

ICASSI 1969, Crete, Greece

The third International Summer School was, in a way, the first for many participants and staff – partly because so many years had passed since Denmark in 1962 and Oregon in 1963, and partly because Dr Dreikurs' dynamic teachings had reached such broader areas and captured the hearts and minds of so many socially-oriented people in the helping professions. The Summer School took place in the marble pillared Orthodox Academy, a renowned ecclesiastical institution, situated 22 kilometres from Chania and near a monastery and the village of Kolumbari.

In this setting overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, over 125 students from nine different countries, and instructors from six different countries, together with the local Bishop and clergy, began their fully packed, two weeks of living and learning together.

The theoretical foundations of Individual Psychology were presented by Dr Dreikurs, and its application to practical problems were discussed, with staff members as leaders in special interest groups: Education at home and in the school; Marital relationships; Community problems; Relationship between religion and psychology; and Counselling and Psychotherapy. Participation in discussion groups dealing with personal problems was available to interested participants.

With such a large, diverse group and many new members on the staff, there were many challenges to be met. The almost impossible task of translation was accomplished, and the dedication of Juliet Cavadas was apparent throughout the sessions where translations were in Greek and in English. Initial concern over crowded living conditions soon dissipated in the spirit of intense learning and "Gemeinschaftsgefühl".

However, the Summer School in Crete was even more than all this – it was feeling the pulse of the community and moving in tune with the cultural happenings. There was a Cretan Festival; the home-coming of a thousand former Cretans, visiting their new, famed Academy; a hike through 13 kilometres of the rugged Samarian Gorge with all the mishaps of such a venture; experiencing life in an isolated Cretan village; huddling like refugees on a ship in the darkness of night but being welcomed at the end of the journey with a midnight village feast that was spread out for the length of the street.

There was a mingling with a simplistic mode of life and friendly inhabitants, who communicated with gestures and smiles and a welcome to sit with them on their verandas, while small boys brought flowers gathered from the fields for their foreign guests. Many participants enjoyed daily swimming in the warm sun-drenched sea, and late evenings of Greek dancing at the nearby tavern at Kolumbari.

There was a cultural exchange of songs around a campfire and an optional Mediterranean cruise of the Greek islands at the end of the sessions. Memorable Crete, and lasting friendships echo Dr Dreikurs' dream of a "universal brotherhood of man".