



**Institute for Religion &
Critical Inquiry**



Atheism and Christianity: Moving Past Polemic
20-22 September 2016

IRCI Rome Campus Seminars

IRCI-CCS Series

1. *Laudato Si'*: The Greening of the Church? (22-24 September 2015)
2. Conceiving Change in the Church: An Exploration of the Hermeneutics of Catholic Tradition (13-16 September 2016)

IRCI Biblical and Early Christian Studies Series

1. The Rise of the Christian Intellectual in the Second Century (27-29 July 2016)

IRCI Philosophy, Religion and Culture Series

1. Atheism and Christianity: Moving Past Polemic (20-22 September 2016)

***Atheism and Christianity: Moving
Past Polemic***

**IRCI Philosophy, Religion, and Culture Seminar
Series**

20-22 September 2016

**Held at the Rome Campus of
Australian Catholic University/Catholic University of
America**

Via Garibaldi, 28, 00153 Roma, Italy

**Convenor: Dr David Newheiser
IRCI, Australian Catholic University**

Welcome

On behalf of my colleagues in the Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry I welcome you to the ACU/CUA Rome Campus for fourth IRCI Rome seminar, entitled 'Atheism and Christianity: Moving Past Polemic.' The seminar marks the beginning of a major research project that includes chief investigators from ACU, KU Leuven and Yale.

The Rome seminar series provides an opportunity for the Institute to bring together leading scholars to address and explore key issues in their respective fields of study. They are a practical expression of our ongoing commitment to innovative, high quality, international research collaboration in the disciplines of theology and philosophy. I extend my particular thanks to Dr David Newheiser for all his work as convenor of this seminar and to Professor Wayne McKenna, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), for his support and sponsorship of the IRCI Rome Campus seminars.

Over the next three days I trust this seminar will provide the opportunity to establish new connections and to enrich existing ones. My best wishes for lively and engaging discussions and deliberations as you explore questions pertinent to the Atheism and Christianity project.

Professor James McLaren

Director,

Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry, ACU

September 2016

Time	Tuesday 20 September
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4:30-6:30	Welcome and Introductions
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6:30-7:30	Drinks Reception
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7:30	Dinner at Rome Campus
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Time**Wednesday 21 September****10:00-11:30****Discussion 1**

Nicholas of Cusa, 'De Deo Abscondito'

Suggested by Stephan van Erp

Introduced by Agata Bielik-Robson

Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*

Suggested by Christiane Alpers

Introduced by Robyn Horner

11:30-12:00**Morning Coffee**

12:00-1:30**Discussion 2**

Dominic Erdozain, "Jesus and Augustine"

Suggested by Alec Ryrie

Introduced by Denys Turner

Hume & Schopenhauer

Suggested by Dennis vanden Auweele

Introduced by Henning Tegtmeier

1:30-3:00**Lunch**

3:00-4:30

Discussion 3

Richard Kearney, *Reimagining the Sacred*

Suggested by Robyn Horner

Introduced by Christiane Alpers

Denys Turner, *How to be an Atheist*

Suggested by Karen Kilby

Introduced by Dennis vanden Auweele

4:30-5:00

Break

5:00-6:30

Open Discussion

6:30-7:30

Drinks

7:30

Dinner at Rome Campus

Time **Thursday 22 September**

10:00-11:30

Discussion 4

Herbert McCabe, *God: I - Creation*

Suggested by Denys Turner

Introduced by Stephan van Erp

Thomas White, *Monotheistic Rationality and Divine Names*

Suggested by Henning Tegtmeier

Introduced by Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer

11:30-12:00

Morning coffee

12:00-1:30

Discussion 5

Simone Weil, *First and Last Notebooks*

Suggested by Philip Goodchild

Introduced by Karen Kilby

Ernst Bloch, *Atheism in Christianity*

Suggested by Agata Bielik-Robson

Introduced by David Newheiser

1:30-3:00

Lunch

3:00-4:30

Discussion 6

Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*

Suggested by Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer

Introduced by Alec Ryrie

Stathis Gourgouris, *Lessons in Secular Criticism*

Suggested by David Newheiser

Introduced by Philip Goodchild

4:30-5:00 **Break**

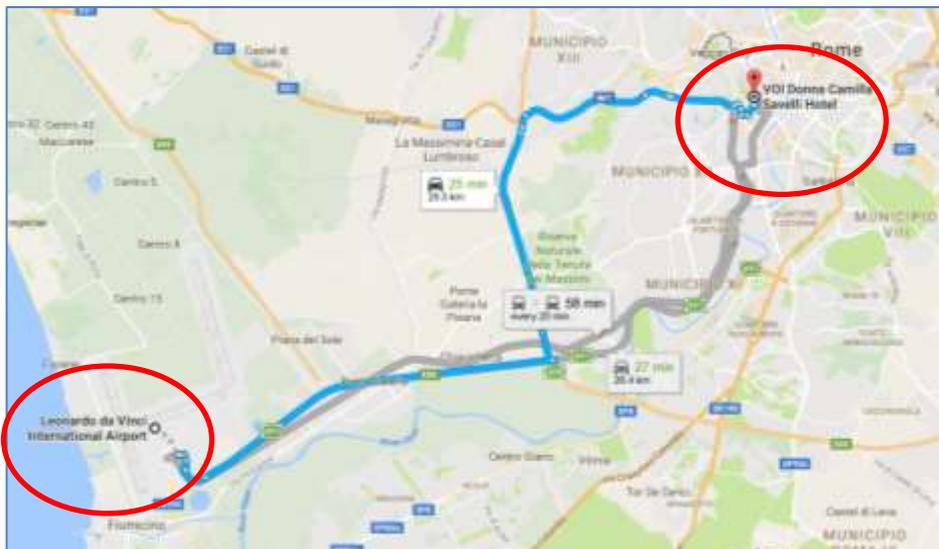
5:00-6:30 **Open Discussion and close of seminar**

Evening **Free time (for those participants able to attend drinks
at the Hotel at 6:30pm)**

Participants

Ms Christiane Alpers	KU Leuven/Radboud Universiteit
Prof Agata Bielik-Robson	University of Nottingham
Prof Philip Goodchild	University of Nottingham
Assoc Prof Robyn Horner	ACU
Dr Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer	ACU
Prof Karen Kilby	Durham University
Prof Wayne McKenna	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), ACU
Prof James McLaren	Director, IRCI, ACU
Prof Jean-Luc Marion	University of Chicago
Dr David Newheiser	ACU
Prof Alec Ryrrie	Durham University
Prof Henning Tegtmeier	KU Leuven
Prof Denys Turner	ACU/Yale University
Dr Dennis vanden Auweele	KU Leuven/Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
Prof Stephan van Erp	KU Leuven

Leonardo Da Vinci International Airport to voi Donna Camilla Savelli Hotel - Rome



Practical Matters

Hotel address: Via Garibaldi, 27, 00153 Roma

Campus address: Via Garibaldi, 28, 00153 Roma

Please note that the walk from the hotel to the Campus is uphill, approximately a quarter of the way up the Janiculum Hill. Although a relatively short distance the walk does involve a climb, part of which is at a steady incline. There is also no designated footpath on the side of the road.

The seminar room has air-conditioning. However, as the seminar is taking place in mid September please dress accordingly (i.e. light weight and informal).

Some nearby places of interest

- Fontana dell'Acqua Paola
- Museo della repubblica Romana e della memoria Garibaldina
- Piazza Garibaldi (including the Vittoriano Monument)
- Orto Botanico
- San Pietro in Montorio (including Tempietto del Bramante)
- Villa Pamphili
- Santa Maria in Trastevere

Some suggestions for food in Trastevere:

- Cave Canem (Piazza di S. Calisto, 11).
- Da Enzo (Via dei Vascellari, 29).
- Fatamorgana (Via Roma Libera, 11) for gelato.
- La Boccaccia (Via di Santa Dorotea, 2) for when on the run (pizza by the slice).

Also worth considering:

Emma Pizzeria (Via del Monte della Farina, 28). It is across the Tiber River, about a 15 minutes walk from the hotel.

The Location

The Rome Campus lies within the Aurelian walls, approximately one-third of the way up the Janiculum Hill. Although the Janiculum is particularly well known as the place where Garibaldi and his supporters fought to defend the newly established Republic of Rome in 1849 the site of the Campus also has some notable points of interest. Gió Ponti was involved in the design of the current building, which was built for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Sion in 1962-63. Within the confines of the previous structures and largely thanks to the work of Mother Marie Augustine and Mother Maria Agnesa the site was a place of refuge for Jews during WWII. Whole families were accommodated within the convent from October 1943 until the liberation of Rome in June 1944 (source: Notre Dame de Sion archives).

In the gardens is one other notable feature, which most likely dates from the first century CE. It is a funerary relief of a man and a woman and an inscription. Dr Alan Cadwallader of ACU has recently identified the relief and epitaph as *CIL* 6.16019, an item recorded in the seventeenth century but subsequently thought to be lost as the Janiculum Hill area was urbanised. Their apparent 'loss' was attested as recently as 1993, by Valentin Kockel in his work on Roman gravesites from the turn of the era. According to Dr Cadwallader, the relief and inscription belong together, making them quite unusual. It is likely that the original setting was a nearby grave structure, possibly situated in the vicinity of the Via Aurelia. The inscription suggests an interesting social history: they have Greek names (Anteros and Apollonia); they were ex-slaves who had belonged to different households and subsequently established their own household (source: A. Cadwallader, "A Note on *CIL* 6.16019 in Light of its Rediscovery," *forthcoming*).

Notes

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