

# Varieties of Atheism

Rome Seminar Series  
19 – 22 August 2018



**ACU**

INSTITUTE FOR  
RELIGION &  
CRITICAL INQUIRY

# IRCI Rome Campus Seminars

## 2018

Modes of Knowing and the Ordering of Knowledge in Early Christianity II  
(26–28 July)

Redeeming Autonomy: Agency, Vulnerability, and Relationality  
(27–30 May)

Global Issues in Ethics II: Moral Disagreement (18–20 March)

## 2017

Companions in Guilt Arguments in Metaethics (1–3 September)

Modes of Knowing and the Ordering of Knowledge in Early Christianity  
(27–30 July)

Negative Political Theology (23–26 July)

Cosmopolitanism and National Identity (16–18 March)

The Enigma of Suffering (3–6 January)

## 2016

Atheism and Christianity: Moving Past Polemic (20–22 September)

Conceiving Change in the Church: An Exploration of the Hermeneutics  
of Catholic Tradition (13–16 September)

The Rise of the Christian Intellectual in the Second Century  
(27–29 July)

## 2015

*'Laudato Si'*: The Greening of the Church? (22–24 September)

*Varieties of Atheism*

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19–22 August 2018

Rome Campus

Australian Catholic University/Catholic  
University of America

Via Garibaldi, 28, 00153 Roma, Italy

Convenor

David Newheiser

# Welcome

On behalf of my colleagues in the Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry I welcome you to the ACU/CUA Rome Campus.

The IRCI Rome seminar series commenced in September 2015, when the Campus was opened. The series provides an opportunity for the Institute to bring together leading scholars to address and explore key issues in their fields of study. The respective seminars are a practical expression of our ongoing commitment to innovative, high-quality, international research collaboration in the disciplines of philosophy and theology. I take this opportunity to thank David Newheiser for all the work he has undertaken to bring together the wonderful program for this seminar in the Atheism series. My thanks also go to Professor Wayne McKenna, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at ACU, for his ongoing support and sponsorship of the IRCI Rome Campus Seminars.

Over the next four days I trust this seminar will provide the opportunity to establish new connections and to enrich existing ones. I am sure the seminar will generate lively and engaging discussions and deliberations as you explore issues surrounding this significant topic.

**Professor David Runia**  
Director

Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry, ACU  
August, 2018

## SUNDAY 19 AUGUST

4:00–4:30pm **Welcome tea**

4:30–6:00pm **Introductions**

6:00–7:00pm **Aperitivo**

7.00pm **Dinner**

## MONDAY 20 AUGUST

10:30–11:45am **Session 1**  
**Susannah Ticciati**  
'Is There Anything More to Learn From the Debate with the New Atheists? Truth and Transformation'  
Respondent: **Leora Batnitzky**

11:45–12.00pm **Break**

12:00–1:15pm **Session 2**  
**Vittorio Montemaggi**  
'Atheism in Dante's Comedy'  
Respondent: **Alda Balthrop-Lewis**

1:15–3:15pm **Lunch**

3:15–4:30pm **Session 3**  
**Andre Willis**  
'Hume's Prefiguration of Rorty's Anti-clericalism'  
Respondent: **Charles Lockwood**

4:30–4:45pm **Afternoon tea**

## MONDAY 20 AUGUST - EVENING

4:45pm–6:00pm

### Session 4

**Devin Singh**

‘Fragile Belief and the Empty Throne: Theology and Politics After Ascension’

Respondent: **Stephan van Erp**

6.00pm

**Aperitivo**

7.00pm

**Dinner**

## TUESDAY 21 AUGUST

10:30–11:45pm

### Session 5

**Denys Turner**

‘Nietzsche, Nominalism, and the Reductive Spirit’

Respondent: **Constance Furey**

11:45–12:00pm

**Morning tea**

12.00–1:15pm

### Session 6

**Noreen Khawaja**

‘Ontology and Alterity’

Respondent: **Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer**

1:15–3:15pm

**Lunch**

3:15–4:15pm

**Open Discussion**

4:15pm

**Free evening**

## WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST

10:30–11:45am

### **Session 7**

**Ryan Coyne**

‘The Death of God and the New Contemplative Life’

Respondent: **Nicholas Adams**

11:45–12.00pm

**Morning tea**

12.00–1.15pm

### **Session 8**

**Mary-Jane Rubinstein**

“‘The Ghastly Apparition of Atheism’”: On the Perplexing Kerfuffle over Einstein’s Cosmic Pantheism’

Respondent: **Fiona Ellis**

1:15–3:15pm

**Lunch**

3:15–4:30pm

### **Session 9**

**Henning Tegtmeier**

‘A Problem of Apophatic Theology’

Respondent: **George Pattison**

4.30–4.45pm

**Break**

4.45–6.15pm

### **Session 10**

Open discussion

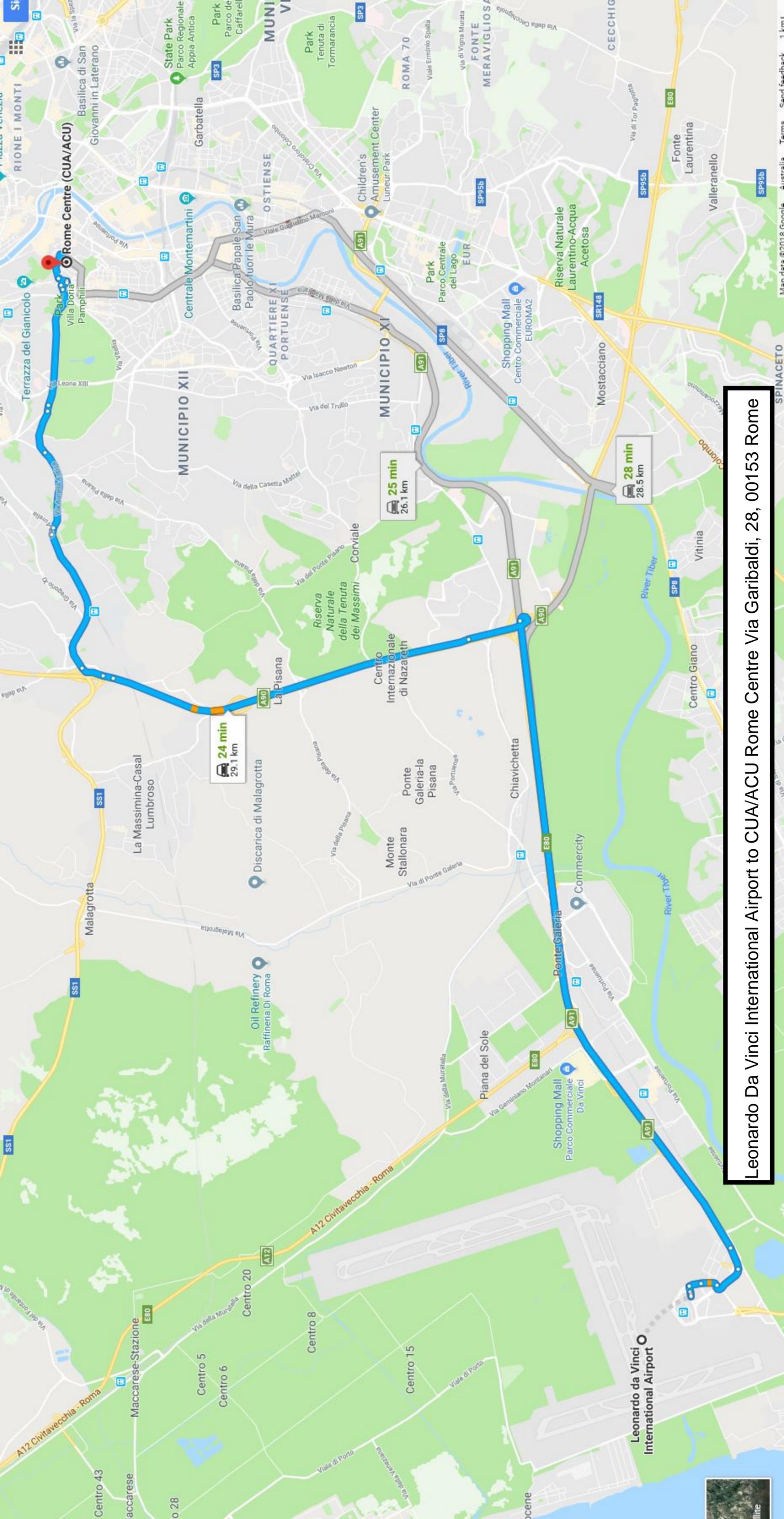
6.15–7.00pm

**Break**

7.00pm

**Closing dinner**

Participant	Academic affiliation	Email contact
Nicholas Adams	University of Birmingham	n.adams.1bham.ac.uk
Alda Balthrop-Lewis	Australian Catholic University	alda.balthrop-lewis@acu.edu.au
Leora Batnitzky	Princeton University	batnitzky@princeton.edu
Ryan Coyne	University of Chicago	rcoyne@uchicago.edu
Rachel Davies	Australian Catholic University	rachel.davies@acu.edu.au
Fiona Ellis	Roehampton University	fiona.ellisx@gmail.com
Constance Furey	Indiana University	cfurey@indiana.edu
Robyn Horner	Australian Catholic University	robyn.horner@acu.edu.au
Chris Jacobs-Vandegeer	Australian Catholic University	christiaan.JacobsVandegeer@acu.edu.au
Noreen Khawaja	Yale University	noreen.khawaha@yale.edu
Charles Lockwood	Australian Catholic University	charles.lockwood@acu.edu.au
Vittorio Montemaggi	King's College London	vittorio.montemaggi@kcl.ac.uk
David Newheiser	Australian Catholic University	david.newheiser@acu.edu.au
George Pattison	University of Glasgow	george.pattison@glasgow.ac.uk
Mary-Jane Rubenstein	Wesleyan University	mrubenstein@wesleyan.edu
Regina Schwartz	Northwestern University	rsreginamara@gmail.com
Devin Singh	Dartmouth College	devin.singh@dartmouth.edu
Henning Tegtmeier	KU Leuven	henning.tegtmeier@kuleuven.be
Susannah Ticciati	King's College London	susannah.ticciati@kcl.ac.uk
Denys Turner	ACU/Yale	denys.turner@yale.edu
Stephen van Erp	KU Leuven	stephen.vanerp@kuleuven.be
Andre Willis	Brown University	andre_willis@brown.edu



**24 min**  
29.1 km

**25 min**  
26.1 km

**28 min**  
28.5 km

Leonardo Da Vinci International Airport to CUA/ACU Rome Centre Via Garibaldi, 28, 00153 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.

## 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
- Villa Farnesina – Renaissance frescoes

## Some suggestions for food in Trastevere:

- Cave Canem (Piazza di. S. Calisto, 11).
- Da Enzo (Via dei Vascellari, 29).
- Trattoria Da Augusto (Vicolo De' Renzi, 15) no nonsense local
- Fatamorgana (Via Roma Libera, 11) for gelato.
- La Boccaccia (Via di Santa Dorotea, 2) for when on the run (pizza by the slice).
- I Suppli (Via San Francesco a Ripa, 137) for when on the run (Suppli - traditional Roman fried rice balls).

## 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 (formerly 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*).

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