

THE EPISCOPAL SYNOD OF THE METROPOLIS OF THESSALONIKI
AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR TODAY*

The Episcopal Synods, as an administrative instrument for a metropolitan see, constitute a canonical institution, encountered from antiquity in the Orthodox Church¹. The institution of the Episcopal Synod of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki, which was abolished by decree of the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in October 1924², is included within these canonical structures. Specifically, during the sixth century, we have the first indication of the existence of some form of a synodical system in the Metropolis of Thessaloniki "Congregata synoda de paroecia ecclesiae Thessalonicensis", as mentioned in a report of 519 A.D. to Pope Ormisdis (514-523)³. At any rate, the most ancient Diocese, whose district was subordinate to the Metropolis of Thessaloniki in the establishment of the Synodical system, was the Diocese of Dion, whose Bishop Palladios participated in the Synod of Sardica in 347⁴. The Diocese of Dion in time became identified with the Diocese of Kitros or Pydna. The Bishops of Kitros were the "protothronos" in the Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki, i.e. the first-in-rank of all the Bishops under the Metropolitan, probably because they presided over the oldest of the Dioceses. And evidently, as the "protothronos" he substituted the Metropolitan in his absence.

Under the Emperor Leo the Wise (886-912) the institution of the Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki developed significantly for two main reasons. First, during the 9th century, Thessaloniki was organized into a separate

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1. For "Provincial Synods" or "Episcopal Synods" see the following sacred canons: Apostles c. 37, First Ecum. Synod c. 5, Fourth Ecum. Synod c. 29, Synod of Troullo c. 8, Seventh Ecum. Synod c. 6, Synod of Antioch c. 8, in A. Alivizatos, *Oi 'Ieroi Kanones*, [The Sacred Canons], Athens 1923, pp. 17, 35-36, 65, 90-91, 137, 171; and Maximos, *Metrop. of Sardis, To Oikoumenikon Patriarcheion en ti 'Orthodoxw 'Eκκλησία*, [The Ecumenical Patriarchate in the Orthodox Church], Thessaloniki, 1972, pp. 45-50.

2. The Synodical Decree was announced in the Document prot. no. 4067 of October 28, 1924, and was published in *Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς* 9 (1925) 24-26. It reappears in the addendum of this study, note 8.

3. T. Tafel, *De Thessalonica eiusque agro dissertatio geographica*, London 1972 (a reprint of the first edition, Berlin, 1839), p. 55.

4. in V. Mansi, vol. 3, p. 39; Cf. Tafel, *ibid.* p. 98.

Theme, and second, the Metropolis in an intense missionary effort undertook to christianize the local pagan slavic races. The number of provincial Bishops subordinate to the Metropolitan was thus increased, in order to meet the growing manifold ecclesiastical needs in the Theme^{4a}. During the 10th century the following Dioceses formed the jurisdiction of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki: "(1) Kitros (2) Veria (3) Drougouvitia (4) Servia (5) Cassandria (6) Kampania or Kastriion (7) Petra (8) Herculia or Ardamerion (9) Ierissos or Mt. Athos (10) Lité and Rentena and (11) Vardariote"⁵.

The Synod of Thessaloniki developed greatly and reached its prime during the 13th⁶ and especially the 14th centuries, when through the ecclesiastical reforms of Emperor Andronikos (1282-1398) the Throne of Thessaloniki was elevated from the 16th to the 11th rank in the hierarchical order of the Metropolinates and Episcopates of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. During the 14th century twelve Dioceses were under the Metropolis of Thessaloniki: (1) Kitros or Pydna, (2) Veria, (3) Drougouvitia, (4) Servia, (5) Cassandria and Potidea, (6) Kampania and Kastriion, (7) Petra, (8) Herculia or Ardamerion, (9) Ierissos or Mt. Athos, (10) Lité, (11) Vardariote, (12) Lycostomion or the Valley of Tempe and Platamon⁷.

In time these Dioceses underwent changes both in name and in number. The Dioceses of Veria, Cassandria and Servia were raised to Metropolinates. The Diocese of Vardariote was replaced by that of Polyané shortly after the reforms of Andronicus II, while those of Lité and Drougouvitia were merged into the neighboring Dioceses of Veria, Kampania and Polyané⁸. Thus, by the 19th century the dioceses under the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki had decreased to seven.

After special research in the historical archives of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki, which constitute the basic source material for the study of its Synodical system, I selected the relative information concerning the activ-

4a. D. Obolenski, *The Byzantine Commonwealth Eastern Europe, 500-1453*, New York 1971, pp. 77-79.

5. Tafel, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57. (Specifically, about each of the above Dioceses see pp. 57-98).

6. *Innocentius III Papa Romanus*, Epistolarum libro 15, 18, Paris 1682, vol. II, pp. 607: "Ad haec ipsi Thessalonicensi metropoli suam confirmatus provinciam, in quo subscriptos episcopatus specialiter nominibus duximus exprimendos, videlicet: Citrensem, Beriensem, Vardariensem, Serviensem, Platamonensem, Langadensem, Ardameriensem, Hierissiensem et Cassandrensem". Cf. Tafel, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

7. O. Tafrali, *Thessalonique au XIV^e siècle*, Paris 1913, pp. 90-93.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93. Cf. Letsas, 'Ιστορία τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης [History of Thessaloniki], Thessaloniki 1963, pp. 57-59, which contains in translation the chapter about Bishops in Thessaloniki in the work of Tafrali, pp. 90-93.

ity of this institution during the fifty year period prior to its abolition (1870-1924). This data, once classified and evaluated, provided a general picture of the organization, operation and significance of the Synod of Thessaloniki, which (city) as an important nerve-center of the Patriarchate, exercised great influence over the other Provinces of the Ecumenical Throne in Macedonia.

On the basis, then, of this material and the relative, while extremely limited, bibliography we will now deal with the following aspects of this Synodical institution: (1) Name, (2) Composition, (3) Convocation, (4) Duties and Responsibilities, (5) its Abolition, and (6) in general, its importance and its influence on the life of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki and by extension on the whole of Macedonia.

Name. The Bishops, in their letters to the Metropolitan, when referring to this institution, use the following names: "Provincial Synod", "Holy Provincial Synod", "Local Provincial Synod", "Holy and Sacred Provincial Synod" and "Local Synod"⁹. On the other hand, the Patriarchal Decree which abolished it officially used the term "Episcopal Synod"¹⁰. The characterizations of this Synod as "Provincial", "Local" and "Episcopal" express both its canonical and essential content; for what we are talking about is precisely a Council of Bishops under a Metropolitan of a specific province of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. These names are, also, encountered in the Sacred Canons¹¹.

Composition. During the period we are dealing with, the Metropolis of Thessaloniki at first had under its jurisdiction the Dioceses of Kitros, Kampania, Polyané, Ierissos, and Mt. Athos, Ardamerion, Petra and Platamon¹². By the time of the abolition of the Synod in 1924 the number of Dioceses had decreased again to five. The dioceses of Platamon (in 1881) and Petra (in 1896) were merged into the neighboring Sees of Kitros, Elason and Larissa¹³. The Bishops of the aforementioned dioceses comprised

9. Archives of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki (to be referred to as AMT), File 61a: 1449; File 63: 4705, 4710, 4726; File 65: 4879; File 108: 5094; File 125, an unnumbered written invitation to Bishop Joachim of Polyané (1892-1899) to participate in the deliberations of the Episcopal Synod, prot. no. 47, dated February 14, 1895, which is published in the addendum, no. 1.

10. See *Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς* 9 (1925) 24-25, and in the addendum, no. 8. See also AMT, File 483, the unnumbered improvised minutes of the Episcopal Synod, 9th period, Meeting of 9-10 December, 1922.

11. See Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 35-36, 65, 90-91, 137, 171.

12. A. Angelopoulos, *Αι ξένοι προπαγάνδαι εἰς τὴν ἐπαρχίαν Πολυανῆς κατὰ τὴν περίοδον 1870-1912*, [Foreign Propaganda in the Province of Polyane during the period 1870-1912], Thessaloniki 1973, p. 14, note 1.

13. *Ibid.*, cf. A. Angelopoulos, "Ἡ συμβολὴ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς Πέτρας εἰς τὰ ἔθνικα καὶ

the canonical Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki under the presidency of the Metropolitan. The "protothronos", as has been already noted, was the Bishop of Kitros¹⁴.

Participation or meddling in the affairs and functions of the Episcopal Synod by neighboring Metropolitans without the express consent of the Patriarchate was forbidden and considered uncanonical. Whenever such interventions were attempted, serious problems resulted, as was the case, e.g. of Metropolitan Anthimos of Vodena who interfered in the matter of the election of the Bishop of Petra. This action was condemned by the Patriarchate as a clear impermissible intervention in the affairs of another Metropolis and, therefore, uncanonical¹⁵.

During the 14th century, when the institution was at its prime, the Emperor and members of the Royal family, (if and when they sojourned in Thessaloniki), were permitted to attend the sessions of the Synod in imitation of the similar practice in Constantinople. In their absence this courtesy was extended to the Governor, the Judge of the Army, the Commandant and the city elders, especially in instances when ecclesiastical trials were held for heresy or severe injustices¹⁶. In these instances, the presence of civil authorities was not a declaration of the active interference of the State in the affairs of the Church, but, on the contrary, it signaled both the moral support of the State in the work of the Synod and the recognition of its decisions.

Concovation. The Synod was convened regularly twice each year, in

ἐκπαιδευτικά προβλήματα τοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ τῆς περιοχῆς Ὀλύμπου 1890-1896" [The Contribution of the Diocese of Petra to the Ethnic and Educational Problems of the Hellenes in the area of Olympus 1890-1896], *Μακεδονικά* 14 (1974) 64-83; and in the relative bibliography in *Μακεδονικά* 15 (1975) 397-398.

14. The meaning of the term "protothronos" (πρωτόθρονος) is consistent with canon 39 of the Synod of Carthage. See Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 245. The term "protothronos" was also preserved in the phéme of the Bishop of Kitros, which was chanted at the Divine Liturgy from the time of the Turkish occupation to 1924, when the Diocese was elevated to a Metropolis: "Παρθενίου τοῦ πανιερωτάτου καὶ Θεοπροβλήτου ἐπισκόπου τῆς Ἀγιωτάτης Ἐπισκοπῆς Κίτρου καὶ Αἰκατερίνης, καὶ πρωτοθρόνου τῆς Ἀγιωτάτης Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης, ὑπερτίμου καὶ ἐξάρχου πάσης Πιερίας, ἡμῶν δὲ πατρός καὶ ποιμενάρχου πολλὰ τὰ ἔτη" (Parthenios, the most-reverend and God-chosen Bishop of the holy Episcopate of Kitros and Ekaterini, and the Protothronos of the holy Metropolis of Thessaloniki, the most-honored and Exarch of all Pieria, and our father and pastor, may his years be many).

15. T. Karantzalis - D. Gonis, *Κώδιξ τῆς ἀλληλογραφίας τοῦ Βοδενῶν Ἀγαθαγγέλου* [Codex of correspondance of Agathangelos Metropolitan of Edessa], Thessaloniki, 1975, p. 13.

16. Miklosich et Müller, *Acta* I, p. 177, Act of 1337 A.D. Cf. Letsas, *Ἱστορία τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης* [History of Thessaloniki], p. 53.

accordance with the provisions of the sacred Canons for Provincial Synods¹⁷. The first meeting took place immediately after the Feast of St. Gregory Palamas, on the second Sunday of Lent "at which Feast the reverend Bishops under the jurisdiction of the Metropolis were present by ancient custom"¹⁸. The second regular meeting was, also, held in Thessaloniki during October, following the Feast of St. Demetrios, when, once again most of the Bishops would assemble for the celebration of the Feast of the City's Patron Saint¹⁹.

We have instances, also, when the Synod met in special session. The Synod, e.g., convened extraordinarily early in July, 1878, for the purpose of electing a Bishop for the diocese of Kitros. The vacancy was created unexpectedly by the flight into free Greece of its Bishop, Nicholas, who had participated in the revolution of February 1878 in Pieria and Olympus²⁰, and was a fugitive from the Turks. Similarly, a special session was held in December 1922, because of the extraordinary national calamities that occurred during that troublesome period²¹.

Finally, we come across the phenomenon when the Synod did not meet either in regular or extraordinary session for a long period of time. Thus, e.g., the Synod did not convene at all for six years during 1917-22 (this was certainly by exception) because of the extraordinary political, ethnic and ecclesiastical events of that period, with Constantinople, Athens and Thessaloniki as the centers of the turbulence. As it is known, a Conference of the Hierarchy of the New Lands was held in Thessaloniki during April-May 1917. In accordance with the decision of these Hierarchs, and by virtue of the Government Order No. 2386 of May 24, 1917, a five-member "Archieratical Ecclesiastical Council" was established. This Council according to its rules, constituted "temporarily, the Administrative Authority of the Church serving under the supreme spiritual leadership of the Ecumenical Patriarch", and was charged with the responsibility of dealing with the abnormal ecclesiastical conditions in which the Metropoles of the New Lands found themselves to be in²². Thus, the "Archieratical Ecclesiastical

17. Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 38, 65, 171. In accordance with canon 8 of the Troullo Synod and canon 6 of the Seventh Ecumenical Synod, the Provincial Synod, due to difficult conditions, could be convoked once a year. *Ibid.* pp. 90-91, 137.

18. AMT, File 125, unnumbered document, published in the addendum, no. 1.

19. AMT, File 63, 4705. The convocation of the Synods during the Spring and Autumn follows generally an ancient tradition, consistent with the canons of the Church. Cf. Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 17, 36, 91, 171.

20. AMT, File 63, 4710; file 64, 4799.

21. AMT, File 483, unnumbered improvised Minutes of the Episcopal Synod, 9th Period, of the meeting on December 9-10, 1922.

22. See "Internal Regulations of the Archieratical Ecclesiastical Council" article I,

Council" replaced, (certainly only in the economy of the Church), the Episcopal Synod from May 1917 to September 1920, given the fact, also, that Metropolitan Gennadios of Thessaloniki presided over this Council with the Bishops subordinate to him participating in it. A second basic reason, which caused the Synod not to convene for yet another two years, was the Patriarchal crisis created in 1921. Patriarch Germanos was forced to resign. The election of his successor Metropolitan Meletios of Athens was not recognized by the Hierarchy. Because of these complications, it was, also, conceivable that the decisions and actions of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate would be not to be recognized since Meletios presided over the Synod. In view of these difficulties the Synod of Thessaloniki did not meet during 1921-1922, since its own decisions had to be ratified by the Synod of Constantinople, which was itself under question in some quarters.

The Synod finally was convoked after a period of six years on December 9, 1922. In his opening statement at the first session, Metropolitan Gennadios explained clearly the reasons which had imposed the suspension of the work of the Synod, saying: "Our Synod, reverend and esteemed Brothers, is meeting for the first time since April 14, 1917, when it was last convoked at the time of the Provisional Government of Thessaloniki. The reasons for not convening the Synod till now are basically two. (a) As you know, the Archieratical Ecclesiastical council was established, and operated from the City by the express will of the Hierarchs who met here and by Order No. 2586 of the Provisional Government, dated May 24, 1917. The function of this Council was later terminated by virtue of Law and Executive Royal Decree on September 30, 1970. Since the Bishops of our Metropolis were, also, responsible to this Council, over which I presided by decision of the Conference of the Hierarchy; and since the unforeseen matters of the Bishops were discussed and solved within this Council, the convocation of our Episcopal Synod was deemed unnecessary. (b) The vacancy on the Patriarchal throne created through the circumstances surrounding the resignation of Patriarch Germanos, of blessed memory; and the ensuing ecclesiastical crisis brought on by the election of his All-Holiness Metropolitan Meletios of Athens, further delayed the convocation of our Synod. As you know, the Hierarchy of the State did not recognize the election. I convened here during December 1921, and proclaimed the election of November 25 as invalid. Further, given the fact that the war continued, the irregularity in the national matters persisted, and that no matters of a pressing nature appeared, we did not consider it necessary to call you together in accordance with custom, either

once or twice annually. Thus the convocation of the Episcopal Synod was postponed till now..."²³.

In accordance with Church canons²⁴ the initiative for convoking the Synod lay exclusively with the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki. One month prior to the date set for the meeting he summoned to Thessaloniki by written invitation the Bishops under his jurisdiction to participate in the work of the Synod. They, in turn, were obliged to respond in time, indicating whether they would attend the Synod, or in event of hindrance, would entrust their proxy to another Bishop. In the latter case, they would accordingly advise the said bishop, or directly inform the Metropolitan of their decision. Often, e.g., the Bishops of Platamon and Petra entrusted their proxy to other Bishops, because, they usually could not be present in Thessaloniki for the work of the Synod due to the instability and urgency of events in their provinces²⁵. It must be noted that the prerogative of the Metropolitan to convene the Synod, was not without a check. He planned it always in co-operation with the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate, which was informed about the date of the meetings and the agenda, (especially when it came to the matter of the election of bishops to fill vacancies), and gave its approval for the convocation of the Synod²⁶. Otherwise, without this prior approval, it was possible that the decisions of the Episcopal Synod would not be recognized by Constantinople. Thus, e.g., Metropolitan Kallinikos, having convened the Episcopal Synod without the permission of the Patriarchate, and having filled the vacancy in the Diocese of Petra (1854), was rebuked by the Patriarch for "having elected and ordained Bishop Agathangelos of Petra, upon the death of Dionysios, though he was obliged first to advise us of this, an event not now recognized by the Church"²⁷.

Duties and Responsibilities. The Episcopal Synod, as the supreme authority of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki, in its own right or in cooperation with the Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate dealt with administrative, judicial, pastoral, and highly sensitive ethnic matters in the area of its jurisdiction.

One essential administrative function of the Synod was the election

23. AMT, File 483, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

24. See canon 6, Seventh Ecumenical Council; canons 9, 19 and 20 Council of Antioch. Cf. Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 137, 167, 170-171.

25. AMT, File, 63, 4705, 4710, 4720, 4726; File 64, 4790. The manner of operation of these Bishops is in accordance with the spirit of the canons of the Church concerning the convocation of Provincial Synods, see canon 4, First Ecumenical Synod, and canon 19, Synod of Antioch. Cf. Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 170-171.

26. AMT, File 483, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

27. G. Sakellariopoulos, "Αγαθάγγελος Μητροπολίτης τῆς Ἑδέσσης" [Agathangelos Metropolitan of Edessa], *Μακεδονική Ζωή* 96 (1974) 40.

of Bishops to Dioceses validly vacated either through the death or resignation of the bishop. The filling of vacant sees followed certain procedures. Qualified clerics were first enrolled on the Patriarchal list of eligible candidates for the episcopacy upon the nomination of their own Bishop and the testimony of the elders of the community in which they served. In this case, the nomination was submitted by the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki, in his roll as president of the Synod²⁸.

When a canonical vacancy occurred in a diocese, it was announced to the Patriarchal Synod, which in turn granted permission for the convocation (in regular or extraordinary session) of the Episcopal Synod in order to fill that vacancy. This was then accomplished either through the election of a cleric on the list of eligible candidates for the Episcopacy, or through the selection and transfer of a Bishop from another Diocese. During the session a list with the names of three candidates was prepared. Following this "on the motion and permission of the president, the Bishops departed, usually to the church of the Eleousa, nearest the Metropolitan residence". There, "through the invocation of the Holy Spirit, and casting their canonical ballots for the election of the worthy person of the three candidates for the taking up of the archieratical authority and the pastoral staff", they chose one of the three candidates. The entire procedure was then registered in a Memorandum in the "sacred Codex of the Holy Metropolis of Thessaloniki"²⁹. After the election, the Bishop-elect offered a brief message of

28. AMT, File 22, 3233. "Most Reverend Metropolitan of Thessaloniki... having received the brotherly letter of your Eminence, dated the 20th of the month of December last, we became aware of the claim you make upon the Church, that the Chancellor of your Metropolis, the reverend sir Gregory Lesvios, — a graduate of the Theological School, and having also served under the Bishop of Tornovon, sir Gregory, as a teacher both in his home-country some years ago and in Galazios, — be inscribed on the list of eligible candidates for the Episcopacy. And simultaneously, your Eminence, proposes the enrollment on the list of your Archdeacon sir Constantine, having also enclosed copies of letters of certification from the place he has served concerning both his studies and his good and blameless life. The letter, therefore, of your Eminence, having been read in Synod, and your letter of introduction and claims having been accepted, seeing that, on the one hand the Chancellor sir Gregory after an examination having been made of the Rolls of the eligible candidates was found to have been inscribed in them upon the proposal of Bishop Meletios of Mytilene of blessed memory, it remains, for the order of things, that the certificates concerning him from the communities in which, and the persons besides whom he happened to have served be forwarded to the Church; and on the other hand, the certificates of the Archdeacon of Your Eminence must be invested with the required confirmations, — we notify your Eminence, that having looked after the documents of both, you may forward them to the Church for further action. February 16, 1876".

29. AMT, File 103, 5094 and File 147, 2583, which contains "Memoranda" of the election of the Bishop of Polané, published at the conclusion of this study, under nos. 2 and 3.

acceptance and thanks before the Episcopal Synod³⁰. The election was then announced by telegram and letter to the Ecumenical Patriarchate by the president of the Provincial Synod.

In some very rare circumstances it was possible, with the approval of the Metropolitan, for the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate to assume the task of filling an episcopal vacancy within the Metropolis of Thessaloniki. In such cases, the Metropolitan reserved the right to nominate one of the three candidates if an election were to take place. Thus, e.g., in November 1902 the Ecumenical Patriarchate intervened to bring order to the ecclesiastical affairs of the Diocese of Kitros. Theocletos, the Bishop of Kitros, due to grave illness and his capricious personality, had at the time come into open rift with his flock, the community elders of Katerini, and even with Alexander, the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki. In the face of this intolerable situation the Ecumenical Patriarchate had suggested, (as one gathers from the letter of the Metropolitan responding to the Patriarchate), "the settlement of the matter, either within the Provincial Synod, or by referring it for disposal to the Holy Synod of your most reverend All-Holiness, reserving for myself the right to nominate one of the candidates for a vacant throne"³¹. Metropolitan Alexander, with the explanation that the troublesome times made the convocation of the Synod difficult, allowed the matter to be settled in accordance with the judgement and decision of Patriarchal Synod³².

During the time the institution of the Episcopal Synod was at its prime, the election to fill a vacancy on the Metropolitan throne of Thessaloniki was conducted by the Synod, with the participation of representatives from the clergy and the laity, and took on a festive nature³³. But the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate, also, had the right to elect the Metropolitan directly. In the end this practice prevailed, in spite of the objections of the local authorities.

Administrative matters of a general nature, which also occupied the Synod, other than those mentioned, were the affairs of the monastic communities. But these rarely appeared on the agenda, because they were usually settled directly by the Metropolitan or by the local Bishops. The other

30. AMT, File 58, and File 147, 2589, which contains handwritten messages of thanks of Theocletos the Bishop of Petra upon his election to the vacant diocese of Kitros; and of Parthenios Vardakas, the Bishop-elect of Kitros, published at the conclusion of this paper under nos. 4 and 5. No. 6 constitutes a letter of resignation.

31. AMT, File 123, unnumbered document to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, prot. no. 397, received on November 29, 1902, p. I.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

33. Migne, *P. G.* 151, 617-628. Cf. Letsas, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

routine administrative and financial matters were divided among the Metropolitan, the Bishops, and their agencies for disposition in accordance with the sacred canons³⁴.

The Episcopal Synod, also, functioned as a Spiritual Court: as a Court of First-Degree for the Hierarchs; and as a Court of Second-Degree for the presbyters, deacons and the monastic orders. If we are to judge from the dispute between Metropolitan Alexander and Bishop Theocletos, which we mentioned above, the differences between a Bishop and the ruling Metropolitan could be judged and settled by the Episcopal Synod, as a Court of First-Degree. But, since the Metropolitan, as the presiding officer had to take such an initiative, he avoided calling the Synod, transferring the matter to the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate for final settlement. Unfortunately, the facts I found concerning the judicial authority of the Episcopal Synod were few. Thus, for the present, it is difficult to draw a picture of it. Basically, the Synod complied with what was set forth in the sacred canons on matters pertaining to ecclesiastical justice³⁵.

The pastoral responsibilities were divided among the Metropolitan and the Bishops, in accordance with the sacred canons³⁶. The Episcopal Synod exercised general supervision over the pastoral ministry. Particular problems were evaluated on the basis of the reports that each Bishop was required to submit annually (or upon special request) to the Metropolitan. The Metropolitan drew upon these reports to discern common and related problems. He then brought them before the Synod for discussion and for the formulation of joint programs and actions to better meet the pastoral needs and problems of the local church.

Parallel to this, as the one responsible for the spiritual welfare of the flock entrusted to his care, and the person who expressed the spirit of the Episcopal Synod, the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki actively looked after the pastoral work of the church. He often addressed special pastoral encyclicals and letters to the Bishops, the clergy and the faithful, underscoring the particular obligations of the clergy and especially of his fellow-bishops, pointing out solutions, or supporting and encouraging them in their ef-

34. See VII Ecumenical Synod c. 6 and Synod of Antioch. c. 9. Cf. Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 137, 167.

35. See Apostolic Canons c. 74 and 75; II Ecum. Synod c. 6; IV Ecum. Synod c. 9; Synod of Antioch c. 14 and 15; Synod of Sardica c. 3, 4, 14; Synod of Carthage c. 19. Cf. Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 44-46, 61-62, 169, 177-178, 187-188, 238.

36. See Apostolic Canons, c. 39, 41, 58, 59; I Ecum. Synod c. 5; Troullo Synod c. 19; VII Ecum. Synod c. 6; Synod of Antioch. c. 9. cf. Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, pp. 18, 22, 35, 96-97, 137, 167.

forts. Thus, e.g., Theokletos the Bishop of Kitros responding to the Metropolitan in a letter dated March 12, 1891, makes special mention of the consoling and encouraging letters the Metropolitan addressed to him, and about his pastoral obligation to forward his report on his diocese. "I received three most-respected letters of your All-Holiness", writes Theokletos to the Metropolitan, "of which the one dated December 1890 consoling and encouraging... And especially thanking your All-Holiness for the content of the first, and unable to express adequately my gratitude, for that letter was indeed for me most soothing, being as it was full of paternal affection and sweetness, I pray the Lord on High will preserve you from every distress and assault of the Evil One, and will shower upon you myriad and varied blessings... and I send enclosed my diocesan report"³⁷.

The institution of the Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki was very effective and beneficial not only in matters of administration, justice, and pastoral concerns, mentioned above, but especially in the area of the ethnic affairs of the Hellenes of Macedonia in general, and of those of the metropolitan area of Thessaloniki, which included Central Macedonia, in particular. During the period under discussion, the Dioceses of the Metropolis in Macedonia and in Thrace were called upon to meet the onslaught of foreign propaganda both ethnic and ecclesiastical: the Bulgarian Exarchate, Serbian, Roumanian, Uniate and Protestant, all of which spread across the metropolitan area of Thessaloniki³⁸. After the liberation of Macedonia from the Ottoman Turks during the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, and the historical events that followed, the Hellenes were confronted with yet another immense ethnic matter: the destruction and uprooting of the Hellenes of Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace. The repercussions of this national tragedy were acute in this Metropolitan province, because of the massive wave of refugees which inundated Thessaloniki and the bordering provinces³⁹. In both of these national trials the Episcopal Synod contributed greatly to the preservation and the restoration of the ethnic heritage and the pride of the Hellenes in Macedonia.

Specifically, lasting witnesses to the important roll the Episcopal Synod played in the chapter of resistance to and the confrontation of the foreign propaganda are the countless reports, letters and other documents of Metropolitan, bishops, priests, community-elders, teachers, and citizens from all of Macedonia addressed to the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki and to the Episcopal Synod. This correspondence described the drama played against

37. AMT, File 63, 4726, pp. 1-2.

38. Angelopoulos, *Αί ξένοι προπαγάνδαι*, [Foreign Propaganda] pp. 11-14.

39. AMT, File 483, unnumbered minutes of the meeting of December 9, 1922, p. 3.

the hellenic communities, and expressed their need for protection and their plea for the intervention of the Metropolitan to save them. All this material comprises (in part) the historical archives of the Metropolis⁴⁰. And the Metropolis in turn, as we learn from the vast number of the relative documents, immediately took necessary action, bringing these cases before the Administrator of Thessaloniki and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. They were asked to intervene before Ottoman Authorities and the foreign Consulates in Thessaloniki, and to plead the case for, and to support the persecuted faithful in Central Macedonia and the other Metropolises, which were politically under the Vilayet of Thessaloniki.

The greater part of the codices and minutes of the Episcopal Synod have been lost⁴¹. Needless to say, this has created a great vacuum. No doubt, they would have provided the historian with countless examples and proofs of the Synod's tremendous contributions in the struggle to combat foreign propaganda. While from the extant documents we are able to gain a clear picture of the tragedy suffered by the Hellenes in Macedonia, we are unable to discern in them the concrete actions taken by the Synod. Let us hope that the discovery of these materials, if they have not already been destroyed, will shed greater light on the activities of the Synod. There is no doubt, however, that the Synod under the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki during its regular and special annual sessions, reviewed the course of the national affairs in the areas under its responsibility; and through its president continually coordinating, in cooperation with the center of Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the struggles for the preservation of the Orthodox faith and the Nation against all foreign propaganda.

The destruction of Asia Minor and the evacuation of Eastern Thrace resulted in the creation of yet another immense problem: the influx of countless refugees. In the district of Thessaloniki alone, over one hundred thousand refugees found asylum and succor. The Episcopal Synod in one meeting after another discussed, and in successive actions contributed to the solutions of the refugee problem in the districts under its jurisdiction. The Metropolitan

40. The historical archives of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki in 58 units contains 1359 Files of which Files 1-311, 404-563, 932-961, 1119-1216 and 1267-1349 include the relative material for our study. Cf. A. Angelopoulos, "Τὸ Ἱστορικὸν Ἀρχεῖον τῆς μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης" [The Historical Archives of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki], *Μακεδονικά* 15 (1975) 361-365.

41. In accordance with the information provided by the Metropolitan of Tyana, Pan-teleimon Rodopoulos, Professor of the Theological School of the University of Thessaloniki, the Minutes of the Provincial Synod of Thessaloniki, were until recent times in the Archives of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki, since he himself had read a section of them.

and the Bishops took charge of the efforts to assist all the refugees, and more especially the orphans and the clerics⁴². Church Institutions and Monasteries were set aside to house the refugees; new parishes and special allowances were given the refugee priests; and in general the Hierarchs of the Synod undertook a crusade to hearten and strengthen the people⁴³. Among the many assets of this Synod, is included the spiritual, moral and material contributions that the Church of Thessaloniki made to the refugees, which was of immense national significance and value.

The minutes of the meeting of the Episcopal Synod held on December 9, 1922, reflect the extent of the work undertaken to aid, encourage and rehabilitate the refugees. The following terse words are noted: "Then his All-Holiness the President, recounting briefly the events of the great calamity which befell the Nation through the destruction of Asia Minor on account of the withdrawal of our Army and the evacuation of Eastern Thrace, he expressed his thanks to their Graces the Bishops, for the activities in which they were engaged and still continue to launch in their provinces for the protection of our unfortunate brothers from Asia Minor and Thrace, who have sought refuge in the motherland; and he asked them, at the same time, to help the work of the Central Committee for the Aid of the Refugees, which was under his chairmanship, inasmuch as the largest concentration of these refugees, amounting to over one hundred thousand souls, is to be found here (in Thessaloniki), distributed in the camps within the city, and outside the city in the settlements of Kalamaria, Toumpa, Charilaou, Charman-Kioi, and Lempété. The Episcopal Synod, thanking his All-Holiness the President, declared that it will continue to fulfill the duties placed upon it, and prayed that the Lord God becoming merciful to our so terribly tested nation, will deliver it from further trials, and will grant to it domestic tranquility and peace abroad, and lead it back to its former glory and fame⁴⁴.

The Abolition of the Institution. The abolition of the Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki came about for internal and external reasons, which even though temporary, the Church was unable to overcome. Thus she proceeded to abolish this basic cell of ecclesiastical administration so clearly provided for in the sacred canons of the Orthodox Church.

From the point of its internal structure the institution, at various times-experienced crises, due especially to the inability of certain local dioceses

42. AMT, File 483, unnumbered Minutes..., of the meeting of December 10, 1922, pp. 1-5, which contains a special word concerning the problem of the refugees.

43. *ibid.*, also cf. *Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς* 1921-1923, where one may find much information about the refugee matter of the metropolitan see of Thessaloniki.

44. AMT, File 483, unnumbered Minutes of the meeting of December 9, 1922, p. 3.

to survive. But a solution was always found, by merging these weaker dioceses with the stronger neighboring ones. The institution came out stronger as a result, regardless of the fact that a lesser number of Bishops sat in the Synod. Thus, at least during the period we are examining, it was repeatedly necessary to decrease the number of dioceses of the Metropolitan Province of Thessaloniki, though reversely the problems and the needs of the local church increased, and made the existence and operation of the Synod necessary.

During 1923 the Synod decided to further decrease its membership from 5 to 4, abolishing the then vacant and smallest of the Episcopates Ardamerion, merging it with the neighboring Diocese of Ierissos and Mt. Athos⁴⁵. At precisely this period, when the remaining Episcopates were made definitely viable, through the abolition of the last unproductive one, a different and contrasting spirit pervaded the Synod. It was becoming more apparent that the Bishops were themselves desirous of being elevated to the rank of Metropolitan, and their respective diocese to a Metropolis⁴⁶.

This internal state of affairs was also brought about by certain external factors and conditions, created with the influx into the New Lands of refugee pastors and flocks from Asia Minor and Thrace. The Ecumenical Patriarchate in concert with the proper authorities, in October 1924, decided on the creation of new temporary Metropoles in Western Thrace, Eastern and Central Macedonia, Epirus and in the Islands of the Archipelagos, in order to (a) better guide and govern the vastly increased numbers of the faithful and, (b) to place in new Metropoles the uprooted refugee Metropolitans. Precisely at that time, in view of the above mentioned internal crisis of the Episcopal Synod, in combination with the move to create the new metropolis of Langada within its very own district, the Patriarchate decided on the abolition of the institution of the Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki, and elevated the episcopates of this Metropolis into independent Metropoles. Thus, first, on October 16, 1924, the new Metropolis of Langada was established⁴⁷; on October 28, 1924 the Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki were

45. See the Synodical Decree, sent to the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki on October 28, 1924, published in *Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς* 9 (1925) 25 and reprinted at the conclusion of this paper under no. 8.

46. The elevation to Metropoles of the hitherto Dioceses of the Metropolitan See of Thessaloniki, on account of which the Episcopal Synod was dissolved, was especially hailed by the prelates of these Dioceses. See their relative letters of thanks in *Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς* 9 (1925) 26-28.

47. See the Synodical Decree, sent to the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki through the document, prot. no. 3825 dated October 16, 1924, published in *Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς* 9 (1925) and reprinted at the conclusion of this paper under no. 7.

abolished⁴⁸; and finally on November 6, 1924, the definitive adjustment of the Provinces of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the New Lands of Greece was decided and acted upon. Changes were made in the boundaries of the old provinces, as new Metropoles were formed; and the five Dioceses of Thessaloniki were raised to Metropolinates⁴⁹. It was under the above mentioned difficult internal and external conditions and circumstances therefore, that the ancient canonical institution of the Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki was finally abolished.

The Significance of the Institution. On the basis of what has been said above, we have clear proof of the most important significance of the institution of the Episcopal Synods. First, the solution of the problems in the local churches, especially during turbulent times, is achieved with greater speed and efficiency. As the highest, on the scene of collective authority the Episcopal Synod is able to directly take on all ecclesiastical and ethnic matters and to dispose of them quickly for the general good of the Church and her flock. The simple act of having to refer even urgent matters to the Ecumenical Patriarchate for solution, often means the loss of valuable time, especially in cases where a particular province is under bondage or political duress, or in a neutral State indifferent to its needs, or in the midst of some violent social upheaval and developments, which in fact are occurring far away from the Center of Orthodoxy⁵⁰.

Second, the administrative relation, responsibility and accountability between the three basic administrative ranks of Patriarch, Metropolitan, Bishop is more canonically ordered and controlled through the Episcopal Synod; especially if we take into consideration that the respect for and the strict maintenance of administrative responsibility is essential for the fulfillment of the purpose of the Church militant in all the areas of her activity. With regard to this, the institution of the Episcopal Synod contributes to the better coordination of this administrative integration through the faithful application of the synodical system, of which this institution is a canonical expression.

Third, the institution of the Episcopal Synod proves to be useful to the very Head, the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. By canonically transferring a series of concrete administrative and other duties to the E-

48. *Ibid.* pp. 24-26 and at the conclusion of this paper under no. 8.

49. See the Synodical Decree, sent to the Metropolitans of the Throne, prot. no. 3939/2346, dated November 6, 1924, published in *Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς* 9 (1925) 29-33.

50. A particular canon, c. 17 of the Synod of Carthage, foresees "ὥστε ἐκάστην ἐπαρχίαν, διὰ τὸ μακροδαπές, πρῶτεύοντα ἔχειν ἴδιον". Alivizatos, *op.cit.*, p. 237.

piscopal Synod, (which in any case remains dependent on it), the Holy Synod is freed from excessive administrative burdens and it becomes an excellent *ἐπιτελικὸς ὀργανισμὸς* for the benefit again of its flock throughout the world.

These reasons then, make it necessary to maintain and reinforce the institution of the Holy Provincial Synod of the Church of Crete, which constitutes a province of the Ecumenical Throne; and very possibly to revive it in other provinces of the See of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. This becomes more obvious when we consider that this canonical institution from ancient times functioned with positive results, both in the See of Constantinople and in the other Orthodox Churches⁵¹. The Archdiocese of America, e.g., by the very force of events is on its way towards this kind of an arrangement; for the complex administrative and Pastoral problems created and existing in a land far from the Center (Constantinople), steadily make the burden unbearable upon the shoulders of each succeeding Archbishop. The same reasons, on the other hand, ought to have weighed heavily upon the decision of the Patriarchate in 1924, so that the abolition of this institution in the Metropolis of Thessaloniki would have been averted, especially since it was dictated by clearly circumstantial factors which must always be subject to, rather than above the canonical institutions. This institution can function successfully in the other ecclesiastical jurisdictions, and indeed in the Church of Greece, where serious discussions on this matter have already begun⁵². It is of itself

51. See Barnabas Tzortzatos, Metropolitan of Kitros, *Οἱ βασικοὶ θεσμοὶ διοικήσεως τῶν Ὁρθόδοξων Πατριαρχείων, μετὰ ἱστορικῶν ἀνασκοπήσεων* [The Basic Institutions of Administration of the Orthodox Patriarchates, with Historical Inquiries], Athens 1972; *Οἱ βασικοὶ θεσμοὶ διοικήσεως τῆς Αὐτοκεφάλου Ὁρθόδοξου Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Πολωνίας μετὰ ἱστορικῆς ἀναπτύξεως* [The Basic Institutions of Administration of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Poland, with an Historical Explanation] Athens, 1975; *Ἡ αὐτοκέφαλος Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐκκλησία τῆς Ἀλβανίας καὶ οἱ βασικοὶ θεσμοὶ διοικήσεως αὐτῆς* [The Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania and Her Basic Institutions of Administration], Athens 1975.

52. During April, 1974 on the occasion of the forwarding to the Ministry of Education and Religions for legislative regulation of the new Draft Charter, prepared by the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy, the then Minister of Education P. Christou first proposed the application of the Metropolitan system of government to the Church of Greece, with the thought of establishing at the most 10-12 Metropoles, which would have under them a number of Dioceses. All the Metropolitans or representative Bishops from each province by order of the Metropolitan would gather once a year for the canonical annual Synod of the Hierarchy of the Church, in accordance with the spirit of the sacred canons. But the then augmented administrative problems of the Church did not permit the advancement of this matter, (which in any case) the Church ought to study further and in time propose such an administrative reformation for herself. Similar written proposals were submitted

understood that the institution of the Episcopal Synod does not replace, but presupposes the wider canonical institution of the Holy Synod of the Hierarchy, (i.e. the Holy Synod of the active Metropolitans) in accordance with the spirit of the sacred canons⁵³.

The application of the institution of the Episcopal Synod in the Archdiocese of America. Finally, I wish to apply the significance of the institution of the Episcopal Synod of Thessaloniki specifically to the Archdiocese of America, since there is today under study a plan for the administrative reorganization of this province of the Ecumenical Patriarchate^{53a}.

More concretely, His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos of the Americas, since 1970 has pondered over the whole matter of the reorganization of his province, because of its increasing administrative problems. In the fall of 1973 he filed with the Ecumenical Patriarchate a Memorandum, which was the result of a five year study and research⁵⁴. In the Memorandum, the particular realities on the American scene were taken into consideration as the matter of the need for change in the structures of the existing administrative system of the Archdiocese were set forth, together with proposals that would better and more effectively meet and deal with the administrative, spiritual and pastoral problems of the Church in America with its numerous and growing flock.

There followed, by order of the Holy Synod of Constantinople a series of contacts and discussions which culminated in a meeting in New York in February 1976 between Archbishop Iakovos and Metropolitan Chrysostom

in October 1974 to the Special Commission drafting the new Charter by a group of Professors of the Theological School of the University of Thessaloniki, but received no further consideration. The above two actions prove, on the one hand, how premature it is for the introduction of this Institution into the Church of Greece, and on the other, how necessary is to study and illuminate this important matter, which is able to promote positively the ecclesiastical administration.

53. See c. 18 of the Synod of Carthage: "that each year in all the provinces the metropolitans gather to meet in Synod", (cf. Alivizatos, *op. cit.*, p. 237).

53a. Concerning the up to the present phases of the administrative establishment of the Archdiocese of America from the nomocanonical point of view, see Barnabas Tzortzatos, Metropolitan of Kitros, *Ἡ εἰς τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν τῆς Ἑλλάδος ὑπαγωγή τῶν ἐν διασπορᾷ Ἑλληνικῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ ἀνάκλησις αὐτῆς* [The subordination to the Church of Greece of the Greek Churches in the Diaspora and its Recalling], Athens 1977. More specific, however, concerning the establishment in force from 1922 and on, abundant information can be found in the work of D. Constantelos, *Ἀγῶνες καὶ ἀγωνίαι τῆς ἐν Ἀμερικῇ Ἑλληνικῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας. Ἐγκύκλιοι καὶ Ἐγγράφα τῶν ἐτῶν 1922-1972* [The Struggles and Concerns of Greek Orthodox Church in America. Encyclicals and Documents of the years 1922-1972], Thessaloniki 1976.

54. See, *Orthodox Observer*, May 26, 1976, p. 9.

of Myra⁵⁵. During the deliberations the Metropolitan placed before the Archbishop for his study and views a "Proposed Charter for the Governing of the Provinces of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, created from the restructuring and reorganization of the till now Holy Archdiocese of North and South America", composed of 51 articles.

Articles 3 and 7 of this Proposed Charter mark out the new system of administration. On the basis of article 3, seven new provinces of the Throne of Constantinople are created, (five of which are in the United States, one in Canada and the other in South America). All these provinces would now bare the title of "Metropolis"; and only the See of the present Archbishop — honoris causa — is named "Archdiocese" and he "Archbishop". In accordance to article 7, all the above provinces, would constitute independent Metropolitan jurisdictions of the Patriarchal See.

Considering articles 3 and 7 of the Proposed Charter presented by Metropolitan Chrysostom we can conclude that each of the newly formed Metropoles jurisdictionally would be directly responsible to the Patriarchate, and that no uniting link would exist between them, except of course, the position of the Archbishop, who would possibly be given added responsibilities as Patriarchal Exarch. Through the Proposed Charter the principle of total ecclesiastical decentralization is introduced. While this has the advantage of providing flexibility to each metropolis to meet its specific needs, it nevertheless, at the same time, destroys the very unity of the American Church, which through the decades, had been hard won through many sacrifices. And this unity, as experience has taught, is essential to the Church in America, situated so far from its ecclesiastical center, if it is to prove effective in her mission.

For this reason the Proposed Charter was not accepted to form the basis for further negotiations. However, in its 51 articles there are some very constructive positions, that point to the solution of the problem of the reorganization of the Archdiocese of America both within the canonical framework and the traditions treasured up by the Great Church in the Phanar.

The deliberations provided Archbishop Iakovos with the opportunity to clarify the purposes that prompted him to place the subject of the reorganization of the Archdiocese before the Patriarchate. A follow-up to these earlier deliberations was the Patriarchal Letter of April 12, 1976. Through it the Archbishop was given the initiative and invited to "proceed in the preparation of a concrete plan for the administrative reorganization" of the Archdiocese⁵⁶. In fact, a few weeks later, on the occasion of the official

55. *Ibid.*, see also *Episkepsis* 143 (1976), p. 2-3

56. See *Orthodox Observer*, May 26, 1976, pp. 9-10 and "News Release" of the Archdiocese in Chicago on May 13, 1976.

meeting of the Council of Bishops held in Chicago, Ill., on May 12, 1976, an official press release was issued on May 13 and referred to "the Administrative Restructure of the Holy Archdiocese of North and South America, as it enters into a Synodical system of administration"⁵⁷.

In accordance with this Press Release eight dioceses would be established. They would be independent of each other in respect to their internal administration, but they would adopt and function under a uniform system of: (1) administration, (2) education, (3) finances, (4) inter-church relations, and (5) relations with the civil authorities. The eight Provincial Bishops would acquire the title of the city headquartering their See. They would further constitute a Provincial Synod under the presidency of the Archbishop, and function in accordance with the relative sacred canons outlining the duties and responsibilities of such a Synod⁵⁸.

Further, a Special Committee was formed to undertake the task of composing the "Preliminary Draft Charter of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese" in order to bring to fruition the decision of the Council of Bishops. The Preliminary Draft was later distributed (September 1976) to all the Bishops and other officials of the Archdiocese for their perusal, in view of the up-coming special meeting of the Archdiocean Council which was to be held in New York City on Friday, October 15, 1976⁵⁹. The purpose of the Council meeting, which is presided over by the Archbishop, was to review, elaborate and refine the Preliminary Draft, and thus prepare and write the Final Draft Charter which would be submitted to the Patriarchal Synod for approval⁶⁰.

The Final Draft, dated October 15, 1976, contains 21 articles, (as did the Preliminary Draft), which deal with the following subjects: The name, the purposes, the dependency, the structure and the administration of the Archdiocese; the duties and responsibilities of the Provincial Synod, the Archbishop and the Bishops, and the process of their election; the Spiritual Courts, the Clergy-Laity Congresses, and Diocesan Councils; and last the Hellenic College and Theological School in Brookline, Mass., and the Academy of St. Basil in Garrison, N.Y.

In the Draft Charter, articles 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 13, 14, and 21 insure the canon-

57. *Ibid.*

58. See *Orthodox Observer*, October 13, 1976, p. 7.

59. *Ibid.*

60. See *Orthodox Observer*, February 2, 1977, p. 7. The final Draft has not to date been delivered, at least officially, to the Phanar by the Committee of the Archdiocesan Council, after the expressed desire of the Patriarchate that it postpone its planned trip "because the entire matter of the reorganization is in need of much study by the appropriate Synodical Committee" (from the telegram dated January 21, 1977, published in the *Orthodox Observer* on February 2, 1977, pp. 7).

cal ordering of the administrative problem of the Archdiocese of America. Briefly, these articles state the following: "The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America is a Province of the See of the Holy Apostolic and Patriarchal Throne of Constantinople" (article 1); it functions "under the supreme spiritual and ecclesiastical supervision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople" (article 3); it is possible for it to "receive into its fold and under its spiritual guidance and administration groups, Parishes and Orthodox Episcopates upon their petition, with the approval of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, which by canonical and historical right exercises ecclesiastical sovereignty and spiritual jurisdiction over the Orthodox of the diaspora" (article 4); it is constituted "of eight Dioceses in the United States of America, and of two others, (one each) in Canada and South America" (article 5); it is administered by the Archbishop and the Provincial Bishops constituting a Provincial Synod, which "has all the powers and responsibilities that the sacred canons record for Provincial Synods, and is responsible to the Patriarch and His Synod of Metropolitans for the resolute observance of the holy dogmas and the sacred canons of the Eastern Orthodox Church" (article 7). Articles 13 and 14 insure the canonicity of the succession and the election of the President and members of the Provincial Synod. And article 21 secures the leading roll of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the process of amending certain articles of this Charter, which may be reviewed in the future.

From the analysis of these official texts there is no doubt that the Archbishop of America and his fellow-Bishops, (after many multi-staged deliberations and evaluations of the ecclesiastical conditions in the American continent regarding the roots, and the past and future roll of Greek Orthodoxy in America, as the ecclesiastical-jurisdictional magnetic pole of Orthodoxy in the Western Hemisphere), are proceeding in a canonical direction in their effort to administratively restructure the Archdiocese. The foundation of this reorganizational plan is the institution of the Provincial Synod. And, as we have shown in the case of the Synod of Thessaloniki, this institution for long years proved to be useful, and contributed significantly to the solution of administrative, pastoral and other matters of general importance especially in the jurisdictions of the See of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. It is our hope and prayer, that through the revival of the institution of the Provincial Synod the administrative problem of the American Church will be finally solved; and generally that the Synodical institution will be strengthened, as the expression of the normal form of ecclesiastical administration for the local church⁶¹.

61. From the just received article of Rev. Dr. George Papaioannou, titled "The New Archdiocesan Charter. Why Not the Best?", we are informed that as a result of the sugges-

1

〈Πρόσκλησις εἰς Ἐπισκοπικὴν Σύνοδον Θεσσαλονίκης〉¹

Ἀριθ. Πρωτ. 47

Ἐρώτατε Ἐπίσκοπε Πολυανῆς ἐν ἁγίῳ πνεύματι ἀγαπητὲ ἀδελφὲ καὶ συλλειτουργὲ τῆς ἡμῶν Μετριότητος κύρ Ἰωακείμ², χάρις εἴη τῇ αὐτῆς Ἐρότητι καὶ εἰρήνῃ παρὰ Θεοῦ. Προσεγγιζούσης τῆς πανηγύρεως τοῦ ἐν ἀγίοις ἡμῶν Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ, καθ' ἣν ἔθει ἀρχαίῳ παρευρίσκονται ἐν αὐτῇ πάντες οἱ τῇ ἱερᾷ ταύτῃ Μητροπόλει ὑποκείμενοι Ἐρώτατοι Ἐπίσκοποι, πρὸς δὲ ὑπαρχουσῶν καὶ τινων ὑποθέσεων πρὸς θεώρησιν ὑπὸ τῆς τοπικῆς ἐπαρχιακῆς Συνόδου, ἐντελλόμεθα καὶ προτρεπόμεθα τῇ αὐτῆς Ἐρότητι ὅπως διακανονίσασα τὰ τῆς Ἐπαρχίας τῆς ἁψεται τῆς ὁδοῦ, ὥστε παρευρεθῆναι αὐτὴν ἐνταῦθα κατὰ τὴν εἰρημένην ἡμέραν ἐξάπαντος. Ἡ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ χάρις καὶ τὸ ἄπειρον ἔλεος εἴη μετὰ τῆς αὐτῆς Ἐρότητος.

αωψε' Φεβρουάριος 18.

† Ὁ Θεσσαλονίκης Ἀθανάσιος ἐν Χριστῷ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφός³.

2

Ὑπόμνημα⁴

Τῆς ἀγιωτάτης Ἐπισκοπῆς Πολυανῆς δίχα κανονικοῦ ἀρχιερέως δια-

tion by the Charter-Commission to the Archdiocesan Council meeting in Detroit, Michigan, on March 16-17, 1977, altered the text of the October Draft, reducing the general articles from 21 to 10. This suggestion, also, implies a most deficient understanding of the concept of the Episcopal Synod. I am not aware of this text, but I could say with certainty that, had this suggestion been adopted, the adulteration of the canonicity of the Episcopal Synod not only would not solve today's increasing administrative and pastoral problems of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, but it would make them more acute to the general detriment of Orthodoxy and the prestige of the Ecumenical Throne in America. I am happy, however, to report that a final Draft of the Charter, consisting of 24 articles, was approved by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The Draft was presented on October 25-28, 1977, to the Phanar on behalf of Archbishop Iakovos by His Grace Bishop Silas, who met with the Special Synodical Commission chaired by His Eminence Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon. This Charter presupposes the canonical application of an Episcopal Synodical System of government for the Archdiocese of America. See *Orthodox Observer*, November 7 and 23, 1977.

1. AMT, File 125.

2. Joachem Panagiotopoulos, Bishop of Polyané (1892-1899). Cf. A. Angelopoulos, *Αἱ ξένοι προπαγάνδαι* [Foreign Propaganda], p. 120.

3. Athanasios Megakles, Bishop of Sisanion in May 1893 succeeded Sophronios (1889-1893) on the Throne of Thessaloniki (1893-1903) after the latter's resignation. Cf. A. Angelopoulos, *ibid.*, p. 119, and in *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 13 (1893) 63.

4. AMT, File 108, 5094.

μεινάσης, ἅτε δὴ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ τέως ἀρχιερατεύοντος κυρίου Παρθενίου¹ προβιβασθέντος εἰς τὴν ἀγιωτάτην Μητρόπολιν Δεβρῶν καὶ Βελισσοῦ οἱ τὴν ἱερὰν Ἐπαρχιακὴν Σύνοδον συγκροτοῦντες ἀρχιερεῖς μετὰ τὴν γενομένην συνοδικῶς πρότασιν καὶ προβολὴν τριῶν ὑποψηφίων τῶν μᾶλλον καταλλήλων εἰς διαδοχὴν τῆς Ἐπισκοπῆς ταύτης ἦτοι τοῦ ἐπιτρόπου τοῦ Σεβασμιωτάτου Μητροπολίτου Πελαγωνίας τιτουλαρίου Ἐπισκόπου Πέτρας Αἰμιλιανοῦ², τοῦ Πανοσιολογιωτάτου ἀρχιμανδρίτου Φωτίου Παγιώτα, καὶ τοῦ Πανοσιολογιωτάτου ἀρχιμανδρίτου Φωτίου Μαρινάκη³, ἀπελθόντες ἐν τῷ πανσέπτῳ ναῷ τῆς ἀγίας Ἐλεούσης προτροπῇ καὶ ἀδείᾳ τοῦ Παναγιωτάτου καὶ Σεβασμιωτάτου Μητροπολίτου Θεσσαλονίκης Κυρίου Κυρίου Ἀλεξάνδρου⁴ καὶ ψήφους κανονικὰς προβαλλόμενοι τῇ ἐπικλήσει τοῦ παναγίου πνεύματος εἰς ἀνάδειξιν τοῦ ἀξίου ἐκ τῶν τριῶν ὑποψηφίων προσώπου πρὸς ἀνάληψιν τῆς ἀρχιερατικῆς προστασίας καὶ ποιμαντορικῆς ράβδου τῆς ἀγιωτάτης ταύτης Ἐπισκοπῆς προεκρίναμεν τὸν Πανοσιολογιώτατον Φώτιον Παγιώταν⁵ παμψηφεῖ, ὅς καὶ ἀνεδείχθη γνήσιος καὶ κανονικὸς αὐτῆς ἀρχιερεὺς. Ἐφ' ᾧ εἰς διηνεκὴ ἔνδειξιν καὶ μόνιμον παράστασιν κατέστρωται τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτῶν ἐν τῷδε τῷ ἱερῷ Κώδικι τῆς ἀγιωτάτης Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης.

Ἐν ἔτει σωτηρίῳ χιλιοστῷ ἑννεακοσιοστῷ Ἰουνίου ιη'.

† Ὁ Κίτρους Παρθένιος

† Ὁ Ἀρδαμερίου Δωρόθεος

† Ὁ Ἱερισσοῦ Ἰωακείμ

1. Parthenios, Bishop of Polyané (1839-1907), formerly the Bishop of Daphnousia. Cf. A. Angelopoulos, "Τὸ ἐπισκοπικὸν ζήτημα τῆς ἐπαρχίας Δεβρῶν καὶ Βελισσοῦ" [The Episcopal Issue of the Province of Devra and Velissos], *Μακεδονικά* 10 (1970) 272-283.

2. Aimilianos Lazarides of Permacha, Ikonium, the Bishop of Petra, and Metropolitan of Grevena, who died in the Diocese in 1908. See B. Stavrides, *Ἡ Ἱερὰ Θεολογικὴ Σχολὴ τῆς Χάλκης, 1844-1913* [The Sacred Theological School of Chalke, 1844-1923], vol. I, Athens, 1970, p. 168.

3. Photios Marinakis of Alatsata, Bishop of Moschonesia. See B. Stavrides, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

4. Alexander Regopoulos, Metropolitan of Thessaloniki (1903-1910), formerly Metropolitan of Neocaesaria. See A. Angelopoulos, *Αἱ ξένοι προπαγάνδαι...* [Foreign Propaganda], p. 119.

5. Photios Pagiotas from Madyta, Bishop of Polyané (1907-1928). See *Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς* 12 (1928) 258, where more information is provided in an article on the occasion of his death. B. Stavrides, *op. cit.*, p. 165, claims that Photios Pagiotas was the first Bishop of Moschonesia prior to his election to the Diocese of Polyané. However, this Memorandum leaves no doubt that he was directly elected Bishop of Polyané from the ranks of eligible candidates for the Episcopal Office.

3

Ὑπόμνημα¹

Τῆς ἀγιωτάτης Ἐπισκοπῆς ἀπροστατεύτου διαμεινάσης ἅτε δὴ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ ἀρχιερατεύοντος κυρίου Θεοκλήτου² οἰκειοθελῇ παραίτησιν ὑποβαλόντος τῇ καθ' ἡμᾶς Ἱερᾷ Μητροπόλει ἡμεῖς οἱ τὴν ἱεράν ἐπαρχιακὴν Σύνοδον συγκροτοῦντες ἀρχιερεῖς μετὰ τὴν γενομένην συνοδικῶς πρότασιν καὶ προβολὴν τριῶν ὑποψηφίων, τῶν μᾶλλον καταλλήλων εἰς διαδοχὴν τῆς Ἐπισκοπῆς ταύτης, ἦτοι τοῦ Πανιερωτάτου Μητροπολίτου Μελενίκου Κυρίου Κωνσταντίνου³, τοῦ Πανοσιολογιωτάτου Πρωτοσυγγέλλου τῆς Ἱ. Μητροπόλεως Θεσ)νίκης Κυρίου Παρθενίου⁴ καὶ τοῦ Παν. Ἀρχιδιακόνου τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μητροπόλεως Προύσης Κου Νεοφύτου, ἀπελθόντες ἐν τῷ πανσέπτῳ ναῷ τοῦ Ἀγίου Νικολάου προτροπῇ καὶ ἀδείᾳ τοῦ Παναγιωτάτου καὶ Σεβασμιωτάτου Μητροπολίτου Θεσσαλονίκης Κυρίου Κυρίου Ἀλεξάνδρου⁵ καὶ ψήφοις κανονικαῖς προβαλλόμενοι τῇ ἐπικλήσει τοῦ παναγίου πνεύματος, εἰς ἀνάδειξιν τοῦ ἀξίου ἐκ τῶν τριῶν ὑποψηφίων προσώπου πρὸς ἀνάληψιν τῆς ἀρχιερατικῆς προστασίας καὶ ποιμαντικῆς ράβδου τῆς ἀγιωτάτης ταύτης Ἐπισκοπῆς προεκρίναμεν τὸν Πρωτοσύγκελλον τῆς Ἱ. Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης Κύριον Παρθένιον Βαρδάκαν⁶ παμψηφεί ὅς καὶ ἀνεδείχθη γνήσιος καὶ κανονικὸς αὐτῆς ἀρχιερεὺς. Ἐφ' ᾧ εἰς διηνεκὴ ἔνδειξιν καὶ μόνιμον παράστασιν κατέστρωται τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτῶν ἐν τῷδε τῷ Ἱερῷ κώδικι τῆς ἀγιωτάτης Μητροπόλεως Θεσσαλονίκης.

Ἐν ἔτει σωτηρίῳ χιλιοστῷ ἔννεακοσιοστῷ τετάρτῳ Φεβρουαρίῳ ΙΘ'.

† Ὁ Καμπανίας Παρθένιος ἔχων καὶ τὴν γνώμην τοῦ Ἀγίου ἀδελφοῦ Ἱερισσοῦ Κυρίου Ἰωακείμ.

† Ὁ Πολυανῆς Παρθένιος.

† Ὁ Ἀρδαμερίου Δωρόθεος.

1. AMT, File 147, 2588.

2. Theocletos Papaioannou, from Naousa, the Bishop of Kitros (1896-1904), formerly the Bishop of Petra, and prior to that, the Bishop of Ierissos and Mt. Athos. See B. Stavrides, *op. cit.*, p. 149. Barnabas Tzortzatos, Metrop. of Kitros, *Journal* 1977, Katherine, p. 28 and A. Angelopoulos, "Ἡ συμβολὴ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς Πέτρας εἰς τὰ ἐθνικὰ καὶ ἐκπαιδευτικὰ προβλήματα τοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ τῆς περιοχῆς Ὀλύμπου 1890-1896" [The Contribution of the Diocese of Petra to the Solution of the Ethnic and Educational Problems of the Hellenes in the District of Olympus 1890-1895], *Μακεδονικά* 14 (1974) 64-84.

3. Constantine Asemiades from Kallioupolis. Bishop of Charioupolis, Metropolitan of Melenikon, who died in Demir Hisar. See B. Stavrides, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

4. Parthenios Vardakas, the one elected.

5. Alexander, Metropolitan of Thessaloniki (1903-1910).

6. Parthenios Vardakas, Bishop of Kitros (1904-1933). See Barnabas Tzortzatos, Metropolitan of Kitros, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

4

〈Εὐχαριστήριον μήνυμα ἐπὶ ἐκλογῇ〉¹

Παναγιώτατε Δ(έσποτα) καὶ λοιποὶ ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφοί. Καὶ λοιπὸν κελεύσει τῆς ὑμ. σεπτῆς καὶ τρισεβάστου μοι Παναγιότητος καὶ ψήφῳ τῆς περὶ Αὐτὴν ἁγίας καὶ ἱερᾶς Ἐπαρχιακῆς Συνόδου θεία εὐδοκία ἐξελέγην ἐπίσκοπος πρὸς ποιμανσιν τῆς χηρευούσης ἐπισκοπῆς Κίτρους². Καὶ συναίσθάνομαι μὲν τὸ μέγεθος τῆς εὐθύνης, ἥνπερ ἀναλαμβάνω, ἀλλ' ἀδαμαντίνως πέποιθα ὅτι σὺν τοῖς ψήφοις ἔξω πάντοτε φιλίαν καὶ εὖνουν τὴν διάθεσιν τῆς Ὑμ. Παναγιότητος³ πρὸς ὑποστήριξίν μου, οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς εὐχὰς καὶ τὰς πατρικὰς Αὐτῆς νοουθεσίας καὶ ὁδηγίας, ἂν ποτε καὶ ἐγὼ ὀλισθήσω ὡς ἄνθρωπος καὶ μάλιστα νῦν ὅποτε ὁ λαὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ βαίνει καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ οὐχὶ ὀπίσω τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ Θεοῦ. Ἀδυνατῶν ἔνεκα τῆς πλημυρουσύνης τὴν καρδίαν μου συγκινήσεως νὰ ἐκφράσω προσηκόντως τὴν εὐγνωμοσύνην μου πρὸς τε τὴν Ὑμ. Παναγιότητα καὶ τοὺς ἐν Χῷ ἁγίους ἀδελφοὺς αἵρω χεῖρας ἱκέτιδας πρὸς τὸν ὕψιστον τὸν δοτῆρα πάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ καθικετεύω αὐτὸν ἵνα δῶ ὑμῖν οὗτος τὸ κάλλιστον τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἐγὼ δὲ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εὐγνώμων ἔσσεαι.

5

〈Εὐχαριστήριον μήνυμα ἐπὶ ἐκλογῇ〉⁴

Ἐπειδὴ ὁδηγηθεὶς ἐκ Θεοῦ ὃ τε Παναγιώτατος καὶ Σεβασμιώτατος Μητροπολίτης Θεσσαλονίκης Κύριος Ἀλέξανδρος⁵ καὶ ἡ περὶ τὴν Α. σεβασμίαν Παναγιότητα ἱερὰ τῶν θεοφιλεστάτων Ἐπισκόπων Ἐπαρχιακὴ Σύνοδος⁶ ἠὐδόκησαν προαγαγεῖν με εἰς τὸ θεῖον ὄντως καὶ μέγα τῆς ἀρχιερωσύνης ἀξίωμα καὶ ἀποκαταστήσαι εἰς τὸν θρόνον τῆς ἀγιωτάτης Ἐπισκοπῆς Κίτρους πειθομαι τῷ θεῷ αὐτῶν προστάγματι καὶ δέχομαι τὸ ἐπίταγμα. Καὶ πρῶτον μὲν εὐχαριστῶ αὐτῷ μοι τῷ Παναγιωτάτῳ καὶ πανσεβάστῳ πατρὶ καὶ Δεσπότῃ τῷ τὴν τοιαύτην περὶ ἐμὲ πρόνοιαν πεποιηκότι, εἴτα δὲ τοῖς σεβασμίοις μοι ἁγίοις Ἐπισκόποις, ὧν ταῖς θεοπειθέσιν εὐχαῖς ἀξιῶσαί με

1. AMT, File 58. This is a "Message of Thanksgiving" delivered by the newly-elected Bishop at the customary ceremony after an election has taken place.

2. Theocletos Papaioannou, Bishop of Kitros (1896-1904).

3. Athanasios Megakles, Metrop. of Thessaloniki (1893-1903), formerly the Bishop of Sisalion.

4. AMT, File 147, 2589.

5. Alexander Regopoulos (1903-1910).

6. The Provincial Synod in this particular occasion consisted of: Parthenios, Bishop of Kampania, who, also, represented Joacheim, the Bishop of Ierissos, Parthenios, Bishop of Polyané and Dorotheos, Bishop of Ardamerion. See the note above on Memorandum No. 3, p. 71.

Κύριος ὁ θεὸς ποιμᾶναι θεοφιλῶς τὸ ἐμπιστευθέν μοι λογικὸν αὐτοῦ ποιμνιον καὶ εἰς νομὰς σωτηρίους ποδηγετῆσαι καὶ ἄσπιλον καὶ ἀμόλυντον ἐμαυτὸν τε κακεῖνο παραστῆσαι ἐν τῇ φρικτῇ αὐτοῦ δευτέρᾳ παρουσίᾳ, ᾧ ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων ἀμήν.

Ἐν Θεσσαλονίκη τῇ 19ῃ Φεβρουαρίου 1904.

Ὁ ἐψηφισμένος Κίτρος Παρθένιος¹

6

〈Παραίτησις〉²

Ὁ ὑπογεγραμμένος μὴ δυνάμενος ἔνεκα τῆς κατατρυχούσης με χρονίας σωματικῆς ἀσθενείας νὰ ἐπαρκέσω εἰς τὰς ἀνάγκας τῆς Ἐπαρχίας καὶ τῶν χριστιανῶν μου καὶ διοικήσω αὐτήν, παραιτοῦμαι ταύτης, οὐ μέντοι γε καὶ τῆς ἀρχιερωσύνης καὶ εἰς τὴν περὶ τούτου πίστωσιν καὶ βεβαίωσιν δίδωμι τῷ Παναγιωτάτῳ Μητροπολίτῃ Θεσσαλονίκης Κυρίῳ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ³ τὴν παροῦσαν οἰκειοθελῇ καὶ ἀπαραβίαστον παραίτησίν μου, φέρουσιν τὴν ἐμὴν ιδιόχειρον ὑπογραφὴν καὶ ἐσφραγισμένην διὰ τῆς ἀτομικῆς μου σφραγίδος.

Ἐν Θεσσαλονίκη τῇ 20 Ἰανουαρίου 1904.

† Ὁ Πρῶην Κίτρος Θεόκλητος⁴

7

Ἀριθ. Πρ. 3825⁵.

ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΣ⁶

Ἐλέω Θεοῦ Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Κων/πόλεως Νέας Ρώμης καὶ Οἰκουμενικὸς Πατριάρχης.

Ἰερῶτατε Μητροπολίτα Θεσ)νίκης, ὑπέρτιμε καὶ ἑξαρχε πάσης Θεεταλίας, ἐν Ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι ἀγαπητὲ ἀδελφε καὶ συλλειτουργε τῆς ἡμῶν Μετριοτήτος κύριε Γεννάδιε⁷, χάρις εἴη τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ Ἱερότητι καὶ εἰρήνῃ παρὰ Θεοῦ.

1. Parthenios Vardakas, Bishop of Kitros (1904-1933).

2. AMT, File, 147, 2584.

3. Alexander Regopoulos (1903-1910).

4. Theocletos, Bishop of Kitros, formerly the Bishop of Petra, whom Parthenios Vardakas succeeded (1904-1933).

5. See *Γρηγόριος Παλαμᾶς* 9 (1925) 23-24.

6. Gregory VII (1923-1924).

7. Gennadios Alexiades (1912-1951) the former Metropolitan of Limnos.

Συνεπεία τῶν μεγάλων ἐκκλησιαστικῶν, γενικῶν τε καὶ ἐπὶ μέρους ἀναγκῶν, τῶν ἀναποφεύκτως προελθουσῶν ἐκ τοῦ γεγονότος τοῦ συνολικοῦ ἐκτοπισμοῦ καὶ τῆς εἰς Ἑλλάδα καταφυγῆς τοῦ χριστιανικοῦ πληθυσμοῦ τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ τῆς Θράκης ἅμα τοῖς ποιμέσιν αὐτοῦ¹, ἡ Ἐκκλησία, προνοοῦσα καθηκόντως περὶ τῆς ἀναλόγως πρὸς τὰς ἀνάγκας ταύτας καὶ τὰς περιστάσεις ἐξοικονομήσεως τῶν πραγμάτων, ἔγνω, ἔχουσα σύμφωνον καὶ γνώμην τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Κυβερνήσεως, προβῆναι εἰς τὴν σύστασιν ἐν ταῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς Πατριαρχικοῦ Θρόνου ἐξαρτωμέναις ἐκκλησιαστικῶς Νέαις Χώραις τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Κράτους διαφόρων Νέων Μητροπόλεων καὶ ἐπαρχιῶν², τοῦτο μὲν ἀνάλογον ἐπιφέρουσα συγκρότησιν πρὸς κρείττονα διακυβέρνησιν εἰς τὰς ἐκεῖ διὰ τοῦ ἔξωθεν συρρεῦσαντος πολυπληθοῦς νέου Ὀρθοδόξου πληθυσμοῦ αὐξηθεῖσας περιοχάς, τοῦτο δὲ τρόπον κατεργαζομένη παραμυθίας διὰ τοὺς ἄνευ ποιμνίου καὶ σχολίας μέινοντας ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφοὺς προσκαλουμένους καὶ πάλιν εἰς ἀνάληψιν διακονίας ἐν ταῖς οὕτως ἰδρυομέναις νέαις Μητροπόλεσιν.

Οὕτως οὖν συστάσης καὶ τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μητροπόλεως Λαγκαδᾶ διὰ τῆς καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μητροπόλεως Θεσ)νίκης ἀποσπάσεως τῶν μέχρις ἐσχάτων αὐτῇ ὑποκειμένων Κοινοτήτων, προαγόμεθα διὰ τῆς παρούσης Πατριαρχικῆς ἐπιστολῆς ἡμῶν ἀποφάσει Συνοδικῇ, γνωστοποιῆσαι τοῦτο καὶ τῇ Ὑμετέρᾳ Ἱερότῃ, οὐδόλως ἀμφιβάλλοντες ὅτι μετὰ τῆς προσηκούσης πρόφρονος γνώμης καὶ διαθέσεως ἐκτιμηθῆσεται καὶ ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἡ γενομένη ὑπὸ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἀναγκαῖα αὕτη ἐξοικονόμησις καὶ διευθέτησις.

Πληροφοροῦντες δὲ τὴν Ὑμετέραν Ἱερότητα ὅτι εἰς τὴν οὕτως ἐπ' αἰσίοις συστάσαν νέαν ταύτην Μητρόπολιν ἀποκατέστη κανονικὸς Ἀρχιερεὺς ὁ Ἱερώτατος Μητροπολίτης Κυκλάδων Κοσ Γερμανός³, εὐχόμεθα ὅπως Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς κατευδοῖ πάντοτε τὰ πάντα εἰς ἀγαθόν.

Ἡ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ χάρις καὶ τὸ ἄπειρον ἔλεος εἴη μετὰ τῆς ὑμετέρας Ἱερότητος.

1924 Ὀκτωβρίου 15.

Ὁ Κων)πόλεως Γρηγόριος

ἀγαπητὸς ἐν Χῷ ἀδελφός.

1. The reference is of course to the destruction of Asia Minor and Eastern Thrace.

2. During 1924 a total of 49 Metropolises were in the New Lands.

3. Germanos Anastasiades from Derka. "A professor and preacher in Adrianoupolis, he became the Chancellor of the Metropolitan of Chalcedon. He was later elected in turn Bishop of the See of Leuke; Stromnitsa; Korytsa and Premeté; Siatista; and Langada. In the end he retired and died as the 'former' Metropolitan of Langada". See B. Stavrides, *op. cit.*, p. 162. On the basis, however, of the Patriarchal Document we are here quoting, concerning the establishment of the Metropolis of Langada, we can conclude that Germanos Anastasiades prior to his transfer to the newly founded Metropolis in 1924 was the Metropolitan of the Cyclades Islands, a fact not mentioned by Prof. Stavrides.

8

ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΣ¹

ἐλέφ Θεοῦ Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Κων)πόλεως Νέας Ρώμης καὶ
Οἰκουμενικὸς Πατριάρχης.

Ἀριθ. Πρωτ. 4067²

Ἰερῶτατε Μητροπολίτα Θεσ)νίκης, ὑπέρτιμε καὶ ἐξαρχε πάσης Θετταλίας, ἐν Ἀγίῳ Πνεύματι ἀγαπητὲ Ἀδελφὲ καὶ συλλειτουργγὲ τῆς ἡμῶν Μετριότητος κύριε Γεννάδιε³, χάρις εἴη τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ Ἱερότητι καὶ εἰρήνῃ παρὰ Θεοῦ.

Ἀπὸ ἱκανοῦ ἤδη, ὡς ἀνεκοινώθη καὶ τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ Ἱερότητι, ἡ Ἐκκλησία εἶχε σχηματίσει τὴν γνώμην περὶ τοῦ εὐκαιροῦ τῆς προαγωγῆς καὶ τῶν ὑπολειπομένων ἐπισκοπῶν τοῦ Θρόνου εἰς αὐτοτελεῖς Μητροπόλεις. Μετὰ τὴν λῆψιν δὲ καὶ τῆς ἀπὸ 6 Μαρτίου 1923 ἀριθ. 574 ἐκθέσεως τῆς ὑμετέρας Ἱερότητος καὶ τῶν συνημμένων αὐτῇ σχετικῶν ἀποσπασμάτων πρακτικῶν τῆς περὶ αὐτὴν Ἐπισκοπικῆς Συνόδου, τὸ ζήτημα καὶ πάλιν ἀπασχόλησε τὴν Ἱ. Σύνοδον καὶ ἔτι μᾶλλον ἐνίσχυσε τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν εἰς τὴν σχηματισθεῖσαν ἤδη γνώμην αὐτῆς. Διό, ὅτε τελευταίως, ἐξ ἀφορμῆς τῶν ἀλλοιωσεων καὶ τῶν ἀναγκῶν τῶν προελθουσῶν ἐκ τῆς εἰς Ἑλλάδα καταφυγῆς ποιμνίων τε καὶ ποιμένων τῶν ἐν Ἀσίᾳ καὶ Θράκῃ ἐπαρχιῶν, παρέστη ἡ ἀνάγκη μετὰ προηγουμένην σχετικὴν γνώμην καὶ ἔγκρισιν ἀπὸ μέρους καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Κυβερνήσεως, ὅπως τὸ ζήτημα τῆς διαρρυθμίσεως καὶ διευθετήσεως τῶν ἐπαρχιακῶν ὁρίων συμφώνως πρὸς τὰς παρούσας ἀνάγκας λάβῃ νῦν τὴν προσήκουσαν τελειωτικὴν λύσιν, ἐνεκρίθη ὑπὸ τῆς Ἱ. Συνόδου καὶ ἐγένετο καὶ ἡ προαγωγή τῶν ἐπισκοπῶν τῆς Ἱ. Μητροπόλεως Θεσ)νίκης εἰς αὐτοτελεῖς Μητροπόλεις.

Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ἐπισκοπῶν Κίτρους καὶ Πολυανῆς, συμφώνως πρὸς τὴν θεθεῖσαν ὡς βάσιν καὶ ἀποδεκτὴν γενομένην ὑπὸ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας γενικὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς συμφωνίας τῶν ἐπαρχιακῶν ὁρίων πρὸς τὰ ὅρια ἐκασταχοῦ τῶν πολιτικῶν ὑποδιοικήσεων, ὠρίσθη ὅπως αὗται γινόμεναι νῦν Μητροπόλεις περιορισθῶσιν ἀποκλειστικῶς εἰς τὰ ὅρια τῆς οἰκείας ἐκάστη ὑποδιοικήσεως, ἥτοι ἡ μὲν τοῦ Κίτρους εἰς τὴν νῦν ὑποδιοίκησιν Αἰκατερίνης, ἡ δὲ τοῦ Πολυανῆς εἰς τὴν ὑποδιοίκησιν Κιλκίς, τῶν ἔξω τῶν ὁρίων τῶν ἐν λόγῳ ὑποδιοικήσεων μερῶν περιερχομένων ὑπὸ τὴν δικαιοδοσίαν τῆς γείτονος Μητροπόλεως καὶ τὴν πολιτικὴν ἐξάρτησιν αὐτῶν. Προκειμένου δὲ περὶ τῶν λοιπῶν Ἐπισκοπῶν τῆς Μητροπόλεως, ἐθεωρήθη πρόσφορον πρῶτον μὲν ὅπως ἡ τέως Ἐπισκοπὴ Ἀρδαμερίου, περὶ ἧς προλαβόν-

1. Gregory VII (1923-1924).

2. See *Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς* 19 (1925) 24-26.

3. Gennadios Alexiades (1912-1951).

τως εἶχεν ἐγκριθῆ, συνωδὰ καὶ τῇ προτάσει τῆς Ἐπισκοπικῆς Συνόδου, ἡ συγχώνευσις αὐτῆς μετὰ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς Ἱερισσοῦ, ἀποτελέσῃ καὶ ἐφεξῆς ἰδίαν περιοχὴν καὶ ἀνακηρυχθῇ εἰς ἰδίαν Μητρόπολιν, δεύτερον δὲ ὅπως τὰ ὅρια αὐτῆς, καθὼς καὶ τὰ ὅρια τῶν δύο ἄλλων ὑπολειπομένων ἐπαρχιῶν, ἦτοι τῆς Καμπανίας καὶ τῆς Ἱερισσοῦ καὶ Ἀγίου Ὁρους, προαγομένων καὶ τούτων εἰς Μητροπόλεις, μείνωσιν τό γε νῦν ὥς ἔχουσι, μόνον δὲ μετὰ τὴν ἐκ τῶν νῦν ἐν αὐταῖς ἀρχιερατευόντων οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως ἐπελευσομένην χηρείαν κηρυχθῇ ἐκάστη αὐτῶν διαλελυμένη καὶ τὰ μέρη αὐτῆς περιέλθωσι, συμφώνως πρὸς τὴν ἄνω εἰρημένην γενικὴν βάσιν τῆς συμφωνίας τῶν ἐπαρχιακῶν ὁρίων πρὸς τὰ τῶν πολιτικῶν ὑποδιοικήσεων, εἰς τὰς οἰκείας γείτονας Μητροπόλεις.

Ταῦτα οὖν τὰ οὕτω συνοδικῶς ἀποφασισθέντα καὶ γενόμενα ἤδη περὶ τὰς τέως ἐπισκοπὰς τῆς ἡμετέρας Ἱ. Μητροπόλεως ἀνακοινούμεθα ἐξ ἀποφάσεως εἰς γνῶσιν καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας Ἱερότητος. Ἀναφερόμενοι δὲ καὶ εἰς ὅσα σχετικῶς πρὸς τὴν ἰδρυθεῖσαν Ἱ. Μητρόπολιν Λαγκαδὰ ἐγράψαμεν ἀπὸ ις' λήγοντος μηνός, ἀριθ. 3825, καὶ τῇ Ὑμετέρα Ἱερότητι, ἐπιδηλοῦμεν αὐτῇ ὅτι ἐφεξῆς, συμφώνως καὶ πρὸς τὴν γενικὴν τῶν ἐπαρχιῶν βάσιν, τὴν περιοχὴν τῆς κυρίως Ἱ. Μητροπόλεως Θεσ)νίκης ἀποτελοῦσι τὰ μέρη τὰ περιλαμβανόμενα ἐν τοῖς ὁρίοις τῆς πολιτικῆς ὑποδιοικήσεως Θεσ)νίκης, ἐξαιρέσει μόνον τό γε νῦν τῶν εἰς τὴν τέως ἐπισκοπὴν καὶ νῦν Μητρόπολιν Πολυανῆς ὑπαγομένων, παραμενόντων προσωρινῶς οὕτω ἐφ' ὅσον ὑφίσταται ἡ ἐπαρχία Πολυανῆς¹. Οὐδεμίαν δ' ἔχομεν ἀμφιβολίαν ὅτι τὸ εὐκαιρον καὶ πρόσφορον τῆς διευθετήσεως ταύτης διὰ τὰς ἀνάγκας τῆς Ἐκκλησίας γενικὰς τε καὶ μερικὰς, καὶ τὴν ἐπιτυγχανομένην οὕτω ἐξοικονόμησιν προσώπων καὶ πραγμάτων καὶ αὐτὴ ἀναγνωρίζουσα ἰδιαιτέραν ὅμα αἰσθανθῇσεται εὐχαρίστησιν ἐπὶ τῇ συντελεσθείσῃ ἐπὶ τῶν ἡμερῶν αὐτῆς καὶ κατὰ τὴν γνώμην καὶ τὸν πόθον αὐτῆς εἰς Μητροπόλεις προαγωγῇ καὶ ἀνυψώσει τῶν τέως ὑπ' αὐτὴν Ἐπισκοπῶν.

Ἡ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ χάρις καὶ τὸ ἄπειρον ἔλεος εἴη μετὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας Ἱερότητος.

ἽΟ Κων)πόλεως

1924 Ὁκτωβρίου κη'

καὶ κατ' ἐντολὴν τῆς Α.Θ.Π.

ἽΟ Α' τῇ τάξει τῶν μελῶν τῆς Ἱερᾶς Συνόδου

ἽΟ Κυζίκου Καλλίνικος

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1. As contained in a later memorandum of the Chief Secretariat of the Patriarchate, the word "Polyané" is replaced with the word "Kampania", since in fact the latter is correct.