed judgement based on the saria (the holy law of Islam), taking also into consideration the kanun (sultanic law) and the customary law (örf). Resort to his court had all the subjects of the Empire. The kadi had also administrative duties, which he performed in collaboration with the officials of the kaza., and he had to supervise tax collection.
	kaza
	The basic grade of the Ottoman provincial administration. It included the surrounding region of a city or a town. During the late Ottoman Period it is identified with the kaymakamlık.
	patriarchal monastery (stauropegion)
	A monastery under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate, autonomous from the administration of the local bishop. The term stauropegion applied also to villages, meaning that in tax matters (mostly in regard to ecclesiastical taxes) they were under the control of the Patriarchate and not of the local diocese.
	sancak (liva)
	Medium sized unit of provincial administration of the Ottoman state, throughout its history. A subdivision of the early Ottoman eyalet (or beylerbeylik) and the later Ottoman vilayet. In the late Ottoman Period it was known also as mutasarrıflık.
	titulary
	A prelate who bore as a distinction the title of the bishop or metropolitan of an inactive ecclesiastical province.

Auxiliary Catalogues

Population of the Asian part of the vilayet of Istanbul (Constantinople), early 20th century

Kaza	Settlements	Greek-Orthodox	Muslims	Others
Princes' Islands	Büyükada	5.000	800	1.200
	Heybeliada	3.000	2.000	500
	Burgazada	3.000	-	-
	Kınalıada	354	160	557
	Büyük Pakalköy	1.000	-	-
	Küçük Pakalköy	1.500	-	-
	Paşaköy	3.000	-	-
	total	16.354	2.960	2.257
Üsküdar	Üsküdar	3,560	16,280	3,700
	Kadiköy	12,000	12,000	8,000
	Kuzguncuk	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Çengelköy	4,000	1,500	500



	Kandilli	1,300	750	390
	Paşa Bahçe	1,200	1,000	200
	Beykoz	500	1,400	100
	Arnavutköy	2,000	-	-
	total	29,760	37,930	17,890
Kartal	Kartal	1,220	1,270	740
	Malköy	2,000	1,000	-
	Panteichion	2,800	200	-
	Tuzla	500	800	200
	Rysion (Aretsou)	-	300	-
	total	6,520	3,570	940
Sile	Sile	2,500	2,500	-
	Ano Neochori	2,500	-	-
	Kato Neochori	3,500	-	-
	total	8,500	2,500	-
Gebze	Gebze	5,100	12,300	1,850

Αναγνωστοπούλου, Σ., *Μικρά Ασία, 19ος αι.-1919. Οι ελληνορθόδοξες κοινότητες: Από το Μιλλέτ των Ρωμίων στο Ελληνικό Έθνος* (Athens 1997), πίνακες, Βιλαγιέτ Κωνσταντινούπολης (ασιατική πλευρά).