

The Global Water Crisis

Townes and Tagore Fourth Annual Seminar

For Science and Technology on Behalf of the Peoples of the Bengal and Himalayan Basins
On the Occasion of Dr. Townes' 98th and Rabindranath Tagore's 152nd Birthday

Nobel Laureate,	Charles H. Townes	Chief Guest Speaker
Nobel Laureate,	Steven Chu	Keynote Speaker
Nobel Laureate,	Douglas Osheroff	Guest Speaker
David Presti, PhD	UC Berkeley MCB	Guest Speaker
Nir Krakauer, PhD	CUNY, Civil Engineering	Guest Speaker
Rashbihari Ghosh, PhD	Charles H. Townes Professor	Cofounder IIB HB

1913 Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)



*The same stream of life
that runs through my veins
night and day
runs through the world
and dances
in rhythmic measures.
It is the same life
that is rocked in the ocean-
cradle of birth and of death
in ebb and in flow.*

Gitanjali, 1910



Charles H. Townes. 1964
Nobel Laureate in Physics,
Laser Inventor, Tagore and
Templeton Awards recipient

Jointly sponsored by the
UC Berkeley Department
of Public Health and
the International Institute
of the Bengal and
Himalayan Basins

IIBHB.ORG

Contact [IIBHB.ORG](mailto:director@iibhb.org)
director@iibhb.org



John Paulin, PhD
510-870-4988

NOBEL LAUREATES SPEAK ON THE WATER CRISIS

Revisiting the Convergence of Science and Religion

David E. Presti, UC Berkeley

Charles Townes has had a long-standing interest in physical science. In the 1950s he conceived the idea of constructing devices for amplifying electromagnetic radiation by a process of stimulated emission: masers (with microwaves) and lasers (with visible light and infrared radiation). For this he shared the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1964. Two years later, in 1966, he published an oft-cited essay on "The Convergence of Science and Religion," another arena of long-standing interest. In 2005 he received the Templeton Prize, an award recognizing exceptional contribution to humankind's spiritual dimension.

Even a scientist with Townes' level of accomplishment and renown receives substantial criticism for treading into such territory - sometimes for even using the words "science" and "religion" in the same sentence. That there may be a productive dialogue and even collaboration between such historically distinct ways of viewing the world may be upsetting to individuals in either camp. Yet it is undeniable that if one attends to the really big mysteries in the cosmos - the nature of mind and consciousness, who and what we are and how we relate to everything else we understand about what we call physical reality - one is confronted with questions of interest both to science and to religious and spiritual traditions. This can form the basis for productive dialogue and hopefully even movement toward the development of a worldview that will truly foster the flourishing of the human spirit in every possible way.