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CONTENTS

George Alexe
Thraco-Daco-Roman Distinct Relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity 5

Theodor Damian
The Language of the Christian Mission in the Carpatho-Danubiano-Pontic Space in the First Centuries after Christ 21

Theodor Damian
Gregory of Nazianzus: Where Greek Philosophy Meets Christian Poetry. Greek Philosophical Influences in Gregory of Nazianzus' Poetry 31

Book Reviews

Gerard Casey
Equality, So Badly Misunderstood by Tibor R. Machan 39

George Lăzăroiu
Semiotics of Programming by Kumiko Tanaka-Ishii 44
Seeing Wittgenstein Anew by William Day and Victor J. Krebs (eds.) 48
Modus Vivendi Liberalism by David McCabe 55

THRACO-DACO-ROMAN DISTINCT RELEVANCE OF THE BYZANTINE AND ROMANIAN CHRISTIANITY

GEORGE ALEXE

This paper is theologically concerned with a general quest for the distinct Thraco-Daco-Roman relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Cristianity, during the apostolic, patristic and medieval aeges, till our time.

It is something of a tradition that the Christian splendor of the Roman Empire, reflected in the Holy City of Constantinople, and the mysterious world of the Thracians in Europe and Asia Minor, should intrigue and fascinate at once. Certainly, the heart has its ethnic reasons... Considering their Christian ethnogenesis, one might say that Romanians and Byzantines, who have been born in the True Faith, are Romans and Thracians. Indeed, it is really very hard to decide now if they were Romanized Thracians, or Romans thracized. Both races have been Christianly transfigured and became one in their descendents, who are identified as: Rhomey in Constantinople and Asia Minor, Vlachs or Walachians in Balkan Peninsula, especially Macedo-Romanians Megleno-Romanians and Istro-Romanians, as well as Romanians in the Greater România and neighboring countries, especially USSR. All of them constitute the Eastern Romanity of Europe and are recognized, among the other nations and races, by their indelible Thraco-Roman of Geto-Dacians distinct relevance.

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Unfortunately or not, for many, the Eastern Orthodox Christianity of Byzantine and Romanian ethnicity seems to be a kind of a "terra incognita" of Eastern Romanity, an unexplored spiritual land, despite of its bimillennary existence and its cultural and historical preponderance upon the medieval Western Romanity. Sometimes the Orthodox Christianity of the Eastern Romanity is considered, by regretable confusion, as being called Greek or Russian.

Even the appelative of "Byzantine" seems to be, in many ways, controversial if not irritant, in the daily language. It cannot be easily retrieved in its true and original Thraco-Roman acceptance.

Jaroslav Pelikan, in his philosophical dictionnary, attractively entitled *The Melody of Theology* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., and London, England, 1988) doesn't hesitate to afirm that "Like medieval, the historical category Byzantine is burdened with pejorative connations" (p. 25). Thus, "Byzantine" means "unnecesarilly complicated or involuted, perhaps also devious and hypocritical" (p. 26). In this case, our paper could be in trouble.

It is clear that applying the adjective "Byzantine," with all its pejorative connations, to the Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct relevance of the Eastern Christianity, would be a real "contradictio in adjecto" – a contradition in what is added to the noun. But in spite of these Western stereotypes, there are important Thraco-Daco-Roman denotations too, which indicate the opposite of the pejorative connations, and restore the prestige of the Byzantine concept, as it was always understood in the histoy of the Art and Eastern Orthodox Theology.

However, without ignoring the justified or unjustified motifs of this situation, I would like to share with you, this time, some theological views toward a more concrete understanding of the Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct

relevance, regarding the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity, culture and art.

Breaking the ground for this paper, I have to mention that this presentation might contradict some Western, Greek or Slavic interpretations, and also might disturb some historical common places dealing with such a very important topic.

However, there might be a Greek or Slavonie side of the Byzantine Empire history. That is acknowledgeable. But there is no Romanian side of the history of the Byzantine Empire, because through their Thraco-Daco-Roman ancestors, Romanians are an organic part, an ontological one, of the history of this Empire. They are ethnically and spiritually identified with the Eastern Orthodox Romanity of the Byzantine Empire.

In fact, despite of all historical ups and downs endured by the Romanians, they are, untill our times the solely legitimated representatives, and not only theoretically, of the Eastern Romanity of Europe. Certainly, an intimate knowledge of this sensitive matter cannot theologically deny the ontological relationship between the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity throughout the centuries and millennia.

Obviously, not enough reactualized by the Romanian Orthodox Church, this spiritual Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct relevance is proving to be in the present time of a great ecumenical significance. And no wonder why. As it is very well known, the entire Christianity is under the pressure of many crises. Among them, the crisis of Christian identity is the most dangerous, because it is gradually becoming more abstract and fictitious, without any historic or ethnic content. So to say,a formal identity without any specific legitimacy.

However, we are not dealing with fictional or conventional Christian identities, but with historical facts and ethnic realites still living in our

Eastern Romanity way of Christian life, as it was sealed, once for ever, by the Holy City of Constantinople.

At this particular point, I would like to stress the fact that, recently, the *New York Spectator*, a quarterly magazine of culture and tradition, scholarly edited in USA by Dr. Serban C. Andronescu, has scientifically aroused a great interest about the almost forgotten Eastern Romanity of Europe. In this sense, I have to mention, among others, only two very commendable essays. First, "The Latin Peoples of Eastern Europe," by Prof. Dr. D. Dvoichenko de Markov, (1989, No. 29–30, pp. 18–21) and secondly, "Les Aroumains," by Prof. Dr, Charles Lambert of Brussels, Belgium (1988, No. 27, pp. 18–19; No. 28, pp. 18–19; No. 29–30, p. 18–19; 1989, No. 31–32, p. 26–29; No. 34, p. 45; and 1990, No. 35, 36, p. 18 and 61).

Attentively studying these essays, I was definetely convinced that there are several reasons to strengthen the aboriginal identity of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity, through its Thraco-Roman of Geto-Dacian distinct relevance and origin.

Unfortunately, the ontological relationship between the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity, based on the same Thraco-Daco-Roman ethnogenesis and Church history, is almost forbidden if not deliberately ignored by many modern thracologues and byzantinists. Even by the historians and theologians. To simplify matters, the Thracians seems to be totally eliminated from history, as if they never existed.

It is unbelievable, but true. Prof. Joseph Constantin Dragan, in his monthly magazine: *We the Thracians* (Roma, Italy, Year XVIII, 1989, pp. 1–3) has vigorously denounced this unscientific attitude which generated what Prof. Dragan was not hesitating to label as a "painful Greco-Italian provincialism."

Certainly, the true history is evident by itself, but it is difficult enough to ignore it for good. In history, the great law of impartiality should be applied

to all nations. Nevertheless, to our intellectual satisfaction, the eminent author and historian, Michael Grant, in the *Rise of the Greeks* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988) has authoritatively emphasized the strong influences that Thracians have exerted upon the Greeks, especially in the field of religion and music.

Created, promoted and defended by the Holy Apostles, Holy Fathers, Holy Martyrs, and to a very special extent by the Thraco-Roman Emperors, the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity – undivided and imperially embodied by the Eastern Romanity – was directly and canonically inherited by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and by the Romanian Orthodox Church, as well as by all the Romanians everywhere in the Balkan Peninsula and the world.

There still exists a living history of the Thraco-Roman Emperors, Saints and Martyrs, which is daily and nightly actualized and celebrated not only in the sacramental life and Divine Services performed in all the Eastern Orthodox Churches and monsteries, but also in both, the Byzantine and Romanian sacred poetry and literature, architecure and art.

A major reason for this paper was to establish some preamble criteria intended to acknowledge from a theological point of view the Thraco-Roman distinct Geto-Dacian relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity throughout the centuries and millennia, by contributing in this way, to a real definition and understanding of what so normally could be called the Thraco-Roman Christianity, culture, spirituality and civilization.

Therefore, the European patrimony would be able to treasure one of the most glorious chapter of its Christian spirituality, and, at the same time to restore its own cultural and ideological equilibrium so badly deteriorated by the well known totalitarian regimes of this century. In fact, the Christian Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct Geto-Dacian relevance is the Eastern Romanity's specific difference from the Western Romanity. Furthermore, the Thraco-

Roman distinct Geto-Dacian relevance of the Byzantine and Romnian Christianiy is the specific difference from the Greek and Slavic Christianity, as well as from the Romano-Catholic and Anglican Churches or Protestant Denominations.

The highest distinct Thraco-Daco-Roman relevance of this Eastern Romanity of the Thraco-Daco-Roman Christianity, spiritually and ethnically embodied and inherited by the Byzantines and Romanians, is proved until today by the "Sancta Sophia" of Constantinople.

There, over the South door of the Narthex, on the vault, instead of the tradiţional Archangels, the Holy Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus Christ is imperially flanked by the two most illustrious Thraco-Roman Emperors, Constantin the Great, at the right, who symbolically presents the Holy City of Constantinople, and Justinian Ist, at the left, who votively offers to the Holy Mother the Church of Sancta Sophia.

Certainly, there is the real Christian apogee of the Thraco-Roman-Geto-Dacian religiosity. The spiritual distinction of the Eastern Romaniy was once for ever sanctified in the Holy Icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus Christ, angelically flanked by the two of our Thraco-Daco-Roman ancestors, the Saints Emperors Constantin and Justinian, in the Divine Cathedral of "Sancta Sophia" of Constantinople.

However, the history was not a Thraco-Dacian-Roman obsession. There has probably been a kind of a reciprocal rejection if not a permanent boycot. I don't believe that history has refussed its access to the Thracian reality, by situating itself outside of the Thracian world. Being ignored by the history, deliberately or not, the relevance of the Thraco-Geto-Dacians has been taken into evidence only by ulterior considerations, later in time or secondary in importance. Probably, for these reasons, their history did not reach the same level or value as the Greek or the Roman sacrosanct history.

Nevertheless, in the company of the Greeks and Romans, the Thraco-Daco-Romans have historically played their own ethnic and religious rol in the ancient and medieval world, long time ago, before and after Jesus Christ.

First in the Greek and Hellenistic world, the Thraco-Geto-Dacians-Romans, through their religion and music, have essentially contributed along with the Jewish religion to the fulillment of times, and then to the apostolic and patristic Cristianity.

Secondly, in the Roman-Empire which has militarily succeeded to unite under the imperial administration almost all the Thraco-Geto-Dacians states and tribes in Europe and Asia Minor. And yet, one has to discover the real historical determinations able to reveal the spiritual meaning of the Thraco-Geto-Dacians existence among the Greeks and Romans who have tacitily assimilated their distinct cultural and religious values, through the process of Hellenization and Romanization. Would be really fascinating.

There is an "interpretatio graeca" and an "interpretatio romana" of the Tracian history, culture, religion and art. It is impossible to define the Greco-Roman culture, or even the modern culture, without the distinct relevance of the Thracian religion and culture.

After more than two centuries of Thracologic research, where the main aspects of Thracian culture are judged by alien criteria, the Bulgarian Professor Alexander Fol of Sofia University has considered that following the World War II "the necessary conditions gradually appeared for a fundamental reevaluation of Thracian historiography." In this sense the "Interpretatio Thracica" he proposed as a new interdisciplinary method of Thracian interpretation will certainly demonstrate the real cultural and spiritual distinct relevance of the Thracians in the Greco-Roman antiquity (See "Interpretatio Thracica" by Alexander Fol, Sofia University, in *The Journal of Indo-European Studies*, Washington D.C., Vol. 11, Numbers 3 and 4, Fall/Winter 1983, pp. 217–230).

Without any exaggeration, through their religion, medicine and art, the Thracians were not only equals, but, at least, superiors to the Greeks and Romans. Remember Friederich Nietzsche (1844–1900) who interpreted the nature of the Greek tragedy through the contrast of the "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" elements which are corresponding to the predominant characters of the Thracian deities Apollo and Dionysos, who deeply penetrated and transformed not only the religious and cultural life of the Greeks and Romans, but also the European culture and literature as a whole.

Now getting down to the very heart of this paper, the Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity, I'll try to avoid the conventional approaches, by theologically considering the Thracian world as a whole, as an ethnic universe unfragmented by the geography, history, language and religion. There have been many Thracian confederations, states and tribes in Europe and Asia Minor, but only one nation speaking the same language, worshipping the same supreme God, and observing the same ancestral customs and religious traditions.

For instance, to be more specific, during the Bronze Age, the Thracians were very well known and their magnificient presence in the Greek mythology, or in the Iliad and Odyssey, bestows upon them a legendary prestige. Also, the Thraco-Daco-Roman religious distinct relevance was acknowledged as their national pride and the general praise of the ancient world.

According to my distinguished Professor, the Very Rev. Fr. Dr. Ioan G. Coman, even the ethnic name of the Thracians, given by the Greeks, was derived from the verb "thriskevo" which means to worship, to venerate, to confess a religious faith.

Therefore, Thracians are the "Worshippers" of God and of their own religion. There is a very stimulative hypothesis that seems likely to be a true explanation though it has to be proved if the verb *thriskevo* was created by the Greeks in order to define the Thracian nation, or this ancestral name of

the Thracians has obliged the Greeks to adapt this name as a verb to better describe the act of worshipping God.

Herodotos (5th century B.C.) has historically testified that Geto-Dacians, the "immortal" ancestors of Romanians, are "the bravest and the most righteous among the Thracians."

Strabo (63 B.C.–A.D. 19) gave the best religious testimony to the Thraco-Geto-Dacians. He said that: "Nobody doubts that the religious distinct relevance of the Thraco-Geto-Dacians always was the predominant character of their nature."

This Thracian religious inheritance is still living in the distinct relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity, and especially in what Mircea Eiade is calling the "Cosmic Christianity," that is to say the popular religion created by the Romanians and by all the Eastern Orthodox nations.

Certainly, there is a very long pre-Christian religious tradition of all the Thracians in Europe and Asia Minor, whose their inițial pre-monotheisme, henotheisme or even monotheisme, has largely contributed not only to the Hellenistic religious syncretisme, but also to the fulfillment of times. There is also an almost legendary history of the Thracian Byzantium before becoming the Thraco-Greco-Roman-Constantinople. To penetrate behind of the instituțional, political, social, and cultural structure of the Roman-Byzantine Empire, one has to rediscover and to reassess the historic evidence of this Thracian Byzantium and his role in the Thracian world of Asia Minor and Europe, as well as the Thracian roots of the Greco-Roman culture and civilization. Grounded and based on religion, poetry and music, there is a great Thraco-Greco-Roman spiritual synthesis, whose Thracian distinct Geto-Dacian relevance is clearly obvious.

For instance, Sabazios (also known as "Bassareus," and especially as Dionysos) the supreme God of the Thraco-Phrigians was finally idenified with Sabaoth from whom he borrowed the auguste gesture of "benedictio

latina." The Thracian worship of Dionysos and Orpheus in Greece, with its belief in immortality ad its ritual of purification, as well as its initiatic mysteries and ideas of the future life after death, has had an enormous religious influence not only in Greece, but in the enire Hellenistic and Roman world. Especially the idea of repentance through the ritual of Death and resurrection was like a pre-Christian preamble of Saint Paul's theology of redemption. Anyhow, Sabazios-Dionysos, Zalmoxis and Orpheus constitute the highest distinct relevance and spirituality of all Thracians.

Erwin Rhode in his famous *Psyche* (Vol. II) analysing the cult of souls and belief in immortality among the Greeks, emphasizes with great admiration the Thracian religious distinct relevance. He said that: "The cult of this Thracian divinity (Dionysos) differed in every particular from anything that we know of from Homer as Greek worship of the gods" (p. 257).

What could be more amazing for us, to be aware by the very fact that Sabazios equated with Sabaoth, has affected the Jewish Diaspora, and in 139 B.C., as we read in *The Hellenistic Civilisation*, by W.W. Tarn (3rd ed. rev. by the author and G.T. Grifith, Meridian Books, Cleveland and New York, 1968, p. 225) some Jews were expelled from Rome ostensible for introducing the worship of Zeus Sabazios! It is really astounding. The Jewish, as the zealous apostles of the Thracian Sabazios in Rome, behold the most fascinating subject to be studied by the theologians and specialists in the History of Religions.

In fact, we learn from Herodotus (*Histories*, Book Two, translated and with an Introduction by Aubrey de Selincourt, The Penguin Classics, Baltimore, Maryland, 1961) that before to be introduced in Greece, Dionysos was worshipped not only in Egypt, where he was believed to be Osiris, but in Etiopia, too. Also we learn from Herodotus himself, the Greek tradition that the Thraco-Phrygian is the oldest race on earth and their religion older than the Egyptian.

If we take into consideration what Michael Grant is historically asserting that Dionysos was known by the Greeks in the Bronze Age, and that his cult came to Greece from Thracian sources through the medium of the Greek colonies in the Thracian coastlands, as well as that the second major element in the Greek religion was the cult of Orpheus, also transmitted to Greece by the Thracians, we understand better what makes so obvious the distinct relevance of the Thracian religion in the universality of the ancient world.

It is clear that the Thracian religion has spiritualized the Greek religion and other ancient religions. This is the truth. The Greek genius and language became the perfect vehicle for the Thracian religion and spirituality in the Greco-Roman and Hellenistic world. Even in the Judaic world, as we already mentioned it.

No wonder why the Thracian presence in the Holy Bible is atested in many places (For more informations, see: George Alexe, "The Biblical Presence of the Thraco-Dacians and Illyrians in the Holy Scripture," in *Romanian Medievalia*, Vol. IV, The 39th International Congress on Medieval Studies, 6–9 May 2004, pp. 237–252).

In this case, because of their very distinct religion, the Thraco-Geto-Dacians were not the "great anonyms" of history, as Mircea Eliade has stated in his *History of Religious Ideas* (Vol. II, The Universiy of Chicago Press, 1984, translated from French by Willad R. Trask). They might be "anonyms" for us, but not for the ancient world, particularly Greco-Roman.

However, what we have to underline is the very fact that Byzantine and Romanian Christinity is deeply and irrevocably rooted in the spiritual background of the Thracian religion, which was replaced by the new religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, at the fulfillment of times.

At this point, taking into a final consideration what the title of this paper is promising, we have to concede that more and more questions arise and

become inevitable. This it is a good sign because it underlines the importance and, to a great extent, the actuality of the Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity of the Eastern Romanity.

In fact, the Thraco-Roman ethnogenesis of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity in its Apostolic origin and Patristic development, as a distinct ethnological "datum," is a self-evident Christian entity, with all the canonical and ethnical implications and consequences throughout the medieval and modern ages. From this "datum" our paper is trying to draw on the Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct relevance and identity of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity.

In this sense, all that we need it is a clear understanding of the Thracian history, religion and ethnicity outside and within the Roman Empire, in Europe and Asia Minor, by underlining their direct contribution and participation, certainly, as Thraco-Romans, to the establishment of the Eastern Roman Empire, Christian foundation of Europe, and especially, to the foundation of the Universal Church in its ecumenical and imperial form.

However, at this point, a digression is necessary. It seems, to our surprise, that we are spiritually and ethnically confronted with the unexpected mystery of these highest Thraco-Daco-Roman political and spiritual performances, that are confirming, once for ever, the greatest Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity. There is a kind of an intellectual suspense created between the mystery of the Thraco-Daco-Roman spiritual-political performances and the mystery of the Thraco-Daco-Roman-distinct relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity.

Two realities created by this Thracian mistery, facing each other, by reciprocally afirming and confirming each other, in the same time. So to say, we genuinely assist to a true competition between performances and their relevance. To theologically conclude this necessary digression, a mystery

cannot be totally known, understood or explained by man, because the mystery could be fully revealed or explained, only through the divine revelation.

In our view, this Thracian mystery of our ancestors is nothing else than, approximately, the same enigme and miracle of the Romanian Nation, which was a clear definition given by the well known historian George Bratianu, to the still unknown historical existence of the the Romanian People, considered in itself as being an enigma and an historical miracle.

Furthermore, as a final epilog of this paper, I would like to emphasize not a mysterious but this time a distinct relevance of the Thracian spirit, as a result of a just historical and theological analysis that will subtly discover what we might call a Thracian "perihoresis," that is to say a Thracian religious interpenetration which genuinely is creating a kind of a spiritual morphogenesis between the Romans and Greeks, as well as in the entire Hellenistic world.

Without any exaggeration, this Thracian religious perihoresis in the ancient world, along with the "pax Romana" and the Jews diaspora, constitutes the true medium for the Christianization, first of the Thracians themselves, and then of the Romans and Greeks, as well as of the oher nationalities.

We have to underline the very fact that Romanization of the Thracians historically coincides with their Christianization. The process of Romanization and Christianization of the Thracians ethnically means the same thing and vice versa. Until now, in Romania, the appellative of "Romanian" means in the first place "Christian."

Astonishingly enough, there are more than forty Roman Emperors of Thraco-Dacian or Illyrian origin, without counting the dinasties of the Comnenis and Cantacuzenis, but nobody paid attention, historically and theologically, to the impact of their ethnicity and religiosity upon the Roman Empire ad the entire Christianity. Who doesn't know that religion, ethnicity and language are the most important factors in the life and history of the

nations? Lactantius (c.240–c.320 A.D.), in his book *De mortibus persecutorum* (27–306) emphasizes the fact that the Thraco-Dacian Roman Eperor Galerius (29–306), who has himself proclaimed as the enemy of the "Roman" name, was ready to change the name of the Roman Empire in that of the "Dacian Empire."

Certainly, it cannot be denied such a Thraco-Dacian ethnic consciousness. As I mentioned before, the holy blazon of this awareness, worn in ther Roman imperial purple, was celestially represented on the vault over he South door of the Nartex in Sancta Sophia, where the "Isapostolos" (equal to the Apostles) Thraco-Roman Emperors, Constatin the Great and Justinian I, are solemnly replacing the Archangels by flanking the Mother of God, the Holy Virgin Mary with the Child, our Lord Jesus Christ.

These Isapostolos Emperors were not Greeks, nor only Romans, but Thraco-Romans, whose Thracian ethnicity and Latin language were totally different from the other ethnicities and languages. And yet, apart from the imperial ethnicity, the History, as well as the Theology, has to recognize the Thraco-Roman ethnicity of so many Holy Fathers, Saints and Martyrs, known or many of them known only by God, who transfigured in their lives in our Lord Jesus Christ the spiritual distinct Geto-Dacian relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity.

That is why, paraphrasing John Van Antwerp Fine's conclusion that, essentially, the Byzantine Empire was a combination of three major cultural components, Roman in political concept, administration, law and military organization, Greek in language and culture, and Christian in religion, what happens to be incorrect formulated. In this case, we are not hesitating to correctly rename the third component with its proper name, being reformulated as Thracian in religion, I should say in the Thracian intense religiosity of approaching and implementing the Christian religion (See: *The Early Medieval*

Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century, John V.A. Fine Jr., Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 1983, p. 16).

As a matter of fact, we have to recognize that the Thracians were among the first to Christianize their ancestral and so distinct relevant religion. Biblically, they are attested in the *Acts of the Apostles*, as being presents in Jerusalem, in the day of Pentecost, when the Christian Church was really born and established by the Holy Apostles in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Among those about three thousand souls who were listening the sermon of Peter in their own ethnic languages and then baptized were also many Thracians from Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia and Pamphilia. (The Acts, 2: 9–10). Thus they become member founders of the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem, the Mother of all Christian Churches. These Thracians have founded heir own ethnic Churches in their native places, as it is proved by the First Epistle General of Peter, which is addressed to the Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia (I Peter, 1:1).

Persecuted and martyrised by the Pagan Emperors of Rome, this Thraco-Roman Christianity of Asia Minor and Europe is relevantly attested not only by the Biblical referenes of the New Testament, but also by the historical documents in the second and third enturies, before the Thraco Emperor Constantin the Great. Organically connected with the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the spiritual relevance of the Thraco-Roman Christianity was transfigured by the Holy Spirit, being canonically and ethnically inherited by the what we are proudly calling the Eastern Romanity, whose distinct Geto-Dacian spiritual relevance is ecumenically and ethnically represented today by the Byzantine and Romanian Christianity.

Finally, in our closing remarks, we regret not having enough time, here and now, to analyze the post byzantine period, following the fall of Constantinople (1453) and the predominant role played by the Eastern Romanity, especially by the Romanians, as Nicolae Iorga splendidly pointed

out in his famous *Byzance apres Byzance* (1935) and Alexandru Dutu, in his *Comparative Literature and History of Mentalities* (1982, in Romanian) where he scholarly demonstrated the byzantine "Imperial Vicariat" really represented and imperially exerted by the Romanian Princes as "Protectors of the Orthodox faith" in the Former Roman-Byzantine Empire, now replaced by the Ottoman Empire of Turks.

Once more, the Romanians representing their own Eastern Romanity, were emphasizing by themselves the imperial Thraco-Daco-Roman distinct relevance of the Byzantine and Romanian Christianty, which, certainly, will be cotinued next year, in the 45th International Congress on Medieval Studies.

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THE LANGUAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSION IN THE CARPATHO-DANUBIANO-PONTIC SPACE IN THE FIRST CENTURIES AFTER CHRIST

THEODOR DAMIAN

There are so many mysteries related to the Geto-Dacians' existence, the Romanians' ancestors, that the quasi-complete disappearance of their language, strangely and with no justification, almost does not shock us anymore. The explanations given to this phenomenon up to this time are, in most cases, insufficient, scientifically unfounded and illogical. They do not go beyond an assertion which is more or less artificial.

Today, the time has come, with the help of the interdisciplinary research that is at hand with ever greater chances of evaluation and re-evaluation, in a more objective way, of the phenomenon of interest to us, to look again at this period of time in the history of the Romanian people in order to have a better understanding of it.

The aim of this presentation is not to treat the topic exhaustively, but only to reiterate, for those who are not yet convinced, a few arguments from a logical and historical point of view, in order to bring back the problem to attention, but also to stimulate the continuous reflection on it in light of the new research and publications.

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The Church can significantly contribute to the problem of the language of the Romanians' ancestors because it developed an intense activity at the pastoral, liturgical, theological and missionary levels among the Geto-Dacians.

Or, if the theological activity – writings meant to interpret the fundamental teaching of the faith that had in view the crystallization of the Christian doctrine – the liturgy and in particular the pastoral one and the mission represent essential dimensions of the Church, if the goal of the Church's mission is to convert and teach the crowds of people, these activities could not be done but in their own language, not in a foreign one.

It is true that many Church fathers were educated persons, fluent in several languages, and in particular Greek and Latin and they wrote in these languages even when they did not represent the language of a certain community where they happened to be. However, it goes without saying that the liturgy, the sermon, the mission could not be done but in the language spoken and understood by the crowds, and I am talking here of mission as a systematic and perseverant attempt to spread out Christian ideas in the midst of a community.

Let's take, for instance, the case of St. Basil the Great, of St. Cyrill of Alexandria, of St. Cyrill of Jerusalem. They wrote in Greek books of theology, complicated and profound even for the educated and sophisticated mind of modern man today.

Yet when they were addressing people in the parishes where they were preaching, doing their mission and catechetical work, they must have talked to these people in their own languages whether they were in Asia, Egypt or Palestine.

Were there people in Jerusalem who spoke Greek during the episcopacy of St. Cyrill? Of course. However, Greek was not the language of the common people who were the target of the Christian mission. Were there people in Egypt who spoke Greek during the episcopacy of St. Cyrill of

Alexandria? Of course. What is sure yet is the fact that common people spoke in their local language (the Coptic language in Egypt, used even today in worship and daily life is a proof in this sense).

Yet, beyond logic there are historical witnesses about the preaching of Christianity in the local languages to different populations. In one of his studies about the Thracian version of the gospels, Bruce Metzger affirms with emphasis that St. Irenaeus of Lugdunum spoke and preached in the local language, the Celtic, just like St. Augustin spoke in Punic, the local language in North Africa.[1]

In 359 AD St. John Chrysostome preached to the Goths who were living in Constantinople with the help of an interpreter. In that sermon he made a special mention about the use of local languages when the goal is the spread of Christianity: "Where are now Plato, Pythagoras and the other philosophers of Athens? Look! Where are the teachings of the fishermen and tentmakers? They are not only in Judaea, but shine more than the sun in the barbarian languages, as you have heard today. Scythians, Thracians, Sarmats, Maures and Indians, and those who live at the extremities of the earth philosophize about these things that were mentioned, having them translated, each one, in their maternal languages."[2]

E. Lozovan in *Dacia Sacra* attests to the fact that the Bessy, an important Thracian tribe used to say Christian prayers in their own language.[3]

If the Gospel was translated and preached to smaller nations and less known then the Thracians and Geto-Dacians (like the Nubians, the Sogdiens, the Georgiens[4] and others) all the more, one can suppose, that a nation like that of the Thracians, the largest one after the Indians, according to Herodotus, strong and civilized (Thracia was the mother country of poetry, music and religion),[5] was a priority target for the Christian missionaries.

At the beginning of the IVth century, the native population of Thracia was not Romanized,[6] Bruce Metzger writes, and Christianity was advancing

there remarkably, as Heliodorus mentions in a letter to St. Hyeronymus, who was then in Palestine.[7]

Although historian Morton Smith of Columbia University believes that in the VIth century the four Gospels were already translated in the Thracian language,[8] I believe that if at other nations less known, they were translated earlier, in the Thracian language they must have been translated at least three centuries earlier, by the time that the first bishop of Tomis, Evangelicus, is mentioned (end of IIIrd century),[9] if not earlier.

On the other hand, if we take for valid the affirmation that in the VIth century the Gospels were already translated in the Thracian language, yet unlike other languages where the Gospels represented the first written literature,[10] in the Thracian language, as it happened in Latin, there were writings before the coming of Christianity, I do not see why the translation of the Gospels had to wait until the VIth century.

If the Thracian language is considered by M. Smith next to the Latin, in this context, then, it can be considered next to the Greek as well. And if in the last two, the Gospels were translated at the dawn of Christianity, there is no proof that they could not have been translated in the Thracian language at about the same time.

Meanwhile, if the Gospels' translation caused a succeeding literary development of Christian nature, as Morton Smith writes,[11] and if we take for good the hypothesis that the Gospels were translated in Thracian in the VIth century, and that an entire Christian literature just started to develop, how can the Thracian language disappear in the same century, as W. Tomaschek, B. P. Hasdeu, and later I. I. Russu[12] maintain?!

Although timid, Lozovan's conclusion that on the Danube's banks the Christian Church was not Latin in nature, nor Greek, and that the Christian doctrine was spread and practiced in the local languages[13] comes strongly to support the idea that the translation of Gospels and Christian texts was done

in Thracian at the dawn of Christianity, and also supports the idea that the Thracian language was not extinguished in the VIth century, but, on the contrary, through the impulse given by the new Christian writings, it continued to exist long after that.

Having this issue in view one needs not forget the character essentially psychological of the Christian mission. Mission addresses the mind and the heart. It addresses the mind, for the content of the evangelical teaching has to be understood intellectually, as much a it can be understood, and the heart, because the senses, the feelings must be engaged in view of the application of the Christian teaching and precepts in the daily life.

The emotional dimension is absolutely essential in both contexts, because any religion targets the daily living, the creation of a *modus vivendi* in the believer's life, otherwise it is reduced to a philosophy or to a simple thinking system.

This aspect is valid in particular in the case of Christian religion, as long as it is centered on, and springs from, the two great types of love: the love of God and of the neighbor.

Keeping in mind these considerations then, one can understand why it was so important that Christian mission be done in the local language of the people, even though, at another level, it was done in a parallel language, a borrowed one, like the one of the cultural on military colonization.

One says that in any country one would be, no matter how many languages one would know, even though daily circumstances determine one to speak currently another language, like in the case of immigration, when one prays, one does it in his on her maternal language. Exceptions might exist of course. What is important is that religion targets man's mind and heart and the total, profound access to them does not come through a foreign language, imposed, some times hated by local people, but through their maternal language.

As long as the free Dacians outside the borders of the Roman Empire constantly attacked the Romans and as long as the internal rebellions of the Dacians from the colonized territory were taking place incessantly,[14] it is clear that the Dacians hated the conquerors and implicitly the Latin language used by them, except for cases where both sides used approximately the same language.

It is good to notice that if the Gospels were translated in the maternal language of the populations of the Empire, all the more the liturgy and the sermon were done in the local languages.

It makes no sense to think that the Gospel was translated into the local inhabitants' languages but the worship and the sermon were performed in a language they did not understand. In addition to that, Lozovan writes explicitely that the Thracian language was a liturgical language.[15]

Another way to look at this issue is as follows: if, as some people maintain, in particular the Latinists, through the preaching of Christianity in Latin and Greek the Dacian language was replaced, that means, because the same thing happened to other nations too, at least from the Roman Empire, that these nations would have to speak today only these two languages: Greek and Latin, which, of course, is not the case.

The use of another language by a certain population does not necessarily lead to the replacement of the maternal one.

The local language is such an important issue in the Christian mission that even today it is paid full attention by the preaching of the doctrine of Christ to peoples in Asia, Africa and other places. For example the American Bible Society, with its headquarters in New York, even now continues to translate the Holy Scriptures in other languages, in local tribal dialects, even though in some of these countries the French or English languages are spoken extensively at the administrative or academic levels.

It is worth noting here that even in cases where the Christian mission targeted the elite of a population, when the communication could be made in a language other than the local one, if the missionary did not know the local language, the target continues to be represented by the general people. The purpose of the Christianization of the elite is that it can Christianize the rest of the population, as happened with the Slaves.

In the case of the Romanians' ancestors, Prof. Ioan Rotaru writes that Niceta of Remesiana, for instance, who preached on both sides of the Danube River, north and south, and who reached regions in the heart of the Occidental Carpathian Mountains, spoke naturally the pre-Romanian language used by the local populations, even though he wrote easily in Latin.[16]

As the erudite theology professor Ioan Coman[17] indicates, and more recently Mihai Diaconescu,[18] the language of the Dacians, based on the culture, depth, and the force of this people's personality, of its advanced culture mentioned by contemporary sources, was not assimilated; it was it that assimilated other languages that it came in contract with just like the Romanian language later under the influence of the Greek and Slavonic languages, did not cease to exist but assimilated both influences, yet remained a Romanian language.

The argument of the language is fundamentally related to that of the continuity of a people's existence and vice versa. We see cases where some minorities were de-nationalized through the interdiction for them to speak their own language and the imposition of the colonist's language, such as in some regions in Hungary, or Poland, for instance, or Greece, where Vlahs are living yet who are today Hungarians, Poles or Greeks.

If Romanians would have lost their language, as some contend, they would not have continued to remain Romanians until today. And vice versa: there where the language was kept, so was the nation, as in the case of small

minority enclaves where for hundreds of years those populations, through the maternal language, were able keep their ethnic identity.

Using the argument backward, if today we are a Romanian nation and not a Roman one, even though colonized shortly by the Romans, that is due thanks to the preservation and the continuity of the maternal Geto-Dacian language until today.

By the some token, we can think of other distinct nations like the Greeks, and the Jews who lived under the Romans, and for that they did not loose their maternal language. The language continuity led to the ethnic continuity in history. In other words, their distinct ethnic existence today demonstrates the continuity of the maternal language.

The natural conclusion of these considerations is as follows: if the Geto-Dacians were so intensely Christianized that in the IVth century they produced hundreds of martyrs in the persecutions against the Christians, if they gave to the Church renowned theologians, such as St. John Cassian, Germanus, Dionysius Exiguus and others, if they were so well organized in dioceses, which, together with their bishops were well known in the ecumenical world of that time, as was the case of bishop Teotim of Tomis, for example, if all these things prove a solid anchoring of the Christian religion in the conscience, mind and heart of the Romanians' ancestors, then, that means that beyond the theological writings produced in Greek and Latin, the Christian mission proper could not have been done but in the language spoken by the local people and not in one strange to their hearts.

And once religion penetrated through the language the heart and conscience of a people, as long as faith and worship continue to exist as its highest values, so does the language. And if the Romanian language existed always between then and now, that implies it is the language the Geto-Dacians spoke even before Christianization, and also before the colonization of Dacian territories by the Romans, even though it is natural for some forms and

aspects in the language to have changed as it happens with all languages over such longs periods of time.

Was then the Daco-Romanian language lost? No. It existed, it persisted and it is.

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GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS: WHERE GREEK PHILOSOPHY MEETS CHRISTIAN POETRY. GREEK PHILOSOPHICAL INFLUENCES IN GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS' POETRY

THEODOR DAMIAN

Introduction

Gregory of Nazianzus was one of the greatest intellectuals of his time, who excelled in particular in the fields of Letters, Philosophy and Theology. He was well known for the spread and depth of his knowledge, for subtlety in philosophical and theological interpretations and was both admired and envied. His immense poetical production (about 20,000 verses) indicates these qualities just as his prose does.

Gregory the Theologian, as he is also called, had a vocation for academics and for monasticism. He traveled between both and at times he was in a dilemma, thinking that his passion for the first might somehow be in the detriment of the other.

As for Philosophy, while that was certainly part of his intellectual, academic vocation, it was considered also strictly related to the monastic calling. In his understanding, philosophy is on a higher level than academia,

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even if it is part of it, because it combines silence and contemplation with prayer and study.

In fact, in spite of their possible apparent antagonism, the two vocations proved to be complementary with each other and were very productive in the life and works of the great theologian.

This paper is generally related to the philosophical aspects of Gregory's poetry, but it will focus in particular directly on the Greek philosophical influences there. In terms of poetry I will focus my investigation on one poem, *On His Tribulations (Sur ses épreuves)* rendered in parallel Greek and French versions in *Saint Grégoire de Nazianze: Oeuvres Poétiques, Poèmes Personnels, II, 1, 1-11,* Edition Les Belles Lettres, Paris 2004.

My focus on Gregory's poetry is related to the gap that exists in academia between Patristic and Classical studies and the need to bridge it. As Preston Edwards writes: "A literary study of Gregory's poetry provides an opportunity to bridge this gap, bringing our understanding of late antique literary culture in the Greek East abreast of recent developments in Latin studies."[1]

Gregory's Love for the Greek Culture

Gregory of Nazianzus received an education that allowed not only familiarization but expertise in the Greek language, literature and philosophy.

First of all, he belonged to a family that could afford to pay a mentor for his education as a child. Then, as adolescent, he continued his studies at Caesarea in Cappadocia where he was colleague with his later friend Basil, and in Antioch and Alexandria, before moving to Athens,[2] where he stayed for eight years.

As Jean Bernardi pointed out, since "Athens used to have a detestable reputation in the Christian midst, one had to have a great passion for literature and culture in general in order to have a fervent Christian family agree to send there a young Christian."[3]

Being very diligent and studying there for such a long time, Gregory was ready to even start an academic career[4] there, such as teaching in the higher education system.

As his biographers mention, in Athens, this city of culture, beauty and polytheism, the young Gregory, together with a group of Christian students under Basil's leadership, became very reknowned. Together with Basil he took courses with all the professors available there and in all fields of study. They also took advantage of all the famous libraries of the city.[5]

This fruitful time and activity was well reflected in his works. The numerous citations and references in his verses to classical authors, major and minor, demonstrate how well acquainted he was with Greek literature and Philosophy.[6]

As P. Edwards indicates, frequent allusions to the works of Callimachus, Apollonius and Theocritus (not to mention lesser authors like Aratus and Nicander),[7] words, expressions, images, metaphors, ideas taken from them and many others such as Homer, Hesiod, Heraclitus of Ephesus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Skeptics, the Cynics and Stoics represent a clear testimony as to the extent to which the Greek culture was present in Gregory's literary production.

In fact, he himself confesses in his long autobiographical poem *(Autobiographie)* that "an ardent desire for Letters used to possess me,"[8] referring to the Greek culture in general. Gregory's passion for it, as mentioned earlier, lead to fears that he might be guilty of unfaithfulness to the monastic vocation.[9]

That certainly did not happen, yet there are places, in his poetry at least, where it is difficult to distinguish if a certain practice or idea comes from the Christian tradition or the Greek cultural tradition, since it is present in both. Such is the case with the closing of his poem on tribulations with a prayer where he enumerates a long series of divine attributes. J. Bernardi explains that invoking all of God's names in a prayer is a practice that is directly rooted in the oldest Greek religious tradition.[10]

Whether Gregory took it from one place or the other is not of much theological relevance since he is one of the highest authorities among the Church fathers and knew what to take from the other cultures around him, from the Greek in particular, and what to integrate in the Christian tradition.

Greek Philosophical Influences in Gregory's Poetry

Given all the above, it is no surprise to find in Gregory's poetry, as in his works in general, models or paradigms from the Greek culture. One combination of Literature and Philosophy, present as a Greek influence in his poem on his tribulations for example, is related to the beginning of the poem. It starts with a kind of prayer, which sends one's thought to the classical Greek invocation of the muses at the beginning of such a work, and at the same time the prayer is done in such a way as to indicate the philosopher behind it.[11]

However, one of the most persuasive philosophical influences in Gregory's theology, even as reflected in his poetry, is related to the conception about soul and body, which, as many of his interpreters agree, comes from Plato's philosophy.

In his poem on his tribulations *(Sur ses épreuves,* verses 35-45) on which we are focusing here for example, but in other poems as well, Gregory

speaks of the two ways of living in the world: one is attachment to the physical body, to the world, the other is attachment to the soul and to the world of the spirit.

While this theme can be found in the Bible also, it is very common in the Ancient Greek literature, such as for example in Hesiod *(Works),* Theognis, Xenophon *(Memorabilia),* and in particular in the Platonic philosophy, which Gregory knew very well.

Gregory has the constant tendency to blame the body and its senses for the many mistakes one makes, which by way of consequence leads to the many tribulations one suffers in life. This is how Gregory puts it in one case: "My soul, don't be agitated by the heavy worries this world, together with the prince of this world, generate in the miserable humans as they consume in humans the form of God's image just the way in which rust consumes iron, and thus causing that a superior condition become one linked to the Earth, so that the soul be blocked from taking with it high up a piece of dust inclined towards the Earth..."[12]

In the same way Gregory speaks of the unhappy soul dressed in flesh, the "dense flesh" as he puts it in one verse, which he equates with "the darkness of the spirit" (expressions found in Plutarch as well).[13] He speaks of the detestable death of the clayish source of vice,[14] whereas this world is compared with "the black clay of Egypt" and this life with "the bitter tribulations of Pharaoh",[15] evidently making an allusion to the biblical narrative of the Jews' exodus from Egypt.

This way of looking at the relation between body and soul is very platonic, since according to Plato's philosophy the flesh is essentially evil and is considered to be the jail of the soul, from which the soul needs to make all efforts to escape. In Gregory's words: "My poor soul... aspires to finally see the day of its freedom;"[16] the soul "needs to be under way towards the divine homeland."[17]

Even if the Bible has the theme of two ways, the way of the soul and the way of the flesh, it is evident that the manner in which the Theologian speaks of them here, is more platonic than biblical. After all, in the Bible there is harmony between body and soul, that is why God created man that way, and in addition, if the body was evil the Son of God would not have taken it in Incarnation, one might think. Yet even going a step further and admitting that the body is evil and the Son of God became incarnate in such a body, once this body was assumed by the divine Logos in Incarnation, it cannot be considered evil any more.

Thus the powerful, irreconcilable antagonism between body and soul in Gregory's works indicates how much Greek philosophy formed and informed his thinking.

As J. Bernardi notices, the two ways Gregory is speaking of in his poem, are to be placed in the larger context of the categories of good and evil. In Gregory's thinking the good consists in the radical separation from the world, which is offered by the monastic life and by mortifications. Here, Gospel is interpreted through the prism of the Platonic philosophy.[18]

This way of looking at the categories of good and evil can be found with nuances in later Greek philosophical views, such as those of the Cynic or Stoic traditions, for instance.

It is an echo of these traditions that Gregory shows when he gives an account of his life and of the way in which he did not allow himself to be caught in the comfort of many daily pleasures, as he enumerates many of them.[19] He considers them to be false goods, and is kind of proud to have been able to distinguish between true and false and keep his soul pure.

Conclusions

Not only is Gregory's love for the ancient Greek culture evident from his works in general, but in several places he offers direct and emotional testimonies for his love for the Greek Letters, for Philosophy, for Athens with all its intellectual traditions. Yet, as much as he loved them all, he tells with some kind of pride or with the conscience of the one who fulfilled his mission, that he made them all prostrate to the ground before Christ, as if just because he loved them so much, he baptized them and brought them to Christ's service and to that of the Church.

This is how he writes about it: "I had only one love: the glory of the Letters brought together by the East and by the West and also by Athens, the honor of Greece. For them I suffered a lot and for a long time, but in turn I made them bow down to the ground before Christ, and I made them cede to the word of the Great God."[20]

Gregory's fame did not wait for him to die in order to overflow everywhere around. His prose writings in particular made him a world celebrity, while he was not yet old. Towards the end of the IVth century his works were translated into Latin, then into several Oriental languages. In the Greek world, we are told, the circulation of his writings was just extraordinary.[21]

Yet Gregory's poetry, to the modern reader, is still a great unknown. It deserves more attention on both sides of academia, Letters and Theology, as it can offer a great deal of help for a more adequate understanding of who Gregory was as a man, as a simple human being, but also as a bright theologian, scholar and mystic, as well as for a better understanding of his time and context.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Equality, So Badly Misunderstood

Tibor R. Machan

New York: Addleton Academic Publishers, 2010, 108 pp.

Tibor Machan's *Equality, So Badly Misunderstood* is a positive pleasure to read. Short, readable, waffle-free and devastatingly destructive of the radical egalitarian position. It could be subtitled: What's So Great about Equality? In a relatively brief compass it explores and undermines the intellectual grounds upon which the egalitarian project is constructed. There are many valuable aspects to this book and I'll comment on them as I proceed but I'd like to remark immediately that it's worth reading (and buying) this book for just one argument which shows conclusively that the egalitarian project is internally incoherent. Enforced equal outcomes, apart from being practically unachievable could only even begin to be brought about if those enforcing the measures to give effect to this material equality are significantly superior in power to those on the receiving end. What Machan calls "bloated equality" has, he believes, "helped, paradoxically, to reintroduce the former political and even moral inequality, which had been nearly totally discredited in much of the developed world" (p.11). As he remarks somewhat later, "the effort to accomplish the massive coercive redistribution of benefits and harms" means that "those who take on this task obtain an inordinately greater measure of power over others than those others have over them" (p.36). So, equality of outcome could only be brought about if we have significant inequality of power.

Not every kind of equality is intrinsically misguided. Machan defends equality of treatment before the law and recognizes that in families and in

other small groups, a rough and ready equality of treatment and outcome is in fact often to be found. What is problematic, however, is when this smallscale, local and voluntary equality is projected onto the larger national and international stage. This projection is a common failing and, in the end, just another version of tribalism. The temptation to model the political order on the family is perennial – all forms of political nationalism are built on it. Machan asks us to "notice the limited range of these cases where equality is a valid objective! Extrapolating from them to societies at large, let alone to the entire globe, is unjustified and the attempt to do it has wrought havoc in the world whenever it has been tried seriously" (p.97). With this pithy conclusion, one cannot but agree.

Unless one has been corrupted by philosophy, one tends to think that human actions are morally significant and implicitly deserve to be either positively or negatively evaluated. The notion of desert, however, appears to be anathema to many egalitarians. Some deny it completely thereby, they think, removing the justification for one person's legitimately having more than another. "The late and widely admired John Rawls claimed that people who succeed do not deserve it because none of us really earns anything, even our moral character, since we are basically socially conditioned to be hard working and entrepreneurial individuals" (p.25). The problem with this position is its extremely high cost – it can't consistently be adopted in the hurly-burly of everyday life, even by egalitarians. Desert is one of a cluster of moral notions that are constitutive of human social life. As Machan notes, Rawls's position ultimately rests on a kind of philosophical determinism – people do what they do, impelled by impersonal factors. The trouble with this is that it makes moral exhortation meaningless yet moral exhortation is exactly what we tend to get from such as Rawls. "Paradoxically...a moral conclusion is drawn that is incompatible with determinism: namely, that we all *ought* to work to fix the accidental distribution of benefits and harms,

gains and losses, by means of a political order that is guided by fairness" (p.31). Telling Alexander he ought to look after the poor and needy is completely pointless unless he can in fact look after the poor and needy but, if determinism is true so that Alexander can't in fact do other than he does, what's the point of moral exhortation?

A practical and fairly obvious consequence of taking radical egalitarianism seriously is that it renders ambition pointless and excellence vacuous. Why work and struggle when one's entitlements would be the same no matter what one does or doesn't do? (p.92). More subtly, if the rejection of the notion of desert has the consequence that one's possessions become arbitrary, why limit redistribution to external goods? After all, some people have two goods eyes while others have none. So why not do a little redistribution here. The late Marxist philosophy Gerry Cohen himself noted that "if standard leftist objections to inequality of resources are taken quite literally, then the fact that it is sheer luck that these (relatively) good eyes are mine should deprive me of special privileges in them" and he remarked, sardonically, that this consequence of egalitarianism tends to inspire in our erstwhile egalitarians a certain lack of confidence in their position! (G. A. Cohen, *Self-ownership, Freedom, and Equality*, 1977, p. 70).

What Machan describes as the "fairness imperative" leads, in Rawls, to a non-sequitur. Even if nothing of what Tom has is his by desert, including his body parts, his temperament, his drive and ambition, it doesn't follow from this that anyone else is entitled to take those things from him. (In the case of some things, it would be hard to know what would be left of Tom if they could be removed!) In fact, if nothing of what Tom has is his by desert, then everything everyone else has is similarly undeserved and *no one* has any right to make any particular disposition of the whole. For that to be the case, someone or other would have to be entitled to something that others

were not entitled to, namely, the right to make that disposition and since that itself is inegalitarian it's ruled out by hypothesis (p.35ff.).

Machan distinguishes clearly between the realm of justice and the realm of morality. The realm of justice is the area in which the force of law properly operates. If you owe me something and refuse to pay I can legitimately use force to make you pay your debt. But if, having agreed to go the movies with me, you subsequently decline to do so it would be bizarre to suggest that the force of law should be brought to bear on you to force you to keep your agreement or to punish your failure to do so. If law and justice are conflated then what may (or may not) be morally desirable becomes a matter of justice and that, to use Hayek's term, is a fatal conceit. It is often concluded that the libertarian position is essentially mean-spirited but that confuses self-interest with selfishness. One cannot but be self-interested in one's actions – that is a conceptual necessity – but one's self interest doesn't necessarily imply that one's actions have to be selfish. That I have the right to do what I like with what I own is perfectly compatible with my liking to do things for others. Human action is not just about justice but also "about decency and generosity and once this is added to the libertarian scenario, the picture changes significantly. One might say, *we do not live by justice alone within our human communities"* (p.33).

One of the topics Machan touches on, but only lightly, is that of envy (p.47 ff.). Not for nothing is envy listed as one of the seven deadly sins and prohibited specifically in the 10 Commandments. Much of the cant about equality is not so much that one desires to have what others have but that one rather desires that no one else may have what I do not. Envy, then, is a kind of resentment and, unlike adultery and fornication, it is a sin of a cold heart. Machan remarks: "Envy is one sentiment that those harbor who believe in universal equality, that no one can help what he or she is, what he or she

accomplishes, that it is all a matter of sheer luck, accident and it's all the same without significant differences among us" (p.91).

In his evaluation of Amartya Sen's *The Idea of Justice*, Machan notes that Sen's notion that what our rights are to be is essentially to be settled by public discussion implies either that the right of public participation in public discussion is a right that does not depend on public discussion (and if any one right can be prior to public discussion, why not others) or if it too depends on public discussion then "that right, too, could be debated away" (p.57).

Egalitarians are very much in favor of redistribution but, as Machan rightly points out, we don't need political intervention by egalitarians to redistribute wealth. Wealth redistribution goes on all the time right before our eyes. What annoys our dogmatic egalitarians is not that wealth isn't being redistributed, it is that it's not being redistributed in what they consider the right way – which is to say, their way. And why is their way a better way? Because "they imagine they are superior to the rest of us" (p.74).

Equality and liberty, then, appear to be irreconcilable opposites. Are they? Not according to Machan, at least not when equality is confined to its proper sphere. There is, in fact, nothing to stop people freely organizing their own communes or communities or factories or whatever on strict egalitarian lines if they choose to do so. What is to be rejected, however, is any attempt forcibly to establish such egalitarian communities. The rejection of force in this instance is merely one more example of the inappropriateness of using force to produce what one considers the right moral conduct. The sense of equality that is perfectly reconcilable with liberty is our equality as moral agents (which, of course, we cannot be if we are not free). If government has a role in human life it is to provide a just and peaceful environment for all – and that's all it should attempt to do. "Liberty and equality, in the respect in which these are possible conditions and valuable features of a

human community, are not only compatible but also mutually dependent on each other for purpose of maintaining political justice. Misunderstanding of the nature of equality, as it occurs in egalitarian political thinking, has led to the denial of this fact" (p.85).

If those who read *Equality, So Badly Misunderstood* still badly misunderstand equality, it won't be Tibor Machan's fault!

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Semiotics of Programming

Kumiko Tanaka-Ishii

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 217 pp.

Tanaka-Ishii has written a valuable, thorough, and thought-provoking book and her analyses are perceptive and well-considered. *Semiotics of Programming* is undeniably valuable and offers a great deal of fodder for contemporary philosophical debates in the study of semiotics.

Semiotics of Programming provides a semiotic analysis of computer programs along three axes: models of signs, kinds of signs, and systems of signs, and considers the question of what computers can and cannot do by analyzing how computer sign systems compare to those of humans. Tanaka-Ishii reconsiders reflexivity as the essential property of sign systems (a *sign* is considered a *means of signification*), claiming that a sign is essentially reflexive, with its signification articulated by the use of itself. Tanaka-Ishii

writes that programming languages are artificial languages designed to control machines. The application of semiotic theories to programming enables the consideration of the universal and specific nature of signs in machine and human systems (the difference between computer signs and human signs lies in their differing capability to handle reflexivity).

Tanaka-Ishii holds that an analysis of recent, well-developed programming languages may reveal significant aspects of human linguistic behavior, and treats a language as a relation among linguistic elements and their interpretations. The pansemiotic view allows comparison of computers with humans at the same level of the sign system. The arbitrariness of signs is obvious within the context of programming: computer signs are specified by the programmer who introduces identifiers (in natural language people have to use the same sign to mean almost the same thing to communicate with each other). A program consists of two parts: the definition part (in which identifiers are defined in terms of their content), and the use part (in which identifiers are used through expressions). A sign defined by self-reference is articulated by a signifier, which is arbitrary. Self-reference is the definition of a sign referring to itself. Careless self-reference in programming languages can lead to nonhalting execution (description by self-reference is frequently preferred by programmers). In a computer language a large number of signs are defined non-self-referentially. Most natural signs are defined self-referentially. Tanaka-Ishii argues the role of the signifier within a sign through consideration of a minimal computer language framework, the lambda calculus, and shows the degree to which sign models specify the design of a computer program ontology. The ontological difference between "being" and "doing" emerges depending on which side of the triadic sign model is emphasized in constructing an ontology. The sign model is what defines the ontological framework. Tanaka-Ishii maintains that in computer programming the contrast of "being" and "doing" is remarkable when

applying triadic modeling of signs but not when applying dyadic modeling. A computer language is a formal, well-defined language, and the signs within are not always self-referential. In programming languages the abstract data type has become more important as software complexity has increased.

Tanaka-Ishii analyzes the two types of ontological constructs used in object-oriented computer programming: the class, which relates data structures according to features (taking a "being" ontology), and the abstract data type, which relates data structures according to functions (taking a "doing" ontology). Tanaka-Ishii considers the ambiguities of computer signs appearing in programs, and applies the sign classification approaches of Hjelmslev and Peirce: a value is represented by a sign in a stratified manner: a value, and address, and/or a type. Tanaka-Ishii formulates the three representation levels by applying Hjelmslev's connotative and metasemiotics from the dyadic framework and Peirce's sign classification from the triadic framework. Tanaka-Ishii considers the various kinds of represented content and examines how signs are involved in such representation. The differences among paradigms are differences in their ways of description and the paradigms are compatible. The universal categories are categories concerning forms (the notion of how a sign represents a form of a category is a different issue). Computational description concerns the human activity of modeling a purpose through inductive abstraction, generation of instances through instantiation, and calculation through deduction. The sheer separation of class and instance requires deconstruction when attempting to understand the nature of significant instances and the process of their instantiation.

In Tanaka-Ishii's reading, both machine calculation and human thinking are in a sense based on the processing of signs. The uses and content of a sign change over time, and the whole represented by the signifier evolves (derived signification of a sign often activates further, different uses of the sign). It is often difficult to precisely define the concrete content and

meaning of a natural language sign. The meaning of a natural language sign exists floating among the network of signs that are used in expressions referring to the sign. A signifier represents everything that is related to the sign with respect to the content and uses. Self-reference can be completely enclosed in the fixed-point function through the use of scope in a radical way. As Tanaka-Ishii puts it, a constructive system is a system in which a larger element is generated as a composition of smaller components, and notes how different a sign system formed as a natural language is from one formed as a computer language. Natural sign systems handle self-reference by leaving ambiguity as is. In computer sign systems, programs must be constructively generated by using procedures that are guaranteed to halt. Tanaka-Ishii examines the computer signs present within a computer program, and considers the structural aspect of a sign system, concluding that communication is an important feature of a sign system for both machines and humans.

Tanaka-Ishii focuses on the description of interaction within the sign system, and considers a sign system communicating with other sign systems, inclusively of itself by using the interactive function. In natural language, the meaning of a word can change, which corresponds to the value change of signs in a computer program. In the case of computer signs, change easily occurs (a computer language system does not have any restrictions corresponding to the social conventions that stabilize sign values. A natural language system is naturally reflexive because of its structural nature. Computational sign systems are inherently reflexive (this is the nature of a sign system in general).

Semiotics of Programming is a comprehensive review of complex developments over a significant period of time, and boasts an extraordinary level of scholarship. Among Tanaka-Ishii's book's many strengths is the com-

pleteness with which he shows the many ways in which human languages and computer programming languages are interrelated.

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Seeing Wittgenstein Anew
William Day, Victor J. Krebs (eds.)
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 393 pp.

Seeing Wittgenstein Anew is hugely stimulating, offering a clear guide to key aspects of Wittgenstein's remarks on the concept of aspect-seeing. It is a model of precision and clarity, and covers an impressive amount territory in a clear fashion. *Seeing Wittgenstein Anew* is a provocative, strikingly insightful, important and timely book, assessing the current state of Wittgenstein scholarship that surrounds aspect-seeing.

Day and Krebs claim that Wittgenstein's aspect-seeing remarks help to clarify the intrinsic relation between his writing and the problem of philosophical self-knowledge (Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy demands a way of seeing and a way of attending to the aspects of things that are most important for us humans but that we are driven to repudiate). *Seeing Wittgenstein Anew* is organized around four "aspects" of Wittgenstein's aspect-seeing remarks that are significant both to Wittgensteinian studies and to the goals and methods of philosophy generally: (I) the essays of the first section ("Aspects of 'Seeing-As'") make the case for a revision of

philosophy's idealized conception of "seeing" in favor of a conception which includes our *responsiveness* to what is seen; (II) the essays of the second section ("Aspects and the Self") turn the lesson of the experience of aspect-seeing the other way around, considering how the phenomenon of a change in aspect can direct us to a new understanding of the self as the source and sufferer of alterations and transformations of "what is seen;" (III) the essays of the third section ("Aspects and Language") focus on the second half of Wittgenstein's aspect-seeing remarks and on their suggestion that the concept of aspect-seeing provides a key to understanding our life with words and the absence of "life" in our words; (IV) the essays of the fourth section ("Aspects and Method") take Wittgenstein's innovations in philosophical method as their topic: their claim lies in their proposing that this method can be elucidated through considerations of the concepts of aspect-seeing and aspect-blindness.

Batkin holds that if we find significance for aesthetics in Wittgenstein's remarks in *PI* II.xi, it is by analogy. We might speak of the form of a picture in very much the terms that Wittgenstein speaks of the "organization" of a visual impression. The notion of "manifest form" and the idea of the "organization" of a visual impression may depend upon similar ideas or the same idea of what constitutes a pictorial image. It is a lesson of Wittgenstein's remarks about seeing-as that in considering the examples he gives we may look for changes in our visual impressions or experience when we should be considering the circumstances of what we say and do. Laugier brings out certain difficulties raised by Wittgenstein for the idea of perceptual sense. To see the problems that Austin was raising in their full depth, one needs to confront the question of a linguistic phenomenology as it is posed in Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein asks us to see judgment as itself a kind of seeing. Gould writes that Wittgenstein is trying to puzzle out issues about the conceptual intersection of seeing and thinking and interpreting,

and that Wittgenstein speaks more often of the mythological than of the allegorical. There is a significant asymmetry between Wittgenstein's treatment of pictures and his treatment of aspects. Pictures first attract Wittgenstein's attention by the fact that they work to the detriment of a perspicuous view of our words and world. On Gould's reading, there is a glaring difference between the affliction of aspect-blindness and the dangers that lie in our misuse of pictures. Cavell points out that Wittgenstein says that the importance of seeing lies in its connection with experiencing the meaning of a word and with our attachment to our words (some idea of the attachment to our words is indispensable to Wittgenstein's fundamental procedures in the invocation of ordinary language). Wittgenstein wants to reveal our intellectual disappointment with our philosophical explanations, such as positing the existence of universals. We are right to look for a sense of essence or necessity in our concepts, only we are looking in the wrong place.

Hagberg maintains that Wittgenstein does not directly repudiate the interlocutor's presumption, but rather provides the means to "shift" when we need to (i.e. to break the twin molds of the generic objective/subjective and perceived/projected dichotomies). Wittgenstein undercut the picture of human experience that both traditional empiricism and behaviorism share (i.e. that we subjectively construct the objects of the world out of objectively given raw data). There is no sharp delineation between what we are led to call the intellectual content and the sensory content, between thinking and seeing, between mind and eye. Hagberg asserts that Wittgenstein is not working toward a reduction to a single comprehensive account of aspect-perception or seeing-as (he is adding layer after layer of complexity, of difference, of case-supported nuance). Krebs shows that the generalized blindness involved in Frazer's stance and extended by Wittgenstein to traditional philosophy is a main concern behind the exploration of "seeing aspects." Wittgenstein rethinks our conceptions of inner experience and

subjectivity. Imagination is the means by which Wittgenstein sees the significance of things beyond their merely logical sense. The ethical tone of Wittgenstein's remarks is essential to his thoughts. The spiritual intensity of Wittgenstein's writings constitutes the original *ethos* from which to discern the underlying purpose behind his writings. Krebs states that Wittgenstein connects "internal relations" frequently to the gestural or the expressive. The kind of understanding involved in seeing internal relations is not only conceptual but also sensible and mimetic. Wittgenstein distinguishes the kind of awareness that results from a merely mental grasp from that which is also anchored in the body. Learning and using language is as spontaneous and corporeal as learning and making new gestures. It is our connection to the sensible root of the language we use, our *aesthetic* sensitivity in calling things by words, that makes us capable of seeing aspects. It is the dis-connection from our sensible experience that is responsible for the pseudo-problems that plague philosophy. Krebs reasons that thinking becomes for Wittgenstein a matter of continuous conversion, of overcoming our resistance to the sensible. Cerbone contends that on the one hand, Wittgenstein is unrelenting is his attempts to turn us away from an "occult" or "magical" conception of the mind, and that on the other hand, Wittgenstein insists on the legitimacy of the concept or category of the *soul*. Wittgenstein describes the concept of hope as something embedded in human life, and his appeal to transparency is bound up with his interest in the concept of seeing. Wittgenstein wants to remind us of the multiplicity inherent in the concept of seeing, and frequently rejects the idea that emotions and attitudes are things that we *infer* from more "neutral" data. Eldridge argues that Wittgenstein's work fits into the tradition of philosophical investigations of the nature and basis of discursive consciousness: Wittgenstein connects his investigation of aspect-seeing more closely with the learning of language than might initially meet the eye. Wittgenstein's treatment of aspect-seeing

offers us a way of thinking about human discursive consciousness that is an elucidatory redescription of what we do when we employ concepts within acts of seeing (Wittgenstein places the idea of a person as an agent among agents at the center of thinking about discursive consciousness). Wittgenstein's elucidatory redescription is an invitation to see human mindedness, discursive consciousness, as *like this*: to notice *its* aspects.

Minar puts it that Wittgenstein's philosophical criticism calls out a sensitivity to language comparable to the aesthetic sensibilities of the art critic. Minar explores how Wittgenstein's investigations of aspect-seeing contribute to our understanding of his views on the nature of philosophical conflicts and confusions. Aspect-seeing is internal to our relation to pictures. Wittgenstein examines the role of images in the perception of aspects, and remarks that seeing aspects requires a capacity for imagination. Minar thinks that one way of advancing with the question of Wittgenstein's pre-occupation with seeing-as is to look at the philosophical significance of the possibility of *meaning*-blindness. Wittgenstein teaches us to see how the meaning, far from having to be breathed into a rule, lies in its use. Philosophy as Wittgenstein practices it opens us to the facts of our lives in language by testing our agreements. Day points out that Wittgenstein wants to create rather than dissipate a cloud of philosophy with the concept of aspect-blindness. Wittgenstein's example of "noticing an aspect" is the experience of seeing a likeness in a face. Wittgenstein's interest in the concept of aspect-blindness develops out of a preoccupation with our attraction to the familiar philosophical ideal of perfect, mutual intelligibility. Wittgenstein characterizes good philosophical writing as writing that shows "a genuine style." A task of philosophy is to model in one's writing an interest in one's experience.

Baz holds that Wittgenstein's remarks on aspects are meant to bring us back to situations of speech. The seeing of an aspect cannot, grammatically,

be *continuous*. Wittgenstein tries to arrive at an unobstructed overview of the conceptual domain within which varied experiences assume their sense. Mulhall maintains that so much of the language Wittgenstein finds that he needs in order to articulate and prosecute his interest in aspect-seeing had to be coined by him. Wittgenstein's denial of the idea that rules of grammar approximate to calculi with fixed rules finds its methodological expression in imagining language-games, in coining metaphors and similes, and in the liberating resonances of aphorism. Wittgenstein explores the capacity of language to generate secondary meanings. A grammatical investigation can discover new ways of establishing philosophical self-possession, by allowing itself to be informed by a transfigured sense of the necessities and limits of grammar in which the word "grammar" tolerates projection into a context which is intolerant of rules. Mulhall takes Wittgenstein to be stressing three interrelated points: (I) when we see a picture-object, we see what it depicts; (II) our grasp of what a picture-object is comes out in the ways in which we unquestioningly relate it to that which it depicts; and (III) we relate to such picture-objects in the kinds of ways in which we relate to the objects they depict. Affeldt says that Wittgenstein is concerned with how and why the aspects of things that are most important for us are hidden, and with how those aspects may be made available and their significance appreciated. The duck-rabbit is the most familiar example of seeing aspects: its central features are shared with Wittgenstein's further examples of the schematic cube, the triangle, and the double-cross. The phenomenon of understanding is an occasion for recurrent self-mystification. Affeldt observes that Wittgenstein has deliberately crafted a jarring example in which language use appears lifeless and mechanical. A remark or question only derives its sense from the circumstances of its natural employment. Wittgenstein reveals *that* we recurrently turn toward emptiness, and concretely and specifically

why we do so. Narrowly philosophical moments of emptiness express aspects of our human nature.

In Cioffi's view, Wittgenstein stresses that there are perplexities which are misaddressed when further information is sought to resolve them (the appropriate method of dealing with these perplexities is by the construction of overviews). Wittgenstein's analogy demonstrates that we engage in non-instrumental, expressive transaction with images. Floyd claims that, for Wittgenstein, there is nothing objectionable *per se* with relying on pictures, diagrams, and other visible symbolic and representational structures. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein's philosophical task is to examine his own uses of language with an eye toward seeing them *in* the general form of proposition. Bearn thinks that Wittgenstein's fear of wanting to make fine distinctions goes to the heart of his philosophy. When the subject is fine aesthetic differences, then it is a matter of which words would be appropriate. The difference between seeing the figure as a duck and seeing it as a rabbit is not a difference in the figure itself. Wittgenstein teaches us how to find our way around the language of our life.

Seeing Wittgenstein Anew is a stimulating presentation of a wide-ranging and sophisticated perspective, rigorous and yet generous with argumentative opponents, and making a significant contribution to the literature on the Wittgenstein's later thought as a whole. *Seeing Wittgenstein Anew* brings together in a unified theory the many ideas that show that aspect-seeing is a pervasive and guiding concept in Wittgenstein's efforts to turn philosophy's attention to the actual conditions of our common life in language.

George Lăzăroiu

Modus Vivendi Liberalism

David McCabe

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 256 pp.

Modus Vivendi Liberalism is ambitious, thoughtfully organized, and challenging, constructing a consistent and well-defended narrative characterized by a high level of rigor, and providing a model of probing philosophical argumentation. McCabe's overall achievement is substantial for his persuasive argument for modus vivendi liberalism as an alternative defense of the liberal state.

McCabe assumes that the liberal arguments he explores, and the two liberal commitments he focuses on ((I) all citizens are to have the broadest possible sphere of liberty within which to pursue whatever ends they choose so long as they do not harm others, and (II) the state should take no steps to direct individuals towards particular goals or activities it regards as more valuable than any others), involve matters of great importance within a political community, so that if the justificatory requirement (JR) applies at all, it applies to them. The conception of well-being McCabe relies on is informed by a commitment to the value pluralism marked by four theses: *uncombinability* (it is not possible to combine in a single life all of the goals, virtues, ideals, and so forth that add value to a life and enhance our well-being); *incommensurability* (among such uncombinable goals, ideals, and so forth are some whose value differs in kind so much from one another that we cannot compare their relative value); *noncomparability* (though powerful reasons relating to a person's particular circumstances may recommend one set over another, there is no single group of goods, virtues, ideals, and so forth that all ought to pursue); and *objectivism about values and reasons* (pluralism allows that the appropriateness of our choices is constrained by objective reasons reflecting the objective value of various

goals, virtues, and so on, but also the importance of commitment and integrity in any person's life).

McCabe assesses four influential ways of advancing the case for liberalism: those grounded in (I) personal autonomy as a universal value, (II) autonomy as a special value within particular kinds of societies, (III) conceptions of the reasonable citizen drawn from the public political culture, and (IV) value pluralism. By a universal value McCabe means one whose worth is of such weight that a person either cannot lead a good life without it or is overwhelmingly less likely to do so: personal autonomy is such a universal value and only robust liberal regimes adequately protect it. An *ideal* of autonomy emerges that is distinctively liberal when the value of autonomy provides a reason for amplifying as far as possible the elements of autonomy on both the personal and social axes. McCabe notes that there are three main strategies for defending the universal value of the liberal ideal of autonomy: the first sees autonomy as a necessary precondition for any good life; the second points out autonomy's instrumental value in helping individuals achieve goods whose value is not itself a function of the value of autonomy; according to the third one, autonomy has such enormous intrinsic value that it must figure in any genuinely good life. McCabe suggests two explanations for the continuing disagreement within liberal regimes: (I) citizens agree that certain norms broadly inform their political culture but see them as both inconsistent with and subordinate to the requirements of their own comprehensive views; and (II) continuing discord within liberal regimes reflects disagreement over either the norms embodied in their political culture or the implications of agreed-upon norms. Political liberals are right in suggesting both that the norm of equal respect is important and that it is central within the public morality of existing liberal societies. The basic norms and values we rely on in any task of self-

making are taken over from others before we are capable of independent reflection.

According to McCabe, modus vivendi liberalism (MVL) is a particularist liberalism rooted in two considerations: (I) the recognition that many citizens endorse normative frameworks that recommend as ideal illiberal models of political association; and (II) many citizens see the existence of the state either as an unchangeable fact of modern life or as something that contributes vitally important goods. Even if citizens endorsing different moral frameworks agree on what constitutes social order, they may value that goal differently relative to other ideals. MVL commits to minimal moral universalism grounded in a presumption that the interests of all persons matter equally. Liberal principles are what a diverse citizenry is most likely to agree to as governing their interactions. McCabe identifies three factors that recommend protecting the core good identified by minimal universalism: (I) a showing that the right in question connects to other recognized core interests; (II) the practices allegedly threatened by minimal universalism reflect persons' equal moral status; and (III) the built-in demands of any political community with a recognized final authority. While JR cannot require the assent of every rational person, it must nonetheless succeed in persuading sizeable numbers of them. In the face of deep diversity the case for the liberal state cannot satisfy the more robust ideal of justification dominant in liberal theory. The MVL state values nothing more highly than protecting individuals' expressive liberty (it protects all citizens' equal freedom because it recognizes their moral quality).

In the final two chapters the book takes up two specific topics of great interest within liberal states: gender equality, and compulsory education. McCabe claims that while gender subordination is a legitimate topic of concern for liberal states, gender differentiation *per se* is not obviously problematic to the degree needed for its presence alone to sanction intervention

by the MVL state. On the topic of compulsory education, McCabe argues that the level of education the MVL state may reasonably demand of all citizens is substantial, and that it must prepare citizens to identify and respond to central challenges facing their community. But more robust conceptions advanced by certain liberal theorists (in particular, those built around ideals of self-authorship and deep autonomy) are ruled out as incompatible with MVL. As the central good the MVL state provides is a secure social space that protects citizens' expressive liberty, it should tolerate a range of educational approaches so long as they recognize the moral equality of all persons.

Modus Vivendi Liberalism as a whole provides a valuable contribution to existing literature, is a starting point for future interdisciplinary research, and should stimulate a great deal of significant debate and discussion. *Modus Vivendi Liberalism* defends a number of innovative theories, constructing a stimulating narrative, and makes a series of significant and well-constructed arguments.

George Lăzăroiu

Sessions organized by the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality, New York, at the 42nd, 43rd and 44th International Congresses on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University, in Kalamazoo, MI

FORTY-SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON MEDIEVAL STUDIES, May 10–13, 2007

Session 420

Ecumenical Participation of the Romanian Eastern Byzantine Romanity in the Christian Foundation of Europe

Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: Theodor Damian, Metropolitan College of New York

Participation of the Eastern Byzantine Romanity in the Christian Foundation of Europe
George Alexe

Saint Stephen the Great of Moldavia: Defender and Athlete of Jesus Christ
Daniela Anghel, University of Bucharest

Scorning the Balkan Ghosts: Byzantine Orthodoxy Confronting the Southern Slavic
Marian Simion, Boston Theological Institute

Session 459

Thraco-Dacian Religion, Culture, and Spirituality during the Macedonian Empire and Hellenistic Era

Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: Theodor Damian, Metropolitan College of New York

Alexander the Great and Saint Thomas in India as Reflected in the Popular Culture and Spirituality of Romanians and Vlaho-Romanians
George Anca, National Pedagogical Library of Bucharest, Romania

The Dacian History as Reflected in the Writers of the Middle Ages
Napoleon Savescu, Dacia Revival International Society of New York

Considerations on Cappadocian Theology of Prayer in the Writings of Evagrius Ponticus
Daniel Theodor Damian, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality

Jesus Child in the Byzantine Tradition of the Romanian Icons
Raluca Octav, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York

Session 506
The Romanization and Hellenistic Impact on Romanian Eastern Byzantine Romanity of Romanians and Vlaho-Romanians
Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: George Alexe

The Language of Christian Mission to the Thraco-Geto-Dacians, the Ancestors of the Romanians and Vlaho-Romanians
Theodor Damian, Metropolitan College of New York

Some Relevant Aspects and Spiritual Particularities of the Thraco-Dacian Medicine
Eva Damian, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York

The Philokalic Influence on Russian Orthodox Revivalism in the Nineteenth Century
Vicki Albu, University of Minnesota–Twin Cities

FORTY-THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON MEDIEVAL STUDIES, May 8–11, 2008

Session 35

Historical, Ethnical, and Religious Roots of the Thraco-Geto-Dacians and Their Successors: Romanians and Vlaho-Romanians

Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: George Alexe

Rolul Manastirilor Medievale Romanesti in Pastrarea Identitatii Etnice si Unitatii Nationale si Spirituale a Romanilor si Vlaho-Romanilor de Pretutindeni
Nina Negru, National Library of the Republic of Moldova

Thracian Influence and Contributions to the Greek Mythology as Reflected in the Romanian Culture and Art
Daniela Anghel, University of Bucharest

About Dacian History and Its Legendary Roots in the Iliad and the Odyssey by Homer and the Aeneid by Vergil
Napoleon Savescu, Dacia Revival International Society of New York

Session 82

The Thraco-Geto-Dacians' Contributions to Greek Mythology and Poetry and to Eastern Orthodox Church Organization

Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: George Alexe

"Nostra Patria" in Codex Justinianaeum
Bogdan Stefanachi, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University

Thraco-Cappadocian Contribution to the Christian Poetry of Greek Expression by Gregory of Nazianzus and His Friend Synesius of Cyrene
Theodor Damian, Metropolitan College of New York

The Religious and Ethnic Role of the Metropolitan Diocese of Ungrovlahia in the History of the Romanians and Vlaho-Romanians, before and after the Fall of Constantinople
Tudorie Ionut Alexandru, University of Bucharest

Session 132

Thraco-Geto-Dacians in Asia Minor before and after the Fall of Constantinople

Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: Theodor Damian, Metropolitan College of New York

Presence of the Thraco-Geto-Dacians in Asia Minor, Their Christianization and Ecumenical Involvement, before and after the Fall of Constantinople
George Alexe

The Impact of Evagrius Ponticus's Ascetical and Theological Work on the Byzantine Eastern Orthodox Spirituality and Its Evagrian Legacy
Daniel Theodor Damian, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York

Some Aspects of the Thraco-Dacian Religiosity and Medicine as Inherited and Reflected in the Folk Traditions of Romanians and Vlaho-Romanians
Eva Damian, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York

FORTY-FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON MEDIEVAL STUDIES, MAY 7–10, 2009

Session 198

Spirituality and Patristic Literature of the Thraco-Geto-Dacian Holy Fathers of the Eastern Orthodox Byzantine Romanity in Europe and Asia Minor

Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: Theodor Damian, Metropolitan College of New York

Justiniana Prima
Bogdan Stefanachi, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University

De Geticae gentis origine ac rebus gestis *by Iordanes*
Timotei Ursu, Dacia Revival International Society

Thraco-Dacian Origin of the Romanian Language, Popular Culture, and Art, as Reflected in the Medieval Religious Heritage of Maramures, Romania
Cristian Stefan, Northern University of Baia Mare

Historic and Literary References about Thraco-Geto-Dacians in the Middle Ages
Napoleon Savescu, Dacia Revival International Society

Session 303

Medieval Patrimony Preserved by the Autochtonous Romanian Byzantine Art of the Eastern Orthodox Monasteries and Churches in Romania

Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: George Alexe

Voronezh Monastery, the Famous Medieval Monument of Bucovina, Romania
Viorica Colpacci, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York

Gregory of Nazianzus: When the Greek Philosophy Meets the Christian Poetry
Theodor Damian, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York

Pleading for a True Ethnogenesis of the Thraco-Geto-Dacian Spirituality
Adrian Gheorghe Paul, Northern University of Baia Mare

The Tragic Medieval Destinies of Stephen Tomsa II, Prince of Moldavia, and His Amazing Monastery of Solca in Bucovina
Nicolai Buga, St. Gregory Orthodox Seminary

Session 322
Historical Thraco-Geto-Dacian Cultural and Artistic Background and Its Medieval Monuments and Influences in Europe and Asia Minor
Sponsor: Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Organizer: George Alexe, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York
Presider: Theodor Damian, Metropolitan College of New York

Thracian Daco-Roman Cultural and Artistic Distinctiveness of the Byzantine and Romanian Eastern Orthodox Christianity
George Alexe

Two Evening Stars of the Romanian Medieval Culture and Literature: Antim Ivireanul and Mihai Eminescu
Valentina Ciaprazi, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York

Thracian Influence and Contribution to the Greco-Roman Mythology
Daniela Anghel, Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York