

Article for English Corner Discussion

1. Article 6-3: Einstein Believed in God

When Albert Einstein (爱因斯坦) developed his revolutionary (革命性的) theory of general relativity (相对论) in 1916, his mathematical (数学) calculations pointed to an extraordinary (不寻常的) conclusion (结论)—the universe (宇宙) was expanding (扩张). And if you rewind (回转) the tape on any expansion, you get back to the point where it started, which means that universe must have had a beginning (开始). Einstein, however, was like most scientists of his day in that he followed the Greek philosophy (哲学) of Aristotle (亚里斯多德), and believed in an eternal (永存的) universe. Unwilling (不愿意) to accept a beginning to the universe, Einstein added a constant (常数) to his equations (方程式) in order to nullify (取消) the conclusion that the universe was expanding.

University of California astrophysicist (太空物理学家), George Smoot, explains that Einstein's main problem with an expanding universe was its implication (涉及) of a beginning. A beginning pointed to a beginner (开始者) beyond scientific investigation (探讨). However, once experimental data collected from high-powered telescopes (望远镜) proved that the universe really was expanding; Einstein admitted (承认) his error (错误), calling it “the biggest blunder (大错) of my life.” There's a point worth considering (参考) here: if it could happen to Einstein, it could happen to anyone. Rarely is anyone completely objective (客观) when it comes to the issue of a Creator (创造者). While it is true that religious belief and philosophy became an obstacle for scientific inquiry in the days of Galileo, trends have changed. In the modern era there is a prejudice (偏见) against the possibility of a cosmic Designer which has kept many scientists from honest and open inquiry.

A new biography (传记) “Einstein: His life and Universe” by Walter Isaacson was published in 2007. An excerpt (摘录) of the book was reported in TIME Weekly (April 16, 2007). The following paragraphs are quoted (引用) directly from

the excerpt: “ Around the time he turned 50, he began to articulate (表达) more clearly his deepening appreciation of this belief in God.

“To what extent (深远) are you influenced (影响) by Christianity (基督教)?”, ‘As a child I received instruction both in the Bible and in the Talmud (犹太教口传经书). I am a Jew (犹太人) by birth, but I am enthralled (被迷住) by the luminous (荧光的) figure (人物) of Jesus. His personality (人格) pulsates (震撼) in every word. No myth (虚构) is filled with such life.’ ‘Do you believe in God?’ ‘The problem involved is too vast for our minds. We see the universe marvelously (不可思议的) arranged (安排) and obeying (顺从) certain laws (自然定律), but we only dimly (微小) understand (理解) these laws. I believe in God, who reveals himself in the lawful (法定) harmony (和谐) of all that exists (存在), but not in a God who concerns (关心) himself with the fate (命运) and the doings (行为) of mankind (人类).’ ” Einstein was consistent in rejecting (排除) the charge (控告) that he was an (无神论者) atheist. “What separates (不同) me from most so called atheists is a feeling (感觉) of utter (十分) humility (低下) toward the unattainable secrets (无法知道的秘密) of the harmony of the cosmos (宇宙的和谐)” he explained.

Einstein was a Jew. He does not believe in a “personal (有位格的)” God who interacts (互动) with His creation (被创造者).” This may be the cause of his famous scientific blunder for not realizing that God created a purposeful (有目的) universe with conditions (条件) just right (适合) for man to live in.

2. Discussion:

1. Why did Einstein commit his Scientific Blunder?
2. What kind of God did Einstein believed in?
3. Einstein believed in a God who created such a Gigantic harmonious and ordered Universe; the Chinese Government wanted to build a harmonious society ought to consult God.