



Summary :

The Diocese of Adana and Tarsus, the purview of which almost coincided with that of the Adana and Tarsus *vilayet*, belonged to the Patriarchate of Antioch.

Geographical Location

Southeast Asia Minor

Historical Region

Cilicia

1. The place - Historical facts

The diocese of Adana and Tarsus was located within the *vilayet* of [Adana](#), an administrative division similar to that of Byzantine times, when the theme of Cilicia was also the metropolis' territory. The diocese of Adana and Tarsus belonged to the neighbouring Patriarchate of Antioch, and this sometimes caused unease between the dioceses of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Patriarchate itself.¹

The area over which the *vilayet* of Adana spread numbered 40,000 square kilometers.² More specifically, to the *vilayet* of Adana belonged the *sancak* of Adana which comprised four *kazas* (Adana, Tarsus, Karahisalu and Mersina). The city itself (Adana) is situated on the banks of the river Seyhan, in the middle of a great plain.³ Approximately forty kilometres southeast of Adana lies the historic [Tarsus](#), built on the banks of the river Cydnus, shrunk according to P. Kontogiannis to "a quarter of its ancient extent".⁴

The city of [Mersina](#) (Mersin) was founded in 1832 close to a natural bay on the coast of Cilicia and became the harbour of nearby Tarsus, Adana (67 km away from these), and many other areas of the central Anatolian plateau. It is said that it was named thus due to the numerous myrtles that grow on its outskirts.⁵ To the west lies Seleuceia ([Silifke](#)), founded by Seleucus Nicator, general of Alexander the Great. It is the seat of the İç-ili *sancak*, built on the right bank of the Calycadnus river, and its port is Taş-ucu, 10 km east of it, deep in the bay of Ağa-liman.⁶

2. Population

In 1892 the population of the *vilayet* of Adana numbered 403,500 persons in total; according to M. Chamidopoulos it comprised (among others) 158,000 Muslims and 68,000 Greek-Orthodox. The figures provided eight years later by Verney & Babmann, in 1900, diverge minutely in terms of the total population and its Muslim constituent. In terms of the Greek Orthodox inhabitants there is an evident divergence; it is however unclear whether during the intervening eight years important changes had occurred -the figures are almost identical in other respects- or whether the Greek data simply provide inflated figures for the numbers of the Greek element. More specifically, the figures of Verney & Babmann give us a total population of 403,430 inhabitants; among these were 158,000 Muslims (this figure has not changed) and 46,200 Greek Orthodox.⁷

The city of Adana, according to P. Kontogiannis, had a total population of 70,000 people: Gregorian Armenians (40,000 at least until the persecutions of 1909 and 1915), 10,000 Greek-Orthodox, most of whom originated from the islands, but also from areas of [Ikonio](#) (Konya) and Cappadocia, 20,000 Muslims, as well as, from the late 19th century onwards, a few Europeans, especially Germans.⁸ Tarsus had 30,000 inhabitants, 15,000 of whom were Muslims, 7,000 Armenians and 5,000 Greek-Orthodox.⁹ The city of Mersina numbered of 22,000 people, 15,000 Muslims, 4,000 Greek-Orthodox, 1,000 Armenians and few Arabs and Europeans, mostly French.¹⁰ Seleuceia, finally, had 3,000 inhabitants, 1,000 of which were Greek-Orthodox.¹¹

3. Economy



The financial importance of Adana was enhanced by the presence of a branch office of the Ottoman Bank in the city, one of the twenty two branch banks situated in the Asian areas of the Ottoman Empire.¹² In the late 19th century, Adana also attracted the attention of German entrepreneurs interested in exploiting the provinces raw materials, like the cotton company (Deutsch – Levantinische Baumwollengesellschaft), while the German-built railway was being constructed in Anatolia destined for Baghdad. The wide Cilician plain -at the heart of which the city of Adana is situated- produced cotton, grain, rice and sugarcane.¹³ Adana was also famous for its honey.¹⁴ The city, finally, emerged as one of the new centres of carpet-making which developed in the early 20th century.¹⁵

Tarsus was an important commercial centre, although agriculture was mentioned as its inhabitants' main occupation. The growth of Mersina, however, affected commercial activities in Tarsus.¹⁶ The strategic position of the port of Mersina (notwithstanding the problems caused by its inadequate depth) led to the city's rapid economic growth, making it centre of transit trade to and from Cilicia and the hinterland of Asia Minor. The area of Cappadocia, for example, was supplied with European products via Mersina and exported its products through this city. The customary Cappadocian commercial activity through the port of Smyrna had diminished due to the greater proximity of the Mersina port, boosting the development of the Cilician region. In the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century, its importance can be gathered by the presence of envoys (consuls, vice consuls or consular agents) from all the powerful states. P. Kontogiannis provides numeric data for the city's commercial activity; 370 ships sailed into the city's harbour in 1911, with a combined tonnage of 577,000 tons. The exports of agricultural produce (grain, cotton and sesame) in that year were worth 15m francs and the imports amounted to 12.610m francs.¹⁷

These activities can not be compared to those of other sites on the coast of Cilicia, for which P. Kontogiannis mentions that it generally lacked important (in terms of regional planning) ports. Seleuceia, for example, to the west of Mersina, again according to Kontogiannis, was home to fewer commercial activity although its harbour served a wider area.¹⁸

Most of the Greeks of the vilayet originated from Cappadocia and Iconium (although some islanders and Cypriots are also mentioned) who had migrated to Cilicia to take advantage of the commercial opportunities. The textile and carpet making industries were robust in the region, and we should note the existence of two Greek spinning mills at Adana, of the Tripanis brothers (daily output of 800/1,000 bales) and of Simeonoglou and Partners (daily output of 150-200 bales) as well as that of Mauromatis in Tarsus (daily output of 500/600 bales). The two cities also had cotton ginneries, while a spinning mill is also mentioned in Mersina.¹⁹

1. *ΘΗΕ* 1 (1962) p. 382, see entry 'Adana' (T. Gritsopoulos).
2. Αντωνόπουλος, Σ., *Μικρά Ασία* (Athens 1907), p. 13.
3. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 169.
4. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 171.
5. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 173.
6. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 174-175.
7. Αντωνόπουλος, Σ., *Μικρά Ασία*, (Αθήνα 1907), p. 13.
8. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας*, (Athens 1921), p. 169.
9. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 171.



10. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 173.
11. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 174.
12. Αντωνόπουλος, Σ., *Μικρά Ασία* (Athens 1907), p. 50.
13. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), pp. 169-170.
14. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 417.
15. Ιστικοπούλου, Λ., *Η ελληνική ταπητουργία και η ταπητουργός στη Μικρά Ασία (1860-1922)* (Athens 2000) p. 56.
16. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921) p. 171.
17. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), p. 173; Ασβέστη, Μ.Β., *Επαγγελματικές ασχολίες των Ελλήνων της Καππαδοκίας* (Athens 1980), p. 50.
18. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921) p. 175.
19. Κοντογιάννης, Π., *Γεωγραφία της Μικράς Ασίας* (Athens 1921), pp. 183, 182; Ιστικοπούλου, Λ., *Η ελληνική ταπητουργία και η ταπητουργός στη Μικρά Ασία (1860-1922)* (Athens 2000), pp. 116-117.

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	Ιστικοπούλου Λ. , <i>Η ελληνική ταπητουργία και η ταπητουργός στη Μικρά Ασία (1860-1922)</i> , Αθήνα 2000

Glossary :

	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.	
	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.	
	vilayet (valilik)
The larger administrative unit in the Ottoman provincial administration system. The large provinces of the Ottoman Empire were previously called eyalet. The new regulation of 1864 introduced the vilayet as an equivalent of the French département - albeit of smaller size. The governor of the vilayet was called vali and had extensive authority.	