

**International Colloquium on Saint Maximus the Confessor  
as a European Philosopher  
Berlin, September 26-28, 2014**

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To a particularly beautiful, full of qualitative academic contributions event dedicated to the person of Saint Maximus the Confessor the International Colloquium, titled 'Maximus the Confessor as a European Philosopher', was evolved. The Colloquium was realized as a synergy of Freie Universitat in Berlin and the University of Athens and was held in Freie Universitat Berlin's Institute of Philosophy in Berlin, in September 26-28, 2014.

A significantly international group of young researchers as well as worldwide recognized academic teachers and scholars, both laymen and priests and monks participated in this meeting. The lectures and presentations aimed at highlighting the multiple facets of the writings of Saint Maximus the Confessor, emphasizing their philosophical dimension, whereas participants represented the entire spectrum of humanities and theology fields. The value of this conference is presumed not only by the content of the addresses and talks, but also by the fact that the participants originated from most of the European countries, Northern America and Australia.

Among the host of researchers and scholars who contributed with papers, the names of whom appear alphabetically in the end of this report, we discern – not merely for their fruitful presence in the very event but also for their greater contribution in the study of the Maximian writings- the following: **fr. Andrew Louth** (Emeritus Professor at Durham University, who was honored by the Organization Committee for his perennial devotion to the study of St. Maximus works), **Torstein Theodor Tollefsen** (Professor of Philosophy -with a special interest and focus on the philosophically elaborated work of St. Maximus- at the Department of Philosophy in the University in Oslo), **Christophe Erismann** (Professor of Medieval Philosophy at the University of Lausanne), **fr. Nicolaos Loudovikos** (Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the Ecclesiastic Academy of Thessaloniki and Visiting Professor at Cambridge), **fr. Maximos Konstas** (Professor at Holly Cross Theology School in Boston, whose recent translation into English of St. Maximus' *Ambigua* was published by Harvard University

Press), **Georgi Kapriev** (Professor of Philosophy at the University of Sofia, Bulgaria) and **fr. Joshua Lollar** (Professor at Kansas University).

The sum of presentations threw light on Maximus as a philosopher, theologian and confessor. Some of the talks focused on certain dogmatic questions, while others succeeded –by underlining the high philosophical capacity of this great Byzantine noble man, intellectual, monk and Saint of Christianity- to mark his influence to the development of the foundations of western philosophical thinking from Early Middle Ages philosophy up to analytical philosophy and the post-modern philosophical trends.

The papers were addressed both in plenary and in parallel sessions, following the [Colloquium Program](#). As one could easily notice in the [book of abstracts](#), the presentations touched upon substantial and major philosophical and theological questions developed and exhaustively examined by Saint Maximus, such as: the theory of personhood, crucial distinctions (such as: *ousia* [essence] - *energy* [activity], created – uncreated, *logos* [word, reason] – *tropos* [mode], *olon* [whole] – *meros* [part]) and identifications (such as: *ousia* [essence] – *physis* [nature] – *morphe* [form] and *atomon* [individual] – *prosopon* [person] – *hypostasis* [substance]), the theology of the uncreated energies, the mystery of the Triune Divinity, the nature of time and its relation to eternity, the relation of the parts to the whole.

It is noteworthy that of particular interest were presentations addressing anthropological, linguistic and, in general, epistemological implications and contributions of Saint Maximus thought in the development of European Philosophy. Hence, Existentialism of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Phenomenology, Theory of Language, as well as the latest developments within modern theory of psychoanalysis were among other topics, discussed by the speakers.

Moreover, crucial facets of Greek philosophy, starting from the Pre-Socratic period and up to the peak of Neoplatonic tradition were seen under the spectrum of the multi-synthetic thought of this great Saint and thinker. The studies presented in the conference suggested both analytical and synthetic approaches, and constituted ideal motivation for further debates.

In addition, a round table chaired by Dr. Sotiris Mitralaxis, with the participation of Professors Torstein Tollefsen, fr. Nicolaos Loudovikos, Georgi Kapriev and Dionysis Skliris focused on essential questions that diachronically rise up with respect to the relation between philosophy and theology. Hence, the opportunity for a discussion that credited the importance of Maximus as a philosopher who genuinely elaborates philosophical knowledge and uses it in

order to express the revealed truth of God, thus contributing decisively to the evolution of philosophy in the West, was also offered. The reflections of the aforementioned discussants maintained vivid the interest of the participants, by granting them, for instance, the opportunity to become aware of the genuine interest many young students of Philosophy in Norway demonstrate for St. Maximus the Confessor and, thus, experience and affirm the globality of his thinking.

Finally, it wouldn't be worthless to remark the organizational completeness and the proven capacity the organizing committee (Dr. Sotiris Mitralaxis - Freie Universitat of Berlin, Ass. Prof. Georgios Stiris – University of Athens, Dr. Sebastian Lalla - Freie Universitat of Berlin) maintained throughout the longtime preparation and successful implementation of this Colloquium. The fact that the academic publishing house Brepols has already expressed its interest in publishing the Proceedings surely constitutes an expression of honor, towards primarily the person of St. Maximus the Confessor, and secondarily the organizers and participants of this Colloquium.

Speakers (in alphabetic order):

**fr. Andreas Andreopoulos** (University of Winchester, UK)

**fr. Michael Bakker** (ACEOT – VU Amsterdam, Netherlands)

**Emma Brown** (Durham University, Durham UK)

**Dorothy Chang** (Columbia University, NY USA)

**fr. Maximos Conostas** (Holy Cross Theology School, Boston, USA)

**Vladimir Cvetkovic** (University of Belgrade, Serbia)

**Natalie Depraz** (Université de Rouen, Mont-Saint-Aignan, France)

**Nevena Dimitrova** (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)

**Christophe Erismann** (Professor at University of Lausanne, Switzerland)

**Elena Giannakopoulou** (University of Athens)

**fr. Demetrios Harper** (University of Winchester, UK)

**Michael Harrington** (Duquesne University, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania USA)

**Pui Him Ip** (University of Cambridge, UK)

**Myroslav Hryshko** (Ljubljana, Slovenia)

**Cullan Joyce** (MCD University Melbourne, Australia)

**Georgi Kapriev** (Professor at University of Sofia, Bulgaria)

**Karolina Kochańczyk-Bonińska** (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw Poland)

**Sebastian Lalla** (Freie Universitat Berlin, Germany)

**fr. Joshua Lollar** (University of Kansas, USA)  
**fr. Nicolaos Loudovikos** (University Ecclesiastical Academy of Thessaloniki and Cambridge, UK)  
**fr. Andrew Louth** (Emeritus Professor at Durham University, UK)  
**fr. John – Panteleimon Manoussakis** (Holy Cross College, Massachusetts, USA)  
**Michail Mantzanas** (University Ecclesiastical Academy of Athens)  
**Nick Marinides** (University of Basel, Switzerland)  
**Sotiris Mitralaxis** (Freie Universitat Berlin, Germany)  
**Smilen Markov** (Sts. Cyril and Methodius University Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria)  
**Sebastian Mateiescu** (University of Bucharest, Hungary)  
**Jack Pappas** (Boston College, Boston USA)  
**Panagiotis Pavlos** (University of Oslo, Norway)  
**Marcin Podbielski** (Akademia Ignatianu, Krakow Poland)  
**Marius Portaru** (Patristic Institute Augustinianum, Rome, Italy)  
**Douglas Auld Shepardson** (Fordham University, NY USA)  
**Dionysios Skliris** (Université de Sorbonne, Paris, France)  
**George Steiris** (University of Athens)  
**Alexandru Szabo** (KU Leuven, Belgium)  
**Stoyan Tanev** (University of Southern Denmark)  
**Torstein T. Tollefsen** (Professor at University of Oslo, Norway)  
**Antonio Vargas** (Humboldt University Berlin, Germany)  
**Anna Zhyrkova** (Akademia Ignatianum, Krakow Poland)