

Crossing the Gap Between Faith and Faithlessness

Models of Religious Belief and Their Anthropological Plausibility

Tuesday, June 30th, 2025 | 14:30–17:30 | LUISS Rome - Parenzo, A18

CONTACT: Anthony Feneuil

CHAIR: Claire Placial

- 14:30 Faith as Credence: What Could It Mean?**
Anthony Feneuil Université de Lorraine (Metz)
- 14:50 Distinguishing Belief-Based and Belief-Less Spirituality in Philosophy and Psychology**
Ryan T. Byerly University of Sheffield
- 15:10 When Non-Believers Write Literature About Faith On Emmanuel Carrère's *Le Royaume* (2014) and Javier Cercas's *El loco de Dios en el fin del mundo* (2025)**
Claire Placial Université de Lorraine (Metz)
- 15:30 Secular Maybe: On Noncommittality in Religion**
Paolo Costa Fondazione Bruno Kessler (Trento)
- BREAK (15:50-16:00)
- 16:00 Faith as Attitude: Toward a Commensurability Between Faith and Faithlessness?**
Aurélien Gallèpe Université de Genève
- 16:20 How to Understand the Relationship Between Faith and Trust**
Benoit Gaultier Universität Zürich
- 16:40 The Irrationality of Religious Fictionalism**
Yann Schmitt Marseille
- 17h00 General Discussion**

The notion that belief admits of degrees is widely held among philosophers and psychologists. Yet, it remains contested in philosophy of religion and theology, despite recent scholarship framing faith as a credence—a variable intensity of belief operating on a spectrum rather than as a binary switch. More broadly, the social sciences have long challenged the simplicity of "belief," occasionally questioning the utility of the category itself. This panel investigates these emerging perspectives, discussing various theories of belief in philosophy and the social sciences through the lens of literary analysis. Bringing together philosophers of religion and literary specialists, it explores how narrative fiction models the complexity of religious psychology—treating literary characters as case studies and examining contemporary writing practices that blur the boundaries between belief and unbelief (E. Carrère, J. Cercas, among others). The panel evaluates the anthropological plausibility of non-binary accounts of belief and explores the nexus between philosophy, theology, and literature in religious epistemology.