



Summary :

Metropolitan of Caesarea (1708-1716) and ecumenical patriarch (1716-1726, 1733). As a patriarch he had an important activity concerning dogma and administration, but he was also particularly conservative and strongly opposed Methodios Anthakitis, an early representative of the Greek Enlightenment.

Date and Place of Birth

Second half of the 17th century, Patmos

Date and Place of Death

1735, Mount Athos (Monastery of Megisti Lavra)

Main Role

Ecumenical patriarch

1. Life and career

He was born in [Patmos](#) some time in the second half of the 17th century.¹ Having been ordained as a deacon in his birthplace, he settled in [Constantinople](#) (Istanbul) in an early age, where he faced financial problems. Finally he started his ecclesiastic career at the island of [Chalki](#) as a priest and then he served at the [metropolis of Caesarea](#) under the metropolitan [Kyprianos](#) (1700-1707), who was to become ecumenical patriarch Kyprianos I (1708-1709, 1713-1714). Most probably he succeeded Kyprianos at the metropolitan throne of [Caesarea](#) in the early 1708.²

We know nothing of Jeremias' service at the metropolitan throne of Caesarea, where he remained until the 23rd March 1716, when he was elected as ecumenical patriarch. His friendship with the [grand vizier](#) Silahdar Damad Ali paşa, with whom he had met during the years of their youth at Chalki, helped the election. His first service as a patriarch ended in 1726, because of the actions of the ruler of Moldavia [Grigorios Gikas](#). Notwithstanding his removal from the throne of the patriarch and his exile at Sinai, Jeremias remained popular in various circles of the Orthodox community of the capital, especially amongst the people who came from [Kaisareia \(Kayseri\)](#), who in 1731 tried to overthrow [Paisios II Kioumourtzoglou](#) and to restore Jeremias. The plan eventually failed, but Jeremias' important role in church was confirmed two years later, when, after the first dethronement of Paisios II, he became patriarch once again in January 1733. However, this second service of him was to be very brief and rather inglorious, since in July of the same year he suffered a stroke and, incapable to fulfil his duties anymore, he was deposed and retired at the Monastery of Megisti Lavra in Mount Athos, where he died in 1735.

2. Work and evaluation

As the metropolitan of Caesarea, Jeremias must have left positive impressions, since during the next years the [community of the Kaisareians in Constantinople](#) kept a positive attitude towards him as a patriarch. Jeremias III was a very active patriarch concerning administrative and organizational, as well as dogmatic issues. A very large number of decrees of him regulating matters of parish rights and subjugation of various monasteries of the Balkan Peninsula, as well as the validation of the formation of a continuous synod of the Russian church are known. During his days and until 1724 the Monastery of the Saviour on the island of [Proti](#) was renovated and enriched by a collection of precious icons dedicated to the [ecumenical patriarchate](#) by Peter the Great of Russia.

In the dogmatic sector his activity included a correspondence with priests of the Church of England concerning the elucidation of the dogmas of the Orthodox Church, the publication of decrees concerning the procedure of acceptance of ex-Protestants by the Orthodox Church and the calling of a synod in 1722 to condemn the dogmas of the Catholic Church. Although he was thought to be one of the most educated patriarchs, he was apparently extremely conservative and hostile towards the early demonstrations of the Greek Enlightenment, as verified by the fact he had accepted the accusations of heresy against Methodios Anthrakitis.³ He called a



synod of prelates and published a decree of condemnation in August 1723, with which he disordained him and suggested the flock not to read his books.⁴ The era of Ieremias III is characterized by the permanent poverty of the patriarchate, which he tried to face by imposing a harsh program of frugality and diminution of the expenses, achieving in greatly reducing the debt of the patriarchate.

1. Genadios of Heliopolis suggests that Ieremias was born during the decade 1650-1660; see Γεννάδιος Ηλιουπόλεως, «Ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης Ιερεμίας ο Γ'», *Ορθοδοξία* 25 (1950), p. 148.
2. The succession of Kyprianos by Ieremias is supported by M. Gedeon, without, however, an absolute certainty (Γεδεών, Μ., *Πατριαρχικοί Πίνακες: Ειδήσεις Ιστορικά Βιογραφικά περί των Πατριαρχών Κωνσταντινουπόλεως από Ανδρέου του Πρωτοκλήτου μέχρις Ιωακείμ Γ' του από Θεσσαλονίκης, 36-1884* [Constantinople 1890], p. 622). There is no proof, though, of any other person taking the metropolitan throne of Caesarea between these two known prelates.
3. Anthrakitis' critical attitude towards scholastic aristotelism and the adoption of Descartes' and Malebranche's views concerning metaphysics contributed in the accusations for heresy and in thinking he was a follower of the mystic philosophy of Molines, which was not true, see. Χρήστου, Παν., «Ανθρακίτης Μεθόδιος», *Θρησκευτική και Ηθική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια*, τόμ. 2 (Athens 1963), column 790-793.
4. The text of this decree is preserved in a codex of the diocese of Sisano and Siatista and has been published by Agathangelos, metropolitan of Sisano, at the *Εκκλησιαστική Αλήθεια* 2 (1881-1882), pp. 495-500.

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Οικουμενικό Πατριαρχείο

<http://www.ec-patr.org/>

Glossary :



grand vizier

Highest government official in the Ottoman Empire, second only to the Sultan. Before the 19th century he led the Ottoman army to war, when the Sultan could not go. He had vast administrative, legislative and judiciary responsibilities. During the reforms of the 19th century the office became even more important, as the grand vizier became in fact the head of the Ottoman government, very similar to the prime minister.