Consciousness, this ancient and mysterious topic, is for each of us the most familiar yet most strange thing. We carry out our activities and think under consciousness every day, but no one can clearly explain what consciousness is. Since ancient times, countless people have studied it, but to this day, no one has made a fundamental breakthrough in its research. To make a breakthrough in philosophy, one must make a breakthrough in the study of consciousness. Because, if consciousness is likened to the light of a flashlight, then our study of the world is like using that flashlight to examine the entire world. If a breakthrough cannot be made in the study of consciousness, both philosophy and science will have obvious flaws. This is because humans are only using the flashlight to observe the things illuminated by the light, but cannot observe the light itself. This neither aligns with the reflective spirit possessed by philosophers, nor with the exploratory spirit for the real world possessed by scientists. Therefore, the study must begin with the problem of consciousness. Below, let us first examine whether science can unravel the mystery of consciousness.

As we all know, modern human science has achieved quite splendid accomplishments in various aspects. Humans have come to understand large celestial bodies like black holes and galaxies, and have even measured things previously unimaginable, such as the age of the universe. And in the microscopic quantum world, they have found tiny elementary particles like quarks. The development of quantum theory has enabled humanity to control matter to an extremely high degree, making it possible to create exceptionally sophisticated electronic devices. The current pace of development in this area is extremely fast, allowing humans to achieve very high computational performance in very small devices; for instance, the improvement in the performance of computers and mobile phones has greatly enhanced people's lives. The success of genetics has enabled people to study our own diseases, the inheritance of behaviors, and other characteristics through macromolecules like DNA. This is just the tip of the iceberg; human science seems to possess an infinite power to carry humanity toward achieving infinite dreams. The attainment of these achievements has all been accomplished through the workings of human consciousness. People, acting through consciousness, have made such tremendous achievements in understanding the material world. However, to this day, we have not been able to achieve a breakthrough understanding of consciousness through our understanding of the material world. At present, humanity's understanding of consciousness is arguably at zero breakthrough. Not a single clue leading to the unraveling of the mystery of consciousness has been found; consciousness remains an unsolved enigma. The current situation for humanity is that it is relatively easy to study matter starting from consciousness, but the reverse is difficult. This is an asymmetrical relationship. How can this be explained? Is it possible to achieve the same splendid accomplishments by studying consciousness through matter as we have achieved by studying the material world through consciousness? How should the relationship between matter and consciousness be explained? Can you find the light while holding the flashlight?

No form action theory is a philosophical theory that I developed during my research on consciousness. The reason for developing a philosophical theory to explain consciousness is that, in the course of my research, I discovered that modern science is flawed in its approach to studying consciousness. When I first began to study consciousness, I believed that by investigating psychology and neuroscience, I could trace the clues of consciousness and thereby figure out what it is and how it is generated. But I was wrong. From these disciplines, you can

only obtain descriptions of conscious behavior and the neural correlates or operational processes of mental activities. Even with more detailed research, for instance, at the level of biological macromolecules, one can only say that these are just more complex and more detailed material operations and processes. If the research goes deeper, you get to molecules, atoms, electrons... all the way down to quarks. Apart from the properties, behaviors, and processes of these substances, you know nothing about what consciousness is. Is consciousness merely a collection of properties, behaviors, and processes? Evidently, there is something more to our consciousness beyond all this that we have not yet discovered.

First, we must answer a question: what does it mean to have unraveled the mystery of consciousness? I believe this question must be answered from three aspects:

1) What is consciousness?

2) How is consciousness manifested?

3) How does consciousness interact with our body?

These are the most fundamental questions about consciousness, and humanity's discussions on the topic also revolve around these three questions. These three questions correspond respectively to the three actions of no form: isolation action, manifestation action, and motive force action. This correspondence is absolutely not a coincidence.

To unveil the mystery of consciousness, science has employed objective and subjective methods, or a combination of the two.

Objective Methods:

1) Behaviorism: Behaviorists like Skinner view human behavior as responses to stimuli, using “stimulus-response” models to map causal links (Skinner, 1953). By focusing on observable actions, behaviorism sidesteps consciousness, reducing it to external patterns without addressing its subjective nature.

2) Neuroscience: Researchers study brain states during conscious experiences, identifying neural correlates like prefrontal cortex activity in decision-making or neurotransmitter dynamics (Libet, 1985; Damasio, 1999). These studies describe material processes but fail to explain how or why they produce subjective awareness.

Subjective Methods:

Introspection, pioneered by Wundt, relies on individuals reporting internal experiences to uncover psychological patterns (Wundt, 1874). Its subjective reports are unreliable and merely catalog phenomena. Phenomenology, as developed by Husserl, analyzes lived experience through methods like epoché, yet remains descriptive, not explanatory, of consciousness’s ontology (Husserl, 1913).

Neither of these methods can touch upon consciousness itself, and so they are ultimately unable to lead to an understanding of consciousness. Even if we find the neural correlates of consciousness in the brain, and even if we understand the process by which these neural correlates generate consciousness, how and in what manner is consciousness manifested from

such a process? Why is it that such a neural process, such correlates of consciousness, generate consciousness at all? It seems as if this chasm between matter and consciousness is insurmountable. As Searle states it more clearly: "Consciousness has a first-person or subjective ontology and so cannot be reduced to anything that has a third-person or objective ontology" (Searle, 1997, p.212). In other words, consciousness possesses a first-person privacy. According to Searle, consciousness exists only when it is subjectively experienced by a person; that is, it is a subjective existence. My understanding of his theory is that a certain state of matter will generate consciousness, but nothing external to that matter itself is aware that it is conscious. We cannot objectively and directly access consciousness; we can only know it indirectly. This is the first puzzle of consciousness. However, what is even more puzzling is this: even if we could directly access consciousness and study it objectively using scientific observation and experimental methods, would we then know what consciousness is? Is not our study of matter objective? Do we not have direct contact with matter? Can anyone clearly tell me what matter is?

And the view of Edelman and Tononi is:

A scientific description may give necessary and sufficient conditions for a phenomenon to occur, it may describe the properties of that phenomenon, and it may even explain why the phenomenon occurs only under those conditions. But no scientific description or explanation can substitute for the thing itself (Edelman, G. M., and Tononi, G., 2000, p.15).

In other words, science has its limitations; even if we were to explain consciousness with science, we could still only describe consciousness, not truly know what it is.

We must first look at the essence of modern science and what it can do. Then we can analyze whether science can ultimately unravel the mystery of consciousness. The scientific method is as follows: one obtains facts through observation and experiment, then derives laws, proposes a hypothesis, and builds a formal model using mathematics. Finally, the proposed laws, hypotheses, and models must be verified through experimentation. This is the scientific method, with typical examples being Newton's universal gravitation, Einstein's relativity, and quantum mechanics, etc. No matter how deep or complex the research conducted using this method, the resulting conclusions are nothing more than phenomena, laws, and mathematical models. Science does not explain what the phenomena themselves are; the laws and mathematical models are, in fact, merely forms (including some formal logic and causal relationships). Therefore, it is impossible for modern science to find out what our emotions are. For example, take the color red: what exactly is our conscious sensation of this color? Although modern psychology knows that nutrients, hormones, bacteria, etc., can influence human cognition and emotions, these are all external influences, not a study of the emotions themselves. As for "what emotions themselves are," modern science is still powerless.

However, science can indeed study and explore this world. Why is this? This shows that the scientific method itself does reveal some of the mysteries of the world. The revelation of these mysteries is possible because science is built on the foundation of form, and form is a component of the world. However, merely studying form is not enough, so there must also be the existence of that which has no form. This is the subject that no form action theory aims to study.

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