12th International Summer Symposium and Conference Beyond Secular Faith
Communion without Collapse: Trinitarian Difference and Social Polarization
Erasmus BIP

virtual session: 8 June 2027, 18.00-20.00 (Central European Summer Time)
physical part: 6-10 July 2027, Pécs, Hungary

Hans Urs von Balthasar's theological vision presented in his dramatic theology affirms a paradoxical logic of love based on the inner-trinitarian personal exchange. Distinction is not a reason for division because the more distinct the persons are, the greater is their unity. Just as unity is not achieved by erasing difference but by the perfect communion of irreducibly distinct persons in the divine communion. Divine love is neither domination nor uniformity; it is self-giving love that preserves the identity of the beloved. Balthasar's friends and followers such as Joseph Ratzinger, John Zizioulas or Klaus Hemmerle argue that communion requires, rather than abolishes, personal difference. Reality is constituted through relation and receptivity rather than isolated self-assertion.

This theologoumenon has often been applied to questions of social fragmentation and polarization. Insofar we are called to model social life in the image of the Divine Being, one ought to avoid the excesses of social division ("splitting difference") or confusion ("fusing union"). Human community therefore reflects God's own relational life when persons remain genuinely distinct while living in mutual self-gift.

We encourage students and researchers to rethink human community, contemporary social formations, social conflicts, local and global social issues in light of Revelation.

Main topics:
- Metaphysics of unity-in-difference,
- solidarity and social justice,
- social friendship,
- ecclesiology,
- political theology,
- authority as service

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Schedule:
Monday (5 July) – arrival
Tuesday-Thursday (6-8 July) - 9.00-14.00 courses
- afternoon optional cultural programs

Friday (9 July) - Teacher's parallel sessions
- Student's papers (with mentoring professors present)
- Farewell Dinner

Saturday (10 July) - Teacher's parallel sessions
- Plenary sessions

(The programme ends at approximately 1-2 pm on Saturday afternoon.)

Participants:
10-26 Students
Teachers:
- Erasmus teaching mobilities: Delivering lecture on Friday or Saturday, and supervising the students' paper presentations. Of course, we welcome teachers who accompany their students for the whole week to take part in a 5-day teaching mobility programme, recognising the informal teaching activities on the other days, such as teaching through academic discussions and conversations.
- Dr Mátyás Szalay is already in contact with the lecturers who will be delivering three lectures each from Tuesday to Thursday; we would also be delighted to welcome them through the Erasmus teaching mobility programme.

Accomodation:
If there is a need, we will organise cheaper, simpler group accommodation in church-run hostels for students. We will collect these requests at a later date.
For lecturers and those students who require higher-quality accommodation, we will provide a list of nearby hotels.
(Unlike last year, we will not use our college's dormitory as accommodation this year, as summer maintenance work begins in July.)

Meals:
Beyond providing coffee breaks, we are considering whether the organisational budget covers a daily lunch set menu at one of the nearby restaurants.
Everyone is warmly invited to the farewell dinner on Friday evening!