The Patriarch of Alexandria Meletios Metaxakis and the Greek – Orthodox migration and mission in Africa

Abstract

This paper aims to present the role of Meletios Metaxakis as patriarch of Alexandria in relation to the Greek – Orthodox Migration and Mission in Africa. Former Ecumenical Patriarch Meletios reorganized the Patriarchate of Alexandria and founded new bishoprics in Africa, especially where there were Greek communities established by Greek immigrants.

Introduction

Meletios (Meletius) Metaxakis was an eminent prelate of the Orthodox Church of the 20th century, born in 1871 in the island of Crete. He was Bishop of Kition in Cyprus (1910-1918), Metropolitan of Athens and All Greece (1918-1920), Ecumenical Patriarch (1921-1923), and Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa (1926-1935). In 1926, he was elected as Patriarch of Alexandria under the episcopal name Meletios II and, until his death in 1935, Meletios was the first patriarch who used the title “and All Africa” instead of just “all Egypt”, extending thus the jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria. This act is in close

1 This paper was presented at the joint ASCH (American Society of Church History)/ EHS (Ecclesiastical History Society) Conference in Migration and Mission in Christian History, Oxford, 3-5 April 2014.

2 Ανδρέας Νανάκης, Μητροπολίτης Αρκαλοχωρίου, Καστελλίου και Βιάννου [Andreas Nanakis Metropolitan of Arkalochori, Kastelli and Viannos, in Crete], Η χηρεία του Οικουμενικού Θρόνου και η εκλογή του Μελετίου Μεταξάκη [The vacancy of the Ecumenical Throne and the election of Meletios Metaxakis, 1918-1922], PhD Thesis, Department of Theology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki 1983; Θρησκευτική και Ηθική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια [Religious and Moral Encyclopedia], vol. 8, Athens 1966, 965-968; See also San Francisco Chronicle, San Francisco, January 14, 1922: “[...] Metaxakis, an archbishop and friend of Venizelos, former premier, was elected patriarch of Constantinople recently [...]”; San Francisco Chronicle, San Francisco, October 4, 1922: “Metaxakis Again is ‘Greek Pope’”; See also: The Chicago Daily Tribune, Chicago, January 13, 1922.

3 Χρυσόστομος Παπαδόπουλος, Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αθηνών και πάσης Ελλάδος [Chrysostomos Papadopoulos, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece], Ιστορία της Εκκλησίας Αλεξανδρείας [The History of the Church of Alexandria] (62-1934), Thessaloniki 2009, 881. Finally, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria extended its rule to all of Africa and especially to the communities of the Greek Diaspora. In 23 October 2001, when Peter was Patriarch of Alexandria, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Patriarch Bartholomew officially recognized the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Alexandria over all Africa and its islands; See Μακάριος Γρινιέζακης, Επίσκοπος Χριστοπόλεως [Makarios Griniezakis, Bishop of Christopolis],
relation to the migration of Greeks in Africa, the organization of Greek Orthodox communities in this continent, the establishment of new bishoprics and the building of new orthodox churches in the areas inhabited by Greek - Orthodox immigrants.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and the Greek Migration in Africa

The Patriarch of Alexandria was head of the Orthodox Church throughout the Africa, wherever there were Orthodox Greeks. When Meletios Metaxakis was patriarch of Alexandria, the Patriarchate reached its acme through the establishment of new dioceses and beginning of missionary actions which took place among heterodox religions and populations. In addition, the characterization “and All Africa”, which was added on the title of the Patriarch of Alexandria- and former Ecumenical Patriarch-, confirmed its growing power and fame. Patriarch Meletios relied on the Hellenism in Africa and especially in Egypt, the seat of the Patriarchate, where there were the most significant communities of Greek immigrants, in order to reorganize the Patriarchate and officially expand its jurisdiction beyond the borders of this country. In his enthronement speech in 1926, he wishes, among other things, "for the welfare of the pious Nation of Greeks. Meletios cared for the good relations of the Patriarchate of Alexandria with the Greek communities in Egypt. During the period of his patriarchy they numbered, according to one version, more than 120,000 orthodox people, of whom 88% speak Greek, 10% Arab and 2% Slavic languages. On the other hand, Patriarch Meletios relied on the Greeks in Africa in...
order to expand the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate on the whole continent of Africa. It is worth mentioning that he had previously organized the Greek Orthodox Church in North and South America and had the requisite experience.

As far as the Greeks in Africa were concerned, they had migrated in several regions of this continent. According to U.S. archives, before the Peace Congress, in 1919, "150,000 distributed on the rest of the Africa [...]." It should be noted at this point that until the 19th century and the rise of Nationalism, religion was a divider element and almost synonym to national identity. For the Greek Orthodox people, religion was a factor determining their national identity. According to the Revolutionary Constitution of Epidaurus, in 1821, "Greeks are those indigenous inhabitants of Greece who believe in Christ [...]."

Specifically, the Greeks had migrated in many areas of Africa:

**The Greeks of Egypt**

First of all, a significant migration point for the Greeks was Egypt. The history of modern Hellenism [Greeks] in this country actually begins in the early 19th century, under the favorable system of governance of the Viceroy of Egypt.
Mohammed Ali\textsuperscript{13} who was born in the city of Kavala, near Thessaloniki. Of course small groups of Greek Orthodox Christians lived in Egypt and the Monastery of St. Catherine of Sinai since the 16th century and lived around the Patriarchate of Alexandria - a city where there was a strong Greek heritage, as it was built by Alexander the Great in the Hellenistic Ages. However, in 19th century, there is a great Greek migration movement and establishment of Greeks in Alexandria, Cairo and other Egyptian cities. The Greek population of 75,000, maybe more, in the late of the 19th century, will reach 132,000 in 1907 to 152,000 at the time of Patriarch Meletios and around 190,000 two years after his death\textsuperscript{14}.

Although the sources do not always agree, the Greeks are the largest group in the early 20th century among the strangers in Egypt. According to the newspaper Chicago Sunday Tribune of 1914, "[...] The population totals in the last census 11.898.978 [...] The foreign population comprises 151.414, the largest single element being 62.973 Greeks. There are 20.653 British, 34.973 Italians, 14.591 French, 7.704 Austrians, 1.847 Germans, 2.500 Russians, 1.500 Persians, and the remainder are literally 'Parthians, Medes and Elamites', representing every nation in the habitable world. [...] The same newspaper stated: "[...] Religiously considered, there are 10.366.826 Moslems - 91.84 per cent of the entire population. The Copts, the descendants of native Christians, number 706.322. There are 38.635 Jews, 57.744 Roman Catholics, 76.953 Greek Christians [more than the above mentioned census about the foreign population], and 27.937 Eastern Orthodox. [...] "\textsuperscript{15}.

Gradually, the population was limited, due to internal turmoil, the migration of Greeks to other countries of Africa and in Australia, the nationalization of their property by the president of Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasser, and, in general because of the political insecurity. As far as their occupation is concerned, approximately 20% of Greeks in Egypt were merchants, bankers, businessmen, landowners and shopkeepers, 40% were craftsmen, clerks and artisans, 20% of them were workers, minor artisans and employees in small firms, and the remaining 20% poor and underemployed. Among them there were a number of well-educated. It is worth mentioning that in the period of Meletios Metaxakis Patriarchy about 15% of the medicine doctors in Egypt were Greeks.

The Greeks of Egypt founded more than 40 communities (the number is approximate, other sources refer them to be up to 60), formed 100 clubs and established churches, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, orphanages, libraries and other cultural institutes. The Church of Alexandria supported the Greek communities and the Greek communities strengthened the Orthodox Church, since the vast majority of the flock were Greek - Orthodox. In 1843, the Greek community of


\textsuperscript{15} The Chicago Sunday Tribune, November 15, 1914.
Alexandria was created, and by them an elementary school was founded, the Tositsaia School, which is now the seat of the Patriarchate of Alexandria. They also erected the church of the Immaculate Conception, the dimensions of which (1,000 m² in size and 20 m in height) is indicative of the thriving Greek Community of the city. In 1856, another Greek community was established in Cairo, which later on built churches and went through charities supported by wealthy Greek merchants and traders of Egypt. Concerning the Greek charitable societies in these cities, the Records of the Department of State Relating to the World War I and its Termination state that: “the Greek Orthodox and the Greek Catholic Charitable Society in Alexandria may be smaller in number than Societies in Cairo, but they are not inferior to them in the extent of their work of charity or in the influence of their members... The Greek Orthodox Charitable Society in Cairo [...] is making a good effort to render what help it can to the poor people of its sect [...]”16.

The most significant Greek communities were in Alexandria and Cairo, which also participated in the election of the Patriarch of Alexandria and had great cultural and charitable institutions17. The spiritual progress in Letters and Arts, as it was reflected in the production of Greek books and in the poetic work of the Greek poet of Alexandria Constantine Cavafy18, are in accordance with the economic progress, which relied heavily on the cultivation and in marketing of cotton19. Though Alexandria is the seat of the Patriarchate, Egypt and specifically the Greek Orthodox community in the country is its actual power.

The Greeks of Sudan

Another important Greek settlement developed in Sudan since the mid-19th century, due to the occupation of the country by Mohammed Ali who was favorably disposed towards Greeks. The Greek presence was intense after the conquest of the country by the British – Egyptian army and the arrival of Greeks from Egypt in Khartoum, which is the seat of the Orthodox Metropolis of Nubia. During Meletios Metaxakis’ Patriarchy, around 2,000 Greeks lived in Sudan, a number which tripled in 1960. They mainly occupied themselves with trade and business. It should be noted here that the Committee of the Greek – Orthodox Community in Khartoum

worked closely with the Patriarchate of Alexandria, despite the absence of a Greek consul in the country\textsuperscript{20}.

**The Greek Communities of North Africa**

Greek communities were also established in the rest of North Africa (Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco\textsuperscript{21}) from the 17th century due to the growth of the sponge fishing, and due to the privileges that local governors of Greek origin gave to Greek immigrants, mainly since the mid-19th century. These communities reached their acme during the first decades of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Greek - orthodox communities were also established in Tripoli, Benghazi, Tunis, Oran, Casablanca. The Greek immigrants occupied themselves with sponge fishing or with commerce, they owned restaurants, cafes, hotels and many were artisans and employees in several companies. The Greeks built churches and Greek schools. The church of St. George in Tripoli (17\textsuperscript{th} century) and of St. Anthony in Tunis are among the first churches in North Africa. Specifically, in 1647, Greek - Orthodox immigrants built the church of St. George in Tunis and years later on its place the magnificent church of St. Anthony\textsuperscript{22}. During the Patriarchy of Meletios Metaxakis, the oratory of the Annunciation in Morocco and the oratory of St. Mefletios in Casablanca were built. Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis was the first patriarch who visited all the Greek Orthodox communities and the Orthodox churches of North Africa\textsuperscript{23}. [It is worth mentioning that the interests of the Greek immigrants clashed with those of European colonialists, of the Italians in Libya and of French in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco\textsuperscript{24}.]

**The Greek Communities of East Africa**

Greek communities also were established in East Africa, particularly in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

The Greek presence in Ethiopia has its roots in the Byzantine period but mainly began in 18th century. Greek - Orthodox from Izmir and the Aegean islands fled to Ethiopia, while the relation between the Church of Abyssinia and the

\textsuperscript{20} Ευθύμιος Σουλογιάννης [Efthimios Soulologiannis], «Αϊγυπτός και Σουδάν» [Egypt and Soudan] in Οι Έλληνες στη Διασπορά [Greeks in Diaspora], 15\textsuperscript{th} -21\textsuperscript{st} c., op. cit., 226-227.

\textsuperscript{21} Αντώνης Χαλδαίος [Antonis Chaldeos], Ο Ελληνισμός του Μαρόκου: η ελληνική παροικία [The Hellenism of Morocco: the Greek community] (1904-2012), Athens, 2012.

\textsuperscript{22} See Οι Έλληνες στη Διασπορά [Greeks in Diaspora], 15\textsuperscript{th} -21\textsuperscript{st} c., op. cit.; Αντώνης Χαλδαίος [Antonis Chaldeos], Η Ελληνική Παροικία της Τυνησίας (16 – 21 c.) [Greek Community in Tynis], Athens: Communaute Grecque de Tynis. 2012.

\textsuperscript{23} Γ. Ευσταθίου [G. Efstathiou], «Η ανά την Βόρεια Αφρικήν πομαντορική περιοδείαν του αοιδίμου πατριάρχου ημῶν Μελετίου” [The pastoral tour of our glorious patriarch Melitios across the North Africa] Εκκλησιαστικός Φάρος 34 (1935), 545-593, 709-711..

\textsuperscript{24} Μαρία Αγαθαγγελίδου [Maria Agathaggelidou], «Βόρεια Αφρική (Τυνησία, Λιβύη, Αλγέρι, Μαρόκο)» [North Africa: Tunis, Libya, Algeria, Morocco], in Οι Έλληνες στη Διασπορά [Greeks in Diaspora], 15\textsuperscript{th} -21\textsuperscript{st} c., op. cit., 229-231.
Patriarchate of Alexandria developed closer. Many Greeks arrived in Ethiopia during the 19th century, as the choice of Addis Ababa as its capital (1887) was accompanied by constructive and other public works which depended on a lot of working hands. Thus, Greek workers and contractors who worked in Suez Canal Company visited Ethiopia. In 1908, an Orthodox church was built in Tsimboujti. In 1917, the first Greek Consulate was established in the capital. In the following year, the Greek community in Addis Ababa and other Greek unions were founded. In 1926, when Meletios Metaxakis was elected as Patriarch of Alexandria, the church of St. Fromentios is a common venue for Greek immigrants. The Greek-Orthodox immigrants, who reached 1,500, established churches and schools and worked in hotels, shops and cafes, while others were employed as clerks in foreign companies.  

In Eritrea Greek – Orthodox people, about 500 in the early of 20th century, dealt mainly with trade and business and tried to save the Greek identity and to communicate the orthodox religion, the Greek language and their customs to the natives of this country. The Patriarch Meletios Meketakis is a personal project of Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis.

Greeks reached Southeast Africa and worked in German and British construction companies such as British South Africa Company; others worked as merchants and in the cultivation of coffee and cotton, while, in the period of Patriarch Meletios, a few of them searched for gold as well. The important role of the Orthodox Church in the establishment of the Greek Orthodox communities is shown by the fact that, during the Second World War, the metropolitan of Axum Nikolaos, with his personal intervention, led to the establishment of the “Union of Greeks in Tanzania”. The latter decided to establish a fund for eastern Africa having the purpose to found churches, schools, take care of the payment of the priests and the financial support of all Greek immigrants. The Greeks of Eastern Africa, with the exception of the Greeks from the island of Imbros, got organized into communities according to their place of residence rather than their place of origin. Finally, it is worth mentioning the important role of the Orthodox mission in Nairobi, and the fact that the establishment of the Orthodox Church in Uganda is a personal project of Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis.

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26 Μαρίνα Πετρονώτη [Marina Petronoti], «Ερυθραία» [Eritrea], in Οι Έλληνες στη Διασπορά [Greeks in Diaspora], 15th -21st c., op. cit., 233-234.
27 Athanasios N. Papathanasiou, “Missionary Experience and Academic Quest. The Research Situation in Greece”, in European Traditions in the Study of Religion in Africa, edited by Frieder Ludwig and Afe Adogame, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz KG, 2004, 302-303: “In 1929, two young Ugandan friends, Odadijah Bassajakitalo and Reuben Sabaya Mukasa, seceded from the Anglican Church without having any contact with Greek Orthodox missionaries and, after a ‘denominational adventure’, finally turned to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Alexandria, Egypt. They joined the Greek Orthodox Church, were ordained and formed the first missionary nucleus”.
28 Ελένη Λαζίδου, Νίκος Μεταξίδης [Eleni Lazidou – Nikos Metaxidis], «Κένυα, Τανζανία, Ουγκάντα, Ρουάντα, Μπουτζουβή, Μαλάουι, Μοζαμβική, Ζίμπαμπουε, Ζάμπια» [Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ruanda, Borodin, Malaoui, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia], in Οι Έλληνες στη Διασπορά [Greeks in Diaspora], 15th -21st c., op. cit., 236-241; Θεοχάρης Προβατάκης
The Greek Communities of Central and West Africa

Meanwhile, the Greek presence in Central and West Africa has its beginning in the late 19th century. In West Africa, there were fewer Greeks in relation to Central Africa. They dealt mainly with the commerce of agricultural products (coffee, cocoa and banana) and businesses. There were significant Greek communities in Zaire (formerly Belgian Congo) and Cameroon. The Greek Orthodox churches were built in the major cities of Central Africa and in remote areas as well, so as to help the Orthodox mission in the countryside. Patriarch Meletios was particularly interested in the Greek Orthodox immigrants in West Africa.

The Greek Communities of South Africa

Finally, there was a significant Greek presence in South Africa. The first Greeks arrived in the country in the second half of the 19th century, mainly due to the discovery of gold and diamonds near Cape town. Many Greek immigrants entered the war along with the British Boers for the independence of the Transvaal and Free Land State. Greek communities were created in Cape Town, in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Port Elisabeth, East Rand, Durban and Rustenburg. The first areas of immigrants, most of which were sailors, were the coastal towns of Cape Town, Port Elisabeth and Durban. In 1898 “the Association of Mutual Help in Cape Town” was founded. It was one small Greek community that numbered around 100 people, who provided assistance to new immigrants and represented the Greeks to the local authorities. In 1902 the first Greek community was officially founded in South Africa. In 1904 the Greek community numbered around 1,000 members. In 1908 the Greek community of Johannesburg and its surroundings was established, in order to build Orthodox churches and schools, financed mostly by wealthy Greeks.

The establishment of the organization “Hellenismo”, in order to protect the Greek language and cultural heritage and the newly founded Greek communities, strengthened Hellenism in South Africa and was closely associated to the Orthodox Church, which was the rallying point of Greek immigrant. Besides, there was not a single Greek community without an Orthodox church, something which indicates the importance of religion for the Orthodox people. During the 1930s the number of the

[Theocharis Provatakis], Ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης Μελέτιος Μεταξάκης από ανέκδοτες επιστολές του [The Ecumenical Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis through his unpublished letters], op. cit., 29.
29 Νίκος Μεταξιδής [Nikos Metaxidis], «Κεντρική και Δυτική Αφρική» [Central and West Africa], in Οι Έλληνες στη Διασπορά [Greeks in Diaspora], 15th - 21st c., op. cit., 243-247.
Greek-Orthodox immigrants increased due to the Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922 which led to a wave of Greek refugees from Asia Minor to South Africa. The immigration restrictions which were put by the United States of America also increased migration towards South Africa. The Greeks of South Africa worked in the mines\textsuperscript{33}, railways\textsuperscript{34}, industries, occupied themselves with commerce and created their own catering business\textsuperscript{35}, while at the height of their prosperity reached the number of 120,000\textsuperscript{36}.

**Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis and the reorganization and the strengthening of the Patriarchate of Alexandria through the Greek Orthodox Communities of Africa**

Patriarch Meletios cared for the reorganization of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and showed great concern for the Greek Orthodox communities of Africa. During his patriarchy, Egypt was in political instability. He cared for the establishment of the Rules of the Patriarchate that defined its fundamental rights, the election of the Patriarch mainly by the Holy Synod and Patriarchate’s autonomy in relation to the Egyptian government. In this way, the question of the election of the Patriarch of Alexandria became an internal issue of the Patriarchate, and the risk of the intervention of the Egyptian government was removed. Greek Orthodox immigrants were unified by the Orthodox faith, and their number gradually grew and turned into an organized community. The initial aim of any of these communities was the establishment of a Greek-Orthodox church and of a school. The Orthodox Religion and the Greek language connected community members and distinguished them from other immigrant communities. The role of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa was substantial. Particularly in Egypt, the Ecumenical Patriarchate recognized the Greek-Orthodox communities as representatives of the Orthodox Christians in Egypt and corresponded with them during the election of the patriarchs of Alexandria\textsuperscript{37}.

Patriarch Meletios had realized the power of the Greek Orthodox communities and their significance for the Patriarchate of Alexandria. However, in


\textsuperscript{35} E.A. Mantzaris, “The Greeks in South Africa” in The Greek Diaspora in the Twentieth Century, Palgrave Macmillan, 1999,123: “[…] the vast majority of Greeks in and around 1920-1930 were occupied in the distribution and trade spheres as shop owners, fruiterers, café owners, general dealers e.t.c.”.

\textsuperscript{36} Benjamin Hendricx, Εριφύλη Θάνου [Erifili Thanou], Σταμάτιος Παυλής [Stamatis Pavlis], «Νοτιοφρικανική Ένωση» [South African Union], in Οι Έλληνες στη Διασπορά [Greeks in Diaspora], 15th.-21st. c., op. cit., 249-253; Βαγγέλης Μάντζαρης [Vangelis Mantzaris], Οι Έλληνες εργάτες στη Νότια Αφρική [The Greek workers in South Africa], op. cit.

\textsuperscript{37} Χρυσόστομος Παπαδόπουλος, Αρχιεπίσκοπος Αθηνών και πάσης Ελλάδος [Chrysostomos Papadopoulos, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece], Ιστορία της Εκκλησίας Αλεξανδρείας [The History of the Church of Alexandria] (62-1934), op. cit., 898-899: There were Greek – Egyptian communities, which divided into Greek and Syrian Orthodox communities. The first had usually Greek and the second Egyptian Citizenship.
his attempt to convert the Patriarchate of "all Egypt" to "All Africa" he had to take special care for all the Greek Orthodox communities throughout the African continent. Under these circumstances, he visited, in July 1931, the Greek–Orthodox communities in Benghani, in Tripoli, in Tunis, in Sfax, and in 1934 he visited the Sudan and Upper Egypt. At the same time, he visited the Sinai, while in Ethiopia he sent Nikolaos, Metropolitan of Axum, who had received Greek education, and was warmly welcomed by the emperor of Ethiopia. Moreover, apart from the Holy Metropolis of Hermoupolis based in Tanta, Egypt, he founded, for all Greek Orthodox communities in Africa, the Holy Metropolis of Ioannopolis based in Johannesburg, South Africa, and the Holy Metropolis of Carthagina based in Tunis, in Northern Africa.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa was closely tied to the Greek Orthodox communities and this can also be seen from what is stated in the press of the time, in 1930, at the inauguration of the church of St. George in Mount Reid, in South Africa by the Metropolitan of (Ioannopolis) Johannesburg, who was elected by himself the patriarch Meletios Metaxakis. According to the magazine Atlantis: "[...] According to the Greek customs and imposing was the ceremony of the inauguration of our holy church of Aghios Georgios in Mount Reid [...] in June 29, 1930. The beautiful ceremony led by the metropolitan [of Johannesburg] Isidore Georgiadis [...] The church was full of [...] Greeks of our community and many others, including [...] the Consul - General of Greece, for 25 years, Mr. Julious Tzipi, the mayor of our town [...] the leader of the Anglican Church Reverend Livy[?], many Orthodox priests and journalists [...]".

**Conclusion**

Summarizing, patriarch Meletios Metaxakis drew on the Greek Orthodox communities of Greek immigrants in Africa, in order to assert the title of the orthodox patriarch of the entire African continent (the autocephalous Saint Catherine’s Monastery in Sinai Peninsula, is also a part of Egyptian territory and is located in Asia). His full title is “His most Divine Beatitude the Pope and Patriarch of the Great City of Alexandria, Libya, Pentapolis, Ethiopia, all the land of Egypt, and all Africa, Father of Fathers, Shepherd of Shepherds, Prelate of Prelates, thirteenth of the Apostles, and Judge of the Ecumene". Among other things, Meletios established new bishoprics and initiated Orthodox missionary action, as he had realized that the future of the Patriarchate lay in the migration of the Greeks and the mission. Today, the reduction in the number of Greek-Orthodox people in Africa proves increasingly

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38 Χρυσόστομος Παπαδόπουλος, Αρχεπισκόπος Αθηνών και πάσης Ελλάδος Χρυσοστόμος Παπαδόπουλος [Archbishop of Athens and All Greece], Ιστορία της Εκκλησίας Αλεξανδρείας [The History of the Church of Alexandria] (62-1934), op. cit., 878, 900, 901.

39 Θρησκευτική και Ηθική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια [Religious and Moral Encyclopedia], vol. 8, op. cit., 66.


the necessity of the mission in order to continue the history of 2,000 years of the Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa.

The Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis (1871-1935)
[2 February 2015]