

In memoriam Alexander Hollerbach

Alexander Hollerbach was one of the founding fathers of the European Consortium for Church and State Research, and he was one of its most cherished members. An outstanding scholar and leading expert in law and religion, he was an extraordinarily gentle, kind and friendly man. The European Consortium for Church and State Research will remember him as a wonderful colleague, teacher, and friend, and it is proud to have counted him among its members.

Professor Hollerbach was born on 23 January 1931 in Gaggenau in Baden, Germany. He passed away on 15 December 2020 in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. The European Consortium for Church and State Research will miss him. He was at the centre of its activities, quiet and in the background, but always present and willing to help.

Alexander Hollerbach was a most remarkable person. His broad knowledge of canon law, constitutional law, history, philosophy, and theology, and most of all his wisdom, were a stimulating source of inspiration for all who knew him. Alexander Hollerbach contributed outstanding descriptions of individual scholars in law, religion, and philosophy, their personal development, historic setting, and enduring impact. These studies, often short but precise, remain shining examples of devoted scholarly work. His 1957 dissertation thesis, supervised by Erik Wolf, on the legal thoughts of Schelling was a key contribution to legal philosophy. His habilitation thesis of 1964, under the guidance of Konrad Hesse, on the treaties between State and Church in Germany remains the standard source on the subject today. Throughout his entire life, he showed sustained interest in the subject of law and religion, and in the personalities involved.

Alexander Hollerbach, first appointed ordinary professor for public law and legal philosophy at the University of Mannheim in 1966, became ordinary professor at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau, where he stayed despite several offers from other universities. He became an emeritus professor in 1996. Alexander Hollerbach received the Order of St. Gregory. He was appointed ordinary member of the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences in 1978. In 2003, Alexander Hollerbach was awarded an honorary doctorate in law by the Complutense University in Madrid, and in 2009 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the Faculty of Theology of the University of Freiburg im Breisgau. In 2011 he received the Distinguished Service Cross, first class, of the service medal of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Alexander Hollerbach was a good man. We will miss him.

Gerhard Robbers