

Essay

Alt-Epistemology, Post-UFO MegaCon: Which is primary, matter or consciousness?

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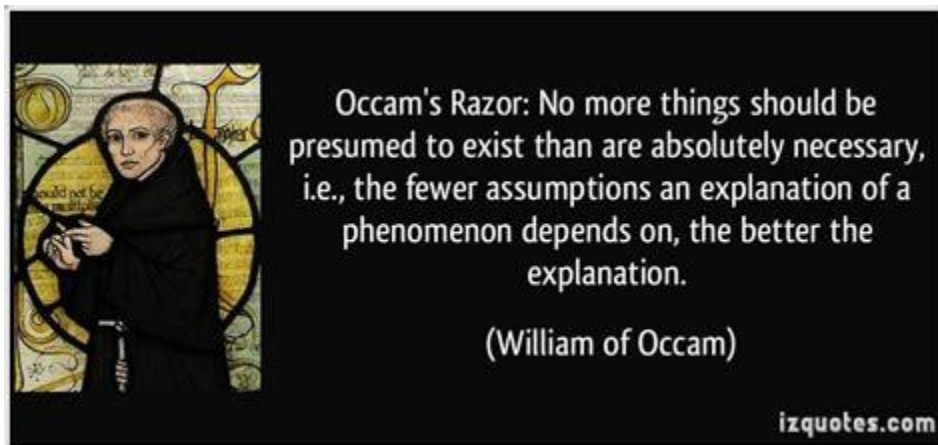
This question, which was answered by several scientists during their presentations at the UFO MegaCon, without however, the question itself being asked, is to me perhaps THE primary question. These scientists (at least two I remember specifically, one a Harvard physicist) assumed that consciousness derives from matter as a matter of course. In other words, to them this assumption was so strong and fundamental that the question did not arise.

Both my [UFO Buddy Joan](#) and I were perplexed to realize that these scientists thought that way. Each of us had long thought that materialism, for that IS what it is, was debunked, as way too narrow a framework for interpreting the universe.

If matter is primary, then the question becomes, what are the specifics, on a chemical and/or biological level, of elements and their combinations that “give rise to” consciousness? Furthermore, if matter is primary, then is consciousness only found in human beings, or perhaps, in sentient beings, like birds, insects and animals? What about rocks, trees, plants? What about mycellium? What about Earth herself? What about the entire cosmos?

All sorts of separate, individual, material and semi-material, both obvious and hidden, “objects” proliferate in a universe where matter is assumed primary. Each of them needs to be “explained,” especially in its relationship with both its own internal parts and with other beings, objects. Those explanations do not come easily, and each one requires its own separate investigation.

On the other hand, how about applying a philosophical principle here, that of “Occam’s Razor”:



A la Occam’s Razor, if consciousness is primary, then I, for one, jump immediately to the assumption that consciousness is unitary, and pervades the entire universe. Matter arises from consciousness. Conscious is primary. Oneness results.

But then, as I was told in my first year as a graduate student in philosophy: the fundamental “problem” of philosophy is that of The One and The Many. In pre-Socratic philosophy, this difference was expressed in the philosophies of Parmenides and Heraclitus. The “problem” Parmenides was dealing with was that of change. Is change possible? He thought not. Instead there is Being, and only Being, eternal and immutable.

For Heraclitus, however, only change exists, and change is continuous, for “you can never step into the same river twice.” Instead of Being, he opted for Becoming.

Notice how the primordial “One or Many” has transmogrified into the equally primordial? “Being or Becoming.” And, depending on how you parse it, Heraclitus might also be arguing for the unity of the universe, via continuous change.

I have no intention of pretending to come to some kind of philosophical conclusion here, but just to notice that the entire question of matter or consciousness being primary does appear to have had its origin in this pre-Socratic conundrum, which ultimately must be addressed by each of us.

Is your awareness primary? Or is your body primary?

Related questions, which may help you decide:

What happens when you dream?

Have you ever had an out of body experience?

Have you been at the side of someone who has just died, and noticed that the body no longer held aliveness?

What is aliveness?

Are rocks alive? Might their timeline just be tremendously long, so that we don't understand their "level" of awareness?

Have you ever communicated telepathically, either deliberately or inadvertently, with another being, human, animal, ET or otherwise? If so, is consciousness not that which holds you both in its singular embrace?

However, while trying to ascertain whether Being or Becoming, the One or the Many, is primary, it's always wise to remember that in a 3D world, the one we live in here on Earth, polarity rules. The One AND the Many; Being AND Becoming. As we get used to the idea of embracing all polarities, contradictions, paradoxes, we find ourselves truly aware, for perhaps the very first time, of our own particular, individual slant on "what is really real" arising from the ocean of Being — and Becoming!