

Science, Religion & Faith Track – 9:40-12:40

Session Moderator: Dr Jonathan Johnson

Jonathan Johnson was born into a pastor's home in the United States and is the third generation of ministers in his family. He currently pastors Island Baptist Church on Hong Kong island, and has lived in Asia with his wife and three children for several years, where he also works in aesthetic philosophy, sociology of religion, and apologetics. Jonathan lectures at HKBU, assists in courses at HKU, and serves with Hong Kong Centre for Christian Apologetics. His most recent publication is *Citizens of Two Kingdoms: Civil Society and Christian Religion in Greater China* (Brill: 2021) which he co-edited with Prof S.H. Chan. Jonathan's current research is in negative judgments in aesthetic philosophy, as well as the problem of evil in philosophy of religion.

The Surprising Things That Models Don't Tell Us

Keynote: Dr Mike Brownutt

Response: Dr Kenneth Ng

Models are ubiquitous in science; from models of viruses spreading in a population, to models of electrons moving in a metal, or models of mutations accumulating in a gene. Models are undeniably powerful tools, allowing us to get a qualitative, quantitative, and predictive handle on the phenomena we see. Nonetheless, models have some logical, albeit counterintuitive, limitations. Among these limitations is that models – even successful models – do not, and cannot, tell us anything whatsoever about the nature of the world in which we live. Drawing illustrations from physical, economic, sociological, and biological models, this talk will consider the significant, though often uncomfortable, implications that this has for our engagement with science and religion.

Mike Brownutt obtained his first Master's degree (MSci in physics) and his PhD (in experimental quantum mechanics) from Imperial College London, UK. Following this he moved to Innsbruck, Austria, for eight years, firstly as a post-doctoral researcher and later as an Assistant Professor. He wrote his habilitation based on his research there, which centered on developing scalable architectures for quantum computers. He completed his second Master's degree (MA in theology, University of Chester, UK) considering how faith is understood by various parties in discourse on the relationship between Christianity and science. Since 2015 he has worked at the University of Hong Kong, where he is Associate Director of the Faith and Science Collaborative Research Forum. His research now focusses on the engagement between science and religion, particularly in Asian contexts. In his spare time, he is doing a PhD in philosophy (University of Birmingham, UK) looking at scientific and religious quasi-objects.

Kenneth Ng read Natural Sciences during his undergraduate study at the University of Cambridge, where he continued on to obtain a PhD in Organic Chemistry. After spending ten years in the UK, he returned to his hometown of Hong Kong, to join HKU. He dived into the field of Chemical Biology and focussed his research on modulation of innate immunity. Over the years in HKU, his work made him feel all the more positive about devoting full attention to becoming a mentor, a confidant, and a friend to our undergraduates. Besides being a lecturer, he is also a father of two.

The Origin of Humanity & Evolution: Science & Scripture in Conversation

Keynote - Dr Andrew Loke

Response - Rev Vincent Chan

This talk provides a summary and review of Andrew Loke's *The Origin of Humanity and Evolution: Science and Scripture in Conversation* (T&T Clark, 2022).

Resolving the perceived conflict between science and religion regarding evolutionary science and scripture would greatly benefit both scientific and religious communities, and contribute to the spiritual quest of humankind. Addressing the intense debate in science and religion in light of evolutionary population genetics, this talk argues that the theory of evolution as understood by mainstream scientists is compatible with Scripture. While affirming that the Bible should be interpreted according to proper hermeneutical principles such as considering the literary genre, literary context, meaning of words, grammatical relationship, and the background and concerns of the ancient authors, the book also assesses the scientific data according to proper mainstream scientific methodology. Having accomplished these tasks, it proposes a model which argues that all humans today have Adam as common ancestor even though this ancestor is not our sole ancestor.

Andrew Loke is Associate Professor in the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Hong Kong Baptist University. After graduating from the Faculty of Medicine, National University of Singapore, Dr Loke worked as a medical doctor for seven years. He then completed his MA in philosophy at Biola University and PhD in Theology at King's College London. He has published multiple books with world-leading academic publishers in peer-reviewed monograph series in the fields of theology, philosophy of religion, historical-critical New Testament studies, and science and religion. These include *The Origins of Divine Christology* (Cambridge University Press), *A Kryptic Model of the Incarnation* (Routledge), *Investigating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (Routledge), *God and Ultimate Origins* (Springer Nature), *The Teleological and Kalam Cosmological Arguments Revisited* (Springer Nature), *The Origin of Humanity: Science and Theology in Conversation* (T&T Clark), and *Evil, Sin and Christian Theism* (Routledge). In addition, he has published numerous articles in leading international peer-reviewed journals such as *Religious Studies* (Cambridge University Press) and *Journal of Theological Studies* (Oxford University Press).

Vincent Chan is deeply committed to academics and charitable work. Before moving back to Hong Kong to minister at a large international church, Vincent earned a Bachelor degree in Actuarial Science from Texas A&M University. He then received a Master of Divinity from The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2019. He is now a PhD candidate focusing on the study of Science and Religion at Hong Kong Baptist University, where he also serves as a member of the Senate and committee member of multiple academic taskforces. Vincent is also currently a visiting doctoral researcher at Faraday Institute for Science & Religion, University of Cambridge. Vincent is a founding executive committee member of The Society for Science and Religion in Asia (SSRA). As well as his academic endeavours, he is the associate pastor of Hosanna church, a board director of the Tuen Mun District Christian Churches Union, and the non-executive director of YWAM Gateway (Youth with a Mission).