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(I) Discriminating between theories of the very early universe

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Different theories of the very early universe that can explain our observations of the cosmic microwave background are presented. The current paradigm - inflationary cosmology - has received much attention, but it is not the only theoretically viable explanation; indeed, several alternative scenarios exist. It thus bares the question: how can we discriminate between the various theories, both from a theoretical and an observational point of view? A few pathways to answering this question are discussed in this talk.

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