

# THE LAST TO DIE: SEMIOTICS OF HOPE BETWEEN RELIGION AND ETHICS

## The conference

The International Conference originates from the perception of a somber contemporary landscape, characterized by global conflicts, environmental crises, and a pervasive sense of dread regarding an uncertain future. In this context, the symposium offers an interdisciplinary inquiry—encompassing semiotics, philosophy, and theology—directed not merely toward the objects of hope, but toward the profound essence of hope as both an ethical praxis and an interpretative framework.

The proceedings traverse a diverse range of classical and modern genealogies: from the dialectic of disillusionment and redemption in Dickens to the collective construction of meaning in Malraux. Seneca's reflections on the structural entanglement of fear and hope are brought into dialogue with the eschatological tension of St. Augustine and the persistent, vital force identified by Leopardi. These perspectives are further enriched by contemporary voices: the utopian anticipation of Bloch, the generative impetus of Péguy, and Solnit's openness to the unpredictable. Finally, the testimony of Primo Levi serves as a vital reminder of hope as a form of resistance and the preservation of fundamental dignity even in the depths of the abyss.

Hosted in Trento as a forum for interreligious and global dialogue, the event seeks to transmute existential anguish into critical elaboration. Hope is thus interrogated as a semiotic apparatus capable of fostering new discourses and ethical responsibilities for the future, while systematically avoiding the pitfalls of rhetorical artifice or illusory sentimentality.

## Key-Speakers

Juan **ALONSO ALDAMA**  
Cristina **DEMARIA**  
Michael **FACIUS**  
Seema **KHANWALKAR**  
Yunhee **LEE**  
Federico **MONTANARI**  
Clotilde **PEREZ**  
Frédéric **VANDENBERGHE**

**April 27, 2026**

Fondazione Bruno Kessler  
Aula Grande | Via Santa Croce, 77 | Trento

## Scientific Conveners

Juan **ALONSO ALDAMA**  
Massimo **LEONE**  
Federico **MONTANARI**