

For Information

1958-2008: FIFTY YEARS AT THE SERVICE OF THE WCC

An overview of Orthodox Staff

by Georges Lemopoulos

1. Introduction

The Executive Committee of the WCC, meeting in Lübeck, Germany (September 2008) has suggested “to carry out an inventory and analysis on how many of the WCC former staff have gone back to work with their churches or ecumenical organizations and to report to the next executive committee meeting”. Having dealt with Orthodox participation in the WCC from several perspectives and being one of the old timers and thus having the privilege of knowing most of the Orthodox who served the Council, I have compiled this brief document with the hope that it will meet the expectations of the executive committee. I am convinced that from a practical point of view it will be easier to look at former WCC staff from regional and/or confessional perspective, rather than as a whole.

In 1958, ten years after the inaugural assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam, Dr Nikos Nissiotis, from the Church of Greece, was hired as lecturer at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey. He was the first person from the Orthodox family to serve on the staff of the World Council of Churches.¹

Today, after fifty years, we could count a considerable number of representatives of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches² who served in various capacities several units and departments of the Council.

The aim of the present survey is threefold: (a) to offer an overview to governing body members as they study ways of assessing staffing matters and sharpening staff policies; (b) to draw some learnings from 50 years of history; (c) to celebrate -- and express gratitude to -- those who served the Council, knowing that some of them are not with us anymore.

Looking carefully at the analytical presentation of the figures, two preliminary conclusions could be drawn:

- (a) The great majority of the Orthodox staff members clearly represented their churches and, therefore, after their period of service in the WCC they have

¹ In 1955 Bishop Iakovos of Melita (the late Archbishop Iakovos of Americas) had been appointed Representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch to the WCC. He assisted the then General Secretary Dr W. Visser t’Hooft, almost as a of his senior staff members, particularly in developing relationships with the Orthodox Churches.

² **9 Eastern Orthodox:** Ecumenical Patriarchate; Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria; Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch; Russian Orthodox Church; Romanian Orthodox Church; Church of Greece; Orthodox Church in Poland; Orthodox Church of Finland; Orthodox Church in America; and **5 Oriental Orthodox:** Coptic Orthodox Church; Ethiopian Orthodox Church; Armenian Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin; Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia; Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church

- occupied high positions both within their own church and the ecumenical movement;
- (b) Participation of youth and women has been rather weak; it is mainly because of the internship programme of the Council that there has been a certain increase in the number of youth and women.

2. A summary presentation in figures

Total	:	40 (33 programme executives and 7 interns)
Eastern Orthodox	:	29
Oriental Orthodox	:	11
Male/Female	:	31/9
Youth	:	8 (including Interns)
Church Functions	:	2 heads of churches 4 Bishops/Metropolitans 2 Principals of Theological Seminaries 3 Professors/Lecturers at Theological Seminaries 2 Permanent Representatives to the WCC 4 Officers in departments of ecumenical work (relations; social matters; education)
the local level)		4 Parish priests (with ecumenical responsibilities at the local level)
(teaching; serving as ecumenical officers)		3 Retired staff continued serving their churches (teaching; serving as ecumenical officers)
Other functions		1 Cabinet minister 4 International Organizations/NGOs 3 University Professors 4 Post-graduate/ Doctoral studies
WCC governing bodies	:	2 Presidents 12 Members of the Central Committee 3 Members of the Executive Committee 13 Members (including Moderators) of consultative bodies

3. Detailed presentation of staff members

(a) Eastern Orthodox

NAME /CHURCH	HAS SERVED		AFTER DEPARTURE FROM WCC STAFF		
	from/to	Unit/Department	CHURCH FUNCTION	OTHER FUNCTION	LINKS WITH THE WCC
BELOPOPSKY , Alexander Mr Ecumenical Patriarchate	02/96- 04/07	Europe Secretary, Public Information Team Coordinator		International Social Security Association (ILO)	
BOROVOY , Vitaly Rev. Prof. Russian Orthodox Church	10/78- 04/85	F&O	Permanent Representative of the Moscow Patriarchate to the World Council of Churches - Deputy Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations – Professor at the Moscow Theological Academy		Central Committee; F&O Commission
BOUTENEFF , Peter Dr Orthodox Church in America	07/95- 08/00	F&O	Professor at the St Vladimir’s Orthodox School of Theology, NY, USA		Commission on Education and Ecumenical Formation
BRIA , Ion Rev. Prof. Romanian Orthodox Church	04/73- 06/74	CWME, Director Renewal and Congregational Life, Unit I Director	(Continued to teach and supervise doctoral students in Romania)	Retirement	
CIOBOTEA , Daniel Rev. Prof. Romanian Orthodox Church	11/80- 09/88	Bossey	His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Romania - Involved in various capacities with the Conference of European Churches .- Participated in a number of bi-lateral theological dialogues		Central Committee
FITZGERALD , Thomas Rev. Dr Ecumenical Patriarchate	07/94- 12/98	Unit I Director	Dean of the Holy Cross School of Orthodox Theology, Brookline, Mass., USA		

HATZOPOULOS , Athanasios Rev. Dr Church of Greece	10/94- 12/96	Bossey	His Eminence Metropolitan Athanasios of Achaia – Director of the Church of Greece’s Office in Brussels – Involved in various capacities with the Conference of European Churches		
HUTTUNEN , Heikki Rev. Fr Orthodox Church in Finland	11/85- 02/89	Youth	Parish priest and Ecumenical officer of his church – General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Finland		Central Committee, Reference Group on Human Sexuality
LABI , Kwame Rev. Fr Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria	01/99- 01/09	URM	Parish Priest and Ecumenical Officer of the Diocese he belonged to.		
LEMOPOULOS , Georges Mr Ecumenical Patriarchate	04/74- 12/75	Intern /Education	Programme Executive at the Orthodox Centre of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Geneva		Central Committee, Staff member of the WCC
LIMOURIS , Gennadios Rev. Dr Ecumenical Patriarchate	07/83- 06/93	F&O	His Eminence Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima – Member of the Holy Synod – Synodical Commission of Inter-Christian Affairs – Co-Moderator of the Dialogue with the Lutheran World Federation – Member of the Dialogue with the RC Church – Involved in various capacities with the Conference of European Churches		Central and Executive Committees, Vice-Moderator and Moderator of F&O, Co-moderator of the Special Commission, Executive Committee, Vice-Moderator of the Central Committee
MOKHEIBER , Lina Mrs Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	01/04- 02/05	Middle East Secretary (Beirut office)	Archdiocese of Beirut – Communication officer and fund raising coordinator of the Hospital run by the Church		CCIA
MITRI , Tarek Dr Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of	05/91- 03/06	Inter-religious dialogue		Government Minister in Lebanon	

Antioch					
NAZARKO , Lukasz Mr Polish Orthodox Church	09/01- 09/02	Intern/Youth		Doctoral Studies	CCIA
NISSIOTIS , Nikos Prof. Church of Greece	09/58- 12/74	Bossey, Associate General Secretary		Theological Faculty of Athens University	Moderator F&O
PANAGOPOULOS , Ioannis Prof. Church of Greece	09/74- 08/76	Bossey		Theological Faculty of Athens University	
PASTHUKOVA , Katharina Mrs Russian Orthodox Church	09/03- 12/05	Intern/F&O	Theological Institute of Sts Cyrill and Methodius in Minsk, Belarus		
PATELOS , Constantine Dr Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria	01/74- 12/78	F&O		Panteios University, Athens	Advisory Group of the Inter-Religious Dialogue
PORUMB , Razvan Mr Romanian Orthodox Church	05/00- 05/01	Intern/GS		Doctoral studies	
PROVOST , Yannick Mr	07/02- 06/07	Publications	Ordained deacon and coordinated the creation of a new parish		
RUBEIZ , Ghassan Dr Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	06/85- 01/92	Middle East Secretary		Christian Children's Fund (CCF)	
SABEV , Todor Prof. Dr Bulgarian Orthodox Church	06/79- 08/93	Deputy General Secretary	(Informally served as Ecumenical Officer/representative of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church)	Retirement	
RIZK , Marina Dr Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	01/99- 05/03	Middle East Secretary		Studies at Sorbonne	
TSETISIS , Georges Rev. Protopr. Ecumenical Patriarchate	06/65- 06/86	Middle East Secretary, Deputy Director and Director CICARWS	Permanent Representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to the WCC		Central and Executive Committees, Special Commission on Orthodox Participation, ad-hoc assignments (e.g. pre-assembly evaluation)

YANNOULATOS , Anastasios Rev. Prof. Church of Greece	09/69- 12/70	CWMW	His Beatitude Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana, Duress and all Albania – Has also served the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria as Archbishop in Kenya - Involved in various capacities with the Conference of European Churches		Advisory Group of the Inter-Religious Dialogue, Moderator CWME, Central Committee, President of the WCC
VASSILIADOU , Anastasia Mrs Church of Greece	09/07- 09/02	Intern /F&O and GS		Doctoral Studies – Teaching religious education at public schools	CCWME
WASYLUK , Aleksander Mr Polish Orthodox Church	10/04- 09/06	Intern /Communication			
ZABOLOTSKY , Nikolai Dr Russian Orthodox Church	08/77- 05/83	CCPD	Department of External Church Relations		
ZIZIOULAS , John Dr Church of Greece	02/68- 09/70	F&O	His Eminence Metropolitan John of Pergamon -- Co-Moderator of the Dialogue with the RC Church – Co-Moderator of the Dialogue with the Anglican Church - Theological coordinator of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s ecological activities		Central Committee, Moderator of F&O

(b) Oriental Orthodox

NAME /CHURCH	HAS SERVED		AFTER DEPARTURE FROM WCC STAFF		
	from/to	Unit/Department	CHURCH FUNCTION	OTHER FUNCTION	LINKS WITH THE WCC
ASSAAD, Marie Dr	08/80-	Deputy General		Retirement	

Coptic Orthodox Church	12/86	Secretary			
ASSAAD , Maurice Dr Coptic Orthodox Church	05/70- 07/72	Education	Director of Christian Education Department		
ESKIDJIAN , Salpy Mrs Armenian Catholicossate of Cilicia	01/95- 04/05	CCIA		Policy advisor on peace and security matters to Scandinavian church-linked aid groups	
GEORGE , Kondothra M. Rev. Prof Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church	07/89- 09/94	Bossey	Principal of the Kottayam Orthodox Theological Seminary		Central Committee (Moderator of the Program Committee); Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC
ITTY , Chirapurath Mr Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church	08/60- 03/87	Youth, Director CCPD		UN-ESCAP	
JOSEPH , K.C. Prof. Dr Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church	09/67- 08/72	CICARWS/Scholarships	Kottayam Orthodox Theological Seminary		
KIFLE , Melaku Mr Ethiopian Orthodox Church	01/80- 10/06	Refugees, CCIA		Retirement	
MARDIROSSIAN , Naïra Mrs Armenian Catholicossate of Etchmiadzine	06/00- 10/01	Intern/Communications			
MORCOS , Salwa Dr Coptic Orthodox Church	01/92- 12/98	Middle East Secretary	Executive staff member of the Bishopric for Social and Ecumenical Affairs		Regional Reference Group
PIRRI-SIMONIAN , Teny Mrs Armenian Catholicossate of Cilicia	12/86- 05/07	Income development, Education, Church and Ecumenical Relations	(Informally serves as Ecumenical Officer/representative of the Catholicossate of Cilicia)	Retirement	
VERGHESE , Paul Rev. Dr Malankara Syria Orthodox Church	05/62- 09/67	F&O, Associate General Secretary	His Eminence Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios – Principal of the Kottayam Orthodox Seminary		Central and Executive Committees – President of the WCC