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Beyond departure: the Greek in Egypt, 1962-1976

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CHAPTER FOUR

Maintaining the *Koinotēta*: The EKA's Role and Agency as Seen Through the Management of Its Property

Introduction

Koinotētes, as the main form of institutional organization, were instrumental in establishing *Egyptians*' feelings of belonging. With the fundamental changes of the 1960s and the resulting departure of large numbers of *Egyptians* it was clear that the *koinotētes* did not sufficiently fill that role in the new context. Although it was clear that fundamental changes were necessary, ideas about what had to be changed and how changes should be implemented varied greatly. As such they underscored the multiple ways belonging was understood in a country that was changing in social, economic and political terms.

The *Egyptian Koinotēta* of Alexandria (EKA), like other institutional organizations in diaspora, was aware of its reputation and the power it could exercise. Diasporic institutions derive this power from the privilege they claim to represent their communities, politically and culturally.⁴⁸¹ However, the demographic shift in the early 1960s weakened the community's institutions, both in size and in terms of finances. Thus, the EKA had to deal with issues concerning institutional property, human resources, and its management, three aspects that would continue its presence in Alexandria. In addition, as noted in the introduction, the 'readjustment' some of the *Egyptian* members proposed for the EKA rested on the reevaluation of the latter's relation with the Greek government and the Greek Orthodox Church. By examining how the EKA handled its relations with other community actors, its real estates and agricultural properties, and what financial and moral support it received from

⁴⁸¹ Tölölyan, "Elites and Institutions," 112.

different parties, among them the Greek government, this chapter examines the EKA's agency and its role as the 'fashioner' of the nation. In so doing, it demonstrates that the EKA was granted an exceptional position by the Greek government, compared to other *Egyptiot koinotētes*, and it worked with and also pressured the latter to achieve its goals. This chapter argues that despite the community's demographic shrinkage, the EKA managed to renegotiate its place as both a local and diasporic institution in Egypt. It reconfigured its relations with the Greek Orthodox Church and the Greek state, and gained in power.

This chapter begins with a short overview of the institution. Then it explores the EKA's financial situation through its real estates and agricultural properties, and its relations with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the Greek state. It examines how the policies and approaches of the two presidents, Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar Sadat, towards the political economy of the state impacted the EKA and its institutional property. Last, it shows how the EKA maintained its activities and its political and social capital through the donations it received. Hence, this chapter demonstrates the EKA's several articulations of presence and power, which not only manifested in periods of economic blooming and growth, but also in periods of so-called decline.

4.1 The Alexandrian *Koinotēta* (EKA): An Overview

As mentioned in the introduction, the EKA, like the other thirty-four *koinotētes* established in Egypt, is a Greek institution that falls under Egyptian law as a charitable society. The EKA was politically tied to the Greek state due to its location (proximity to it and the importance of Alexandria as a Mediterranean port) and historic legacy. The Greek authorities were involved in the EKA's affairs, as they worked closely with the wealthy merchants that

established the *koinotēta*.⁴⁸² The Greek Orthodox Church tried to take control of the EKA too. However, the influential and wealthy merchants did not want to hand over its control to the patriarch, but tied their interests to the Greek state.⁴⁸³ Thus, since 1857 the EKA has come under the protection of the Greek consulate, and not of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, as was the case of the Cairo *koinotēta*.⁴⁸⁴ The Greek consul in Alexandria even has the honorary title of president of the EKA, together with the elected president.⁴⁸⁵ The Greek state therefore has an interest in interfering in the EKA's affairs and the ability to do so legally.

At first EKA's statutes were vague about who could belong to the *koinotēta*, in terms of their citizenship, as it was stated that all expatriate Greeks could be members. As it was very ambiguous who was considered Greek, in 1919 the EKA clarified that any Greek by descent (*to genos*) and not by citizenship could be a member of the *koinotēta*.⁴⁸⁶ Later in the 1960s, Greek citizenship became a condition for the members of the EKA. More specifically, the EKA's statutes stated that only Greek citizens who resided in Alexandria or in its suburbs and who were above 21 years old could be members. Membership was not restricted by religion or gender.⁴⁸⁷

Besides the category of 'member,' there was another category, namely 'affiliate' (*syndromētēs*). The difference between the two concerned their political rights towards the EKA. Members had full rights to elect and be elected after having been registered for 12 months and 24 months respectively in the EKA's list, and after paying the annual fee.⁴⁸⁸ The

⁴⁸² Kitroeff, *Greeks and the Making*, 39.

⁴⁸³ Ibid. Under the system of the Capitulations, the EKA relied for its political protection on the Greek consular authorities. Glavanis, "Aspects," 372.

⁴⁸⁴ At that time, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate was based in Cairo. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta tou Kairou*, 28.

⁴⁸⁵ Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 278.

⁴⁸⁶ The descent (*to genos*) was defined by the father, not the mother. It was also declared that women could be members with the right to vote, but they could not be elected. The *koinotēta*'s statute in 1932 declared that any Greek national could be a member, regardless of their gender. Ibid., 58-59.

⁴⁸⁷ One more condition was for the person to express 'good behavior' in order to become an EKA member. *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 2&3&17/1968, ELIA Archive, 4; 12.

⁴⁸⁸ *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 24/1968, ELIA Archive, 20.

affiliate did not have any of these rights.⁴⁸⁹ Both categories had to pay an annual fee to the EKA; this was at least 2 EGP⁴⁹⁰ for members and at least 1 EGP for affiliates.⁴⁹¹ Any *Egyptiot* could have access to the EKA's facilities and its activities, regardless of being a member/affiliate. However, an important reason for *Egyptiots* to sign up as members was that they were eligible to participate in the political processes of the EKA. Therefore, if they wanted to participate actively in the EKA's decisions, they had to contribute to it with an annual fee. It is important to note that not all *Egyptiots* were either a member or an affiliate of the EKA,⁴⁹² something that raises questions concerning its representational mandate.⁴⁹³ As Efthymios Souloyannis has stressed, the total number of members and affiliates of the EKA was always relatively small;⁴⁹⁴ it never reached more than 10-15% of the total of the *Egyptiot* population.⁴⁹⁵

In the following decades, however, despite the sharp decrease in size of the *Egyptiot* community, the numbers of EKA members did not drop considerably. By 1962, 916 of the c.12,000 *Egyptiots* present in Alexandria were either a member or a subscriber to the EKA,⁴⁹⁶ a number relatively high compared to the 1920s and 1930s, when the community was

⁴⁸⁹ Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 80-81.

⁴⁹⁰ The membership was 200 *grosia*, meaning 2 Egyptian pounds. Between 1963 and 1973, 1.0 EGP was equal to 2.3 USD. Once the war started in 1973, the EGP was devaluated (1 USD to 0.38 EGP). "Timeline: The Egyptian Pound Over the Last Five Decades," Egyptian pound, accessed February 04, 2022, <https://egyptianstreets.com/2016/11/03/timeline-the-egyptian-pound-over-the-last-five-decades/>

⁴⁹¹ *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁴⁹² Indeed, any *Egyptiot* could have access to its institutions and their activities, regardless of being a member/subscriber. However, as mentioned already, members were the only ones eligible for political participation in the EKA.

⁴⁹³ As noted in the introduction, among the 'readjustment' goals in the 1950s was for the EKA to be a less plutocratic and a more democratic institution that could represent not only the interests of the Alexandrian *Egyptiot* elite and the Greek state, but the rest of the *Egyptiots* living in Alexandria.

⁴⁹⁴ Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 81.

⁴⁹⁵ This is my estimation after examining the numbers of the *Egyptiot* community in Alexandria and the EKA members and affiliates between 1920 and 1980.

⁴⁹⁶ *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive. The Alexandrian community consisted of about 12,000 members in 1963 and 8,000 in 1967. *Apodēmoi Ellēnes-Greeks Abroad*, Greek National Center of Social Research on the issue of the Greeks Abroad, Ethnikon Kentron Koinōnikōn Ereunōn, Athina, 1972, 70.

larger.⁴⁹⁷ By 1965, the number had dropped to 361.⁴⁹⁸ Nevertheless, support for the institution by the *Egyptiot* community continued and was shown through payment of the annual fees, illustrating also in practice how much they wanted to maintain the EKA's existence and activities, when the institution (and they themselves) perhaps needed it the most.⁴⁹⁹

4.2 The EKA's Role as Seen Through the Management of its Real Estate

The departure of most *Egyptiot* inhabitants and the subsequent decrease in the EKA's membership; Egyptian socioeconomic policies, among them the nationalization of the commercial and industrial enterprises; and the Land Reform order that was issued in October 1963, raised questions around how the EKA should organize its activities and manage the financial asset and organization of all its properties.⁵⁰⁰ Even though the *Egyptiot* community lessened in size, the EKA still had the full control over its six churches,⁵⁰¹ the cemetery, the Benakeio soup kitchen, the Antoniadeio home for the elderly, the Benakeio orphanage, the

⁴⁹⁷ For example, in 1927, out of 35,106 Greek nationals, 395 were members. In 1932-33, members and affiliates together accounted for 3,136 persons. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 81.

⁴⁹⁸ *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁴⁹⁹ For instance, in 1991, the EKA consisted of 312 members and 7 affiliates, only a few members less in comparison to the numbers in 1965, mentioned above. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 81-84.

⁵⁰⁰ In addition, the EKA faced restrictions on its equity shares. See, here: *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵⁰¹ Most of the *Egyptiot koinotētes* built and maintained churches, administratively independently from the Patriarchate. The EKA's churches were the following: Evangelismos church, the church of Profitis Ilias, Agios (Saint) Georgios church (in the old Kaniskereion and the new Antoniadeios elderly house), the church of Agion Theodoron in the Kotsikeio hospital, the church of the Koimiseon Theotokou in the cemetery, and the chapel of Agia (Saint) Aikaterini in the Benakeio orphanage. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

Kotsikeio hospital, and the *koinotēta*'s twelve schools.⁵⁰² In addition, the EKA owned and received income (primarily from rents) from its real estates and agricultural properties.⁵⁰³

Through its affiliated institutions, the EKA, like other diasporic institutions, associations, and communal elites, has simultaneously worked towards philanthropic, political and cultural causes.⁵⁰⁴ For example, since its establishment, the EKA has focused on Greek education through its schools, cultural, religious and social activities through its associations and churches, and healthcare and wellbeing through its hospitals, orphanages and homes for elderly *Egyptiots* residing in Alexandria or its suburbs. Both the EKA and the Greek government wanted to continue the *Egyptiot* presence in Alexandria and the EKA's activities. In order to realize this and serve these causes, the EKA required resources, material and human, administrative organization and hierarchies, and voluntary support and participation from the community to maintain the *Egyptiot* presence and the ties between the latter and the homeland.⁵⁰⁵ Therefore, the EKA's goal in the 1960s and 1970s was to find the best solutions to manage its property, both the physical buildings and the activities that took place therein, as this would secure its presence in Egypt.

Even though the EKA owned a considerable amount of property, its financial situation was critical, as many of these affiliated institutions were in deficit, which burdened

⁵⁰² The schools were divided into four categories: nursery schools, primary schools, the schools for technical education and of secondary schools. The two nursery schools were those of Averofeio and Aristofroneio, and the three primary schools were those of Tositsaia-Zervoudakeios, Averofeio-Familiadeios, and Aristofroneios. The four schools for technical education were the school of fashion design (Scholē Amfieseōs), the day and night vocational schools, and the evening language tutorials. Last, the secondary education schools were the Averofeio gymnasium, the Salvageios Commercial school and the Averofeio girls' school (Anōtero Parthenagōgeio). The Averofeio gymnasium was divided in the third grade into two departments, of classical direction and of sciences. Many of these schools, as I discuss in the next chapter, suspended their activities in the late 1960s and early 1970s, due to either low attendance of students or financial difficulties.

⁵⁰³ If the *koinotēta* was dissolved, its property would pass to the *koinotēta* of Cairo, and if the latter was not active anymore, the property would pass to the Greek state, according to the agreement signed between Greece and Egypt in February 10, 1949. *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 52/1968, ELIA Archive, 40.

⁵⁰⁴ Khachig Tölölyan, "Elites and Institutions in the Armenian Transition," *Diaspora* 9/1 (2000), 107-136. 107.

⁵⁰⁵ Kitroeff, *Greeks and the Making*, 126.

the *koinotēta* financially. The expense of repairs and maintenance of some of its estates also added considerable costs for the EKA. In addition, its financial situation was worsened by several litigation cases the EKA faced.⁵⁰⁶ Indeed, the financial situation of the institution was of great concern to its financial team, as its deficit reached the amount of 62,777 EGP for the year of 1963.⁵⁰⁷ The EKA's debt to banks added another 52,740 EGP to this, with interest increasing annually.⁵⁰⁸

To relieve its financial burden, the EKA sold some of its properties and rented out others. Indeed, the EKA owned some profitable urban real estate in central areas of Alexandria, which it rented out as apartments, offices and shops.⁵⁰⁹ Other sources of income were the EKA's annual membership fees, students' tuition fees from its schools, donations via its several charitable institutions, and income from the events the EKA or its affiliated institutions organized (for example the proceeds from lotteries). The EKA was also greatly supported by donations from individuals and associations, and most importantly from the Greek government.⁵¹⁰ Another source of income came from properties it received from other *Egyptiot koinotētes* and dissolved fraternities and associations that suspended their activities.

⁵⁰⁶ Until February 24th 1973, the EKA had 33 open legal cases. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, February 26, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 6.

⁵⁰⁷ The amount of the total deficit was calculated after the subsidies the EKA received from several bodies, among them the Greek Government. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵⁰⁸ From the total amount, 48,768 EGP were owed to the National Bank, and another 3,972 EGP to the Bank of Commerce. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵⁰⁹ *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵¹⁰ *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 7/1968, ELIA Archive, 6-7. Those who donated to the EKA and its institutions had a special place and reference in their statute and annual reports. The donors and benefactors were reported always in the first pages of the annual reports, under the names: 'great benefactors,' 'benefactors,' 'great donors,' and 'donors.' See for example, *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive. The minimum donation for one to be considered a donor was 100EGP, and at least 500 EGP for a great donor. For the benefactors, the amount of donation was much higher, as they had to donate above 3,000 EGP. For one to be granted the title of the great benefactor, the amount was above 10,000 EGP. *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 19/1968, ELIA Archive, 14. This amount of money remained the same in the period under study, namely until 1976. Some of those people had donated in the past, but their names were still registered, like Georgios Averof, who was one of the EKA's 'great benefactors.' It was not clear from the annual reports whether *Egyptiots* who had already departed continued to support the institution. The annual reports did not differentiate the donors between those who departed and those who were still present.

These resources allowed the EKA to increase in power in the 1960s. Despite the community's shrinkage, in size and finances, the properties the EKA received and the donations, especially from the Greek government, empowered the EKA's political capital and reaffirmed its agency and autonomy. Therefore, as I explore below, the EKA, as both a local and diasporic institution, continued, in many ways independently from the Greek government, to be responsible for 'maintaining the nation.'

The EKA's Legal Cases

In the 1960s and 1970s, however, the EKA had to deal with two major legal cases that financially burdened the institution and intensified the need to liquidate some of its property. The first case was with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate over the property rights of the Palaio Nosokopeio (Old Hospital), and the second was a legal dispute the EKA had with the Egyptian state, specifically, with the Egyptian government's General Social Insurance Agency over the amount of money it had to pay to the latter for its legal contributions.

Conflicts around the EKA's property were not new. Almost from the beginning of its establishment, in 1863, and due to the fact that its property was quite valuable, conflicts arose between the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the Greek consulate in Alexandria over who was to supervise the EKA and control its property.⁵¹¹ The legal case between the EKA and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate started in 1940, when the Patriarch of Alexandria, Christoforos, asked to receive part of the revenues the EKA received by renting out the Palaio Nosokomeio (Old Hospital).⁵¹² According to the Patriarch, the Patriarchate was partly entitled to this rent, since part of the hospital's plot belonged to the it. Indeed, the Palaio Nosokomeio was a

⁵¹¹ The end of this conflict demarcated the victory of the secular authorities, namely the Consulate, over the ecclesiastical ones. The Patriarchate recognized the EKA's autonomy in 1863. Glavanis, "Aspects," 369-370.

⁵¹² Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 274.

profitable estate that could bring in a considerable income for either of them.⁵¹³ Once the EKA's president, Michael Salvagos, rejected the Patriarch's request, the case went to the court.⁵¹⁴

The legal case lasted for more than twenty years. It financially burdened both parties and caused tensions among the *Egyptiot* members, since two of the community's main actors were in conflict. In 1962, the court rejected the ownership rights that the Patriarchate asserted over the Palαιο Nosokomeio.⁵¹⁵ Two years later, in 1964, the legal dispute between the EKA and the Patriarchate ended, with the EKA winning the case.⁵¹⁶ As the 1964 EKA's annual report stated, this was the first time in more than twenty years that the two parties had no disputes.⁵¹⁷ It further stated that both parties jointly decided to end this legal dispute for the community's benefits, especially as its numbers were decreasing.⁵¹⁸ The end of this legal case was particularly important, as it not only ended the dispute over the EKA's property, but it showed both parties' willingness to respect each other's sovereignty and not continue to compete with one another. As Souloyannis noted, the main source of their conflict for over a century was the tendency of both to interfere in each other's matters.⁵¹⁹ By deciding to end this conflict, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the EKA decided to keep their matters separate, and divide their political power and control over the *Egyptiot* community. The reconciliation in the relationship between the EKA and the Patriarchate achieved one of the

⁵¹³ For instance, in the financial report of 1971, the *koinotēta* had as a total income 27,021 EGP. 13,679 EGP of this amount, about half of it, coming from the Palαιο Nosokomeio. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 21, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētās* Alexandreias, 4.

⁵¹⁴ Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 274.

⁵¹⁵ Since November 24, 1962 the case was at the stage of appeal at the trial court. *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 20.

⁵¹⁶ *Logodosia Etous 1964*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 13.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵¹⁹ Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 271.

community's main 'readjustment' goals of the 1950s,⁵²⁰ something that could strengthen further the ties between the *Egyptiots*, their community actors, and Egyptian society.

Indeed, these two important community actors kept their promises and respected each other's autonomy, as is clear from their correspondence and communication in the ensuing years. See for example, the lunch that some of the EKA's representatives gave for the new clerical staff of the Patriarchate at the Yacht Club (*Nautikos Omilos*) in November 1971.⁵²¹ Similarly, in May 1973 the EKA president, Kostas Sandis, invited the Patriarch to visit the EKA's schools in order to be better informed on their issues and progress.⁵²² These two examples, among others, indicate that relations had stabilized and improved and that both actors were sincere in putting an end to their conflicts after the close of the legal case, prioritizing the community's benefits, as they claimed to do, and respecting each other's autonomy.

On the other hand, the EKA's legal dispute with the Egyptian government's General Social Insurance Agency started in 1964, lasting for several years, and also burdened the institution. Since 1948, the EKA had managed the social insurance of its employees, under its affiliated institution, the Pension and Welfare Staff Fund (*Tameio Syntaxeōn kai Pronoias Prosōpikou*).⁵²³ The Egyptian government's new Decree 63/1964, enacted on April 1, 1964 and concerning the social insurance of the country's labor force, obliged all employees and employers to be registered in the General Social Insurance Agency, whereby the Egyptian state would have centralized control of these labor activities.⁵²⁴ Consequently, the EKA had to limit its activities to providing only the pensions to its own employees. In addition, one of the

⁵²⁰ Gorman, "The Failures of Readjustment," 51-52.

⁵²¹ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, November 22, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 6.

⁵²² *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, May 9, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 12.

⁵²³ *Logodosia Etous 1964*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 18.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*

conditions the Agency enforced was that the EKA should pay the former the amount of all legal contributions since April 1, 1956, with interest and in installments.⁵²⁵

The dispute between the agency and the EKA was over the amount of money the latter had to pay in retroactive legal contributions. The EKA calculated the amount at 100,000 EGP, but according to the Egyptian governmental agency, it amounted to 250,000 EGP. The EKA started a legal case against the agency in an attempt to solve this issue and have a “fairer estimation of the money it had to compensate,” as it claimed in its annual report.⁵²⁶ The dispute was still ongoing by the 1970s when the court ruled in favor of the Egyptian government.⁵²⁷ The EKA was ordered to pay an amount far higher than it had originally estimated. This legal dispute and judgement added an additional burden to the EKA’s already critical financial situation and increased the need to liquidate some of its property.

The Deficits and Maintenance of the EKA’s Affiliated Institutions

The EKA’s financial situation was further burdened by its affiliated institutions that were in deficit, and by the expenses it had to pay for the repairs and maintenance of some of its buildings.⁵²⁸ For example, the thorough renovation of the Benakeion Orphanage was the biggest cost on the estate of the EKA for the year 1965, as its expenses reached 2,816 EGP.⁵²⁹ Together with costs coming from its other buildings, such as painting the doors of the

⁵²⁵ *Logodosia Etous 1964*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 18.

⁵²⁶ The EKA was concerned about the compensations of those employees who had left the institution and had to be reimbursed by it, as this open legal case was delaying their compensations. *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵²⁷ This is confirmed by the fact that the EKA had already paid a much larger amount for its financial duties, compared to what it claimed it had to. Specifically, until the period of March 31, 1964, the EKA had paid 156,524 EGP to the General Social Insurance Agency. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, May 29, 1972, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētās Alexandreias, 9. The General Social Insurance Agency continued to receive money from the EKA in the following years. Indeed, until May 31, 1973, the EKA had paid approximately 157,380 EGP to the agency. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, June 21, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētās Alexandreias, 21.

⁵²⁸ For example, in the year of 1963, the EKA spent 2,099 EGP for the maintenance of its urban estates. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵²⁹ *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 28-29.

Salvageios commercial school, the EKA spent almost 5,000 EGP maintaining its properties that year.⁵³⁰

In contrast to its other institutions, whose capacity and activities started to decrease after the *Egyptiots'* departure, the Antoniadeios home for the elderly demanded an increase, as it had to host more *Egyptiots* compared to previous years.⁵³¹ Its increasing activities highlighted the aging of the community, as many of the *Egyptiots* who remained in Alexandria were from the older generations. The Antoniadeios home for the elderly was located in the Kaniskereio building, and since its establishment in 1915, it had hosted about 1,500 *Egyptiots*, both destitute and not.⁵³² Due to the increase in the number of residents, the home needed more beds and rooms, something that impacted the EKA's expenses in 1965.⁵³³

In addition, at the beginning of the 1960s, most of the EKA's affiliated institutions were in deficit, as their expenses were more than their annual income.⁵³⁴ The Benakeio soup kitchen, the Benakeio orphanage, the Antoniadeio home for the elderly and the schools all operated without profit.⁵³⁵ Schools ran the highest deficits, surpassing the total shortfall of the other three institutions. The school deficit was of great concern for the EKA. However, with help coming from the Greek government, the EKA managed to decrease its shortfalls and maintain the schools' activities.

⁵³⁰ *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 28-29.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁵³² By 1965, it hosted 143 *Egyptiots*, with 35 of them having been admitted recently. *Ibid.*

⁵³³ For example, in 1964 the EKA's expenses for the maintenance of the Antoniadeios home for the elderly was 6,324 EGP, which increased to 7,783 EGP in 1965. Thus, the deficits of the institution also increased for 1965 to 3,862 EGP from 1,996 EGP in 1964. *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵³⁴ This was not a new phenomenon that occurred in the 1960s. Prior to this decade, many of the EKA's affiliated institutions were in deficit. However, as the community shrunk and its income decreased, the deficits increased, so did the EKA's concerns for its properties. In 1963, only the six churches and the cemeteries that belonged to the EKA did not face any deficits. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*

The Greek government was very much invested in preserving the quality of the EKA's schools, supporting the institution and through it maintaining the presence of the *Egyptiot* community in Alexandria. Thus, in 1963, the EKA received the amount of 17,000 EGP from the Greek government to cover the needs of its schools,⁵³⁶ and 14,705 EGP in 1964.⁵³⁷ From 1965 until 1976, the amount of the aid increased. Indeed, after the aid the EKA received in 1963, the deficit of the schools dropped to 10,118 EGP, almost half compared to the previous year, when it was 19,954 EGP.⁵³⁸ The Greek government continued to provide financial support to the EKA in the 1970s, stressing in this way how important the institution was for preserving Greek education in Alexandria. The EKA also thought this was of crucial importance; it took up this challenge and reiterated its commitment to this cause.

The Greek government maintained an active financial policy to preserve a Greek identity amongst the *Egyptiots* of Alexandria, ascribing the EKA a crucial role therein. The EKA's commitment to this goal, through education and other activities, was evident. It was clearly expressed at a meeting held on 7th December 1973, attended by the Greek ambassador, Antonis Korantis. At this meeting, the EKA's president, Kostas Sandis, confirmed the generous aid provided by the Greek government to the institution, and declared to the ambassador that the EKA's schools would continue educating the community according to Greek values. In addition, the EKA's role was to provide a 'family atmosphere' (*oikogeneiakē atmospherā*) and 'character shaping' through its institutions, values mentioned often in its many reports.⁵³⁹ Sandis thus compared the activities and dedication of the EKA

⁵³⁶ *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 16.

⁵³⁷ *Logodosia Etous 1964*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 18.

⁵³⁸ The total deficit of that year dropped to 62,777 EGP due to the aid received from the Greek government and other subsidies given to the EKA. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 60-61.

⁵³⁹ *Tositsaia kai Averofeios: Ekthesis Pepragmenōn Scholikou Etous 1963-1964*, June 17, 1964, File: Allēlografia (Correspondence), 1964, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētās Alexandreias, paragraph 6.

with other Greek *koinotētes* abroad, which had not kept alive the ‘Greekness’ of their communities, as the Alexandrian *koinotēta* did, according to Sandis. He stated:

The Alexandrian *koinotēta* feels very responsible and indebted to continue its duty towards its schools. It has acquired a significant heritage from its predecessors due to their altruism and patriotism, and also, due to the generous aid by our national center (*Ethniko Kentro*). We are pleased and proud because as *Egyptiots* we preserve our nationalism and Greekness, due to our schools and their structure, in contrast to other communities abroad. In addition, those *Egyptiots* who departed to other farther places, they continued to transmit the Greek Spirit.⁵⁴⁰

The ‘Greekness’ Sandis mentioned entailed the preservation of the Greek language, that the Alexandrian *Egyptiots* proudly maintained through their schools, and the loyalty and feelings of belonging to the Greek nation and state. Sandis emphasized that these elements were not limited to those who remained in Alexandria, but that they crossed the Egyptian borders with those who had departed. Thus, wherever these Alexandrian *Egyptiots* were, they carried within them the ‘Greek spirit,’ meaning the Greek language and education, morals, and the feeling of belonging to the Greek nation that they had acquired in Alexandria, and they thus transmitted all these elements to their new homes. The EKA, as the diasporic institution responsible for the *Egyptiot* community, through the financial and moral support it received from the Greek government, was tasked with maintaining the nation at the behest of the Greek government. The EKA was responsible for its fashioning; and yet because it was given ownership by the Greek government to do this, it was the ‘fashioner’ of the nation.⁵⁴¹

The financial aid from the Greek government to the EKA’s schools was undeniably a great support to it, and, as I explore below, this support was not limited to its schools but

⁵⁴⁰ *Praktika Synedriasis Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 7, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias.

⁵⁴¹ Similarly, Sossie Kasbarian demonstrates how the Armenian community in Cyprus has an active social and cultural identity, and has exercised autonomy in social and cultural matters, impacting visions of the nation. Sossie Kasbarian, “Between Nationalist Absorption and Subsumption: Reflecting on the Armenian Cypriot Experience,” in *Cypriot Nationalisms in Context*, ed. Thekla Kyritsi and Nikos Christofis (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

expanded for the institution's overall management, something that helped it maintain its activities and capital. Nevertheless, this support alone could not cover all the expenses and debts the EKA had amassed over the previous two decades. Hence, two main solutions were suggested by the EKA's representatives: the use of the revenues from renting out some of its profitable estates, and the sale of some of its property.⁵⁴²

The EKA's Resources: The Sales and Rents of Its Profitable Estates

The EKA owned several profitable urban sites that were located in central areas of Alexandria, where their value was considerable, such as in the Attarine district, specifically near the Attarine Mosque, on Archiepiscopi Street, and on Sidi Metwaly, like the Dimitriou estate.⁵⁴³ The EKA's income came from renting these properties as apartments, offices and shops.⁵⁴⁴ Even though its income decreased from 1965 onwards, due to the introduction of a new decree that decreased rent collection by 20%,⁵⁴⁵ the EKA continued to receive a notable sum from the rents of its profitable urban properties in the early 1970s.⁵⁴⁶ Thus, its income coming from those properties was calculated in 1971 to be 27,021 EGP.⁵⁴⁷ Despite the fact that the EKA sold some of its estates in the 1960s, as I show below, until the early 1970s, it still had under its ownership some very profitable estates that brought significant revenues to

⁵⁴² *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵⁴³ In addition, in the early 1960s, the EKA had under its ownership the Familiadeios property on the street of Ebn Khatab, the estate of George Napier on Dr Aly Ramez Street, the estate of the Palaion Nosokomeio (Old Hospital) on Khoreya Boulevard, the estate of Gianaklis and Ramliou, and the estate of the Fleming district, on Ahmet Pasha Turk Street, Eleni Chandrinou's donation. The EKA's income from these properties was calculated to be 19,236 EGP for the year 1963. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁵ For example, there was a decrease of 3,470 EGP in rental income for 1965. *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 30.

⁵⁴⁶ For instance, until the autumn of 1971, the EKA had 321 renters in total. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 21, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētās *Alexandreias*, 14.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

the institution. Amongst these the Palaio Nosokomeio was its most profitable estate,⁵⁴⁸ followed by the Archiepiskopi estate.⁵⁴⁹

Next to renting out some of its properties and using the revenues to cover its expenses, the EKA found selling the most effective solution. In most cases, the EKA's properties were bought by either Egyptian or by other Greek institutions, as their size could cover their costs and administrative activities.⁵⁵⁰ The first property the EKA considered selling in 1963, in order to ease its financial problems, was the Kotsikeio hospital.⁵⁵¹ The Kotsikeio hospital belonged to the Greek state, but the EKA had full management of it. The hospital was built on land that was ceded by the Egyptian government to the EKA in 1931/1932 at half of the actual value.⁵⁵² Theocharis Kotsikas, one of the great benefactors of the EKA,⁵⁵³ together with his wife, Angeliki, donated a significant sum of money to the EKA to build the hospital and it was inaugurated in 1938 for the use of the Alexandrian community.⁵⁵⁴

As stated in the annual report for 1963, the departure of most of the *Egyptiot* inhabitants and the financial situation of the EKA made the maintenance of such a building difficult.⁵⁵⁵ In addition, many doctors and medical staff had left Egypt, leaving the hospital short staffed. By selling this property, the institution would no longer have to pay the

⁵⁴⁸ The Palaio Nosokomeio (old hospital), was by itself bringing in about half of the total income the EKA received in 1971 from its urban estates. This was calculated to 13,679 EGP out of 27,021 EGP of the total income. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 21, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 4.

⁵⁴⁹ The rent from the Archiepiskopi estate was 6,422 EGP for 1971, and 6,439 EGP for 1972. Some other profitable estates were: the Kypriadou estate, the Flefing, the Mosque Attarin, the Koromili (el-Fosha) and the Eleutheriadou (Aba Younes) estates, the estate of George Napier on Dr Aly Ramez Street, the estate in Asyut, and last the Kypriadi estate. The EKA seemed to have sold the Kypriadi estate later on that year, and thus, its total income for 1972 decreased to 26,545 EGP, a bit less compared to the 1971 income. Nevertheless, the income from its other estates remained stable. *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁰ See, for example: *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 56.

⁵⁵¹ *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 55.

⁵⁵² Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 99.

⁵⁵³ The name 'great benefactor' (*megalos euergetēs*) was given to Kotsikas by the EKA and stated as such in the report. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 55.

⁵⁵⁴ Kitroeff, *Greeks and the Making*, 127.

⁵⁵⁵ *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 55-59.

municipality taxes,⁵⁵⁶ which were an extra financial burden.⁵⁵⁷ Therefore, the best solution was identified as the sale of this estate, as it was no longer profitable or beneficial for the EKA.⁵⁵⁸

After several and long-lasting negotiations, the EKA decided to sell the hospital to the Egyptian Ministry of Scientific Research, after both the Greek and Egyptian governments reached a mutual agreement.⁵⁵⁹ On September 17, 1964, the EKA ceased all supervision of the Kotsikeio hospital.⁵⁶⁰ A pre-agreement was arranged in June of 1965,⁵⁶¹ and the final contract signed in 1967, when the hospital was sold for 300,000 EGP to the ministry.⁵⁶² The EKA's deficit in 1964 dropped to 51,070 EGP, less than in the previous years,⁵⁶³ due to the resulting cut in the EKA's expenses.

The 1964 EKA annual report made special reference to the sale of the hospital. It highlighted its importance for the EKA and the *Egyptiot* community, as it had provided important healthcare to the community, and underlined the emotional cost its sale had for the EKA's personnel.⁵⁶⁴ That section of the report described all the activities the hospital undertook in its 25 years of life, treating around 5.400 patients annually, and thus a total of 134.600 patients over the years. The role of the hospital during WWII was especially praised.

⁵⁵⁶ All charitable associations were exempted from the municipality fees. Since the Kotsikeio Hospital did not belong to the EKA, but to the Greek state, it could not be exempted. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 306. In addition, as Kitroeff underlined, the EKA (and not the Greek government) undertook the administrative costs of the building. Kitroeff, *Greeks and the Making*, 128.

⁵⁵⁷ *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 15.

⁵⁵⁸ According to Souloyannis, another reason the EKA sold the hospital was the legal restrictions it first faced after 1964, when decree 32/1964 was issued with regards to private law associations in Egypt. According to this decree, private associations, like the EKA, were not allowed to provide hospital and medical care. Thus, all hospital units owned by private associations were taken in September 1964 by the Egyptian Ministry of Health. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 231-232; 244-245.

⁵⁵⁹ The Greek government was involved in the negotiations, as it owned the hospital. In addition, in these negotiations, the future access of *Egyptiots* to the hospital was unsure. Indeed, it was still vague whether destitute *Egyptiots* would have medical and hospital coverage, as in the past. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 56.

⁵⁶⁰ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, October 19, 1964, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias.

⁵⁶¹ *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁵⁶² Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 233.

⁵⁶³ The deficit of the hospital had reached 33,717 EGP, about half of the total EKA deficit for 1963. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 55-59; 60-61.

⁵⁶⁴ *Logodosia Etous 1964*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 53.

Indeed, the report dedicated several paragraphs to the Kotsikeio's help to the patients of the Greek and Allied armed forces hospitalized there between July 1941 and October 1944. The report concluded by referring to the "melancholy" that "would always surround the memory of the hospital," and ended by stating that: "Kostikeio no longer exists. IT EXISTED."⁵⁶⁵

As has been demonstrated in a previous chapter, through the *Egyptiots'* oral accounts, property entails more than the material sense of belonging. The sale of the hospital was seen as a loss by the EKA's personnel. The capitalization of the last sentence in the EKA report added a dramatic tone to how the EKA's representatives perceived and articulated this sale. Besides the administrative time and effort that these properties demanded from the EKA's representatives, it seemed that the emotional cost was equally high. Loss is a phenomenon that embodies memory,⁵⁶⁶ and as such, it engendered mourning for a past that was lost, besides the actual and material loss of belonging.⁵⁶⁷

Despite the fact that the EKA had a relationship of responsibility, given that it governed this property, the *Egyptiot* community had also rights vis-à-vis the hospital. They could access the hospital and use its spaces. Therefore, certain powers and rights were bestowed upon both the EKA and the *Egyptiots*, demarcating a collective ownership of the hospital and other community properties that remained or were sold in the following years.⁵⁶⁸

⁵⁶⁵ *Logodosia Etous 1964*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 55.

⁵⁶⁶ Aris Anagnostopoulos, "Varieties of Nothingness: Absence, Materialism and Ontology in Two Greek cases," in *Social matter(s): anthropological approaches to materiality*, ed. Tryfon Bampilis and Pieter ter Keurs (Zurich: Lit, 2014), 67.

⁵⁶⁷ Diana Mines and Brad Weiss suggest that material objects constitute more than representations of the past. Rather, they impact one's relation to the past. Diana Mines and Brad Weiss, "Materialisations of Memory: The Substance of Remembering and Forgetting: Introduction," *Anthropological Quarterly*, 70/4 (1997): 161-163, 161. On the material presence of the past, see also: Domanska, "The Material Presence of the Past," 337-348.

⁵⁶⁸ Davina Cooper notes that there is an institutional recognition in establishing collective property. Cooper, "Opening Up Ownership," 24. The mourning of the sale of the Kotsikeio hospital and the loss accompanying it underscored the loss of this recognition.

The sale, and subsequent loss, of such property projected the loss of a particular past that the EKA was mourning through the expropriation of some of its properties.⁵⁶⁹

The EKA sold several other estates during the 1960s, something that demonstrated its need to liquidate its property and use the revenues to cover its many expenses. Among others, it sold the Nebi Daniel real estate to Bank Misr, an Egyptian financial institution; this site had been donated to the EKA by an *Egyptiot* named Petridis, and was bought for 16,000 EGP.⁵⁷⁰ Three other properties based in Alexandria were sold in 1963, including the Averofeio primary school (*Aberōfeios Dēmotikē Scholē*),⁵⁷¹ which was sold to the Greek state for 45,000 EGP.⁵⁷²

The sale of some of the EKA's properties impacted individuals who used these institutions. Indeed, the sale of schools, like the Averofeio primary school (*Aberōfeios Dēmotikē Scholē*) and the Aristofroneios primary school, raised questions about management and human resources. Due to the sales of the schools, students and teaching staff had to constantly relocate from one place to another within Alexandria. For example, once the Averofeio school was sold, the students were transferred to the Tositsaia primary school.⁵⁷³

⁵⁶⁹ Aris Anagnostopoulos addressed absence as a historical product, and made an important distinction between lack and loss. Loss is a phenomenon that looks towards the past, but lack is fueled with expectations, looking towards the future. Anagnostopoulos, "Varieties of Nothingness," 67.

⁵⁷⁰ *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 22.

⁵⁷¹ The Averofeio school was funded by Georgios Averoff, an *Egyptiot* of Vlach origin, and opened during the 1890-1891 academic year. First, it started to operate as a girls' school (*Parthenagōgeio*), but later in the years it became a mixed school. Georgios Averoff was one of the EKA's presidents from 1885 to 1899. "Georgios Averoff," Ellēnikē Koinotita Alexandreias, Istoría, accessed February 03, 2022, <https://ekalexandria.org/el>. Averoff was the richest *Egyptiot* in Egypt. Kitroeff, *Greeks and the Making*, 69.

⁵⁷² The other two were the Gianakli house, donated by Charitonos; and the Dimitriou estate. Together these properties were sold for 5,375 EGP. The sale of the three properties was mentioned in the annual report of 1963. However, their official contracts were signed in 1964, so their revenues were calculated in the financial report of that year. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 14-15. In 1965, the EKA also sold the shops on the façade of the Familiadeios School for 11,250 EGP. *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 16. Its final contract was signed in 1970. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 159.

⁵⁷³ The primary schools of Aristofroneios and Tositsaia were still operating for the students of the community. The School of Dressmaking and Fashion Design (Scholē Amfieseōs) that was housed in the building of the Averofeio school was relocated to the Tositsaia school building, after the sale of the Averofeio school. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

The Tositsaia School building also took in the students of the Aristofroneios primary school,⁵⁷⁴ which was sold to a Coptic Orthodox charitable association for 18,000 EGP a year later, in 1964.⁵⁷⁵ The Tositsaia School took on all the students from the remaining nursery and primary schools of the EKA, between 1965 and 1967.⁵⁷⁶ Once the Tositsaia school was sold in 1968,⁵⁷⁷ the students and the teaching staff had to relocate again within Alexandria, this time to the Pratsikeios primary school building of the Ibrahimia *koinotēta*. Finally, in 1973, the EKA took on the nursery and primary schools that were hosted at the Pratsikeios building under the name of the ‘Tositsaia-Pratsikeios primary schools,’ after the merging of the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* with the Alexandrian one.⁵⁷⁸

Next to the management of schools and the relocation of the students and teaching staff, the continuation of religious institutions also became a matter of concern for the EKA. The departure of the *Egyptiots* brought certain concerns and costs with regards to the lack of personnel for the EKA’s religious institutions, the extent to which they could continue their activities, and who could operate them. For instance, Alexandrian churches became understaffed, as there was a lack of clergy to lead congregations. In fact, the annual report of 1965 stated that the churches not only lacked the priests to provide services, but also supporting staff, including deacons and choirs, another element that highlighted the consequences of the *Egyptiots*’ departure.⁵⁷⁹

With regards to the empty churches of those *Egyptiot* communities outside Alexandria that were no longer active, the EKA found in the Coptic Church the most suitable candidate to negotiate and take over its religious properties. For example, when the Archangel Michael

⁵⁷⁴ Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 158.

⁵⁷⁵ *Logodosia Etous 1964*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 17.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷ The school was sold to the Greek state for 60,000 EGP. The final contract was signed in 1969. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 158-159.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid., 159.

⁵⁷⁹ *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 20.

Greek Orthodox Church in Damanhur, in the Delta region, stopped its services due to declining numbers, the Coptic Orthodox church, which was very active in Damanhur, took over the church and the Coptic metropolitan bishop of Beheira, Garbia and Kafr el-Zayat, Isaak, resumed its operations.⁵⁸⁰ Besides allowing the Coptic Church to operate some of the empty EKA churches, the EKA also sold some of its religious property to the Copts, such as its plot in Asyut that included the Saint Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church.⁵⁸¹ The two parties agreed on the amount of 7,100 EGP, with the conditions that the Coptic church would not obtain any of the church's belongings, such as icons, and would allow the Greek Orthodox members to run their own services on some days during the year, and that the Copts would maintain the Greek Orthodox cemetery next to the church.⁵⁸²

However, the Administration of Social Affairs of the Governorate of Alexandria claimed that according to article 19 of Decree 32/1964 the EKA could not assign its properties to other parties, but could only keep and manage its properties for its own use.⁵⁸³ In order to solve the situation and grant its properties to the Coptic church, the EKA chair, Kostas Sandis, suggested that they charge a symbolic rent to the Coptic church. With this move, the church would not be under the ownership of the Coptic church, so the latter could use the Saint Spyridon church without being restricted by the decree. In this way, the EKA managed to come to terms with both the Alexandrian authorities and the Coptic church, and to find a solution for its property.

As has been demonstrated so far, the EKA, by renting and selling some of its property, on the one hand eased the financial burdens caused by the maintenance costs, fees,

⁵⁸⁰ Georgios Abdel Messih, Zaki Aouad and Aoudallah Samman to Anastasios Theodorakis, November 29, 1966, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias.

⁵⁸¹ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, July 27, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias, 10-11.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*

and deficits that the organizations located in the properties were running, while on the other hand raising income to finance its continuing activities. Alongside these solutions, the EKA relied on donations by individuals, associations and the Greek government that continued to come in in the 1960s and 1970s. Even though the number of private donations decreased compared to previous years, the EKA still received a significant amount of money from different parties, which allowed the institution to maintain its activities.

The Role of the EKA's Donations

The EKA had a long history of receiving financial aid or material support, including properties, from individuals, other *koinotētes*, fraternities and associations, and from the Greek government. As I explore below, these three main categories of donors not only enabled the EKA to continue its activities and cover the expenses of its affiliated institutions, but also allowed it to maintain and even increase its political and social capital. Through these donations, the EKA grew in responsibility and power. It was aware of its reputation as a diasporic institution and used these donations to maintain its autonomy, despite the community's decrease. Hence, in a numerically shrinking community, the role and position of the EKA actually increased for the community and the Greek government, and as a result of other community representatives disappearing and passing their responsibilities, members and properties on to the EKA.

Firstly, with regards to the donations by individuals, the *Egyptiots* who donated to the institution received a special title, either benefactor or donor, depending on the amount of money they donated.⁵⁸⁴ For example, when Kostas Sandis, the EKA's president from 1973

⁵⁸⁴ I gave a detailed explanation of these titles in a footnote earlier in this chapter. There are plenty of such examples. For instance, the Kotsikeio hospital took its name after Kotsikas' donations, and the Salvageios commercial school after the Salvagos' donations. Several authors have stressed the role of benefactors in

onwards, suggested that education in the EKA's schools should be free, he donated 500 EGP to the schools in order to support his decision.⁵⁸⁵ Sandis' initiative to introduce free education and the significant amount of money he donated to the schools entitled him to the position of 'great donor,' a decision all the representatives of the EKA agreed on.⁵⁸⁶ From 1973 onwards, Sandis featured on the list of benefactors and donors and was specially referred to in the annual reports of the EKA, as someone who supported the institution. By giving a special place to donors and benefactors, the EKA created and emphasized the social status and posthumous fame of these *Egyptians*.⁵⁸⁷ Even when the community shrank, the donations and references to them carried on as permanent mentions in the EKA's statutes, highlighting the continuity of support to the institution.⁵⁸⁸

As well as financial support, the EKA also received donations of various kinds that served the needs of the institution. These donations could be clothes, such as when the Caritas company offered four boxes of garments to the EKA,⁵⁸⁹ or when some women from the *Egyptian* community offered clothes to the girls of the Benakeio orphanage.⁵⁹⁰ They could

supporting the community and developing projects for the community's institutions. For example, Matoula Tomara-Sideris examined the donations by the Greek merchants and cotton producers from the mid-19th century until the first quarter of the 20th century to the Greek communities in Egypt. These donations, among others, covered the building of schools, hospitals, and elderly care homes. Tomara-Sideris' work highlighted the social and national consciousness these benefactors developed, alongside their economic contribution to the community. On this point see: Tomara-Sideris, *Oi Ellēnes tou Kairou*. In addition, Efthymios Souloyannis also dedicated a section in his book to the role of the benefactors of the Alexandrian community. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*.

⁵⁸⁵ Once Kostas Sandis offered this amount to the schools, the other representatives of the EKA, including the vice president and the general secretary, followed with their own donations, albeit on a smaller scale. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, September 4, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 2.

⁵⁸⁶ The rest of the EKA's representatives that donated a smaller amount were named 'donors.' *Ibid.*, 10.

⁵⁸⁷ It was a common practice among institutions (religious or not) in the Middle East to honor donors and emphasize their posthumous fame. See, for example the mosaics of donors in synagogues. Bracha Yaniv, *Ceremonial Synagogue Textiles*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2019).

⁵⁸⁸ Next to the annual reports, benefactors and donors were mentioned in some of the EKA's meeting minutes. See for example the donations to the Antoniadeio hospital and the students' awards made by several *Egyptians*, which were mentioned in the meeting minutes: *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, June 11, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 22.

⁵⁸⁹ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 20, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 15.

⁵⁹⁰ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, October 26, 1972, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 5.

also be different types of donations for specific celebrations like Christmas or Easter,⁵⁹¹ or scientific tools related to the schools' needs, such as when donor Athanasios Zotos offered a microscope with lenses to the physics and chemistry laboratory of the Averofeio school.⁵⁹² Another common practice was the donation of dowries that wealthy *Egyptiots* offered through the EKA to impoverished girls.⁵⁹³ In addition, *Egyptiots* donated properties in prime locations to the EKA. For example, in the 1960s, the EKA received the Kiriakidi property near the Sidi Bishr station, a very central location in Alexandria; this was given to the institution for a total payment of just 30 EGP.⁵⁹⁴ The Papatheologou property was also given to the institution after the owner's death in June 1965.⁵⁹⁵

Secondly, the EKA received the properties of other *koinotētes*,⁵⁹⁶ Alexandrian fraternities and associations that could no longer survive as the number of the *Egyptiots* decreased. Due to these donations, the EKA grew in responsibility and power, as some of these institutions passed on considerable amounts of property. For example, on June 21st, 1973, the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* merged with the EKA.⁵⁹⁷ This merger was quite profitable for the latter, as the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* was not an association in deficit, but held abundant reserves. Once the merger took place, 30,000 EGP were transferred from the Ibrahimia

⁵⁹¹ In one of the sections of the minutes was mentioned that many *Egyptiots* gave "rich offerings in kind" to the EKA for the Easter celebrations. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, June 11, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētās Alexandreias*, 11.

⁵⁹² Letter by the high school principal of the Averofeio school, A. Tsernovits, to the president of the EKA, Anastasios Theodorakis. Tsernovits to Theodorakis, May 3, 1965, protocol number: 158/127, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētās Alexandreias*.

⁵⁹³ An example was the dowry Ioannis Lagoudakis offered to a Greek Orthodox girl who resided in Alexandria. The dowry that was offered was announced in the community press, and thus those women who were interested had to contact the EKA in order to participate in the lottery for the dowry. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, October 2, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētās Alexandreias*, 11.

⁵⁹⁴ *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 16.

⁵⁹⁵ Papatheologou's property consisted of his mansion on Mustafa Pasha and his garage plot on Sultan Hussein. The EKA had the high ownership of these properties from 1953, but obtained their usufruct in 1965 after his death. *Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁵⁹⁶ The *Egyptiot koinotētes* that suspended their activities either merged with the *koinotēta* of Alexandria or Cairo.

⁵⁹⁷ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, July 3, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētās Alexandreias*, 3-6.

koinotēta to the EKA, and immediately 8,000 EGP of this was used for repairs to the latter's buildings.⁵⁹⁸ The EKA also obtained all the property⁵⁹⁹ of the Ibrahimia *koinotēta*, and the Taxiarchōn church.⁶⁰⁰ In addition, all benefactors of the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* were named as benefactors of EKA, a title that seemed to be considered greater than that of other *koinotētes*.⁶⁰¹

This was not in fact the first time that the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* had substantially aided the EKA. For instance, from 1967 until the merger, the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* exclusively undertook the entire financial support and maintenance of the only *Egyptiot* primary school left in the city.⁶⁰² Hence, the help of the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* towards the EKA was often praised as “immeasurably and unimaginably large.”⁶⁰³

Similarly, Ibrahimia *koinotēta*, in 1966 the EKA acquired the Asyut *koinotēta*, and through it obtained the Saint Spyridōnos church, a three-story house and a shop, together with a sum of money.⁶⁰⁴ The *koinotētes* of Marsa Matrouh and Mansoura also merged with that of Alexandria in 1987 and 1985 respectively. The Mansoura *koinotēta* added its abundant reserves of about 1,460,861 EGP, together with some additional property.⁶⁰⁵

⁵⁹⁸ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, July 3, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 3-6.

⁵⁹⁹ The meeting's minutes do not mention what this property entailed. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, September 4, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 14.

⁶⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶⁰¹ Also, all Ibrahimia commissioners became consultants for the school ephorate of the EKA. Two of them joined the ephorate of urban estates as well. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, July 3, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 3-6.

⁶⁰² The only primary school left after 1967 was the Pratsikeios primary school of the *Egyptiot* Ibrahimia *koinotēta*. Since 1973-1974, and after the merging of the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* with the EKA, the latter took over the operation of the kindergarten and primary school, under the name 'Tositsaia-Pratsikeios Primary School.' Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 158-159.

⁶⁰³ See, for example: *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, July 3, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 4.

⁶⁰⁴ Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 269.

⁶⁰⁵ The official delivery of Mansoura's property to the EKA took place in 1987. *Ibid.*, 269-270.

The EKA also received the properties of several dissolved fraternities that *Egyptiots* had established upon their arrival in Alexandria in the late 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. These fraternities were specific to places from which *Egyptiots* originated,⁶⁰⁶ with links to certain islands, such as Kastellorizo, Kasos and Symi. Other fraternities or associations had a regional reference, such as the association of *Egyptiots* who originated from Asia Minor. These fraternities financially supported the EKA through their donations, especially to the field of education.⁶⁰⁷

Among the twenty-three fraternities that existed, only the Cypriot fraternity and the association of Asia Minor are still active today. The others either lasted for a few years, like the Kefallinian fraternity that lasted from 1915 to 1919, or slightly longer, like the Limnian one. The large Limnian fraternity (established in 1905) suspended its activities and transferred its property to the EKA in 1964.⁶⁰⁸ The Kastellorizian fraternity followed a few years later, in 1972, and, like the Limnian one, also transferred its small property to the EKA.⁶⁰⁹ In addition, unions or associations that terminated their activities followed a similar procedure, transferring any money that was left in their funds to the EKA. For example, in

⁶⁰⁶ The Cypriot fraternity was the first to be established in Alexandria in 1861. Manolis Gialourakis, *Ē Aigyptos tōn Ellēnōn*, (Athens: Metropolis, 1967), 310-311.

⁶⁰⁷ For instance, in a report sent to the head of the school board, Ioannis Oikonomou, it was stated that 226 students out of 463 studied either for free or through fraternities' donations, during the academic year of 1963-1964 of the Tositsaias-Averofeio school. *Tositsaia kai Averofeios: Ekthesis Pepragmenōn Scholikou Etous 1963-1964*, June 17, 1964, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1964, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias.

⁶⁰⁸ In October 21, 1964, the representatives of the Limnian fraternity, Charalambos Anagnostellis, Panagiotis Christofis and Konstantinos Patrikios, sent a letter to the EKA president, Anastasios Theodorakis, declaring the dissolution of the fraternity, which was already accepted by the Ministry of Social Affairs and announced in the press in September 28, 1964. Once the fraternity was dissolved, it was agreed that its property would pass to the EKA, according to article 45 of the statute of the fraternity. Hence, the three representatives passed the sum of 697 EGP to the EKA. Charalambos Anagnostellis, Panagiotis Christofis and Konstantinos Patrikios, to Anastasios Theodorakis, 21 October 1964. File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence) 1964, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias.

⁶⁰⁹ The Kastellorizian fraternity transferred two banking stocks and the amount of 100 EGP to the EKA. *Praktika Synedriasis Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, February 28, 1972, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 13.

1972 the *Egyptiot* shopkeepers' association, the association of bakers, and the union of tailors all suspended their activities, and their money passed to the EKA.⁶¹⁰

Thirdly, in order to maintain its activities, the EKA received very generous financial support from the Greek government throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Therefore, and despite its shrinkage in size, this enabled the institution to gain in power and negotiate its place in Egypt. As mentioned earlier, the EKA received a considerable amount of money for its schools. Aid from the Greek government for the EKA's overall management also expanded. For example, in 1965, the EKA received 57,780 EGP overall, which 28,280 EGP of this money dedicated to its schools.⁶¹¹ The financial aid from the Greek government reached its highest point in 1967,⁶¹² when the EKA received in total 63,173 EGP, although the state's donation dropped to half of this by the 1975 and 1976.⁶¹³ This aid strengthened the EKA's social and political capital. It was chosen as the most important vehicle for maintaining 'Greekness' amongst the diaspora. The exceptional position of the EKA and the important financial and moral aid it received from the Greek government was emphasized in one of the meetings the EKA held in the 1970s. Specifically, on March 27, 1973, the Greek consul in Alexandria and honorary president of the EKA, Christos Papadopoulos, attended one of the EKA's meetings.⁶¹⁴ Papadopoulos stressed that the *Egyptiot* community should continue to adapt its activities to the new Egyptian reality, and he scrutinized the EKA's privileged

⁶¹⁰ The shopkeeper's association transferred approximately 139 EGP to the EKA, the association of bakers around 55 EGP, and the union of tailors around 20 EGP and 5 credits pertaining to land. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, November 28, 1972, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 21.

⁶¹¹ *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 17.

⁶¹² On April 21 1967, the Greek military dictatorship was established in Greece, and it lasted until July 23, 1974. There was no information in the archives I examined as to whether the increase in the financial aid the EKA received in 1967 was linked to the Greek junta. However, I assume that the dictators in power would be in favor of continuing financial aid to the EKA and maintaining its members' loyalty.

⁶¹³ For a detailed analysis of the financial aid the EKA received from the Greek government, see: Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 262-263.

⁶¹⁴ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, March 27, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias.

position, regarding the financial support it received by the Greek government, in comparison to the rest of the *koinotētes* across the Greek diaspora. He stated:

Especially for your *koinotēta*, the generous material help continued, which is a privilege I would dare to say, in comparison to other needs of the Overseas Greek Diaspora. We would like to believe that this help will continue for your *koinotēta* throughout 1973. As such, it would remain free from any financial stress, and continue undistracted its very serious work and activity, towards the under new-conditions-shaped-*paroikia* (*nean diamorfōtheisan*) and institutional reality.⁶¹⁵

The exceptional position of the EKA, granted by the Greek authorities, in comparison to the other *Egyptiot* and in general Greek diasporic communities, was very much highlighted in this meeting. For the Greek consul, it was important that the EKA continue its activities uninterrupted, without having any worries concerning its finances. Indeed, in March 1973, the Greek consular authorities emphasized the privileged position of the EKA given the financial and moral support it received, and in December of the same year, as discussed above, Sandis confirmed the EKA's exceptional position and its dedication to continuing to educate the nation. In return, the Greek government would secure financial support for the EKA, neglecting the needs of other *koinotētes*.

The aid the EKA was receiving, financial and moral, empowered its economic, political and social capital. It reaffirmed its agency and, therefore, emphasized its privileged position. As the following section explores, the EKA, like other diasporic institutions, was not “innocent of the exercises of power.”⁶¹⁶ Rather, it was very much aware of its power and used it to push forward its own goals. In this way, the EKA pursued its second ‘readjustment’

⁶¹⁵ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, March 27, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias.

⁶¹⁶ Tölölyan, “Elites and Institutions,” 112. In addition, Tsolin Nalbantian illustrates in her work on the Armenians in Lebanon how the Armenian community could engage in power struggles and at the same time could fashion (or refashion) its belonging and identifications. Tsolin Nalbantian, *Armenians Beyond Diaspora: Making Lebanon their Own*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

goal.⁶¹⁷ It only allowed the Greek government to facilitate its interests concerning its property, without interfering as to how this capital should be used. Therefore, on the one hand, the Greek government had its own objectives and reasons to preserve the *Egyptiot* presence in Alexandria, and so it invested a great deal in the EKA's affairs (especially in the community's schools), by providing financial aid to the institution. On the other hand, the EKA did not limit its role to 'serving' the needs of the Greek government through educating the nation. It worked towards its own needs and on its own terms. Hence, it articulated its power by being able to get from the Greek government what served its own interests.

4.3 The Agricultural Reforms and The EKA's Role Through Its Agricultural Property

The Agricultural Reforms (*al-Islāh al-Zirā'ī*) that took place in Egypt in the early 1950s and later in the 1960s, as in other countries in North Africa,⁶¹⁸ were part of the decolonization process that aimed to address/redress private land ownership.⁶¹⁹ Gamal Abdel Nasser's political regime was characterized by anti-imperialistic and nationalistic policies,⁶²⁰ and in his *Falsafat al-thawrah* (Philosophy of the Revolution) he maintained that popular struggle would eliminate foreign exploitation and feudalism.⁶²¹ In 1952, Abdel Nasser introduced the first land reforms.⁶²² These land reforms concerned the EKA deeply, as they limited its

⁶¹⁷ Gorman, "The Failures of Readjustment," 51-52.

⁶¹⁸ In Morocco, for example, 13 percent of the arable land was controlled by European settlers, and 20 percent in Tunisia. Hanieh, *Lineages of Revolt*, 77.

⁶¹⁹ According to the USAID report, until the 1952 revolution, 44 percent of rural households were landless, and a minority of landowners, about 0.4 percent, held 33 percent of Egypt's agricultural land. USAID, Country Profile, Egypt, Property Rights and Resource Governance (Washington, DC: USAID, September 2010), 5.

⁶²⁰ Arab nationalist terms, such as 'Arab homeland' and 'Arab nation', began to appear frequently in his speeches in 1954-55, whereas previously he would refer to the Arab 'peoples' or the 'Arab region.' James P. Jankowski, *Nasser's Egypt, Arab Nationalism and the United Arab Republic*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001.

⁶²¹ Gamal Abdel Nasser, *Falsafat al-thawrah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam, 1970), 183-184. However, Betty Anderson suggests that the land reforms did not change significantly the land ownership in the country. Specifically, Anderson claims that the state reduced landlessness only from 59% to 43%, and transferred approximately 15% of the land to 11% of the population. Betty S. Anderson, *A History of the Modern Middle East: Rulers, Rebels, and Rogues*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), 381.

⁶²² With Law No. 178/1952, Gamal Abdel Nasser limited the total amount of landholding per household to 200 *feddans*. From 1952 to 1970, Nasser redistributed land to around 350,000 families, while he set a maximum

landholding. Specifically, Law 178/1952, and later Law 108/1953, restricted the landholding of the EKA to 200 *feddans* per property.⁶²³ The EKA was granted a period of ten years to sell any property that exceeded this amount.⁶²⁴ The total amount of agricultural land owned by the EKA at that time was 1,762 *feddans*,⁶²⁵ coming largely from the Averoff, Toulis and Lagoudakis agricultural properties, all bequeathed to the institution by these benefactors. All of these agricultural properties were located in the administrative center of *markaz* Abu Hummus, in the Beheira Governorate (in the Delta region). According to their wills, the profit the EKA was receiving from these properties was donated mainly to those EKA institutions that the benefactors had requested. For example, the profit from the Averoff property was donated to the schools, and the Toulis estate to the hospital. Lagoudakis' profits were given partly as a dowry to an unmarried girl with Greek Orthodox roots who resided in Alexandria, and partly to free school registration and school supplies for destitute students.⁶²⁶

According to the land reform, the EKA was allowed to keep 200 *feddans* per property, so in total 600 of the 1,762 *feddans* of these three properties. Thus, it was obliged to sell the remaining area of these properties by the end of September 1962.⁶²⁷ Up until the end of the extension period, it managed to sell 1.251 *feddans* for 306,883 EGP.⁶²⁸ Even though the EKA had initiated the selling of the necessary properties, new policies that restricted foreigners'

ceiling on land ownership. In addition, he strengthened the rights of tenants to the land. Thus, tenants could not be evicted if rent was paid, and as such, tenancy became inheritable. USAID, Country Profile, Egypt, Property Rights and Resource Governance (Washington, DC: USAID, September 2010), 5. In addition, Abdel Nasser consolidated the land reforms with laws in 1961 and 1969. The 1961 law reduced land ownership to 100 *feddans*, however this did not apply to charitable associations like the EKA. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 247. The 1969 law limited further the land ownership to 50 *feddans*. USAID, Country Profile, Egypt, Property Rights and Resource Governance (Washington, DC: USAID, September 2010), 7.

⁶²³ One *feddan* is 1.038 acres, equals 0.42 hectare or 4.200 sq. meters.

⁶²⁴ *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 34.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁶ *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 27-28.

⁶²⁷ If the EKA did not sell its excess property by the end of the extension period, the Egyptian government had every right to expropriate this land. *Logodosia Etous 1961*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 38.

⁶²⁸ Until then, the EKA had received 238,634 EGP of this amount from those who bought the land. The EKA had obtained the final contracts for 409 *feddans* and for the rest of the *feddans*, it had either signed preliminary contracts or had contracts under approval. *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 34-35.

property rights were introduced after the end of this extension period. Law 15, issued in January of 1963,⁶²⁹ addressed land ownership by foreigners.⁶³⁰ It did not allow foreigners to own any agricultural land, but only permitted them to own residential real estates, with limitations.⁶³¹ As such, this new law had serious implications for the EKA's property and personnel. Specifically, the Egyptian government started to confiscate the agricultural land owned by the institution, which impacted it financially, as well as those who were working the land, since this decision left them unemployed. In addition, the confiscations brought great concerns to the EKA, as they threatened its livelihood and 'presence.'⁶³²

Despite the EKA's objections, the Egyptian government confiscated its first property in October 1963.⁶³³ As it has been highlighted earlier concerning the sale of the Kotsikeio hospital, the loss of the EKA's property not only demarcated the loss in the material sense of belonging, but also had a great impact on its human resources, and an emotional impact on the history of the community.⁶³⁴ The confiscation of the remaining agricultural properties of Averoff, Toulis and Lagoudakis in Abu Hummus meant also loss of the staff houses, warehouses and offices, thus affecting ordinary individuals.⁶³⁵

Moreover, in practice, this meant that the EKA had to suspend all contracts and agreements made prior to September 1962,⁶³⁶ even though they were in accordance with

⁶²⁹ The Law 15/1963 was announced in 1961, but was implemented in 1963. *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive.

⁶³⁰ Other laws that governed ownership by foreigners were Law No. 143 of 1981 and Law No. 230 of 1996. USAID, Country Profile, Egypt, Property Rights and Resource Governance (Washington, DC: USAID, September 2010), 7.

⁶³¹ Ibid.

⁶³² *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 26.

⁶³³ Ibid.

⁶³⁴ Scholars have shown that there are societal values attached to the value of land, and thus, land should not be perceived in relation to what it can offer to people in the present, but also in the future. See, for example: Nisrin Elamin, "'The miskeet tree doesn't belong here': shifting land values and the politics of belonging in Um Doum, central Sudan," *Critical African Studies*, 10/1 (2018), 67-88; James Ferguson, "How to Do Things with Land: A Distributive Perspective on Rural Livelihoods in Southern Africa," *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 13/1 (2013), 166-17.

⁶³⁵ *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 26.

⁶³⁶ I refer here to the contracts, preliminary and final, for the EKA's 1.251 *feddans* that it managed to sell. *Logodosia Etous 1962*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 34-35.

previous laws, introduced in the early 1950s. Thus, the EKA asked the Egyptian authorities to continue with all the sales agreements made prior to September 9, 1962, in order to receive the revenue. Second, it asked to receive the compensations of these properties in money and not in state bonuses, in accordance with Decree 108/1953. Last, the EKA asked to be able to keep all land and buildings that were within the city plan of Abu Hummus.⁶³⁷ Even though the Egyptian government's official policy was the confiscation of agricultural properties, the EKA managed to negotiate its first request with the Egyptian authorities, allowing the sale of some of its property. The Egyptian government authorized the pre-sale agreements of 35 *feddans* the EKA had signed with third parties, and finalized another 52 sales.⁶³⁸ All in all, by the end of 1966, the EKA succeeded in selling 165 *feddans*.⁶³⁹ This was much less than the EKA had planned in previous years. Nonetheless, it did manage to negotiate managed divestment of its property with the Egyptian government, even in times that official policies seemed to be defined and rigid.

The 1970s Shift in Government's Policies

A 'counterrevolution' that opposed these measures of decolonization started in the early 1970s in Egypt, as for other countries in North Africa, such as Morocco and Tunisia.⁶⁴⁰ As Adam Hanieh has noted, the World Bank played a major role in shifting agricultural activities from public to private ownership, and thus incorporating them into the world market.⁶⁴¹ In

⁶³⁷ *Logodosia Etous 1963*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 26-27.

⁶³⁸ *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, 31.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁰ For example, the Tunisian government ordered the sale of state farms to private owners, between the years of 1970 and 1986. In the same period of time, the Moroccan government expropriated land that belonged to the clergy, which afterwards transferred it to private owners. Hanieh, *Lineages of Revolt*, 79.

⁶⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 78.

this process of privatization, Anwar Sadat, who followed Gamal Abdel Nasser as president, reversed the measures taken by the latter on land reform.

Indeed, Decree 35/1971, introduced by Anwar Sadat in June 1971, excepted all non-Muslim charitable associations from the land reforms of 178/1952 and 15/1963.⁶⁴² Among other things, Sadat awarded financial compensations to those whose land was confiscated during Abdel Nasser's period by the state.⁶⁴³ Hence, the EKA's situation radically changed, since the properties that were once confiscated by the state started to be returned to the institution in the early 1970s.⁶⁴⁴

Indeed, some of the sales agreements on plots of land that had been suspended by the Egyptian authorities in the past, finally reached a final stage. Thus, out of the 152 contracts that were under approval, the EKA was granted the approval of 142 of them, which corresponded to approximately 763 *feddans*.⁶⁴⁵ In addition, it received the confiscated properties that had been inherited by *Egyptiots* in the past, and which revenues were donated to the EKA's institutions. Among others, the EKA obtained the inherited property of Alexander Spyridon Dimopoulos, whose part of the revenues was donated to the Benakeio orphanage.⁶⁴⁶ Hence, once the confiscated properties were returned to the EKA, the latter

⁶⁴² *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 21, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 13.

⁶⁴³ From the archival material I examined, it was not evident whether the EKA's property passed to other owners, when it was under confiscation by the Egyptian government. From the oral accounts I gathered, it was confirmed that the Egyptian state was quite bureaucratic and it took time to manage all the properties it confiscated in the first place. Therefore, I assume that there were no 'old' new owners that objectified the Egyptian government's decision to take back those property. At least, no reactions or tensions were mentioned during the EKA's meetings when the institution managed to receive back its property.

⁶⁴⁴ The financial situation of the EKA seemed to have improved in this period, as it could return the amount of 47,000 EGP to the Greek Consulate in Alexandria; an amount that the EKA had borrowed from the consulate in the past due to the financial problems it was facing. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, November 23, 1970, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 7.

⁶⁴⁵ Out of the 142 sales agreements, the EKA obtained full papers for 139 of them, which corresponded to approximately 737 *feddans*. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 21, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 13.

⁶⁴⁶ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, January 19, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 27-28.

could start paying again part of the expenses of its various affiliated institutions and associations through those inherited properties.

The revocation of the law on agricultural properties enabled the EKA to sell some of its profitable estates, as it was still in need of money, and many of these properties could bring a considerable income to the institution. Among the most profitable properties the EKA sold in the early 1970s were the Asyut property, the Kiriakidis property in the Sidi Bishr neighborhood of Alexandria, and the Familiadeios school building. These properties were either bought by individuals, mostly Egyptians as they were the biggest market in Egypt, or by the Egyptian state. Certain spacious buildings, like hospitals and schools were especially attractive to the Egyptian state, as they could accommodate other administrative needs Egyptian authorities had at that time. Similar to the case of the Kotsikeio hospital that had been bought by the Egyptian Ministry of Scientific Research in 1964, the Familiadeios school building was sold to the Educational Zone of Alexandria (Ministry of Education) for 58,780 EGP.⁶⁴⁷

The Familiadeios school, which covered 3.22 *feddans*, had been confiscated by the Egyptian state in 1963 with the enactment the land reform law 15/1963.⁶⁴⁸ While the EKA had objected at the time, it only managed to regain its property⁶⁴⁹ when Sadat introduced Decree 35/1971 that reversed the land reform measures.⁶⁵⁰ Once it had regained its property,

⁶⁴⁷ The selling of the school took place in August 19, 1971. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, November 26, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētās Alexandreias, 6. The preliminary contract was signed in November, 16, 1971 and the *koinotita* had already received 4,000 EGP of the agreed amount. The final contract was signed a few months later, in January 1972. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, November 26, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētās Alexandreias, 5.

⁶⁴⁸ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, August 12, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētās Alexandreias, 4-5.

⁶⁴⁹ In this case too, as in the others above, it was not evident whether the Familiadeios school had passed in the meantime to other owners. Again, no tensions or objections to that decision were found on the archival material I examined.

⁶⁵⁰ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, August 12, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētās Alexandreias, 4-5.

the EKA began to re-sell the land, together with the Kyriakidis estate. In the same period, the EKA signed the preliminary contract for its plot and estate in Asyut, Upper Egypt.⁶⁵¹ The plot at 4 Riad Street covered 284 square meters and together with its estate was sold for 6,500 EGP to Alfy Halem Gorgy.⁶⁵² A month later, the 1,593 square meters plot at 10 Ezbet-Siouf Street in Siouf was sold for 9,000 EGP, together with the buildings located on the plot.⁶⁵³ Last, the EKA sold the Kyriakidi estate and plot in Sidi Bishr, for 6,100 EGP, to Stefanou Matias Stefanou and Bisai Gabriel. The preliminary agreement took place in December 1971, and the final contract was signed a few months later, in May 1972.⁶⁵⁴

Even though the EKA regained some of its confiscated property, some parts still remained ‘frozen’ in 1974. These agricultural properties proved to be an obstacle for the EKA, as they delayed the restructuring of its real estate holdings, which was part of the overall readjustment policies the EKA strove for after the departure of most *Egyptiots*. In spite of the fact that many years had passed since the massive waves of migration in the early 1960s, the EKA still remained unorganized on important issues, such as property management, which were strongly related to the institution’s vitality.

The restructuring of the EKA’s properties had often been suggested by the Greek state. For instance, in May 1973, the Greek Consul in Alexandria, Christos Papadopoulos, encouraged the EKA to launch working groups that would involve *Egyptiot* members with knowledge and experience on topics that concerned the institution.⁶⁵⁵ These *Egyptiots* would work together with the elected members of the EKA to resolve the institution’s issues. As

⁶⁵¹ The preliminary contract was signed on November, 16, 1971 and the *koinotita* had already received 4,000 EGP of the agreed amount. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, November 26, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 5.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*

⁶⁵³ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 21, 1971, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 20.

⁶⁵⁴ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, May 29, 1972, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 10.

⁶⁵⁵ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, May 9, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 13-15.

Papadopoulos noted, this practice should not threaten the EKA's representatives, as the role of the EKA would still remain central. Rather, this suggestion was part of the general plan concerning the "community's adjustment to today's reality," as Papadopoulos stated.⁶⁵⁶

The EKA's need for systematic property management was a well-known topic among its representatives, who voiced the need to restructure several times. In particular, Kostantinos Rappas,⁶⁵⁷ one of the EKA's representatives, stressed in one of the meetings in 1973 that: "until today, nothing concrete or positive has been done concerning the utilization of the EKA's property."⁶⁵⁸ Even though the EKA's president and the rest of its representatives agreed with Rappas, no solid solution came besides the suggestion of a three-member committee that would look into the issue. Short-term solutions like this, with small committees that would manage some important topics, was a common practice for the institution. Such policies put more emphasis on the EKA's micromanagement, rather than on finding solid long-term solutions for its future prosperity. In addition, having always had the support of the Greek state, the EKA knew that it could rely on outside support to help maintain it.

The biggest concern for the EKA was that the Egyptian authorities had not yet resolved the issue of its nationalized property. Despite revoking the land reforms in 1971, the Egyptian government left return of ownership of nationalized land and compensation open until the end of 1973, and this was often one of the main topics of discussion during EKA meetings.⁶⁵⁹ The resolution of these outstanding problems and the profitable exploitation of

⁶⁵⁶ Four work groups were created: the first, concerned the EKA's real estates; the second, its internal organization; the third management of the EKA's social welfare; and fourth, legal cases and court clearance. *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, May 9, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 10; 13-15.

⁶⁵⁷ Konstantinos Rappas assumed the EKA's presidency in 1978, when Konstantinos Sandis voluntarily left his position. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 339-340.

⁶⁵⁸ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, June 21, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 25.

⁶⁵⁹ The resolution for the nationalized properties finally came in 1974, when Sadat introduced Decree 793/1974, whereby all nationalized agricultural properties were returned to the charitable associations. Thus, the Egyptian

these properties were strongly connected to a future investment the EKA was planning to make, namely to construct a new property in the city center of Alexandria. The delay of a solution thus forced a postponement of the EKA's plans.

To help solve this issue the EKA appealed once again to the Greek authorities. The EKA brought the issue of nationalized property to the Greek ambassador in Egypt, Antonis Korantis, asking him to intervene with the Egyptian authorities to fix the matter. Korantis attended one of the last EKA meetings in 1973, where Sandis, the EKA president, communicated to him the following:

The serious issues that concern us, and which fall within the competence of the (Greek) Embassy, are the total compensation of the EKA's nationalized warrants. We believe this issue could be solved through the mediation of the (Greek) President of the Republic, who would facilitate and validate the decision, and with the friendly intervention of the Egyptian government. The return of ownership of the nationalized lands to the EKA comes in accordance with the new principles on the return of nationalized lands to Charitable Associations.⁶⁶⁰

Once Sandis expressed the EKA's concerns to the ambassador, he stated that his eagerness to find a solution on the nationalized properties stemmed from the EKA's need to substantially restructure and better manage better the property it owned.⁶⁶¹ Thus, Sandis announced the EKA's plan to construct a profitable development in the city center of Alexandria, where the institution owned a plot of land of high value.

By obtaining such property, Sandis declared to the ambassador that the EKA's deficits would drop, and as such, the institution would no longer need the valuable support that the Greek government has been providing all these past years. Thus, the EKA would be

authorities returned to the EKA the Averoff, Touli and Lagoudakis agricultural properties. Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, 247-248.

⁶⁶⁰ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 7, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 4.

⁶⁶¹ Sandis meant that the EKA had to reevaluate which property was profitable, so to be kept, and which should be sold. By not having the nationalized properties back, or their compensations, the process for managing these properties was delayed. *Ibid.*

able to manage its financial situation in a more effective way, which would prolong the presence of the *Egyptiots* in Alexandria. Regardless of its small size, Sandis emphasized the good organization of the institution, and the community's importance to the Greek state, being one of the main pillars in the Eastern Mediterranean opposite to Piraeus, which "at all costs should be maintained."⁶⁶²

According to Sandis this proposal was a "revolutionary plan," which could only be achieved if the Greek government donated the remaining amount of the Kotsikeio sale to the institution.⁶⁶³ As mentioned earlier, the Kotsikeio hospital was sold in 1964 by the Greek government to the Egyptian Ministry of Scientific Research for 300,000 EGP. Even though the Kotsikeio hospital belonged to the Greek state, the EKA had been in charge of its management. Thus, Sandis requested the remaining 100,000 EGP from the total amount, which was pledged to the National Bank of Egypt. Upon this request, and in order to make his argument more convincing, Sandis stated that the Greek government would be the one to receive all EKA's property, in the event that the latter was wound up. As such, he underlined that the investment would be beneficial for both parties.⁶⁶⁴

The financial support Sandis requested from the Greek government was not on this occasion of direct service to the latter, as when EKA provided Greek education. Sandis was asking for this money to serve EKA's needs, which would also indirectly help the Greek state by not burdening it financially in the future. By doing so, Sandis worked towards the other 'readjustment' goal that had been suggested in the 1950s; the role of the Greek government as facilitator of EKA and *Egyptiot* interests, without interfering in how these were defined and maintained.⁶⁶⁵ As Khachig Tölölyan has emphasized in his work, diasporic institutions

⁶⁶² *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 7, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, *Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias*, 5.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁵ Gorman, "The Failures of Readjustment," 51-52.

should not be seen as passive when it comes to the power they can exercise.⁶⁶⁶ The EKA did take advantage of opportunities and moved within the margins available to it. The EKA was aware of its power and used it to put pressure on the Greek government to achieve its goals. By asking for this money from the Greek authorities, Sandis was aware of the negotiating power the EKA had, and what the convincing points would be to encourage the Greek government to grant such donation to the institution. Indeed, it was not the first time that the EKA had emphasized its importance in the Eastern Mediterranean so as to convince the Greek authorities to accommodate its requests. The EKA's representatives exploited its position in a major Mediterranean harbor, with commercial and diplomatic importance for the Greek state.

In addition, the EKA, in its attempt to further convince the Greek authorities to continue its aid, used the tensions between the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the Greek state. The EKA declared that all its property would pass to the latter, with the former having no rights to it.⁶⁶⁷ Thus, the position of the Alexandrian community in the Eastern Mediterranean and the benefits of its property strengthened its positionality, and political, economic and social capital, and granted it special privileges other *koinotētes* did not have. As such, the moral and financial support from the Greek government continued until the 1980s, maintaining the institution's agency and autonomy.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how the EKA operated as both a local and diasporic institution after the *en masse* departure of most of its members. It analyzed the EKA's property

⁶⁶⁶ Tölölyan, "Elites and Institutions," 112.

⁶⁶⁷ *Praktika Synedrias Koinotikēs Epitropēs*, December 7, 1973, File: *Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1963-1977, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, 5.

management to examine how its concerns, goals and policies were readjusted in this period. I noted that the EKA managed to maintain and even increase its social, political and economic capital as the community shrank in numbers. This allowed it agency in exploiting its properties and activities vis-à-vis its own community members, the Greek church and the Egyptian and Greek governments.

Facing an increasingly difficult financial situation due to rising costs, the EKA nevertheless responded to its financial challenges and exploited opportunities that presented themselves. The EKA's affiliated institutions and their deficits, their repairs and maintenance, and its legal disputes with various parties had burdened the institution financially. In addition, land reforms in the 1960s threatened its institutional property and presence. However, the shift in government policies from Gamal Abdel Nasser to Anwar Sadat eased the EKA's financial situation and enabled the institution to regain its property. Moreover, having the continuous support of individuals, associations, and the Greek government, and with the merging of other *koinotētes*, the EKA managed to continue its activities and grew in responsibility and power. Especially in relation to the Greek government, the EKA was aware of its negotiating power, emphasizing its presence in the Eastern Mediterranean and the 'Greekness' it strived to preserve for the *Egyptiot* community. Therefore, being aware of its agency, the EKA managed to preserve its political and social capital, and continued to act as the 'fashioner' of its community.