ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΜΕΙΖΟΝΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΥ

Authoring : *Stathi Angeliki*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Stathi Angeliki , "Establishment of the Empire of Trebizond by the Grand Komnenoi, 1204", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=8823>

Summary :

After the rebellion of September 12th 1185 in Constantinople, which signalled the fall of the Komnenian dynasty and caused the death of Andronicus I and his son Manuel II, the later's underage sons Manuel, Alexius and David found refuge in their relative Thamar, queen of Georgia. With her help, the two brothers captured the south coast of the Black Sea and founded the Trebizond Empire in April 1204.

Date

1204

Geographical Location

Trebizond, south coast of the Black Sea

---

1. Historical framework

After the death of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) his twelve year old son, Alexios II, ascended to the Byzantine imperial throne, his regent being Maria of Antioch, whose attitude towards the Latin was rather favourable. But since the lawful emperor was still underage, a nephew of the dead emperor and a favourite of Maria, the protosebastos Alexios Komnenos, assumed power. The dislike of many members of the Komnenoi family towards the Latins, who were favoured by this new status quo in the administration of the state, led to the overturning of the government in May 1182, following a rebellion that broke out in the capital. The protosebastos Alexios was blinded, and the cousin of Manuel, Andronikos I Komnenos, governor of the Pontos up to then, seized power. Andronikos (1182-1185), being an enemy of the aristocracy and having opposed to the pro-western policy of his predecessor Manuel I, had raised great expectations to all those wishing to overturn the pro-Latin regency. Soon, however, his administration became a regime of terror.

Andronikos' anti-Latin attitude contributed in raising the tension between the West and the Byzantine Empire, while his anti-aristocratic policy militarily weakened the state, as the landed aristocracy was the main source of its military strength. All these elicited intense popular resentment, which also spread to members of the Komnenoi dynasty. In August 24, 1185 the Normans of Sicily captured Thessalonica meeting almost no resistance; then a part of the Norman army moved towards Serres and another one made its way towards Constantinople. Upon the Byzantine capital a gloomy atmosphere was hanging. The administration's terrifying measures and the fear of a Norman capture of Constantinople were the two main factors that led to the outbreak. On September 12th 1185 a rebellion broke out, and the last of the Komnenos dynasty, Andronikos I, met a violent death at the hands of the infuriated mob of Constantinople.

Andronikos was succeeded in the throne by Isaac II Angelos (1185-1195). Isaac was worried about the threat represented by the son of the deceased emperor, the popular rightful heir sebastokrator Manuel Komnenos, and had him blinded. However, Manuel Komnenos was so seriously injured in the process that he soon died. The sons of Manuel were still underage at the time. Alexios, born in 1182, was only three years old. David was a bit younger, but he had certainly been born sometime before 1185. Under the menace of Isaac Angelos, who was bent on exterminating the grand-children of Andronikos, the two brothers were taken to Iberian (Lazican) Colchis.[1] Exactly how the two infants managed to escape the heavily guarded Constantinople remains a mystery. If their mother was a Georgian princess, which is considered possible, it was prbably her that helped them escape. The only thing certain is that Alexios and David left Constantinople by sea – possibly on one of the ships prepared by Andronikos to fight the Normans – and found refuge in their relative Thamar,[2] the Georgian princess of Iberia. After the death of David (1178), her husband and ruler of Georgia, Thamar (1184-1212) shared power with her father George. She became sole ruler in 1184.

2. Thamar's stance

In 1204, the year Constantinople was captured by the Latins, Alexios was 22 years old and David, the younger one, was around 20 or 21.[3] It seems unlikely that the two brothers had by then aspired to capture of the imperial throne, or to establish a new empire.

Authoring : *Stathi Angeliki*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Stathi Angeliki , "Establishment of the Empire of Trebizond by the Grand Komnenoi, 1204", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=8823>

Thamar, however, was hostile towards the Angelos dynasty, because they had ousted the Komnenoi, a family to which she was related. This hostility was openly expressed on the occasion of an incident occurred in Constantinople, at some point before July of 1203. In her customary way, the Georgian princess offered to monks from the Black Mountain (near Antioch), from Cyprus and from the Mount Athos large sums of money. On their way back from Georgia, the monks' itinerary necessarily passed through Constantinople. Having been informed of the monks' arrival, Alexios III Angelos seized the gifts. Enraged, Thamar decided to take revenge by organizing a campaign against Trebizond. At start, she did not intend to found a new empire; she only sought vengeance for Alexios III's hostile act, in the general context of her expansive policy. The area of Trebizond was easy prey for Thamar, while the loss would be grave and damaging for the Angeloi.

3. The capture of the city of Trebizond and the foundation of the Empire of Trebizond

Thamar probably judged that the right time to strike was the period following the first capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders, in July 18th 1203. That was a moment when the capital had received a blow and Thamar could take advantage of the political instability and the Byzantine incapability of a military response: Alexios III was dethroned and his blind brother, Isaac II, had become emperor again. In the brothers Alexios and David she found the ideal instruments to fulfil her plans. Thus the two brothers emerged in the scene of the military operations against Trebizond; imbued by Thamar's political ideals, they followed her external policy plans. And so, in April of 1204 Alexios Komnenos peacefully captured the capital of the theme of Chaldia, the city of Trebizond; the two brothers captured subsequently the south shore of the Black Sea. David took up residence in Paphlagonia, in the western section of the captured territory, making Heraclea[4] his capital. Alexios, now master of the fortresses of Tripolis, Cerasous, Iasonion and Mesochaldia, and in control of an area extending from the river Phasis to the river Thermodon (Terme), settles down in the eastern part, making Trebizond his capital.[5] The route Alexios' army followed until Trebizond remains a matter for speculation. It is unlikely that the army was transported over water, since in Thamar's period Georgia did not possess any suitable ports in the Black Sea. There was the port of the river Poti (Phasis) in Mingrelia, but it is unlikely that the royal force embarked from Poti. Moreover, the chronicles of the time do not make the slightest mention to a naval expedition. On the contrary, they note the names of the places captured by Alexios in geographical order; Lazica was reportedly the first to fall, followed by Trebizond, which indicates that the troops arrived in Trebizond through Lazica. We do know that the journey from Tblisi to Trebizond lasted eight days, but we do not know the itinerary. A famous route leading to Trebizond passed through Karin and Theodosiopolis (Erzurum).[6] A folk song may prove illuminating on this issue; in it Thamar appears as saying: "I Thamar, captured Erzurum and placed Isfahan under tribute".[7] This particular quote indicates that the historical fact of the Georgian onward march towards Arzen (Erzurum), which led to the foundation of the Trebizond Empire, must have survived in the collective memory of the people.[8] Thus we come to the conclusion that Alexios' army crossed Lazica through Erzurum, following a south to north direction, reaching Trebizond from the south. The imperial domain during the first years of the Empire's existence spread from the Sangarios region to Nicomedia. After David's defeat by Theodore I Laskaris (1204-1222) at Heraclea, its territory was limited up to Sinope. But boundaries kept shrinking further. After his defeat at Heraclea,[9] David withdrew to his estates in Paphlagonia and shortly before his death he was tonsured a monk, taking on the name Daniel. After the elimination of David, Alexios' territory was constricted to the region between the river Phasis and the city of Themiscyra (Çarsaba), including some cities in Crimea and Perateia, the area around Cherson. Alexios was left the sole Komnenos ruler in the Pontos and emerged as the founder of the Empire of Trebizond and of the dynasty of the Grand Komnenoi.

4. Attitude of the local population

The bloodless capture of Trebizond by the brothers Alexios and David was not a coincidence, nor was it merely a felicitous event for the first of the Grand Komnenoi: it can be attributed to very specific factors. The then doukas or eparch of Trebizond, Nikephoros Palaiologos, quickly defected to Alexios, as he did not possess the military vigour of the Komnenoi, in spite of the fact that he militarily controlled the area of the Trebizond and the theme of Chaldia. The inhabitants of this area, seeing as defining changes took place throughout the whole region and fearing the Latins on their west and the various Turcoman tribes on the east, coalesced around Alexios, hailing him as the rightful heir to the Byzantine Empire. The name of the Komnenoi alone, which enjoyed respect and recognition throughout Asia Minor, was enough to inspire confidence and security in the minds of the people. We should also underline the fact that before 1204, Alexios' grandfather, Andronikos I Komnenos, had served as commander of the Pontos area for

Authoring : *Stathi Angeliki*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Stathi Angeliki , "Establishment of the Empire of Trebizond by the Grand Komnenoi, 1204", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=8823>

two years before ascending to the imperial throne. He had even organised a campaign to capture Constantinople there, aiming at seizing the throne. The name of the Komnenoi was well-known and dear to the inhabitants of the Pontos, and Alexios took advantage of this affection.[10] The geographical and strategic position, as well as the financial importance of the Pontos, together with the strong Byzantine element among the region's population, were defining factors for the survival and consolidation of his state. The identity of interests between Alexios and the inhabitants of Trebizond resulted into the latter willingly submitting to Alexios' rule (with the sole exception of Amisos [Samsun]) and to their peaceful coexistence.

5. Connection between the capture of Trebizond and the fall of Constantinople

The empire of the Grand Komnenoi is founded in early April 1204. The Latin Empire is established in Constantinople on April 13th, 1204. If we assumed that the capture of Trebizond took place after the establishment of the Latin Empire, we would have to accept that the news of the capture of Constantinople reached Georgia in only a few days, and a few days later a campaign was organized; this was impossible at the time from a realistic point of view. It appears that the capture of Trebizond was planned independently of the final fall of the Byzantine capital to the Crusaders in April of 1204, and it was probably connected with the first capture of Constantinople on July 18th, 1203.[11] It has been argued that the emergence of the Empire of Trebizond was not a movement of byzantine resistance following the fall of Constantinople to the Latins in 1204, but a product of the centrifugal tendencies that existed in Constantinople during the time of the Angelos' rule.[12] Moreover, it seems that the state of Trebizond had already come into existence when the Byzantine capital fell to the Crusaders.[13] In all likelihood the decision to capture Trebizond was taken after the appropriation of Thamar's gifts and the opportune for the Georgian queen first capture of Constantinople by the Latins, both events taking place in July of 1203. The period of time until April of 1204, when Alexios captures Trebizond, is considered enough to plan and carry out such a campaign.

6. The idea to recapture Constantinople

It seems that the first emperor of Trebizond cultivated the idea to recapture Constantinople after 1204, having himself adopted the inherent ideology of the states that were created after the conquest of Constantinople by the Latins. Centrifugal tendencies existed in the province of Trebizond already from the 11th century. Theodore Gabras regained Trebizond from the Seljuk Turks (c.1075); he then organized and became the indipendent ruler of the whole region up to Coloneia and Paipert until his death (1098). Apparently, the expansive aspirations of this independent Pontic state after the fall of Constantinople in 1204, flourished in a traditionally secessionist environment thus inspiring Alexios the ambition to recapture Constantinople, since he was the rightful heir to its throne.

7. The imperial title of the Grand Komnenoi

In the 13th century and up to the time of Manuel I Grand Komnenos (1238-1263), the emperors of Trebizond had appropriated the title «faithful Basileus (king) and Emperor of the Romans». However, after the recapture of Constantinople in 1261, the first Palaeologos emperor, Michael VII, expressed his discontent at the use of this title by the Trapezuntine kings, by sending several envoys requesting of John II (1280-1285) to cease using the imperial emblems. He also offered his third daughter, Eudokia, as a bride to John, on the understanding that John would remove the scarlet shoes from his royal attire –these were the imperial insignia par excellence– and would accept to be demoted, taking on the title of despotes. Indeed, in 1282 John II was married to Eudokia in Constantinople. He did not receive the title of despotes, however, which indicates that Michael VII probably made a concession on that point. The new title of the emperor of Trebizond was «Faithful to Lord Christ Basileus and Emperor of all the East, Iberia and Perateia». This title first occurs in legislative texts in the signature on a chrysobull issued by Alexios III Grand Komnenos (1349-1390) in March of 1364 and regarding the Venetians. This title is inserted in treaties only later, in the 14th century, while it also appears on the chrysobull of Alexios III pertaining to the foundation of the monastery of Dionysios on Mt Athos, in September of 1374. The title of the emperors of Trebizond also describes the extent of their dominion: «of all East» is an overstatement, for Iberia, the region southeast of the Black Sea, was already lost to the empire (possibly during the reign of Andronikos I), while the «provinces overseas» or «the region overseas», i.e. the Crimean possessions of Cherson and Gotthia, where independent of Trebizond already by the 14th century. Therefore, the addition «of the Iberians» (emperor of the Iberians) is most likely an allusion to the family relations and the traditional friendship that connected the imperial dynasties of Georgia and Trebizond. It is also a reminder of the fact that,

Authoring : *Stathi Angeliki*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Stathi Angeliki , "Establishment of the Empire of Trebizond by the Grand Komnenoi, 1204", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=8823>

after 1334, a part of Lazica belonged to the Empire of Trebizond, and we should consider this year as terminus post quem for the mention of Iberia in the imperial title. The phrase «of Perateia» denotes the empire's possessions on the Crimean peninsula. Just like the terms «Perateian land» or «Pera», it indicates the coastal areas found on «the opposite shore». The term «Perateia» was preserved in the title of the Trapezuntine emperors until the end (1461), notwithstanding the presence of the Mongols and the Genovese, who weakened the link between these possessions and the capital, Trebizond. Lastly, the imperial emblem of Trebizond was the single-head eagle, adopted after September of 1282, after John's marriage to Eudocia.

8. The distinctive name of «Grand Komnenoi»

The Komnenoi of Trebizond, from the time of the first emperor, Alexios I, to the last one, David, were hailed as «Grand Komnenoi». According to Michael Panaretos this title, which was also known in the West, was not only applied to the emperor, but also to his spouse and their offspring. The origins of this epithet are unknown. One could argue this title is indicative of the political ideology of the Grand Komnenoi, according to which the Empire of Trebizond constituted a continuation of the Byzantine imperial tradition in the empire's former eastern possessions. At the same time, the epithet «Grand» next to the name of each Komnenos Trapezuntine emperor brings to mind the imperial grandeur of Constantinople, acting, at the same time, as a reminder of the ousted family's legitimate claim to the throne of Constantinople.

---

1. On the exact time of the two brothers' escape there are many views. See Βασίλιεφ, Α.Α., «Η ίδρυση της Αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας» (reprint), *Ποντιακά 1*, Παμπούκης, Ι.Τ. (trans.) (Αθήνα 1947), pp. 16-20.

2. Πανάρετος, Μιχαήλ, Χρονικόν, Λαμψίδης, Ο. (ed.), «Μιχαήλ του Παναρέτου περί των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών», *Αρχείον Πόντου* 22 (1958), p. 61.3; Nicetae Choniatae, *Historia*, Dieten I. van (ed.) (CFHB 11, 1975), pp. 224.34. An earlier view, that Thamar was Manuel's sister, is considered impossible by modern scholars, yet there is no certainty on the kind or the degree of this relation. See Λαμψίδης, Ο., «Περί την ίδρυσιν του κράτους των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών», *Αρχείον Πόντου* 31 (1971-1972), pp. 4-9; Janssens, E., *Trebizonde en Colchide* (Bruxelles 1969), pp. 65-66.

3. A major issue for students of the history of the Great Komnenoi is the lack of sufficient textual evidence. The only source on the Trebizond Empire, the chronicle of Michael Panaretus, a Georgian chronicler in the court of the Great Komnenoi, is rather scant on information concerning the years up to 1280, but it does treat in some detail the empire's relations with the various Turkic tribes during that same period.

4. Nicetae Choniatae, *Historia*, Dieten I. van (ed.) (CFHB 11, 1975), pp. 638.69-639.72.

5. Nicetae Choniatae, *Historia*, Dieten I. van (ed.) (CFHB 11, 1975), pp. 639.72-73.

6. "Arzen er Roum", which means area or fortress of the Romans. This name was given to the city from the 11th century already; it is identified with the Calicala of the Arab writers.

7. Βασίλιεφ, Α.Α., *Η ίδρυση της Αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας* (reprint), *Ποντιακά* 1, Παμπούκης, Ι.Τ. (trans.) (Αθήνα 1947), p. 31.

8. Βασίλιεφ, Α.Α., *Η ίδρυση της Αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας* (reprint), *Ποντιακά* 1, Παμπούκης, Ι.Τ. (trans.) (Αθήνα 1947), p. 31.

9. Nicetae Choniatae, *Historia*, Dieten I. van (ed.) (CFHB 11, 1975), pp. 626.68-71.

10. On the popular image of the Comneni see Βησσαρίων, *Εγκώμιον εις Τραπεζούντα*, Λάμπρος, Σ. (ed.), «Βησσαρίωνος Εγκώμιον εις Τραπεζούντα», *NE* 13 (1916), pp. 183.35-184.11. On the fame of the Comneni among modern Greeks see Ανδρεάδης, Χ.Γ., «Παναγιώτης Ματαράγκας. Ένας λησμονημένος ποιητής-πρόξενος στην Τραπεζούντα (1865-1868)», *Αρχείον Πόντου* 47 (1996-1997), pp. 41-90.

11. Vasiliev, A.A., "The foundation of the Empire of Trebizond 1204-1222", *Speculum* 11 (1936), p. 19.

12. Ahrweiler-Γλύκατζη, Ε., *Ιστορία Ελληνικού Έθνους Θ'* (Αθήνα 1980), p. *326*.

Authoring : *Stathi Angeliki*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Stathi Angeliki , "Establishment of the Empire of Trebizond by the Grand Komnenoi, 1204", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=8823>

13. Nicol, D.M., *The Last Centuries of Byzantium* (London 1972), Κομνηνός, Σ. (trans.), *Οι τελευταίοι αιώνες του Βυζαντίου, 1261-1453* (Αθήνα 1996), p. 30.

Bibliography :

- **Ostrogorsky G.**, *Ιστορία του Βυζαντινού Κράτους, 1-3*, Αθήνα 1989, Παναγόπουλος, Ι. (μτφρ.)
- **Λυμπερόπουλος Β.Χ.**, *Ο Βυζαντινός Πόντος. Η Αυτοκρατορία της Τραπεζούντας (1204-1261), ο χώρος, οι άνθρωποι, η οικονομία*, Αθήνα 1999
- **Λαμψίδης Ο.**, "Μιχαήλ του Παναρέτου περί των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών", *Αρχείον Πόντου*, 22, 1958, 5-128
- **Ιωαννίδης Σ.**, *Ιστορία και Στατιστική Τραπεζούντος και της περί ταύτην Χώρας, ως και τα περί της ενταύθα Ελληνικής Γλώσσης*, Κωνσταντινούπολη 1870
- **Λάμπρος Σπυρίδων**, "Βησσαρίωνος Εγκώμιον εις Τραπεζούντα", *Νέος Ελληνομνήμων*, 13, 1916, 145-204
- **Χρύσανθος Φιλιππίδης, μητροπολίτης Τραπεζούντος**, "Η Εκκλησία Τραπεζούντος", *Αρχείον Πόντου*, 4/5, 1933, 1-1070
- **Λαμπάκης Σ.**, **Σαββίδης Α.**, *Γενική Βιβλιογραφία περί του βυζαντινού Πόντου και του κράτους των Κομνηνών της Τραπεζούντας*, Αθήνα 1992
- **Fallmerayer J.P.**, *Ιστορία της Αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1992, Σερμπίνης, Θ. (μτφρ.)
- **Nicol D.M.**, *Οι τελευταίοι αιώνες του Βυζαντίου, 1261-1453*, Αθήνα 1996, Κομνηνός, Σ. (μτφρ.)
- **Janssens E.**, *Trébizonde en Colchide*, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles 1969, Travaux de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres XL
- **Miller W.**, *Trebizond. The Last Greek Empire of the Byzantine Era, 1204-1461*, London 1926
- **Λαμψίδης Ο.**, "Περί την ίδρυση του κράτους των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών", *Αρχείον Πόντου*, 31, 1971-1972, 3-18
- **Vasiliev A.A.**, "The Foundation of the Empire of Trebizond 1204-1222", *Speculum*, 11, 1936, 3-37
- **Finlay G.**, *The history of Greece (from its conquest by the crusaders to its conquest by the Turks) and of the Empire of Trebizond (1204-1461)*, Edinburgh – London 1851
- **Ευαγγελίδης Τ.**, *Ιστορία της ποντιακής Τραπεζούντας από τα αρχαιότατα χρόνια μέχρι σήμερα (756 π.Χ.-1897)*, Φωτιάδης, Κ. (επιμ.), Κεσόπουλος, Α. (μτφρ.), Θεσσαλονίκη 1994
- **Λάμπρος Σπυρίδων**, "Το Τραπεζουντιακόν Χρονικόν του Πρωτοσεβαστού και Πρωτονοταρίου Μιχαήλ Παναρέτου", *Νέος Ελληνομνήμων*, 4, 1907, 257-295
- **Λαμψίδης Ο.**, "Ο βασιλεύς της Τραπεζούντας κατά το Χρονικόν Μιχαήλ του Παναρέτου", *Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών*, 23, 1953, 567-576

Authoring : *Stathi Angeliki*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Stathi Angeliki , "Establishment of the Empire of Trebizond by the Grand Komnenoi, 1204", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=8823>

Λαμψίδης Ο., "Απόψεις επί του κράτους των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών", *Αρχείον Πόντου*, 24, 1961, 14-34

Σαββίδης Α., "Ο βυζαντινός Πόντος, οι Σελτζούκοι και οι Ντανισμεντίδες Τούρκοι", *Αρχείον Πόντου*, 47, 1996-1997, 91-106

Λαμπάκης Σ., **Σαββίδης Α.**, "Πρώτο συμπλήρωμα στη Γενική βιβλιογραφία περί του βυζαντινού Πόντου και του κράτους των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών της Τραπεζούντας", *Αρχείον Πόντου*, 45, 1994, 79-91

Λαμπάκης Σ., **Σαββίδης Α.**, "Δεύτερο συμπλήρωμα στη Γενική βιβλιογραφία περί του βυζαντινού Πόντου και του κράτους των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών της Τραπεζούντας", *Αρχείον Πόντου*, 47, 1996-1997, 345-350

Λαμπάκης Σ., **Σαββίδης Α.**, "Τρίτο συμπλήρωμα στη Γενική βιβλιογραφία περί του βυζαντινού Πόντου και του κράτους των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών της Τραπεζούντας", *Αρχείον Πόντου*, 48, 1998-1999, 235-250

Ahrweiler H., "Η Αυτοκρατορία της Τραπεζούντας", *Ιστορία του Ελληνικού Έθνους Θ': Υστεροβυζαντινοί χρόνοι (1204-1453)*, Εκδοτική Αθηνών, Αθήνα 1980, 325-334

Webliography :

Empire of Trebizond

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emperor_of_Trebizond

History of the Empire of Trebizond

http://www.ancientworlds.net/aw/Post/634249

Glossary :

chrysobull

(gold seal) Imperial document of the Byzantine state which was so named because it bore the gold seal of the emperor.

despotes

Title introduced in the 12th century. In administrative hierarchy, the office of despotes was under the emperor and the co-emperor. From the 14th century onwards, the title was given to the governors of the Byzantine Peloponnese.

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.

praefectus urbi (prefect of the city)

(later referred to as the *eparch* of the city) Administrator and virtual governor of Constantinople in the Early/Middle Byzantine Era. He was responsible for the surveillance and the harmonius life of the Capital. One of his responsibilities was to control the commercial and manufacturing activities of Constantinople. After 1204, however, the office began to diminish, while from the 14th century, his responsibilities were assumed by two officers, the so-called *kephalatikeuontai of the capital.*

protosebastos

High-ranking title usually bestowed upon close relatives of the emperor. The title was introduced by Alexios I Komnenos. In the 12th century it was awarded to close associates of the emperor and to members of aristocratic families, such as the Palaiologos, Tarchaneiotes, Raoul and Metochites families.

sebastokrator

Honorary title of the Byzantine court. The office was established in 1081 by Alexios I Komnenos for his elder brother Isaac, equivalent to the one of regent

Sources

Authoring : *Stathi Angeliki*
Translation : *Κούτρας Νικόλαος*
For citation : *Stathi Angeliki , "Establishment of the Empire of Trebizond by the Grand Komnenoi, 1204", Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World, Asia Minor*
URL: <http://www.ehw.gr/l.aspx?id=8823>

Πανάρετος, Μιχαήλ, Χρονικόν, Λάμπρος, Σ. (ed.), «Το Τραπεζουντιακόν Χρονικόν του Πρωτοσεβαστού και Πρωτονοταρίου Μιχαήλ Παναρέτου», *Νέος Ελληνομνήμων* (1907), pp. 257-295.

Πανάρετος, Μιχαήλ, Χρονικόν, Λαμψίδης, Ο. (ed.), «Μιχαήλ του Παναρέτου περί των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών», *Αρχείον Πόντου* 22 (1958), pp. 5-128.

Nicetae Choniatae, *Historia*, Dieten I. van (ed.) (CFHB 11, 1975).

Βησσαρίων, Εγκώμιον εις Τραπεζούντα, Λάμπρος, Σ. (ed.), «Βησσαρίωνος εγκώμιον εις Τραπεζούντα», *Νέος Ελληνομνήμων* 13 (1916), pp. 10-204.

Quotations

Michael Panaretos

«Ἦλθεν ὁ μέγας Κομνηνός, ὁ κῦρ Ἀλέξιος ἐξελθὼν μὲν ἐκ τῆς εὐδαίμονος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, ἐκστρατεύσας δὲ ἐξ Ἰβηρίας, σπουδῇ καὶ μόχθῳ τῆς πρὸς πατρὸς θείας αὐτοῦ Θάμαρ, καὶ παρέλαβε τὴν Τραπεζούντα μηνὶ Ἀπριλίῳ, ἰνδικτιῶνος ζ΄, ἔτους ϛψιβ', ἐτῶν ὢν κβ΄».

Πανάρετος, Μιχαήλ, *Χρονικόν*, Λαμψίδης, Ο. (ed.), «Μιχαήλ του Παναρέτου περί των Μεγάλων Κομνηνών», *Αρχείον Πόντου* 22 (1958), pp. 61.1-5

Bessarion

Α. «Ἀλέξιος μὲν γε καὶ ἡμῖν. Ὁ πρῶτος τῆς γῆς ταυτησὶ βασιλεύσας, καὶ τοῦτο δὴ τὸ γλυκὺ πάντων ὄνομα καὶ ἡμῖν, ὡς τοῦ τῆς βασιλείας ὀνόματος, οὕτω δὴ καὶ πάντων κατῆρξε καλῶν. Οὗτος οἰωνὸς μὲν ὑπῆρχεν Ἀνδρονίκου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ, βασιλεύσαντος μὲν καὶ αὐτοῦ τῶν Ῥωμαίων, τὸ δ' οἰκεῖον ἀναφέροντος γένος οὐ καὶ ὁ πρῶτος Ἀλέξιος, μέγας δὲ Κομνηνὸς κεκλημένος, οὐδὲν ἧττον καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις ἦν μέγας, οὐ μᾶλλον ὀνόματος ἢ τῆς τῶν Κομνηνῶν ἀρετῆς αὐτός τε κληρονόμος γενόμενος καὶ τοὺς ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ τοιούτους ἑτέρους ἡμῖν ἀναφήνας, ἀγαθοὺς ἐξ ἀγαθῶν καὶ ἐξ ἀρίστων ἀρίστους, πάντας βασιλικούς, πάντας τῷ γένει συμβαίνοντας, πάντας ἐκείνου τοῦ χαρακτῆρος καὶ τῆς ὁμοίας εἰκόνας, πάντας ἀλλήλους ἐρίζοντας, ἀλλήλους ἁμιλλωμένους ὅστις αὐτὸς φθάσει πλείῳ κατωρθωκὼς ἀγαθὰ καὶ μεταδώσει τοῖς ὑπὸ χείρα».

Β. «Τὴν τε γὰρ πόλιν ἡμῖν οὐ μικροῖς ὁροῖς ἐπηύξησαν, ἀντ' ἀρχομένης ἄρχουσαν καταστήσαντες καὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ δουλεύειν ἑτέρους πολλοὺς ἄλλους δουλώσασαν, σχῆμά τε μητροπόλεως πρὸς τὰ κύκλῳ πάντα καὶ τὴν σύμπασαν, Λαζικὴν σχοῦσαν, τό τε ὑπήκοον ἐννόμου βασιλείας ἐπιστασίᾳ καὶ πλήθει καὶ πλούτῳ καὶ τῇ κατὰ πολέμους ἀνδρείᾳ καὶ γενναιότητι βέλτιον αὐτὸ ἑαυτοῦ ἀπειργάσαντο καὶ προήγαγον εἰς ἐπίδοσιν».

Βησσαρίων, *Εγκώμιον εις Τραπεζούντα*, Λάμπρος, Σ. (ed.), «Βησσαρίωνος εγκώμιον εις Τραπεζούντα», *Νέος Ελληνομνήμων* 13 (1916), pp. 183.35-184.11 (A), 184.11-17 (B)

Panaghiotis Matarangas

«Ὅπου δράττουσα ἓν τμῆμα τῆς βασιλικῆς χλαμύδος ἡ μεγάλη ἐθρονίσθη γενεὰ τῶν Κομνηνῶν καὶ ἐστήριξεν ἐν μέσῳ τῆς ἀγρίας καταιγίδος τὸν ἑλληνισμὸν τοῦ Πόντου τῆς μητρός του ὀρφανόν» [...] «Σεβάσθητ' Ἕλλήνων πόλιν καὶ πρωτεύουσαν ἀρχαίαν ὅπου ἔστησαν τῶν φώτων τὸν φανὸν οἱ Κομνηνοί».

Ανδρεάδης, Χ.Γ., «Παναγιώτης Ματαράγκας. Ένας λησμονημένος ποιητής-πρόξενος στην Τραπεζούντα (1865-1868)», *Αρχείον Πόντου* 47 (1996-1997), pp. 41-90.