

PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY OF THE HOLY CROSS  
Faculty of Theology and DISF Research Centre

January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
4:30 – 6:30 PM  
Room *Benedetto XVI*

Public conference

**“THE WORD BECAME FLESH”**  
**Deep Incarnation in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century and today**

***Deep Incarnation and the Cappadocians’ Relational Ontology***

Giulio MASPERO

Professor of Dogmatic Theology, Faculty of Theology  
Member of the Research Group on Relational Ontology (ROR)  
Pontifical University of the Holy Cross

**Abstract:** The Cappadocians in the 4<sup>th</sup> century were able to reshape at the same time metaphysics, anthropology and epistemology in their work to develop a form of thought enriched by Christian revelation. In particular, the strength of their theological construction stemmed from the need to confront the Arians, the Pneumatomachians and the Apollinarists simultaneously. Thus, they were forced to apply the ontological novelty of the immanent relation within the divine nature, as developed in response to Eunomius, to pneumatology, in response to those who denied the divinity of the third Person, and then to Christology in its inescapable connection with anthropology highlighted by the confrontation with Apollinaris. In this way the new ontological density acknowledged to relations could be recognized as the ultimate and deepest meaning of creation, without any confusion between the Creator and the creature. Thus, the Wisdom literature found its fulfillment in a relational conception of the cosmos itself, which starting from the very narrative in Genesis could be read as a relational reality held together by the Logos himself who became flesh and who, for this reason, is the true meaning of the world and history. The proposed reading will also be presented from the perspective of the possibilities it offers in confronting postmodernity.

***Deep Incarnation and Chalcedon: Inspirations from the Cappadocian concept of *mixis****

Niels H. GREGERSEN

Professor of Systematic Theology, Faculty of Theology  
Principal Investigator, Centre for Science and Faith  
University of Copenhagen

**Abstract:** While the Nicene Creed states that the Son came “in the flesh” and “was made human”, the first part of the incarnation in “the flesh” was obliterated in the Chalcedonian Creed, which focused on the relation between the divine and the human natures of Christ. In the lecture, it will be argued that the contemporary concept of deep incarnation remains aligned with the intentions of the Chalcedonian Creed, but is even more strongly informed by the Cappadocian interpretation of the mixture, or conjunction, of Christ and creation, especially in the work of Gregory of Nyssa. How did it come that the *mixis* between Christ and creaturely existence does not lead to a confused amalgam but to a conjunction between Christ and creation that retains the specificities of God and the world of nature, at once human and more than human?

## Tentative schedule

4.30 – Opening addresses and welcome

4.40 – *Introduction*

Claudio **TAGLIAPIETRA**, Faculty of Theology and DISF Research Center, Pontifical Univ. of the Holy Cross

4.50 – *Deep Incarnation and the Cappadocians' Relational Ontology*

Giulio **MASPERO**, Professor of Dogmatic Theology, Pontifical University of the Holy Cross

5.30 – *Deep Incarnation and Chalcedon: Inspirations from the Cappadocian concept of mixis*

Niels H. **GREGERSEN**, Professor of Systematic Theology, University of Copenhagen

6.10 – *Dialogue with the speakers*

6.30 – End of the event

Event moderator: Claudio **Tagliapietra**

The event will be in English

Venue:

Pontifical University of the Holy Cross,

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