



PONTIFICIA
UNIVERSITÀ
GREGORIANA

Piazza della Pilotta 4
I-00187 ROMA • ITALIA

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Together with the Council for Research in Values and Philosophy and other institutions interested and dedicated to the promotion of Philosophy within the context of Catholic Higher Education around the world, the Pontifical Gregorian University will host an International Conference on *Discerning Boundaries: Philosophy across Cultures*. The Conference will take place in Rome at the Pontifical Gregorian University, from July 29-31, 2024, that is, just days before the start of the XXV World Congress of Philosophy.

What do boundaries mean from a philosophical perspective as well as in our lived experience? What kinds of boundaries are necessary and what not? How are we to discern boundaries (positive/negative) in our world and beyond? How is philosophy able to play its role in crossing boundaries, not only within the discipline of philosophy itself – different philosophical schools, traditions, ideas, etc. – but also with other disciplines – the social sciences, natural sciences, and so on? What are the relationships between philosophy and culture? What is the meaning of philosophy and culture?

In order to answer these and other questions, philosophy is called to deepen and widen its range according to circumstances and times and to relearn its meaning and relevance in an ever-changing world. This requires philosophers and thinkers to work within the contemporary life of all peoples, cultures, and traditions to generate new visions/understandings both in theoretical as well as in practical terms. Accordingly, philosophy must learn to reembrace all aspects of the lifeworld – economical, socio-political, cultural, ecology, science and technology, etc. – in order to develop new/innovative inquiries and offer answers to some of the most fundamental questions/issues of our time. We

deeply believe that philosophical investigations and communication are of fundamental importance for the shaping of human minds and hearts.

Although philosophical traditions, which are as old as humanity, are different, all have things in common. All peoples have developed their ways of thinking, acting, and being as well as their understandings of reality; accordingly, each culture has produced its own thought, value systems, and made its unique contribution to world philosophy as a whole, while being open to other philosophical traditions through dialogue and communication. As George F. McLean, an alumnus of the Pontifical Gregorian University, once stated, there is need for dramatically new ways of thinking in terms both of the whole in which all are related and of the responsive individual person by which values are shaped, freedom is exercised, and hope is generated. Dialogue that is global and universal—open and mutual—is necessary in the present intercultural context; such conversation, not clash, is the philosopher’s trade. Through such thinking what is personal can become social, and what is global more humane; ethics can thereby be enriched by the cumulative cultural experience of many peoples, and civilizations can be more dialogical in a context marked by harmony and beauty. This is the real challenge to philosophers in our day. Such a conversation is most urgent, practical, and filled with promise and can help understand the real meaning of philosophy and culture across boundaries.

In our time, challenges have become ever more daunting and unprecedented, but opportunities are also plenty and foreseeable. In order to assure a better future, the role of philosophy becomes even more vital because philosophical wisdom can help humanity not only understand the meaning and purpose of existence, human and non-human, but also provide guidance for our socio-political lives. If philosophy means *love of wisdom*, people who love philosophy should live up to its meaning and overcome cultural and political prejudices and so learn to embrace the *given* in order to not just understand the world, but also induce into the same world the transformative requirements of transcendental dimensions of reality such as Goodness and Justice, Truth and Beauty.

Discerning Boundaries: Philosophy across Cultures and Disciplines

- 1| *One and Many*: The In-Between of Faith and Reason, of Cultures and Religions.
- 2| *Same and Other*: The In-Between of Ontology, Anthropology and Hermeneutics.
- 3| *Person and Common Good*: The In-Between of Philosophy and Politics.
- 4| *Personal and Institutional*: The In-Between of Freedom and Power.
- 5| *National and the Supra National*: The In-Between of War and Peace.
- 6| *Natural and Artificial*: The In-Between of Science and Technology.
- 7| *Normative and Creative*: The In-Between of Philosophy and the Arts.
- 8| *Philosophy and History*: The Special Cases of Aquinas, Bonaventure and Kant.
- 9| *Philosophy and University*: Present and Future Challenges.
- 10| *Crisis and Opportunities*: Reading the Signs of the Times.
- 11| *Beyond Subalternity and Domination*: Searching for New World Order
- 12| *Justice and Democracy*: The In-Between of Personal Decision and Socio-Cultural Conditions.