

Augustine distinguished between the eternal City of God and the temporal City of Man - two rival cities shaped by opposing lives and working toward different ends. Nevertheless the dual divine command to love God and to love neighbor requires that we work for the common good of the City of Man, even as we are citizens of the City of God who proclaim the gospel to our neighbors that they might become our brothers.

Justin Taylor

If the two "spheres" interact, as Goldberg allows, one of two things will happen: either the City of God will increase, or the City of Man will. Without any presumption or expectation that here below the City of Man will ever be completely transformed, which is a heretical fantasy, it seems patently obvious that a conservative who "emphasises" the transcendent should want the eternal verities of the City of God to advance and transform as many people as possible. The distinction between the two Cities was intended as a means to explain where the ultimate and proper loyalty of Christians lay. It is not, as it seems to be as it is used here, an excuse for people to focus most of their attention on the affairs of the City of Man and have religion do as relatively little "informing" of values as humanly possible.

Daniel Larison

Religion, in short, is resistant to successful foreign policy when the city of man is equated with the city of God. More properly conceived, it offers resources for understanding the nature of man and politics. Christian realism, by illuminating the misery and grandeur of man, can be a textbook for the diplomatist. It can rid men of their illusions while preparing them for their "finest hours." But more important for our purposes, Christian realism provides proximate moral standards that are neither as lofty as "the law of love" nor as bitterly tragic as the struggle for power. I take it that Christian realism accepts the fact and reality of the two realms but dedicates itself untiringly to an inquiry into political behavior at the boundary line separating the two.

Kenneth W. Thompson

Modern culture has cut out the highest part of the human soul, the part that longs for eternity and for spiritual transcendence of the here and now, the part that seeks the presence of the Incarnate God in worship and daily life and even hopes for a dim reflection of the city of God in social and political institutions. Instead of focusing on eternal life, we have become absorbed in one-dimensional materialism, trivialized life and death, and learned to avoid thinking or talking about life after death.

Robert P. Kraynak

But *The City of God* is not about the rise and fall of nations except insofar as they provide the arena in which what really happens in history is carried out. Augustine has two sources of knowledge, reason and Scripture. He places them together in a coherent whole. Both arise from the same origin. Perhaps the most famous part of *The City of God* is Book 19, where he gives the 288 different philosophic definitions of happiness.

James Schall, S.J.

The modern liberal regime, marked by "individual rights, republican self-government, technological mastery and economic improvement," is based on a powerful moral claim about the dignity of the individual. But instead of grounding human dignity in a recognition that man is a fallen being who is nonetheless made in the "image and likeness of God," modern liberals locate human dignity in the modern aspiration to autonomy and self-mastery. But what then is to limit the self-assertion of the modern individual?

Daniel J. Mahoney



THE ROMANIAN INSTITUTE OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY

30-18 50th Street, Woodside, NY 11377,
Tel. (718) 626-6013, DamianTh@aol.com
Theodor Damian, Ph.D., president
Mr. George Alexe, chairman

The Metropolitan College of New York

Audrey Cohen School for
Human Services and Education
75 Varick Street
New York, NY 10013-1919
www.metropolitan.edu

The Academy of Romanian Scientists

Splaiul Independentei 54, Sector 5
050094 Bucharest, Romania
tel. +40-21-314 7491, www.aos.ro
USA Branch: 30-18 50th Street, Woodside,
NY 11377, Tel. (718) 626-6013, DamianTh@aol.com

PROGRAM

The Seventeenth Ecumenical Theological Symposium

Religion and Politics: The Human Society between the Power of God and the Power of Man

Saturday, December 5, 2009
3:00 PM

Metropolitan College of New York
75, Varick Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10013
(Subway 1, 9, A, C, E to Canal Street)

George Alexe

Senior theologian of the Romanian Orthodox Church, member of the Union of Romanian Writers, director and founder of *Romanian Communion*; Chairman of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality: *Simul Justus et Peccator; Man Between His Own City and the City of God*

Theodor Damian, Ph.D.

Professor of Philosophy and Ethics, Metropolitan College of New York; President of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality: *Human Identity and Dignity: The Fight Between Theology and Madness.*

Ioan N. Rosca, Ph.D.

Professor of Philosophy, School of Philosophy and Cultural Studies, Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania: *La Religion dans le contexte des valeurs politiques democratiques*

Richard Grallo, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Applied Psychology, Metropolitan College of New York: *Problem-Framing: Present and Future*

Doru Tsaganea, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Mathematics, Metropolitan College of New York: *Ethics and Economic Development*

Brian McInerney, Ph.D.

Adjunct Professor at Metropolitan College of New York: *The Politics of Human Services Work with Citizens: How Ecumenical and Religious Pluralism Theory is a Help in Practice*

John A. McGuckin, Ph.D.

Nielsen Professor of Late Antique and Byzantine Christian History, Union Theological Seminary, New York; Professor of Byzantine Christian Studies, Columbia University, New York *Orthodoxy and Culture*

George Lazaroiu, Ph.D.

Professor of Philosophy, School of Journalism, Communications and Public Relations, Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania: *Political Theology as Theological Politics*

GUEST OF HONOR:

His Eminence Dr. Nicolae Condrea,
Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox
Archdiocese of the Americas

MODERATOR:

Ines A. Murzaku, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Church History, Seton
Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey

DISCUSSANTS:

Bert Breiner, Ph.D.
Adjunct Professor of Religion, Hunter College,
City University of New York

Daniel Damian

Ph.D. candidate, Long Island University, Adjunct
Professor at Metropolitan College of New York

By making us frenetics, Chistianity prepared us in spite of itself to create a civilization of which it is now the victim: did this religion not create too many needs, too many demands? Initially inward, these needs and demands were gradually corrupted and externalized, just as the fervor generating so many suddenly interrupted prayers, unable to subside or to remain unemployed, was to apprentice itself to makeshift gods and to forge symbols befitting their vacuity. Thus we were handed over to counterfeits of infinity, to an absolute without metaphysical dimensions, submerged in speed since we were not plunged into ecstasy. This panting contraption, the answer to our fidgets, and these specters that work it, this procession of automata, this parade of hallucinated zombies - where are they going, what are they seeking? What kind of madness bears them onward? Each time I tend to absolve them, each time I entertain doubts as to the legitimacy of the aversion or terror they inspire in me, I need only think of the country roads, on a Sunday, for the image of that motorized vermin to confirm me in my disgust and my dread. Use of the legs being abolished, the walker, among these paralytics behind the wheel, seems an eccentric or an outlaw; soon he will appear to be a monster. No more contact with the ground: all that sinks into it has become alien and incomprehensible to us. Cut off from every root, unfit, moreover, to mix with dust or mud, we have achieved the feat of breaking not only with the depths of things, but with their very surface. Civilization, at this stage, would seem to be a bargain with the Devil, if man still had a soul to sell. *Emil Cioran*