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Prizren as a City-State under Roman-Byzantine Administration

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Abstract. The rule of the Roman Empire left its mark on ancient Dardania as well. At the time of the division of the empire into Roman and Byzantine, Prizren fell under the Byzantine rule. Theranda, as Prizren was called in Roman times, developed as a very important place in many spheres of life, first in trade then in administration and culture. As we know, Rome, at the time of the occupation of the new lands, compulsorily introduced both law and management and administration. The initial cartographic data for Prizren come from the Roman period, when the city with its ancient name, Theranda, is shown on Peutinger's table. Regarding the functioning of Prizren as a city-state or provincial state, according to the Kanun of Prizren of 1570, part of the Sanjak of Prizren were six kazas (districts): Prizren, Hoça, Sesrit (Neubicare), Bihor (important fortification) and Trgovishte (Rozhaje). According to Haxhi Kalfi, in the middle of the XVII century, this sanjak had Perser (Prizren) Suhareka, Havas Prizren (Gora and Opoja), Firqne (Hoqa), Bihor and Trgovishte as kadiluks. The paper treats Prizren since ancient Roman Byzantine times, Prizren as a city-state, Theranda as an important cultural trade centre and as the first administrative centre, a province of the Roman Empire.

Keywords. Prizren, city, state, administration, Roman-Byzantine

Prizren as a city-state under Roman-Byzantine administration

The period of Roman rule begins with the subjugation of the Dardanians, at the beginning of the II century BC, which lasted until 395 AD when the Roman Empire split into two parts, the western and eastern part. Prizren fell under the rule of Byzantium until the XIII century. The Dardanians were in constant wars with their neighbours, especially the Macedonians. In 200 BC, they joined the anti-Macedonian coalition formed by the Roman Empire. In 168 BC, the Romans, with the help of the Dardanians, settled in Macedonia. But, this victory has brought almost no benefit to the Dardanians and gradually the former allies became enemies (Dasiq, 1983, str. 22).

In this way, Dardania is created as an area of material development and spiritual culture of the ruling groups of the Illyrian tribes, as a buffer state of autonomous territory. From 44 AD, the Roman province of Moesia was created, which included Dardania as well. But after Diocletian's administrative reforms, around 243, Dardania became an independent province.

The Roman period has left indelible marks and has played a significant role in the development of these territories. More precisely, the establishment of Roman rule over this territory has brought new conditions and legacies in the socio-economic life of the Dardanians.

The declaration of Pax Romana for Italy and the provinces causes the independence of the parts incorporated (united) by Rome. But it has nevertheless brought peace, security and order to a more advanced organization throughout the territory of the Roman Empire (Papazoglu, 1969, str. 133). All this is reflected in the implementation of economic activities, the development of productivity and foreign trade (Haskuka, 1985, str. 85). Therefore, the Romans did not find an uninhabited place here, but numerous settlements where life took place in tribal order. Ancient writers mention Illyrians, constructions like oppidum and castellum (Pasaliq, 1967, str. 113-114).

In Albania, the people have called these castles. In these areas is presented the creation of latifundia at the beginning of the III century. The members of the Furi family, who belong to the Roman patrician families, were the owners of the latifundium in the vicinity of Prizren. In the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, even in the then territory of Prizren, slavery was less developed than in the metropolis itself, which means that slave labour was not an important factor in the economy of this part. In one of the monuments in Prizren, three family slaves are mentioned. That is, in latifundia, the main labour force was the people free from the locals, and very few slaves. The main road communication of the Empire (the shortest road), which came from the Adriatic coast inside the Balkan Peninsula and passed through the region of Prizren, was Lissus-Naissus. Through this road, commercial goods and post passed, while at risk of war, the army passed as well. The initial cartographic data for Prizren come from the Roman period, when the city with its ancient name, Theranda, is shown on Peutinger's table (Cershkov, 1969, pp. 53-61). In this Roman itinerary, the roads that pass through Kosovo are pictographically presented (Stipqevic, 1989, p. 71). The important road that passes through Kosovo is the Lissus - Naissus road. Several localities are marked along the presented road (Cerbregu, 1987, pp. 110-111).

Distances between localities are fixed with distances measured m.p. (milia passum - 1485.5 m) with Roman numerals. Along the Lissus - Naissus road, 11 stations are presented, which are listed according to this order: Lissus (Lezha) XXX Adpicaria (Puka) XXX Creueni (Vau Spas) XVI Glabules (Kukes) XXX Theranda (Prizren) XXX Viciano (Caglavica) XIX Vindenis (Glavnik) XX Ad Fines (near Kursumlija) XX Hammeo (near Prokoplje) VI Ad Herculem (Brestovica) XVI Naissus (Nis). A large number of scientists have debated the importance of this road for the geographical position of the territory.

This road has brought the emergence of the ancient city of Theranda. However, regarding the location of this city, different opinions have been given. According to an opinion presented in the historical scientific work of the historians K. Jirecek and S. Nenadovic, this city was located in the place of present-day Prizren, respectively of its ancestor Torazhda, near which, the famous road Lissus - Naissus passed. According to another opinion presented in the works of Chershkov and others, Theranda was located 15 km northeast of present-day Prizren in the Torazhda plain (present-day Terrna near Prizren). The emergence, development and empowerment of the Roman city of Theranda, as the most important commercial centre in the Prizren basin from the Albanian coast to the interior of the Balkan Peninsula, clearly shows the new time in which the form of organization and technology is considered an economically developed country and as a place of natural suitability (Illyrians and Illyria to ancient authors, 1979, pp. 311-313). The Roman settlement near Verbica that was then located where today the Drini i Bardhë meets its left tributary, the Verbica River of this settlement is thought to

come from the Iron Age, while in Roman times, according to preserved remains such as buildings, cemeteries and various things, is also noticed that the basilicas prove that the settlement existed even in the late ancient period (IV-VI centuries).

The existence of the basilica is a sign of the value of the position and the importance of the role of that settlement. In the important road and commercial centres, the stations of consular benefits were located, and their role certainly contained the protection of order and security, as well as the preservation of the integrity of the property of Roman citizens. This institution, established at the end of the II century and at the beginning of the III century, through the road Lissus - Naissus or Via de Zenta and along the way, there was a station in the village of Dobruzhda (Dobrusha) near the village of Nashec, not far from the river Sojija in Drini i Bardhë, where there was a Roman settlement. In the site "Zidine", approximately 2 km west of Prizren, there was also a Roman settlement, and remnants of tiles and shingles are material evidence from both of these sites (Kosovo in the light of archaeological material, 1979, p. 101). The existence of the territorial tribal unit (*civitates peregrinorum*) is proved in the basis of the epigraphic material. Such a tribal unit of *civitas* character is attested in the territory of the villages of Spoina, Mushutishta and Popovlana, approximately 18 km northeast of Prizren (Shukriu, 1977, p. 181).

The Roman state, both during the wars and after their end, dealt with the administrative organization of the occupied territories, which it carried out in several stages and with changes according to the conjunctures that were created from time to time and in accordance with the possibilities that the Roman state had. The main purpose of the administrative organization of Illyria was the strengthening of Roman power, through which it would be transferred to a more rational and systematic administration and use of the Illyrian provinces. This happened in the last period of the Republic of Rome and especially with the establishment of the empire. Measures that served this purpose were the confiscation of land and changes in land ownership, the transformation of several cities into Roman colonies and the settlement of an Italian and Oriental population, the development of technology and production, the use of mines and the construction and reconstruction of roads and, in general, the difficult situation that was imposed on the Illyrians, especially starting from the I century AD. Along with this policy, Rome made great efforts for the assimilation, "Romanization" of the Illyrian population, but without achieving visible results. Through urbanization, the army and the Latin language, Rome strengthens its rule in these areas.

However, it does not completely destroy the socio-economic organization of Dardanian inhabitants and, in order to ensure internal peace, it builds important fortifications and enables the valorisation of natural resources. By the end of the Roman period, the Dardanians did not lose their language to Latin. For this, Dardania maintained its individuality with compact Dardanian citizens (Mirdita, 1969, p. 79). Functioning of Prizren as a city-state or provincial state. According to the Kanun of Prizren of 1570, part of the Sanjak of Prizren were six kazas: Prizren, Hoça, Sesrit (Neubicara), Bihor (important fortification) and Trgovishta (Rozhaja). According to Haxhi Kalfi, in the middle of the XVII century, this sanjak had Perser (Prizren) uhareka, Havas Prizren (Gora and Opoja), Firqne (Hoqa), Bihor and Trgovishte as kadiluks. (Mirdita, 1969, p. 97) But, in 1699, Trgovishta is mentioned as part of the kadiluk of Novi Pazar. Until the second half of the XIX century, the Sanjak of Prizren was part of the elayet of Rumelia, based in Sofia. 44 In the XIX century, the desire of the Ottoman Empire, in the administrative-political point of view, was for it to be organized according to the example of European states, the law on the annulment of the elayets and the formation of vilayets (Kaleshi, 1962, p. 498). Meanwhile, immediately in 1868, the Vilayet of Prizren was

created, which was joined by several parts of Bitol (Manastir) (the sanjak of Skopje and that of Dibra), of Danube (the sanjak of Nis). The creation of this vilayet was the desire of Turkey which, from Prizren as the centre of the vilayet, wanted to include Albanians in the army as Nizams, disarm the population in these territories, collect tax voluntarily and stop the uprisings. The administration of the Vilayet of Kosovo included several sanjaks such as: - Skopje Sanjak: kazas of Skopje, Kumanovo, Kacanik, Shtip, Radovish, Kocan, Kratovo, Peceva, EgriPalanka. - Prizren Sanjak: kazas of Prizren, Lume, Tetovo. - Peja Sanjak: kazas of Peja, Gjakova, Gucia, Berana, Tergovishta. - Prishtina Sanjak: kazas of Prishtina, Mitrovica, Vuçiterna, Gjilan, Presheva Novi Pazar Sanjak: kazas of Novi Pazar, Sjenica, Kolashin, Akova, Novi Varosh, Prepolje. (Kosovo pod Turskom Vlasti, (nekad i sad), 2007, p. 131). The vilayet of Prizren was administered by the following official administrators: in different periods; since 1869. Below is the table showing the period of administration and administrator. Administrator Period: June 1869 - January 1871 Ismail Rahmi Pasha, Tepedelenlizade January 1871 - November 1871 Safvet Pasha Tatar, November 1871 - August 1872 Galib Pasha Sari, August 1872 - April 1873 Abdurrahman Nureddin Pasha, April 1873 - May 1873 Mehmed Akif Pasha Arnavud Kalkandelenli, May 1874- April 1874 Huseyin Husnu Pasha (Kaleshi, Jedna prizrenska i dve kanunam, 1957, p. 289).

At that time, the Albanian vilayets had a kind of military, judicial and political autonomy. They were militarily organized in bayraks. In case of war, they, together with the Turks, went to war under the command of their own bayraktars. The interests of the states both east and west were in having their influence in Prizren. Russia was the first to react in May 1866, appointing its own Russian consul in Prizren. Therefore, immediately in May 1866, the Russian consul in Prizren was appointed. The reasons for the (source of data) appointment of the Russian consul were various, but the main ones were: for Russia to maintain the influence gained in the Balkans, to continue the expansion of pan-Slavic ideas and to compete with the Austro-Hungarian action and propaganda in the territories inhabited by Albanian population. The first consul to be appointed was Tomas, who remained in this duty until 1870, when Lisevic was appointed. After the Russo-Turkish wars (1876-78), immediately in 1879, a Russian consulate was established in Prizren and Ivan Jastrebov was reappointed consul. The Russian consul remained in Prizren until 1915. One month after the ceasefire in Edirne, the Treaty of Peace between the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire was signed in San Stefano on March 3, 1878. The Treaty of San Stefano ceded to the Ottoman Empire about 80% of its possessions in the Balkan Peninsula. Its borders would include the vast majority of lands ceded from the Ottoman Empire. It would stretch east to the Black Sea, south to the Aegean Sea, north to the Danube and west to the Voskopoja Mountains. Although Greater Bulgaria would remain under the sovereignty of the Turkish sultan, the High Gate would not have the right to place any Ottoman military garrison within its borders. The rest of the imperial territories would be ceded to Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, which would return from autonomous principalities to independent states. Greece gained nothing. It would remain as it was, an independent state within its pre-war borders. The Treaty of San Stefano did not mention Albania at all, which for Russia did not exist as a subject of political rights (Jastrebov, 1904, p. 51). According to the Treaty of San Stefano, almost half of the Albanian lands were given to the Balkan Slavic states. Bulgaria would take, among others, the Albanian provinces of Korca, Bilisht, Pogradec, Struga, Dibra, Kercova, Gostivar, Tetovo, Skopje, Kacanik. Serbia, which would stretch mainly to the southwest, would also annex the northern and northeastern parts of Kosovo, up to the vicinity of Mitrovica. Montenegro, whose area would increase more than three times, would also include within its borders a number of Albanian provinces, such as Ulcinj, Kraja, Anamal, Hoti, Gruda,

Tuz, Kelmend, Plava, Gucia and Rugova. The rest of Albania would remain under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. The division of Albanian lands was one of the motivations of our patriots to deal with one of the main issues raised during the spring of 1878 in the popular assemblies of the provinces of the country, which was the formation of the Albanian League, whose national character was defended by both radical patriots and moderate circles, that in the future the headquarters will be one of the largest and most important cities for Albanians and the Balkans. As a procedure for its formation, political leaders decided to use the ancient Albanian tradition.

According to this tradition, whenever the country was threatened by external danger, each province convened its own provincial assembly and then their representatives gathered in an extraordinary assembly, which formed, as the case may be, the inter-provincial covenant or general league. The existence, in the spring of 1878, of local covenants or self-defence commissions facilitated the work of political leaders. All that was needed was to convene the general assembly and successfully organize its work. The initiative to convene the General Assembly was taken by the Istanbul Committee. But, in order not to provoke the open reaction of the Ottoman governing bodies, the Istanbul Committee acted, as before, in the circumstances of complete secrecy. Prizren was designated as the place for the meeting of the Assembly, which was the main city of Kosovo and one of the largest in Albania, located near the provinces, where the armed resistance of the League for the protection of the integrity of the homeland would take place. A special commission was tasked with directly organizing the actions for convening the Assembly and most of the members were from Prizren and Gjakova. Ymer Prizreni and Ahmet Koronica are known among them, while the call for the Assembly meeting was issued at the end of April by one of the most prominent representatives of the moderate patriotic regions, Ali Bey Gucia (hereinafter: Ali pasha Gucia), large landowner and old adversary of the Tanzimat and of the Treaty of San Stefano. The movement for the convening of the National Assembly revived at its peak during the second half of May. As soon as the news spread that the Congress of Berlin would convene in June 1878, meetings were held in the areas of the four vilayets to appoint the delegates who would go to Prizren. From the Albanian areas of the vilayets of Kosovo, Shkodra, Bitola and Ioannina, none of the sultanist elements was appointed as a delegate to Prizren. However, the Ottoman ulema and functionaries, using a variety of means 44, led to the appointment of many pashas, beys and sultans as delegates in those kazas, where the Albanian, Bosnian, Turkish and Roman (Islamized Bulgarian) populations lived in a mixed manner. Concerned by the development of the Albanian National League, the High Gate did not leave the fate of its policy in Albania only in the hands of the state authorities of the vilayets, but also intervened itself to change the course of events.

For this purpose, at the end of May, it called in Istanbul the most prominent personalities of Albanian political life, such as Iljaz pasha Dibra, Ali Bey Gucia, Abdyl Frasheri, Ymer Prizreni, Ahmet Koronica, Zija Prishtina, Mustafa Pasha Vlora, Sheh Mustafa Tetova, Vejsel Bey Dino and many others, against whom it exerted for several days strong pressure to force them to give the covenant the character of a Balkan Islamic organization. The Gate tried to keep in Istanbul the Albanian personalities, who resisted the pressure of the Ottoman government, under various pretexts, to prevent their participation in the National Assembly. But they left for Prizren without its permission. Prizren had got a festive look in those first days of June. In addition to the permanent residents, thousands of other guests circulated in the city, dressed in the clothes of their provinces and armed. The National Assembly was opened on June 10, 1878. The Albanian League of Prizren (1878 - 1881) officially began with the gathering of 300 representatives of all Albanian provinces in the Albanian assembly held in

Prizren on June 10, 1878. There were also Bosnians from Bosnia and Sanjak (assimilated Albanians) in the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was the formation of an autonomous Albanian state that would cover 45 the Ottoman vilayets of Prizren, Shkodra, Bitola and Ioannina. The League was the first major movement organized politically, administratively and militarily to create a united Albanian region since the failure of Skanderbeg's forces in the Middle Ages. During the holding of the League of Prizren, England had opened its consulate in Prizren. In order to be able to directly follow the work of this League, the English consulate stopped working. That is, the English consulate operated briefly in Prizren from 1878 to 1880, and the English consul was St. John.

Then, the consulate reopened in Prizren, only in May 1907. The consulate remained open until the time of the evacuation of the Serbian army in 1915. With the cancellation of the English consulate in 1880, of the Austrian consulate in 1912 and of the Russian and Italian consulates in 1915, one of the most important diplomatic activities of Prizren and the so-called era of 'time of consuls' came to an end.

Conclusion

The data from the paper lead to the conclusion that the city of Prizren in its roots under the Roman-Byzantine administration took over the Byzantine Roman law and traditions. It is important to note that Prizren, as one of the oldest cities in Kosovo, resembled a city and a state within itself, with culture, trade and international roads. It is also worth mentioning the very important Lissus-Naissus road which passed through Prizren, or otherwise known in Albanian as the Nish-Lezhe road that passed through Prizren. The other road which is Thessaloniki-Prizren-Shkodra, was a very important economic trade line and was called the Via Egnatia. These two roads, Via Disenda Nish-Lezhe and the Via Egnatia Thessaloniki- Shkodra made Prizren commercially very important. The state body of slave-owning Rome is very well known, which is organized in three powers, the legislature, the assembly and the executive, the rex and the senate. Prizren was easy to administer because it knew the contours of state administration of city-states.

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