

## God and Time IV

God & Time IV is the fourth in a series of international philosophy conferences focussed on philosophical questions concerning the nature of divine temporality in different religious traditions. The conference features research presentations by leading international philosophers of religion and of time. All welcome.

**Conference Website:** <https://isphilosophytime.weebly.com/pta-332840.html>

**Time & Date:** 9am-6pm Monday 29 August and 9am-1pm Tuesday 30 August

**Location:** [Museum of Literature Ireland](#) (UCD Newman House), St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland

Please note that registration is required for in-person attendance. To register for in-person attendance or for any other enquiries please email Daniel Esmonde Deasy (UCD) at [daniel.deasy@ucd.ie](mailto:daniel.deasy@ucd.ie). Please include your name, institutional affiliation (if any), and any dietary or accessibility requirements.

**Accessibility:** We aim to make the conference as accessible as possible. The venue is fully accessible, but if you have any additional accessibility needs, please do let us know at [daniel.deasy@ucd.ie](mailto:daniel.deasy@ucd.ie).

**Join Online:** Zoom Webinar (Monday): <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/62958146260>

Zoom Webinar (Tuesday): <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/67485698256>

Please note that the event will be recorded.

**Organisers:** [Daniel Esmonde Deasy](#) (UCD); [Florian Fischer](#) (Siegen); [Martin Pickup](#) (Birmingham)

**Acknowledgements:** The conference is organised by the [UCD Newman Centre for the Study of Religions](#); the [Society for Philosophy of Time](#); and the [Irish Society for the Philosophy of Time](#). We are grateful to the UCD Newman Centre for the Study of Religions for supporting this event and to the [Museum of Literature Ireland](#) for hosting it.

### Programme:

#### Monday 29 August: UCD Newman House (The Museum of Literature Ireland)

09:00: Welcome reception with tea & coffee in the Saloon (access through no.85 or front door, UCD Newman House/Museum of Literature Ireland).

10:00: Asha Lancaster-Thomas (Atlanta Classical Academy): Fluctuating Maximal God and the Problem of Inconsistent Evil

11:00: Joseph Cohen (UCD): title tbc

12:00: Ryan Mullins (University of Lucerne): The Sooner Objection to Divine Temporality

13:00: Lunch break in the Saloon (sandwiches, tea and coffee)

14:30: Fatema Amijee (British Columbia): Is the Possibility of Time Travel consistent with God's Existence?

15:30: Tea & coffee break in the Saloon

16:00: Brian Leftow (Rutgers): Time, Eternity, and Causation

17:30: End of event (departure through n. 85 or front door)

### **Tuesday 30 August: UCD Newman House (The Museum of Literature Ireland)**

09:00 : Welcome reception with tea & coffee in the Saloon (access through no.85 or front door, UCD Newman House/Museum of Literature Ireland).

10:00: Martin Pickup (Birmingham): Where is God? Divine Presence and Location

11:00: Tea/coffee break in the Saloon

11:30: Jessica Frazier (Oxford): God's Good Literature: What does the glowing present look like to a B-Theoretical God?

12:30: Aaron Cotnoir (St. Andrews): God, Spacetime, and Modal Space

13:30. End of event (departure through n. 85 or front door)

### **Abstracts:**

#### **Asha Lancaster-Thomas (Atlanta Classical Academy): Fluctuating Maximal God and the Problem of Inconsistent Evil**

The fluctuating maximal God thesis, developed by Jeffrey et al. (2020), offers a conception of God that removes the characteristic of divine immutability, allowing the degrees of God's great-making properties to change over time. This God-concept potentially offers a substantial advantage over the 'static' maximal God thesis proposed by Yujin Nagasawa (2017) if it can adequately sidestep what I call the 'problem of inconsistent evil', which questions how a static God can be compatible with the seemingly inconsistent dispersion of evil in the world. In this presentation I consider whether the fluctuating maximal God thesis

can effectively overcome temporally-inconsistent, spatially-inconsistent, and interpersonally-inconsistent evils.

**Joseph Cohen (UCD): title and abstract tbc**

**Ryan Mullins (University of Lucerne): The Sooner Objection to Divine Temporality**

Divine temporality faces a particular objection concerning the coherence of God's freedom, rationality, and creation ex nihilo. There is an ancient question, "Why Didn't God Create the Universe Sooner?" I will develop a Leibnizian version of this objection, and then consider several different ways for a divine temporalist to reply.

**Fatema Amijee (University of British Columbia): Is the Possibility of Time Travel consistent with God's Existence?**

Many philosophers believe that time travel is possible. But is the existence of God consistent with the possibility of time travel? I will argue—perhaps surprisingly—that it is. On the face of it, time travel precludes the possibility of God's existence, for it allows for causal loops, which in turn seemingly require brute facts about how the world is—facts whose possibility threatens to undermine God's existence. I will argue first that God's existence rules out that there could be any brute facts about the world. Second, I will show that, despite appearances, time travel does not require a commitment to brute facts. If my argument succeeds, then it removes a major barrier to the consistency of God's existence and the possibility of time travel.

**Brian Leftow (Rutgers University): Time, Eternity, and Causation**

Abrahamic theists believe that God created and sustains the universe. A great many of them have also believed that God has no temporal location— that though He exists, His existence is not “in” time. So a great many Abrahamic theists have been committed to claiming, and many have claimed explicitly, that a timeless being has temporal effects. This implies that something causes temporal events without bearing any temporal relation to them or coming to bear one to them by causing them. This is bound to raise hackles. I suggest that for theists, prima facie, it should not. I then consider arguments that it should.

**Martin Pickup (University of Birmingham): Where is God? Divine Presence and Location**

Where is God? This is a question asked by philosophers, theologians and 4-year-olds alike. Answers vary. One particularly well-attested answer is that God is everywhere: this is the doctrine of divine omnipresence and is shared by traditional forms of Judaism, Christianity and Islam (among other religions) under the banner of classical theism. But what does it mean to say God is present everywhere? This is my motivating question, and I will offer a new account of what it could be for God to be omnipresent which I take to be an improvement on the existing options. I do so by drawing on and contributing to work on the metaphysics of location in contemporary analytic philosophy.

**Jessica Frazier (University of Oxford): God's Good Literature: What does the glowing present look like to a B-Theoretical God?**

Abstract tbc

**Aaron Cotnoir (University of St. Andrews): God, Spacetime, and Modal Space**

It is widely agreed that God is an eternal, omnipresent, and necessary being. With respect to God's spatio-temporal location, a plethora of options have been explored; I'll suggest that the options regarding God's location in modal space are interestingly complicated too. I'll look into parallels and disanalogies regarding these modes of location, and argue for distinguishing between metaphysical necessity and theological necessity. I'll then suggest that this distinction can help with the well-known problem of non-divine necessary existents.