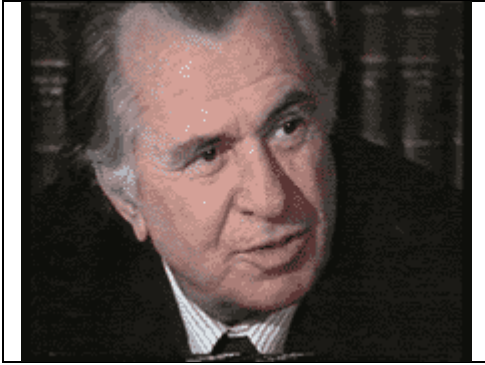


Alexandros K. Papaderos, Lay Theologian, Dr. Phil.



A short biography

He was born in Livadas, Selinon, Chania/ Crete (on February 9, 1933), as the fifth of six children of a rural family. During the German occupation, this region had been a center of resistance, in which he himself participated as a trained messenger. Therefore, after the destruction of his village (1943), he was put in a Concentration Camp (KZ). Those services (officially recognized by the Greek State) and especially his painful experiences, which frequently had brought him face to face with death, have motivated his later dedication to struggle for peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and the illumination of darkness in human life.

1946-1952: Cretan Priests Seminary.

1952: Study of Theology, Aristoteles University of Thessaloniki, graduated 1956. During these years he was a preacher in the Diocese of Thessaloniki, where he also developed a wide social diaconia for victims of the civil war in Greece (in cooperation with a philanthropic mission of the Congregational Church of the USA).

1955 and 1956 (summer): Ecumenical Work camps in Germany (Berlin and Wiesbaden), 1961 in Crete.

1957-1958 military service (responsible for religious education/instruction of the soldiers and officers in North Greece).

1958-1964: Under the pressure of his "German enigma" (how to harmonize van Beethoven and Hans, the Murderer) he rejected a scholarship at Yale, in order to do postgraduate studies and academic work in West Germany (Mainz, Evangelical and Roman Catholic Theological Schools, and Faculty of Philosophy, specializing finally in Comparative Studies of Cultures).

1962 granted Dr. of Philosophy.

During the years 1960-1963 he lectured at the same University and from 1962- Sept.1963 he worked as an Assistant Professor there.

While in Germany he elaborated the concept of the Orthodox Academy of Crete and has secured also the money needed for its first buildings and activities. In that notion he visited the Evangelische Akademie Bad Boll (1963-1964), Germany, and other Christian Academies in Europe.

1965 he was elected member of the Pedagogical Institute, Athens, the Supreme Scientific Body of Education in Greece. Among other responsibilities there, he was Vice-President of the highest Administrative Council of Secondary Education and Vice-Director and Professor at the School for Teachers' Further Education. Fired by the dictators (1967) he regained that position (1974) and left it in 1999. Between 1974 and 1999, he worked for the development of the new University of Crete and the Technical University of Crete. For many years, he traveled between Crete and Athens, serving in both positions, the Ministry of Education and the Academy.

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ORTHODOX ACADEMY OF CRETE

After years of preparation and in close cooperation with his teacher Irineos, Metropolitan of Kisamos and Selinon, he undertook the responsibility of being the General Director of the Academy. The construction of its first buildings began in 1965.

Under the heavy veil of the dictatorship's monologue, the OAC (inaugurated in 1968) dares the dialogue between Church and modern man on national and international level, gaining the trust and support of many people home and abroad.

Reconciliation (especially between Greeks and Germans), the struggle against poverty and social exploitation, ignorance and prejudice as well as scientific and human progress, are some of the major priorities and activities of the OAC. Between its inauguration (1968) and 31-12-2008 (the end of his service as Gen. Director of the OAC), 1.965 conferences on national and international level have been organized/hosted.

The Centre for Agricultural Development (a Department of the OAC, supported by Mennonites from Europe and the USA) has applied radical innovative structural and other reforms in the agriculture of Crete, combined with educational programs and spiritual encouragement of the farmers.

The *Euromediterranean Youth Centre* (the second Department of the OAC) has already brought together several thousands of young people from various nations and religious traditions.

The third department, the *Institute of Theology and Ecology*, has been enriched by the donation of more than 8.000 species of Cretan herbs (by the well known French Prof. J. Zaffran) and is developing several ecological activities and conferences.

Apart from his responsibilities as above (Pedagogical Institute, OAC), various other activities of Dr. Papaderos may be mentioned, e.g.:

- Preparation of the Cretan Theater Society; its first president, re-elected (1973-1983).
- 1974-2003 (re-elected) member of the Advisory Committee/Central Committee of the Conference of European Churches (CEC, Geneva), representing the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. For six months (1992-93) CEC's President.
- Since many years cooperation with the World Council of Churches (WCC) in General Assemblies, several committees, activities and missions.
- For more than 30 years member of the Executive Committee of the Ecumenical Association of Academies and Lay Centers in Europe.
- Visiting Professor, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago (1989).
- Member of the Senate of the Council of Europe for the educational-cultural Program: "CULTURAL ROUTES – MONASTIC INFLUENCE" (1997-98).

Publications: Over 450 titles (books, studies, articles etc.) in Greek and other languages.

Recognitions: Patriarchates of Constantinople, Antiochia, Moscow, Bucharest, Armenian Church in Lebanon, Bundesverdienstkreuz I. Kl. (Cross of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, First Class, awarded by Bundespräsident R.v. Weizsäcker), Member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Married, two children, three grandchildren.

Dez. 2009