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**Abstract:** The departure of most Greeks from Egypt at the beginning of the 1960s raised questions in the community about how it should readjust its presence at an institutional level. This article examines how the Greek *Koinotēta* of Alexandria (GKA) operated as both a local and diasporic institution in periods of contraction, in terms of size and finances, and analyzes the adjustment policies it undertook concerning its institutional property and real estate. Despite the community's demographic shrinkage in the 1960s and 1970s, the GKA was assigned its role as the value keeper and moral guide for the children of the community through its educational institutions and orphanages, having the support of the Greek representatives, in this case the consular authorities. Even though the GKA faced serious financial difficulties in the 1960s, it strived to find strategies of adaptation to maintain its agency and social, political and economic capital.

**Keywords:** Diaspora, Philanthropy, Belonging, Presence

**Geographical keywords:** Egypt

## Philanthropie en maintien : les institutions grecques d'Alexandrie après l'exode du début des années 1960

**Résumé :** Le départ de la plupart des Grecs d'Égypte au début des années soixante amena à s'interroger sur la manière dont la communauté dût réajuster sa présence institutionnelle. Cet article examine le fonctionnement de l'institution diasporique *Koinotēta* Grecque d'Alexandrie (GKA) en période de déclin, en termes de taille et de finances, et analyse les ajustements qu'elle entreprit concernant son patrimoine institutionnel et immobilier. Malgré le rétrécissement démographique de la communauté dans les années 1960 et 1970, la GKA s'est vu attribuer le rôle de gardienne des valeurs et de guide moral pour les enfants de la communauté à travers ses institutions éducatives et ses orphelinats, avec le soutien des représentants grecs, en l'occurrence les autorités consulaires. Même si la GKA a connu de graves difficultés

financières dans les années 1960, elle s'est efforcée de trouver des stratégies d'adaptation afin de maintenir son agence et son capital social, politique et économique.

**Mots clefs :** Diaspora, Philanthropie, Appartenance, Présence

**Mots clefs géographiques :** Égypte

In March 1967, the Greek General Consul, Ioannis Touloupas, sent a letter to the board of the Benakeio orphanage of the Greek *Koinotēta* of Alexandria (GKA),[1] concerning the supervision of four out of six children of the Kalogridis family, as they were facing 'serious moral issues' and a 'tendency to vagrancy'.[2] The father, Dimitrios Kalogridis, was a worker at the 'Koutarellis' factory. His low salary and physical disability due to a war injury were mentioned in the letter, as well as the unemployed status of his wife, Olga, in order to stress the incapacity of the family to maintain the wellbeing of their children. The letter enclosed a report by a social worker from the department of social welfare within the consulate (*Grafeio Koinonikēs Pronoias*), who asked for Kyriakoula's admission to Benakeio orphanage.[3] At 16 years old, Kyriakoula was the oldest child of the four studying at the Greek Ibrahimia school. In addition, there was a request for the admission of her brothers, Christos (11 years old) and Georgios (9 years old), to Kaniskereio orphanage and for the youngest, Stauroula (5 years old) to attend the nursery (*nēpiotrofeio*) of the GKA. According to the consul, the GKA would, through its two orphanages, Benakeio and Kaniskereio, have to act as a moral guide, as the children were in real 'moral danger' since the family was not considered fit to take care of them.

*Koinotētes,* as the main form of institutional organization, were instrumental in establishing Greeks' feelings of belonging. The *koinotētes* tried to establish belonging by promoting feelings of community and common heritage through their educational, cultural, and philanthropic institutions, so their members would remain loyal to their national and linguistic identity. However, the departure of most Greek inhabitants in the early 1960s[4] and the subsequent decrease in the GKA's membership weakened the community's institutions, both in size and in terms of finances. In addition, Egyptian socioeconomic policies, including the nationalization of commercial and industrial enterprises and the Land Reform order that was issued in October 1963, raised questions around how the GKA should organize its activities and manage its financial assets and the organization of all its properties.

Even though the Greek community in Alexandria had decreased in number, the GKA remained its representative body, managing various institutions placed under its supervision and financial

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1 *Koinotēta* is the official entity of the Greek community, plural, *koinotētes.* Therefore, I use this term to refer to the Greek institutions in several Egyptian cities, and not to the community itself.

2 Letter from Ioannis A. Touloupas to Eforeia Benakeiou Orphanotrofeiou, March 2, 1967, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias, nº 1474, File: Benakeio Orphanotrofeio.

3 *Koinōnikē ekthesis anaforikōs me tēn periptōsin tōn teknōn Dimitriou KALOGRIDĒ*, X. Basileiadou-Beniou, March 1, 1967, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias, File: Benakeio Orphanotrofeio.

4 Important scholarship has been produced on the Greek departure from Egypt. See, for example: Alexander Kitroeff, *The Greeks in Egypt 1919-1937: Ethnicity and Class*, London/Ithaca, Middle East Centre/St Antony's College, "St Antony's Middle East monographs, 20", 1989; Floresca Karanasou, "The Greeks in Egypt: from Mohammed Ali to Nasser, 1805-1961," in Richard Clogg (ed.), *The Greek Diaspora in the Twentieth Century*, Basingstoke/New York, Macmillan/St Martin's Press, "St Antony's series", 1999, p. 24-57; Alexander Kazamias, "The 'Purge of the Greeks' from Nasserite Egypt: Myths and Realities," *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, 35, 2009, nº 2-Special Issue "Egyptian Hellenism", p. 13-34; Sophianos Chryssostomidis, "The Left, Nasser, and the Exodus of the Greeks from Egypt," *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, 35, 2009, nº 2-Special Issue "Egyptian Hellenism", p. 155-159; Angelos Dalachanis, *The Greek Exodus from Egypt: Diaspora Politics and Emigration, 1937-1962*, New York/Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2017.

control. For example, in 1963, the GKA still had full control over its six churches,[5] the cemetery, the Benakeio soup kitchen, the Antoniadeio home for the elderly, the Benakeio orphanage, the Kotsikeio hospital and the *koinotēta's* twelve schools.[6] In addition, the GKA owned and received income (primarily from rents) from its real estates and agricultural properties.[7]

In this article, I focus on the GKA, not only because it was the oldest of the Greek *koinotētes* established in Egypt, but mostly because after the 1960s it also claimed – and was granted by the Greek government – exceptional cultural, economic, and political capital that other *koinotētes* did not have. Therefore, my interest is in exploring how the GKA negotiated its presence as both a local and diasporic institution, not just in periods of growth, but also in periods of so-called 'decline'.

Even though the Greek communities in Egypt had multiple layers in their social and economic stratifications, the presence of employees, shop owners and technical professions in the 1960s and 1970s demonstrated their predominant lower and middle-class nature. The example of Kalogridis, who worked in a factory, and his family is the starting point from which I examine how the GKA's philanthropic institutions, in this case the Benakeio orphanage, aimed to maintain Greekness and the sense of belonging among the remaining members of the Greek diaspora in Egypt in changing times.

This article is based primarily on records of the Benakeio orphanage, the Tositsaia and Averofeios primary schools and files from the Greek *koinotēta's* archive, including meeting minutes and correspondence between the GKA's board members, all of which are housed at the archive of the Greek *koinotēta* in el-Shatby quarter, Alexandria. The records of the Benakeio orphanage include letters and reports written by orphanage personnel, as well as the children's registration cards and requests for admission. The Tositsaia and Averofeios school records I discuss here include reports written by teachers and the school board. In addition, I examine the GKA's articles of association and annual reports between 1962 and 1976, found at the Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive (ELIA) in Athens. Those records mostly cover the institutional life of Greeks in Egypt, depicting the voice of the authorities. Indeed, institutional archives present philanthropy from above, showing how officials understood their role regarding benevolence. However, the Kalogridis case also reveals some details about the life and status of the beneficiaries, and the fact that benevolence was not always welcomed or had full consent, at least not immediately when it was offered.

This article demonstrates the role of philanthropy in the process of adaptation and survival of the community. Despite the community's demographic shrinkage in the 1960s and 1970s, the GKA was assigned its role as the value keeper and moral guide for the children of the community through its educational institutions and orphanages, having the support of the Greek representatives, in this case the consular authorities. I will show how, although the GKA faced serious financial difficulties in the 1960s, it strived to find strategies to enable it to adapt and maintain its agency and social, political, and economic capital. I argue that it achieved this

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5 Most of the Greek *koinotētes* built and maintained churches that were administratively independent from the Patriarchate.

6 The schools were divided into four categories: nursery schools, primary schools, schools for technical education and secondary schools. Many of these schools suspended their activities in the late 1960s and early 1970s, due to either low attendance of students or financial difficulties.

7 If the *koinotēta* was dissolved, its property would pass to the *koinotēta* of Cairo, and if the latter was no longer active, the property would pass to the Greek state, according to the agreement signed between Greece and Egypt on February 10, 1949. *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 52, 1968, ELIA Archive, p. 40.

through the continuous support of the Greek government, associations, and individuals, as well as its mergers with other *koinotētes.* The Greek government was in favour of economically, politically, and educationally supporting the survival of the Greek community in Alexandria through the GKA. As I explore below, this was politically motivated on the Greek government's side. In addition, the survival of the GKA was of historical significance, it being the oldest and most prestigious community institution among the thirty-five Greek *koinotētes* established in Egypt.

### *The Role of the Koinotētes*

The establishment of *koinotētes* was a common practice among Greeks in the diaspora in order to organize their lives and activities.[8] The Greek *koinotētes* in Egypt were established through donations by the local Greek economic elites, namely by wealthy merchants and entrepreneurs active in, among others, the cotton and tobacco industries. Their motivation for the establishment of *koinotētes* was to create solidarity and social and economic networks between them.[9]

The prime and basic aim of the *koinotētes* was the Greeks*'* education and healthcare. Hence, two of the first things the Greeks established in Egypt were schools and hospitals, through donations from the wealthiest members of the community.[10] For example, even before the formal establishment of the Greek *koinotēta* in Alexandria in 1843, the small Greek community of Alexandria maintained a school and a hospital, funded by a donation from the Greek Theodoros Tositsas, and supported financially by the Tositsas brothers and N. Stournaras.[11] The Greek *koinotēta* in Cairo followed in 1856, again founding a school and hospital first.[12] Another thirty-three *koinotētes* were established by Greeks throughout Egypt, manifesting their active presence.[13] Once the number of the Greeks increased, so did their activities and power. For example, besides establishing schools and hospitals, the *koinotētes* also established associations, churches and cemeteries for their religious, cultural, and social activities, and homes for the elderly and orphanages for wellbeing and healthcare. The *koinotētes* also owned agricultural land and real estate and received considerable donations from their members and the Greek state to sustain their activities.

The *koinotētes* were legal entities under Greek private law (*Idryma Ellēnikou Dikaiou*), and after 1949 also fell under the Egyptian Ministry of Social Affairs as charitable institutions.[14] They claimed to represent the whole Greek community, in contrast to the Italian community, for example, which did not have a single representative body, but had numerous associations

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[8] See, for example the work of Olga Katsiardi-Hering on the *koinotētes* in Trieste: Olga Katsiardi-Hering, *Ē Ellēnikē paroikia tēs Tergestēs, 1751-1830*, Athens, Ethniko kai Kapodistriako Panepistēmio Athēnōn, 1986.

[9] Alexander Kitroeff, *The Greeks and the Making of Modern Egypt*, Cairo, The American University in Cairo Press, 2019, p. 37.

[10] Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta tou Kairou*, Athens, Kontinos Publications, 2001, p. 36.

[11] Eftymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, Athens, Ellēniko Logotechniko Kai Istoriko Archeio, p. 17.

[12] Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta tou Kairou*, op. cit., p. 36.

[13] After the establishment of the Alexandria and Cairo *koinotētes*, the *koinotētes* in Mansura (1860), Port Said (1870) and Tanta (1880) followed. Greeks established these thirty-five *koinotētes* in several areas of Egypt. For example, in Upper Egypt, there were the *koinotētes* of Luxor and Aswan, in the Suez Canal region the *koinotētes* of Ismailia, Kantara, and Suez and Port Tawfik, among others.

[14] The *koinotētes* fall under Egyptian law, according to the agreement signed between Greece and Egypt on February 2, 1949. See, for example: *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 5, 1961, ELIA Archive, p. 4.

and clubs.[15] At first the GKA's statutes were vague about who could belong to the *koinotēta*, in terms of citizenship, as it was stated that all expatriate Greeks could be members. As there was a lot of ambiguity as to who was considered Greek, in 1919 the GKA clarified that any Greek by descent (*to genos*) and not by citizenship could be a member of the *koinotēta*.[16] Later, in the 1960s, Greek citizenship became a condition for members of the GKA. More specifically, the GKA'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.[17]

Besides the category of 'member', there was another category, namely 'affiliate' (*syndromētēs*). The difference between the two concerned their legal rights within the GKA. Members had full rights to elect and be elected after having been registered on the GKA's membership list for 12 months and 24 months respectively, and after paying the annual fee.[18] Affiliates did not have any of these rights.[19] Both categories had to pay an annual fee to the GKA; this was at least 2 Egyptian pounds (EGP)[20] for members and at least 1 EGP for affiliates.[21] Any Greek could have access to the GKA's facilities and activities, without being a member or affiliate. However, an important reason for Greeks to sign up as members was that they were then eligible to participate in the political processes and decision-making of the GKA. Therefore, if they wanted to participate actively in the GKA's decisions, they had to contribute to it with an annual fee. It is important to note that not all Greeks were either a member or an affiliate of the GKA, something that raises questions concerning its representational mandate. As Efthymios Souloyannis has stressed, the total number of members and affiliates of the GKA was always relatively small;[22] it never reached more than 10-15% of the total Greek population.[23]

In the following decades, however, despite the sharp decrease in size of the Greek community, the numbers of GKA members did not drop considerably. By 1962, 916 of the c.12,000 Greeks present in Alexandria were either a member or an affiliate of the GKA, a number relatively high compared to the 1920s and 1930s, when the community was larger.[24] By 1965, the number had dropped to 361.[25] The Greek population dropped further in the following years,

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[15] Anthony Gorman, "The Italians of Egypt: Return to Diaspora," in Anthony Gorman and Sossie Kasbarian, (eds), *Diasporas of the Modern Middle East: Contextualizing Community*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2015, p. 143. See also Eleonora Angella and Costantino Paonessa in this special issue.

[16] 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* statutes of 1932 declared that any Greek national could be a member, regardless of their gender. Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, op. cit., p. 58-59.

[17] *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 2, 3,17, 1968, ELIA Archive, 4; p. 12.

[18] Ibid. supra, p. 20.

[19] Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias,* op. cit., p. 80-81.

[20] 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/>.

[21] *Katastatiko tēs Ellēnikēs koinotētas Alexandreias*, Article 17, 1961, ELIA Archive, p. 9-10.

[22] Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, op. cit., p. 81.

[23] This is my estimation after examining the numbers of the Greek community in Alexandria and the GKA members and affiliates between 1920 and 1980.

[24] 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. Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, op. cit., p. 81.

[25] *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, p. 117-119.

numbering about 8,000 Greek residents of Alexandria in 1967, and 17,000 residents in total in Egypt.[26] The total number of Greeks in Egypt dropped below 10,000 in the 1980s, and by the 2000s, the number did not exceed 2,000 residents.[27] Nevertheless, support for the institution by the Greek community continued and is shown through payment of the annual fees, illustrating also in practice how much they wanted to maintain the GKA's existence and activities, when the institution (and they themselves) perhaps needed it the most.[28]

Despite the GKA not including all Alexandrian Greeks as members, it had, to a large extent, an instrumental role in determining their quality and way of life, especially through its economic, political, and educational activities. Both the GKA and the Greek government wanted to maintain the Greek presence in Alexandria and the GKA's activities. In order to realize this and serve these causes, the GKA required resources, material and human, administrative organization and hierarchies, and voluntary support and participation from the community to maintain the Greek presence and the ties with the homeland.[29] Therefore, the GKA'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.

### *Keeping 'Greekness' Alive*

Despite its small size, the Greek community in Alexandria, being located in a major Mediterranean harbour with commercial and diplomatic importance, had political significance for the Greek government. Indeed, the community's importance to the Greek state was often mentioned in the GKA's meetings as one of the main pillars in the Eastern Mediterranean opposite Piraeus, which "at all costs should be maintained".[30] The Greek government was very much invested in preserving the quality of the GKA's schools, supporting the institution and through it maintaining the presence of the Greek community in Alexandria. For example, in 1963, the GKA received 17,000 EGP from the Greek government to cover the needs of its schools, and 14,705 EGP in 1964.[31] Indeed, after the aid the GKA 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.[32]

The amount of aid expanded during the period of the Greek Junta (April 1967 – July 1974). For example, in 1967, aid reached its highest point as the GKA received in total for its overall management 63,173 EGP.[33] Even though there was no information in the archives I examined as to whether the increase in the financial aid the GKA received in 1967 was linked to the Greek Junta, I assume that the dictators in power were in favour of continuing financial aid to the GKA and maintaining its members' loyalty. At least, at this stage of research, I do not see

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[26] *Apodēmoi Ellēnes [Greeks Abroad]*, Athens, Greek National Center of Social Research on the issue of the Greeks Abroad, Ethnikon Kentron Koinōnikōn Ereunōn, 1972, p. 70.

[27] Spyros Kottis, *Ē Aigyptos tōn Ellēnōn pou agapēsame*, Athens, Taxideutēs, 2004, p. 54.

[28] For instance, in 1991, the GKA consisted of 312 members and 7 affiliates, only a few members fewer in comparison to the numbers in 1965, mentioned above. Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, op. cit., p. 81-84.

[29] Alexander Kitroeff, *The Greeks and the Making…*, op. cit., p. 126.

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

[31] *Logodosia Etous 1963; 1964*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, p. 16; p. 18.

[32] 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 GKA. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, op. cit., p. 60-61.

[33] For a detailed analysis of the financial aid the GKA received from the Greek state, see: Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, op. cit., p. 262-263.

a particular shift in the relations between the GKA and the Greek state. The Colonels continued to provide financial support to the GKA in the early 1970s, thus stressing how important the institution was for preserving Greek education in Alexandria. The GKA also thought this was of crucial importance; it took up this challenge and reiterated its commitment to this cause.

The Colonels maintained an active financial policy to preserve Greek identity among the Greeks of Alexandria, ascribing to the GKA a crucial role therein. The GKA'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 GKA's president, Kostas Sandis, confirmed the generous aid provided by the Greek state to the institution, and declared to the ambassador that the GKA's schools would continue educating the community according to Greek values, meaning that they would strive to keep strong connections to the Greek language and Christian Orthodox faith. In addition, the GKA's role was to provide a 'family atmosphere' and 'character shaping' through its institutions, values mentioned often in its many reports.[34] Sandis thus compared the activities and dedication of the GKA with other Greek *koinotētes* abroad, which had not kept alive the 'Greekness' of their communities, as the Alexandrian *koinotēta* had done, according to Sandis.[35]

The Greek *koinotētes* were primarily responsible for the education of Greeks in Egypt.[36] Even after the abolition of the Capitulations in 1937,[37] which had granted great autonomy to foreign schools, the *koinotētes'* schools continued to enjoy their autonomy, as they had minimal intervention in their curriculum by the Egyptian state. Consequently, the *koinotētes'* schools followed the educational curriculum of Greece, which focused on classical studies and Greece's ancient past, and less on technical studies, or on learning the Arabic language and culture. Similarly, other foreign schools in Egypt mostly followed the curriculum of their home nation, with the Italian school, for example, mostly following the curriculum of Italy, emphasizing classical studies.[38] However, the education system of the foreign schools changed in 1955 (Law 583/1955), when the Egyptian government emphasized the teaching of the Arabic language and technical education. In addition, Gamal Abdel Nasser, the second president of Egypt (1954-1970), focused on industrial development, which increased the need for more technical personnel. Consequently, vocational schools, within the Greek community and beyond, grew in number, as did the focus on technical training.[39] Nevertheless, even in the

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[34] *Tositsaia kai Averofeios: Ekthesis Pepragmenōn Scholikou Etous 1963-1964,* June 17, 1964, File: Allēlografia (Correspondence), 1964, Archeio Ellēnikēs Koinotētas Alexandreias, §6.

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

[36] In 1955, the Greek *koinotētes* had under their control 57 out of 83 Greek schools. Leonidas Markantonatos, *Ta en Aigypto ellēnika ekpaideutēria*, Thessaloniki, Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 1957, p. 16.

[37] The Capitulations *(al-Imtiyāzāt* in Arabic, which translates as 'privileges') were bilateral agreements between the Ottoman Empire and European states. They regulated the status of the nationals of these states and granted them privileges, including among others, protection of their respective consuls and residency in Egypt without paying taxes. On the extraterritorial legal identities in Egypt, see: Ziad Fahmy, "Jurisdictional Borderlands: Extraterritoriality and 'Legal Chameleons' in Precolonial Alexandria, 1840-1870," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 55, 2013, nº 2, p. 305-329, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23526383>.

[38] Annalaura Turiano and Joseph Viscomi, "From immigrants to emigrants: Salesian education and the failed integration of Italians in Egypt, 1937-1960," *Modern Italy*, 23, 2018, nº 1, p. 1-17, p. 9, <doi:10.1017/mit.2017.47>.

[39] For further information on the *koinotētes'* education and the shift in their curriculum in the 1960s and 1970s, see: Eftychia Mylona, "'Our Greek dignity and our educational autonomy': Arabic language teaching in Greek schools, 1950s to 1970s," in Sarah Irving, Karène Sanchez, Lucia Admiraal and Rachel Mairs (eds), *Colonial*

late 1960s, when the new educational policies had already been introduced by Nasser, the curriculum of the Greek *koinotetes'* schools continued to emphasize the teaching of Ancient Greek and Modern Greek, Greek history and the Greek Orthodox faith.[40] Hence, the 'Greekness' Sandis mentioned entailed the preservation of the Greek language and culture, which the Alexandrian Greeks proudly maintained through their schools, and the loyalty and feelings of belonging to the Greek nation and state.

Indeed, some of the adaptation strategies the GKA employed were to protect the confines of the Greek community and secure the continuity of the Greek language among its members. In the following decades in particular, when the number of Greeks dropped even further, fears of assimilation increased, "reinforcing their (Greeks) feelings of collective survival among 'others' (Egyptians)."[41] Sandis emphasized that those Greek values 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 Greeks were, they had to carry 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, thus transmitting all these elements to their new homes. The GKA, as the diasporic institution responsible for the Greek community, through the financial and moral support it received from the Greek state (in this case from the military dictatorship) maintained its right to imagine and fashion the community's identification and belonging, even in periods of population shrinkage.[42]

### *Protecting the Citizens Through Philanthropy*

Through its affiliated institutions, the GKA, like other diasporic institutions, associations, and communal elites, simultaneously worked for philanthropic, political, and cultural causes.[43] The GKA attempted to maintain 'Greekness' and a sense of belonging among its members through its philanthropic institutions. Belonging was maintained through shared activities that the Benakeio orphanage organized for children, such as athletic events, scouting and school trips, in order to promote community feelings, and children's national and linguistic identity.[44] This was especially important in changing times as in the period of the 1960s and 1970s, when the community had decreased. The preservation of 'Greekness' came as a response to the increasing 'Egyptianess' in society and fears of assimilation.[45] Hence, the GKA's philanthropic

*Vocabularies: Teaching and Learning Arabic in Europe (1870-1970)*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press/AUP, forthcoming 2023.

[40] See, for example the curriculum of the Averofeio gymnasium in 1967 and 1968. *Katalogoi Mathētōn Averofeiou Gymnasiou* (students' lists), *1961-1975*, Files: Averofeio Gymnasio, 1961-1975, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias.

[41] Eirini Chrysocheri, "Boundaries and Margins: The Making of the 'Golden Cage'," *Anthropology of the Middle East*, 14, 2019, nº 1, p. 23-44, p. 41, <https://doi.org/10.3167/ame.2019.140103>.

[42] 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 Thekla Kyritsi and Nikos Christofis (eds), *Cypriot Nationalisms in Context: History, Identity and Politics*, Cham, Springer International Publishing/Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, p. 177-198.

[43] Khachig Tölölyan, "Elites and Institutions in the Armenian Transnation," *Diaspora*, 9, 2000, nº 1, p. 107-136, p. 107, <https://doi.org/10.3138/diaspora.9.1.107>.

[44] *Logodosia Etous 1965*, Ellēnikē en Alexandreias Koinotēs, ELIA Archive, p. 25-26.

[45] Irakleitos Souyioultzoglou, "Apo tin Istoria sti Mnimi: Ideologikes kai Fantasiakes Synathroiseis tis Ellinikis Paroikias stin Aigypto," [From History to Memory: Ideological and Imaginary Articulations of the Greek Community in Egypt] in Antonis Antoniou, Riki van Bouschoten, Antonis Dalkavoukis and Yorgos Tsiolis (eds), *Tautotites kai Eterotites se Periodous Krisis: Mnimi kai Vioafigisi*, Athens, Enosi Proforikis Istorias, forthcoming).

role in this process of adaptation was to emphasize children's shared linguistic heritage and Greek national identity through its institutions.

As mentioned in the introduction, I. Touloupas, the Greek General Consul, asked for the Kalogridis children's admission to the Benakeio and Kaniskereio orphanages, assigning responsibility to the GKA for their morality and guidance.[46] The first intervention came from the Greek Ibrahimia school board, which suggested the admission of the children to the orphanages. However, the parents seemed very negative towards the school's intervention, not wanting to admit their children to the orphanages. Touloupas had also interfered a few months earlier and invited Kalogridis to discuss the issue in his office. At first, Kalogridis rejected the offer made to him and his children, and stated that: "It's his right not to agree with a third party's suggestions.[47]" Kalogridis' response reveals that recipients did not always welcome such benevolence, and that it was most often negotiated. However, after a few months, as the Benakeio review indicates, the father ultimately accepted the children's admission.

As Table I below depicts, most of the children's admissions to the Benakeio orphanage were not due to orphanhood, but mostly to poverty or divorced parents. Therefore, it was natural for the Ibrahimia school to suggest the admission of the Kalogridis children into the institution:

Table I[48] : Children's admission to the Benakeio orphanage, 1967-1975

| Year | Total Number | Male | Female | Due to Divorce | Due to Poverty | Due to Orphanhood |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Oct 1967-Jan 1968 | 33 | 0 | 33 | 23 | 6 | 4 |
| Feb-Apr 1969 | 29 | 2 | 27 | 17 | 7 | 5 |
| July 1970 | 19 | 3 | 16 | 12 | 2 | 5 |
| Apr-Jun 1971 | 23 | 3 | 20 | 15 | 2 | 6 |
| May 1973 | 33 | 9 | 24 | 15 | 11 | 6 |
| 1974 (throughout the year) | 34 | 10 | 24 | 11 | 20 | 3 |
| Jan 1975 | 34 | 10 | 24 | 11 | 20 | 3 |

Orphanages and asylums were not only concerned about the wellbeing of orphans and destitute children and whether those children might be in (physical) danger. Rather, they were concerned about the moral danger they could pose to society in the future. These institutions aimed to form desirable citizens through the provision of education and skills beyond teaching literacy and mathematics. Their task was to equip young citizens to be useful to society without posing a danger to the society and the community.[49] Therefore, most of these institutions, whether state or community ones, had as their primary goal to fashion children into loyal and obedient citizens who would subsequently become useful actors in the labour market. In addition, many of these institutions claimed they had to fight against the children's moral and physical

[46] Letter from I.A. Touloupas to Eforeia Benakeiou Orphanotrofeiou, March 2, 1967, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias, nº 1474, File: Benakeio Orphanotrofeio.

[47] *Koinōnikē ekthesis anaforikōs me tēn periptōsin tōn teknōn Dimitriou KALOGRIDĒ,* X. Basileiadou-Beniou, March 1, 1967, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias, File: Benakeio Orphanotrofeio.

[48] *Benakeion Orfanotrofeion: Statistikai Plēroforiai*, 1965-1975, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias, File: Benakeio Orphanotrofeio.

[49] Heidi Morrison, "Nation-Building and Childhood in Early Twentieth Century Egypt," in Benjamin C. Fortna (ed.), *Childhood in the Late Ottoman Empire and After*, Leiden, Brill, 2016, p. 77, Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004305809_005>.

bankruptcy, especially those coming from the working class, as in the Kalogridis case, since their financial situation could corrode their morality.[50]

Destitute and abandoned children were not non-political. Unprotected children became part of demographic politics, nation-building and the processes of identity formation.[51] For example, in the Ottoman Empire, children became subject to reform agendas when questions of identity and citizenship arose. The centralization of modern states occasioned disputes over the citizenship status of abandoned and destitute children. Campaigns concerning those children by the state authorities, non-Muslim communities, or foreign missionaries, among other actors, did not derive from concern for the children's wellbeing, at least not exclusively, but rather from interest in their role as future members of society and citizens of an imagined community.[52]

This interest, and the new approach to children as actors in society, emerged within the context of the modern state and its new tools of governmentality, characteristics of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Therefore, the new forms of governmentalism within the modern state, for example the introduction of standard birth certificates and census records, raised questions about identity, citizenship and belonging, and hence control over the children. In addition, it was not uncommon for the state's administrators and diplomatic bodies to interfere in a family's affairs and request the replacement of parental authority by the state.[53] In the case under review, Touloupas saw in his role certain responsibilities as to how the Kalogridis children should be integrated into society, and more specifically into the confines of the Greek Alexandrian community, and how they would be best shaped as good citizens of the Greek nation beyond its borders. Hence, besides the wellbeing of the children, institutions and authorities put their emphasis on the children's identity formation and their belonging to the nation.

Moreover, as depicted in the table above, most of the children admitted to the Benakeio orphanage were female, pointing to the gendered aspect of philanthropy. Indeed, for unprotected girls, prostitution was seen as being the main moral threat. Therefore, the role of these institutions was to protect the girls' morality, and sexuality, so they would not pose any threat to society.[54] Furthermore, as mentioned above, philanthropic institutions aimed to form useful social and economic actors. Hence, a link between the orphanages and the labour market

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[50] Abd-el-aal Mahmood El Shawafdy refers to the 'Manna' of the GKA's asylum in Alexandria and how one of its goals was the physical and moral protection of working-class children. Abd-el-aal Mahmood El Shawafdy, "Ellēnoaigyptiakes pneumatikes scheseis sto 19o kai stis arches tou 20ou aiōna, me basē tis archeiakes pēges", PhD diss. University of Ioannina, 2009, p. 217.

[51] See, for example: Nazan Maksudyan, *Orphans and Destitute Children in the Late Ottoman Empire*, 1st ed., Syracuse/New York, Syracuse University Press, "Gender, culture, and politics in the Middle East", 2014; Lisa Pollard, "Egyptian by Association: Charitable States and Service Societies, circa 1850-1945", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 46, 2014, nº 2-Special Issue "Politics of Benevolence", p. 239-257, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43303141>; Nadir Özbek, "Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism, and the Hamidian Regime, 1876-1909", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 37, 2005, nº 1, p. 59-81, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3880082>.

[52] Nazan Maksudyan, *Orphans and Destitute…*, p. 10; p. 50.

[53] N. Maksudyan notes that Ottoman administrators, mostly from the diplomatic body in European cities, raised concerns over vagrant children; a reflection of how imported ideas from the 'West' on moral codes and social values were integrated into the Empire. Ibid. supra, p. 20; p. 84.

[54] On this matter, see: Hanan Hammad, "Regulating Sexuality: The Colonial–National Struggle over Prostitution after the British Invasion of Egypt", in Marilyn Booth and Anthony Gorman (eds), *The Long 1890s in Egypt, Colonial Quiescence, Subterranean Resistance*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2014, p. 195-221; Beth Baron, *Egypt as a Woman: Nationalism, Gender, and Politics*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2005.

was not uncommon. Many of these orphanages specialized in providing specific workshops and training and supplied labourers for factories and industries.[55] Therefore, these institutions reshaped the children's civic responsibilities and turned them into social and political actors by providing them with education, and later placing them in the labour market. In the specific case of the Benakeio orphanage, the orphanage personnel saw possibilities for the reintegration of these children into society by offering them a specific education that would prepare them for the labour market. In particular, the girls of the orphanage mostly studied at the school of fashion design (*Scholē Amfieseōs*). For example, according to the registration cards of the Benakeio, in July 1970 five out of sixteen female inmates, aged 16 to 19 years old, graduated from that school and left the orphanage. Several other girls followed in the 1970s.[56] In most cases, these young female employees were recruited by Greek employers, stressing the closed ethnic network in which some Greek businesses still operated, even after the population exodus in the early 1960s, and revealing solidarity networks among those who remained.

### *Maintaining Presence: The Role of Donations*

In order to continue its activities at the community's schools and orphanages, the GKA required resources, both material and human. At the beginning of the 1960s, most of the GKA's affiliated institutions were in deficit, as their expenses were more than their annual income. This was not a new phenomenon that occurred in the 1960s. Prior to this decade, many of the GKA's affiliated institutions were already in deficit. As the community shrank and its income decreased, the deficits increased, as did the GKA's concern for its properties. For example, in 1963, only the six churches and the cemeteries that belonged to the GKA were not faced with deficits. The Benakeio soup kitchen, the Benakeio orphanage, the Antoniadeio home for the elderly and the schools all operated without profit.[57]

The expense of repairs and maintenance of some of its estates also added considerable costs for the GKA. For instance, the thorough renovation of the Benakeion Orphanage was the biggest cost on the estate of the GKA for the year 1965, as its expenses reached 2,816 EGP. Together with the costs of its other buildings, such as painting the doors of the Salvageios commercial school, the GKA spent almost 5,000 EGP maintaining its properties that year.[58] In addition, its financial situation was worsened by several law suits the GKA faced.[59] Indeed, the financial situation of the institution was of great concern to its financial team, as its deficit reached 62,777 EGP for the year 1963. The GKA's debt to banks added another 52,740 EGP to this, with interest increasing annually.[60]

In order to relieve its financial burden, the GKA sold some of its properties and rented out others. Indeed, the GKA owned some profitable urban real estate in central areas of Alexandria, which it rented out as apartments, offices, and shops. Other sources of income were the GKA's annual membership fees, students' tuition fees, donations via its several charitable institutions, and income from the events the GKA or its affiliated institutions organized (for example the proceeds from lotteries). The GKA was also greatly supported by donations from individuals

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55 Nazan Maksudyan, *Orphans and Destitute…*, p. 94; 96.

56 *Benakeion Orfanotrofeion: Statistikai Plēroforiai*, 1965-1975, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas* Alexandreias, File: Benakeio Orphanotrofeio.

57 *Logodosia Etous 1963*, op. cit., p. 17; 19-24.

58 *Logodosia Etous 1965*, op. cit., p. 28-29.

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

60 *Logodosia Etous 1963*, op. cit., p. 60-61.

and associations, and most importantly from the Greek government, as mentioned above. Another source of income came from the properties it received from other Greek *koinotētes* and dissolved fraternities and associations that had suspended their activities. Even though the number of donations decreased compared to previous years, the GKA still received a significant amount of money from different parties, which allowed the institution to maintain its activities and exercise philanthropy through its institutions.

The GKA 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 enabled the GKA to continue its activities and cover the expenses of its affiliated institutions. Firstly, the donations by individuals had been numerous since the establishment of the GKA. For instance, Theocharis Kotsikas, one of the great benefactors of the GKA,[61] together with his wife, Angeliki, donated a significant sum of money to the GKA to build the Kotsikeio hospital, which was inaugurated in 1938 for the use of the Alexandrian community.[62] The Kotsikeio hospital belonged to the Greek state, but the GKA had full management of it. The hospital was built on land that was ceded by the Egyptian government to the GKA in 1931-1932 at half the actual value.[63] In addition, Greeks donated properties in prime locations. For example, in the 1960s, the GKA 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. The Papatheologou property was also given to the institution after the owner's death in June 1965.[64] The Greeks who donated to the institution received a special title, either benefactor or donor, depending on the amount of money they donated.[65] By giving a special place to donors and benefactors, the GKA created and emphasized the social status and posthumous fame of these individuals. This practice was also found in other philanthropic institutions (religious or not) in the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East which honoured donors and emphasized their posthumous fame. Even when the Greek community shrank, their donations and the references to them carried on as permanent acknowledgements in the GKA's statues, highlighting the continuity of support for the institution.

The second category of donations were properties the GKA received from other *koinotētes,*[66] Alexandrian fraternities and associations that could no longer survive as the number of Greeks decreased. Due to these donations, the GKA grew in responsibility and resources, as some of these institutions passed on considerable amounts of property. For example, on June 21st, 1973, the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* merged with the GKA. 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 *koinotēta* to the GKA, and immediately 8,000 EGP of this was used for repairs to the latter's buildings. The GKA also obtained all the property of the Ibrahimia *koinotēta,* and the Taxiarchōn church. In addition, all benefactors of the Ibrahimia *koinotēta* were named as benefactors of the GKA, a title that

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61 The name 'great benefactor' (*megalos euergetēs*) was given to Kotsikas by the GKA and stated as such in the report. *Logodosia Etous 1963*, op. cit., p. 55.

62 Alexander Kitroeff, *The Greeks and the Making…*, p. 127.

63 Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, op. cit., p. 99.

64 Papatheologou's property consisted of his mansion on Mustafa Pasha and his garage plot on Sultan Hussein. The GKA had the freehold of these properties from 1953, but obtained their usufruct in 1965 after his death. *Logodosia Etous 1965*, op. cit., p. 16-17.

65 On this point see: Matoula Tomara-Sideris, *Oi Ellēnes tou Kairou*, Athens, Kerkyra- Economia Publishing, 2007. In addition, Efthymios Souloyannis also dedicated a section in his book to the role of the benefactors of the Alexandrian community. Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, op. cit.

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

seemed to be considered greater than that of other *koinotētes*.[67] Similarly, in 1966 the GKA 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. 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.[68]

The GKA also received the properties of several dissolved fraternities that Greeks had established upon their arrival in Alexandria in the late 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, acquiring a sort of monopoly on the Greek's community's affairs. These fraternities were specific to places from which Greeks originated, [69] with links to certain islands, such as Kastellorizo, Kasos and Symi. Other fraternities or associations had a regional reference, such as the Asia Minor or the Peloponnese association. These fraternities financially supported the GKA through their donations in the 1960s, especially to the field of education. 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 at the Tositsaias-Averofeio school.[70]

The last category of donations throughout the 1960s and 1970s was the financial support the GKA received from the Greek government. As mentioned earlier, the GKA received a considerable amount of money for its schools. Aid from the Greek government for the GKA's overall management also expanded. For example, in 1965, the GKA received 57,780 EGP overall, of which 28,280 EGP was dedicated to its schools.[71] This aid strengthened the GKA's social and political capital. It was chosen as the most important vehicle for maintaining 'Greekness' in the diaspora. The exceptional position of the GKA and the important financial and moral aid it received from the Greek state was emphasized in one of the meetings the GKA held in the 1970s. Specifically, on March 27, 1973, the Greek consul in Alexandria and honorary president of the GKA, Christos Papadopoulos, attended one of the GKA's meetings. Papadopoulos stressed that the Greek community should continue to adapt its activities to the new Egyptian reality, and he scrutinized the GKA's privileged position, regarding the financial support it received from the Colonels at that time, 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-community and institutional reality.[72]"

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

[68] The official delivery of Mansoura's property to the GKA took place in 1987. Efthymios Souloyannis, *Ē Ellēnikē koinotēta Alexandreias*, op. cit., p. 269-270.

[69] The Cypriot fraternity was the first to be established in Alexandria in 1861. Manolis Gialourakis, *Ē Aigyptos tōn Ellēnōn*, Athens, Metropolis, 1967, p. 310-311.

[70] *Tositsaia kai Averofeios*: *Ekthesis Pepragmenōn Scholikou Etous 1963-1964*, June 17, 1964, File*: Allēlografia* (Correspondence), 1964, Archeio Ellēnikēs *Koinotētas Alexandreias*.

[71] *Logodosia Etous 1965*, op. cit., p. 17.

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

The exceptional position granted by the Colonels to the GKA in comparison to the other *koinotētes* in Egypt and Greek diasporic communities in general, was very much highlighted in this meeting. For the Greek consul, it was important that the GKA continue its activities uninterrupted, without having any concerns about its finances. Indeed, in March 1973, the Greek consular authorities emphasized the privileged position of the GKA given the financial and moral support it received, and in December of the same year, as discussed above, Sandis confirmed the GKA's exceptional position and its dedication to continuing to educate the nation. In return, the Greek authorities would secure financial support for the GKA, neglecting the needs of other *koinotētes*. The aid the GKA was receiving, both financial and moral, empowered its position in Egypt and maintained its philanthropic role through its institutions.

## Conclusion

As this article has demonstrated, as the community demographically declined in the 1960s and 1970s, the GKA attempted to maintain Greekness and a sense of belonging to the Greek nation among its members through its educational and philanthropic institutions. Since the beginning of their establishment, the *koinotētes* had as a primary goal the education of their members. However, the demographic shift in the early 1960s weakened the community's institutions, both in size and in terms of finances.

However, the continuous support by individuals, associations and the Greek government, and the merging of other *koinotētes* with it, enabled the GKA to continue its activities and preserve its capital. Its status as the most significant and privileged *koinotēta* in comparison to others, and in some instances across the Greek diaspora *koinotētes*, was maintained through the moral and financial support of representatives of the Greek state, especially during the period of the Greek Junta.

As such, the GKA could continue to perform its role as the value keeper and moral guide for the children of the community through its educational institutions and orphanages. Thus, philanthropy became a vehicle for the maintenance of Greekness, especially in times when the community's members had decreased and fears of assimilation into Egyptian society intensified. The Greek state invested in preserving the Greek diaspora in Egypt, which consequently enabled one of its representative bodies, the GKA, to continue fashioning the community's identification and belonging.