



Programme

The Big Bang and the interfaces of knowledge: towards a common language?

Monday 15 – Wednesday 17 October 2012 | WP1180

The Big Bang theory is the prevailing cosmological model for explaining the genesis of the universe. To date it has the wide support of the scientific community because it offers the most accurate and comprehensive explanation for a broad range of observations. It leads to a dating of the universe as 13.7 billion years old.

The purpose of this conference is to enable scientists from a range of disciplines to dialogue with philosophers and theologians from the world religions about the nature of the Big Bang Theory. What understandings might scientists and theologians share in common? How are their paradigms shaped and developed? Is it possible to develop a common framework or language?

**In partnership with the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), Geneva
With support from Sir Halley Stewart Trust
To be held in Nyon Switzerland**

Monday 15 October

1400 Participants arrive

1500-1515 **Welcome and introduction to the conference**

Richard Burge

Chief Executive, Wilton Park, Steyning

Gary Wilton

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the EU, Brussels
Visiting Programme Director, Wilton Park

Rolf Heuer

Director General, CERN, Geneva

1515-1645 **1. Philosophy, religion and the nature of scientific knowledge**

How do different communities hold knowledge? What are the legitimate aims of scientific endeavour? How should scientific results be interpreted? Is it scientific to make truth claims? What is the relationship between faith and reason? How are religious truth claims knowable? What do religious and scientific paradigms have in common?

Andrew Pinsent

Research Director, Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Religion, Oxford University, Oxford

Yujin Nagasawa

Professor of Philosophy, University of Birmingham, Birmingham

Marcel Weber

Professor of Philosophy of Science, University of Geneva, Geneva

1645-1730

Photograph followed by tea/coffee

1730-1900

2. Contemporary understandings of Big Bang Theory

How does contemporary cosmology understand Big Bang Theory? How does particle physics inform contemporary understanding? Higgs Boson – Where does the ‘God Particle’ fit in? Current experimentation and data from LHC at CERN.

Michelangelo Mangano

Senior Scientist, CERN, Geneva

Brian Foster

Alexander von Humboldt Professor, University of Hamburg/DESY, Hamburg

Jeff Forshaw

Professor, Particle Physics, University of Manchester, Manchester

1930

Welcome reception followed by dinner

Tuesday 16 October

0800-0845

Breakfast

0900-1045

3. In the beginning from different religious perspectives

What are the implications of Big Bang Theory for religious or theological understandings of the genesis or creation of the world? In what ways might the Big Bang contradict or support traditional theological approaches? Are there any religious elements inherent within some scientific understandings of Big Bang Theory?

John Lennox

Professor of Mathematics and Fellow in Mathematics and the Philosophy of Science, University of Oxford (Green Templeton College), Oxford

Alnoor Dhanani

Harvard University, Lexington, MA

Gad Freudenthal

Professor, University of Geneva, Geneva

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1245

4. The shaping of communal knowledge?

This session will open with the two speakers in plenary before dividing into four parallel discussion groups. Each discussion group will feedback to the plenary session 5.

The relationship between faith and scientific empiricism

Nancey Murphy

Professor of Philosophy, Fuller Seminary, Pasadena

The role of authority within a knowledge community

John Bishop

Professor of Philosophy, University of Auckland, Auckland

Groups 1 and 2

The relationship between faith and empiricism

Groups 3 and 4

The role of authority within a knowledge community

1300-1500	Lunch
1500-1530	<p>5. The shaping of communal knowledge? Feedback from discussion groups in session 4</p> <p>Feedback from groups</p>
1530-1700	<p>6. The interfaces of knowledge – Is a common language possible?</p> <p>Where are the meeting points between religious approaches to the beginning of the world and contemporary scientific approaches to Big Bang Theory? In what ways might the different knowledge communities have already influenced one another's paradigms. Are there pointers to common language or new shared paradigms?</p> <p>Lawrence Krauss Foundation Professor, School of Earth and Space Exploration and Physics Department; Inaugural Director of the Origins Project, Arizona State University, Tempe</p> <p>Michael Heller Director, Copernicus Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies, Tarnow</p> <p>George Anagnostopoulos Associate Professor, Demokritos University of Thrace, Xanthi</p>
1700-1730	Tea/coffee
1730-1900	<p>7. The shaping of communal knowledge?</p> <p>This session will open with the two speakers in plenary before dividing into four parallel discussion groups. Each discussion group will feedback to the plenary session 7.</p> <p>How to handle revolutions in discovery/thought? Nidhal Guessoum Professor of Physics, American University of Sharjah, Sharjah</p> <p>What are the limits of knowledge? How do we work with what we don't know? Russell Stannard Emeritus Professor of Physics at the Open University, Leighton Buzzard</p> <p>Groups 5 and 6 How to handle revolutions in discovery/thought?</p> <p>Groups 7 and 8 What are the limits of knowledge? How do we work with what we don't know?</p>
1930	Dinner at Château de Divonne, France
Wednesday 17 October	
0800-0900	Breakfast
0915-1045	<p>8. The shaping of communal knowledge? Feedback from discussion groups in session 7</p> <p>Feedback from groups and open discussion</p> <p>Concluding Comments and Observations</p> <p>Carl Feit Ades Professor of Health Science, Yeshiva University, New York</p>
1045-1115	Tea/coffee

1115-1300

Closing Panel Discussion

This session will open with brief reflections from each of the panel members including pointers towards aspects of a possible common language and or new shared paradigms.

David Wilkinson

Principal, St John's College, Durham University, Durham

Eliezer Rabinovici

Professor, Racah Institute of Physics, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Ken Gemes

Professor of Philosophy, Birkbeck College, University of London, London

1315-1415

Lunch

1415

Participants depart

1500-1700

Optional visit to CERN