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JOHN ROGER SEARLE'S POSITION CONCERNING THE RIDDLE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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Abstract. The problem of consciousness is regarded as one of the riddles that have long haunted human thought, a persistent enigma which all branches of science and philosophy have strived, each in their own way, to grasp its essence and unveil its inner nature; nevertheless, what has been grasped so far are only scattered fragments, mere shards of this intricate puzzle. Likewise, our philosopher "John Rogers Searle" is counted among the contemporary philosophers of mind who are actively engaged in studying and analyzing the problem of consciousness and the way in which it comes about, attempting to trace back some of the errors that earlier thinkers committed- those who adhered either to dualism or to materialism. Moreover, we find that he has contributed his own share, so to speak, by offering critiques at times, and at other times advancing positions that appear to agree, in a certain manner, with neurobiology, insofar as he tried to fill the gaps and clarify the ambiguities left by neuroscience, and this specifically through his philosophy of intentionality. Thus, if we imagine that we live our lives in the midst of a world- even if we were not fully aware of it- or that our consciousness encompasses all the things that exist in it, there is nevertheless no doubt that we do have some knowledge and capacity for consciousness as well as an understanding of how it happens. However, scientists and philosophers have a different point of view, for although we are familiar with consciousness and its flexibility of use, we know consciousness in an intimate manner more than we know the rest of the world, but we understand the rest of the world more comprehensively than we understand consciousness.

Keywords: Consciousness, Mind, Dualism, Materialism, Neurobiology, Intentionality

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ПОЗИЦИЯ ДЖОНА РОДЖЕРА СЕРЛА ОТНОСИТЕЛЬНО ЗАГАДКИ СОЗНАНИЯ

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Абстракт. Проблема сознания рассматривается как одна из тайн, на протяжении веков тревоживших человеческую мысль – загадка, которую различные науки и философия пытались постичь и раскрыть её внутреннюю природу. Однако всё, что человечеству удалось постичь до сих пор, – это лишь отдельные фрагменты, осколки этого сложного феномена. Современный философ сознания Джон Роджер Серл (*John Rogers Searle*) также относится к числу тех мыслителей, которые активно исследуют природу сознания и процесс его возникновения. Он стремился выявить ошибки, допущенные предшественниками – представителями дуализма и материализма, и предложить собственный путь понимания этого феномена. Серл внёс значительный вклад в развитие философии сознания, выдвигая критические замечания и одновременно позиции, в определённой степени согласующиеся с достижениями нейробиологии, стараясь восполнить пробелы, оставленные нейронаукой, и прояснить трудные вопросы через свою философию интенциональности. Если представить, что человек живёт в мире, даже не осознавая его полностью, и что его сознание охватывает существующие в нём явления, то становится очевидно, что человек обладает знанием и способностью к сознательному восприятию. Однако учёные и философы расходятся во мнениях относительно природы этого феномена: хотя мы интуитивно знакомы с сознанием и его гибкостью, мы не понимаем его с той же глубиной, с какой понимаем внешний мир. Другими словами, мы знаем сознание изнутри, но не осознаём его сущность и механизм, тогда как внешний мир нам понятнее и системнее.

Ключевые слова: сознание, разум, дуализм, материализм, нейробиология, интенциональность

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ŞÜURLULUQ PROBLEMİ ÜZRƏ JOHN ROGER SEARLE-İN MÖVQEYİ

Riyad Xuder*

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Abstrakt. Şüur problemi insan düşüncəsini uzun müddət narahat edən və fəlsəfi təfəkkürün ən dərin “sırlarından biri” kimi dəyərləndirilən bir məsələlər toplusudur. Elm və fəlsəfənin bütün sahələri bu hadisənin mahiyyətini anlamağa və onun daxili təbiətini üzə çıxarmağa çalışsalar da, bu günə qədər əldə olunan nəticələr yalnız bu mürəkkəb tapmacanın dağınıq fraqmentlərindən ibarətdir. Eyni şəkildə, müasir zehni fəlsəfə təmsilçilərindən biri olan Con Rocer Sörl (*John Rogers Searle*) də şüurun mahiyyəti və yaranma mexanizmlərini araşdıran filosoflardan sayılır. O, həm klassik dualist, həm də materialist baxış bucaqlarına aid olan düşüncülərin buraxdıqları metodoloji və ontoloji səhvləri təhlil etməyə və düzəltməyə çalışmışdır. Sörl öz tənqidlərini və alternativ baxışlarını əsasən intensionallıq fəlsəfəsi (philosophy of intentionality) çərçivəsində irəli sürərək, neyrobiologiya ilə müəyyən mənada yaxın mövqe tutmuş, lakin neyroelm sahəsində qalan boşluqları doldurmağa və anlaşılmaz məqamları aydınlaşdırmağa çalışmışdır. Əgər biz həyatımızı müəyyən bir dünyada yaşadığımızı, bu dünyanı tam şəkildə dərk etməsək belə, şüurumuzun həmin dünyadakı varlıqları müəyyən qədər əhatə etdiyini düşünsək, o zaman istər-istəməz qəbul etməliyik ki, bizdə şüur və dərk qabiliyyəti mövcuddur. Bununla belə, alimlər və filosoflar bu məsələni fərqli cür izah edirlər: biz şüuru və onun istifadəsindəki elastikliyi yaxından tanısaq da, onu dünyanı tanıdığımız qədər dərinliklə anlamırıq. Başqa sözlə, biz şüuru daxildən tanıyıraq, amma onun mahiyyətini və mexanizmini tam anlamırıq, halbuki xarici dünyanı daha geniş və sistemli şəkildə dərk etmişik.

Açar sözlər: Şüur, Zehin, Dualizm, Materializm, Neyrobiologiya, İntensionallıq

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1.Introduction

When the American president "Bush" declared that the last decade of the twentieth century (1990) would serve as "the Decade of the Brain," it nevertheless remained the case that only a little has actually been unveiled about the relationship between the brain and the mind. It was "Stephen Morse" (Stephen Morse), professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, who admitted in the World Conference of Brain and Neuroscience held in 2005 by saying: *"Let me tell you a puzzling secret; we have absolutely no idea how the brain works as a mind. We have indeed come to know much about the localization of brain functions, about its electro-chemical mechanisms, yet how the brain produces consciousness and free will- we do not possess even the keys for understanding, and when we approach that, we will have created a revolution in brain biology and neuroscience."* [Sharif, 2012, p.09]. Furthermore, "Robert L. Kuhn" had himself acknowledged this truth nearly forty years earlier, by stating: *"the human brain does not explain the differences between the human and other creatures. Therefore, we must postulate a non-material essence that unites with the brain to produce the mind, and there is no escape from regarding it as the soul that religious people speak about, for without this essence the human would be nothing but an exceptional ape, whose intelligence exceeds that of the chimpanzee only by as much as the chimpanzee exceeds the other mammals."* [Sharif, 2012, p.10].

This is why scientists and philosophers concede that consciousness is *the greatest riddle* [Ismail, 2007, p.65]. If consciousness, as "William Lyons" put it, is "one of the ghosts of modern philosophy of mind," then the enigma becomes even deeper [Leaman, 2004, p.255].

Hence, where does the philosophy of mind stand in relation to this issue? On the other hand, has philosophy been able to offer clear answers as to how consciousness arises in the brain? And whether it is indeed true, according to "Robert Kuhn," that understanding consciousness necessitates a non-material essence in order to account for the riddle of consciousness? And what are the most important schools of thought that have tackled the problem of consciousness? And how did "John Searle" respond to the dilemma of consciousness?

Has contemporary neurobiology succeeded in giving answers? Are there convincing arguments provided by the materialists to explain how the brain produces consciousness? And what are Searle's replies to the claims of materialists and other approaches?

On the basis of all this, what indeed is John Searle's position regarding the dilemma of consciousness?

2.The Concept of Consciousness

Among the most difficult and intricate matters in philosophical inquiry is to present a definition or meaning for things that are themselves complex, things that cannot be fully encompassed by mere words or simple expressions. As Hamilton sees it, it is not at all easy to define consciousness; for any awareness of what happens in one's own soul cannot even be communicated to another person so as to make him grasp exactly what one feels and perceives of sensations and emotions [Madkour, 1983, p.215]. Yet both "M. Blondel" and "M. Bernès" went on to say that, in fact, the word *consciousness* in its meaning points to thought itself, the thought prior to any distinction between the knower and the known; it is, in this very sense, the primary given, which thinking then breaks down into subject and object, agent and patient [Lalande, 2001, p.210]. However, "Salah Ismail" rejects such dictionary definitions because of what he sees as their misleading connotation, since they conflate the meaning of consciousness with that of self-consciousness. For consciousness, in his view, is a "phenomenon that is evolving yet elusive, and it is impossible to determine what it might be, what it does, and why it evolves" [Ismail, 2007, p.76].

As for Searle, he describes consciousness to us through an example of a conscious state, saying: "*What I mean by consciousness, I can illustrate with the best example: when I wake up from sleep, I enter into a state of consciousness, and this state endures so long as I am awake, and when I go to sleep, or when I am under anesthesia, or dead, then my consciousness and perception cease.*" [Searle, 1994, p.83]. Searle further explains that the very first and most important attribute of the mind manifests itself in consciousness; by consciousness he means those states that accompany awareness and perception, which according to him begin at the moment of waking in the morning from a dreamless sleep and continue through the day as long as the individual does not retire to sleep. Likewise, other ways in which awareness ceases- such as at the moment of death, or in a state of fainting, or other forms of unconsciousness- are included within the domain of the *unconscious* [Searle, 2006, p.67]. Salah Ismail also says that there are those who maintain that "human consciousness is distinguished by a unique feature: that when it is conscious it knows that it is conscious, whereas the rest of conscious creatures do not know that they are conscious, which means that they lack self-consciousness, the very thing that seems that man is the only creature who possesses it" [Ismail, 2007, p.78].

In some cases, we find consciousness more or less complete- as in the case of total attentiveness- and in other cases consciousness relaxes or weakens in the state of laziness, languor, or physical fatigue. But to what extent does this consciousness extend? For if Descartes considers man to be the only creature possessing the quality of consciousness, whereas other animals lack this feature, yet he leans toward affirming that some living creatures do in fact

possess this trait, such as the chimpanzee with its remarkable intelligence and others [Ismail, 2007, p.78].

3.The Nature of Consciousness

"James Trefil" holds that Descartes' famous phrase "I think... therefore I am" was the result of an arduous search by Descartes to find something in the world that could not be doubted, and through which he could establish his philosophical system upon a rock-solid ground of certainty about his ideas. However, what Trefil seeks to highlight here is that vital aspect concerning Descartes' view of the world- namely the idea that there is a distinction between the physical body (including the brain) on the one hand and the non-physical mind on the other. He acknowledges the influential power of this Cartesian dualism in understanding the mental capacities of thinking, which differ today from what is currently publicized about the brain with the rise of contemporary sciences that investigate the brain- such as neuroscience, neurobiology, and brain physiology. Yet despite the progress achieved in brain sciences, Descartes' logic concerning consciousness continues to exert its influence on human thought [Trefil, 2006, p.167].

For Searle, consciousness is a biological phenomenon; yet alongside this, he describes consciousness with other features, saying: *"But although consciousness is a biological phenomenon, it still has some important and unique features, and the most important of these is what I have called subjectivity; there is a sense to consciousness, since each individual has his own private subjective conscious state, and there is another sense of consciousness in how it is connected to pain, tickling, thoughts, feelings, and in a way that is not similar to the states of others. And this phenomenon of consciousness can be analyzed in different ways"* [Searle, 2002, pp.7-8]. This means that consciousness is to some extent subjective, if the individual is aware of it and feels it, and it manifests itself through daily states such as pain, tickling, the sum of thoughts and knowledge, and other feelings. Yet the crucial point is that a particular conscious state is different from other conscious states and from the feelings of others.

Searle further sees that conscious experiences such as: the smell of a rose, the taste of wine, a pain in the lower back, a memory of an incident in childhood, leafing through a book pondering a philosophical problem, feeling anger at a situation on a travel bus, and the craving for well-prepared food- these daily experiences are all *conscious experiences*. And despite the multiplicity of their forms and types, there are three common features of these states of awareness: they are *inner*, *qualitative*, and *subjective* [Searle, 2006, pp.66-67].

Likewise, typical conscious states have qualities and some qualitative features, often described as *qualitative* or *like something*, and although both

terms have the same etymological root, consciousness cannot be confused with knowledge, attention, self-awareness, or self-consciousness. Searle considers that each typical state of consciousness is no longer mysterious in his view, since many conscious states have no relation to knowledge nor to uncontrolled states of consciousness such as anger [Searle, 2002, p.8]. Indeed, Searle warns against confusing consciousness with knowledge, and consciousness with attention. For instance, there are many cases of consciousness that are only slightly connected to knowledge, but are not bound to it as an ultimate or necessary attribute. A conscious state that involves unwarranted anxiety or nervous temper, for example, does not necessarily have an essential relation to knowledge. The same applies to attention: we must be cautious not to confuse it with consciousness. Attention takes place within a specific field wherein the focus of attention lies, whereas some of its elements lie on the margin of consciousness- that is, not every consciousness is attention [Ismail, 2007, p.77]. This confusion is the primary reason that many have stumbled when trying to determine the concept of consciousness, since each definition has taken only one side or one direction in defining the term consciousness.

4.The Most Famous Theories Studying the Problem of Consciousness

Whoever contemplates the history of human problems will find that human thought has known two main patterns of studies and research- philosophical and scientific- and on this basis, what works and criticisms did Searle actually present concerning some of the theories that have attempted to investigate the dilemma of consciousness?

Many philosophers still affirm certain forms of dualism that were left behind by “René Descartes”, and who are classified as belonging either to reductive tendencies or to some version of materialism, though they do not believe that “consciousness” transcends and rises above the physical characteristics of the material world. Among the most famous of these are: **Behaviourism**, **Functionalism**, and **Physicalism** [Ismail, 2007, p.73].

- Behaviourism reduces mental states to mere behaviour and inclinations or tendencies to act; that is, the feeling of pain, for instance, would be nothing other than engaging in the behaviour of pain or the tendency to engage in such behaviour [Searle, 2006, p.75].
- As for Physicalism, it claims that “mental states are nothing over and above brain states” [Ismail, 2007, p.73].
- Functionalism, on the other hand, has considered “that mental states are determined by their causal relations, and any state in a physical system, according to functionalism, whether it be a brain state or otherwise, is considered a mental state when it appears within correct causal relations that begin with the stimulus, pass through the other functional states in the system, and end with behaviour” [Searle, 2006, p.75].

- In other words, Functionalism holds that a mental state is known through its causes or its effects, and from a metaphysical point of view what makes an internal state a mental one is not an essential property of the state itself, but one that it acquires through the internal or external sensory stimulus that provokes it [Ismail, 2007, p.73].
- The proponents of **Strong Artificial Intelligence** likewise adopted the same stance as the materialists who reduce the mental and conscious state to a material essence, claiming that minds are nothing but computer programs installed inside brains- or even within computers themselves- and thus our feeling of pain and its endurance is like a computer program that has been inserted [Searle, 2006, p.75].

In addition to the reductive and materialist tendency, there are other general directions concerning the question of consciousness that have branched from materialism or from other forms of dualism left by Descartes. Among these we can mention:

- **The Mysterians** are known for their rejection of the principle of explaining how brain processes cause the state of consciousness. Some of these "new mysterians" deny that the problem of consciousness can be solved based on or relying on current scientific results. Thomas Nagel holds that "it may one day be known how neurons in the brain produce consciousness," yet this cannot be at the present time, since understanding the causal relation between brain and consciousness would require a complete revolution concerning the scientific principles, and all the current conceptions and explanations of the movement and occurrence of things in the external world [Searle, 2007, p.118]. However, Colin McGinn- whom Searle calls a "hardcore mysterian"- denies entirely the possibility of ever knowing how brain processes cause the state of consciousness [Searle, 2007, pp.118-119].

But Searle criticizes the mysterians for their pessimism, while at the same time admitting the possibility that they might be correct in their claim that no scientific explanation of consciousness may ever be discovered. Nevertheless, he also acknowledges that some scientific theories have arisen through causal correlations; thus, if we suppose "that we have actually discovered the neural correlates of the specific field of consciousness, and then as a second step, that we have been able to show that these neural correlates were in fact causes- that is, suppose that we have been able, so to speak, to wake up consciousness by waking up these neural processes, and to put consciousness to sleep by putting these processes to sleep- that is, suppose that we can make the statements of causal correlation an inseparable part of the statements of the laws or of the general principles" [Searle, 2007, p.119].

- The proponents of **Supervenience** have held that consciousness is represented by saying that phenomenon "A" supervenes upon phenomenon

“B,” meaning that any change in the property of “A” is paralleled by a corresponding and additional change in phenomenon “B.” And this is exactly what occurs when processes take place in the brain that are accompanied by, in addition, the state of consciousness. As for Searle, he seems to accept this idea, for it is generally acceptable, as he says: *“There cannot be changes in the mental state without there being corresponding changes in the brain states. For example, if I pass from a state where I am thirsty to a state where I am no longer thirsty, there must occur a corresponding change in my brain. This is generally true, and thus conscious states do supervene upon, or are entirely dependent on, brain states.”* [Searle, 2007, p.120].

Many philosophers, according to Searle, have expressed skepticism toward this idea, and among the most prominent of these is “Jaegwon Kim”, whose position often intersects with the notion of non-reductive materialism. However, Searle goes in the opposite direction of Jaegwon Kim, who refuses to accept that material brain processes can actually *cause* or be *reduced to* conscious states. In this respect, Searle does not fully agree with the principle of supervenience as it is usually framed; rather, he distinguishes between two kinds of supervenience- one that is constitutive and another that is causal [Searle, 2007, pp.120-121].

- As for the proponents of the principle of **Panpsychism**, they assert that consciousness is spread in a total way across the perceived object. Yet Searle sees that this view is not presented in a clear and explicit manner within the philosophical and scientific approaches, even though it is implicitly present in some of the principles adopted by thinkers such as the mysterians. Once they attempt to explain the question of consciousness through particulate operations, they go so far as to think that consciousness pervades the entire body. And this is exactly what Chalmers acknowledged when he stated that consciousness touches every part of the perceived object as a whole, and he explained this possibility through his example of the “conscious thermostat” [Searle, 2007, p.121].

Searle believes that the principle embraced by the advocates of panpsychism is reasonable in one sense; yet this does not blind him to its flaw due to its failure to provide a fully consistent and complete explanation of how a *global* consciousness would occur. He says: *“I see no way that can explain the problem of the unity of consciousness. Consciousness does not spread like jam spreads over a piece of bread, but rather it happens as separate units.”* [Searle, 2007, p.121].

- The theory of **Epiphenomenalism** is built upon the principle that mental events are generated as a result of physical events in the brain. This is what Armstrong affirmed when he said that behaviour takes place through the contraction of the muscles that produce the final behaviour (for example,

moving an arm), and this contraction itself is caused by nerve impulses, which are in turn produced by the transmission of signals inside neurons carrying a neural impulse from the sensory organ to the brain. Yet this theory does not state or admit that mental processes have any effect on the physical, material side present in the brain [Abu Zayd, 2008, p.17]. And both "Chris Horner and Emrys Westacott" consider that consciousness, from the standpoint of epiphenomenalism, is something that is *caused* but cannot itself cause anything else. They illustrate this through their example: the gear in a machine rotates within the wheel but does not drive the other gears, and in exactly this manner Horner and Westacott argue that epiphenomenalism considers that a person is aware of things happening around and inside his body, but he cannot influence them consciously [Horner & Westacott, 2011, p.112].

5.The Overlap of Searle's Position with Contemporary Neurobiology in Investigating the Question of Consciousness

There has long existed an old proposal that consciousness should not be traced back to any causal explanation; but here Searle has a different opinion, and this is precisely what we are about to analyze. Among the questions that I wish to speak about here is the issue of how consciousness actually occurs. And among the problems being examined regarding the question of consciousness in the current era is the question: *"How do brain processes cause consciousness?"*

At this point John Searle says: *"A number of philosophers, and even some scientists, have already been philosophically predisposed to think that the relationship cannot be causal; because the presence of a causal relationship between brain and consciousness seems to them to suggest a kind of duplication of the brain-mind dualism, which remains a matter of rejection and non-acceptance for others."* [Searle, 1997, p.4]. There are, according to Searle, various differences among neurobiologists regarding the dilemma of consciousness; this difference ranges between those who believe that they are not prepared nor capable of studying the question of consciousness at this stage- maintaining instead that priority must be given to gaining greater knowledge about brain functions and unconscious states- and a second opinion whose holders think that the study of consciousness is unnecessary, for it is not a scientific matter at all and must be left to theologians and philosophers.

The first thing that Searle offers and presents is what is known as "the research project on the problem of consciousness," which he sets forth in the form of the traditional formula, that is, one that consists of:

1. Attempting to find the neural correlate of consciousness.
2. Carrying out a test to determine whether this correlation is in fact due to a causal principle.
3. And finally, deriving a theory [Searle, 2004, p.151].

Searle attempts to explain and analyze the significance of these three stages in discovering the relationship that allows brain processes to produce states of consciousness. And in order for Searle to analyze these stages, he classified or divided them into two categories: the first he called **the Unified Field Approach**, which contains within it the second category, which he called **the Building Block Approach**. According to this Building Block Approach, he considers the entire field of consciousness as being made up of, and constructed from, independent and autonomous units that he calls "building blocks," such as a person experiencing the color red, or tasting a certain drink, or hearing the musical note "C." All of these experiences are considered as building blocks. But Searle believes that the solution to the problem of consciousness lies in explaining how the brain causes just one building block; and once that is understood, it becomes possible to understand how the brain causes the rest of the building blocks, and consequently, the entire field of consciousness as a whole [Searle, 2007, p.123].

Explaining how the brain causes a single building block may help in understanding how the other building blocks occur; and at that point it would be possible to employ this knowledge to comprehend and resolve the problem of consciousness as a whole. According to Searle as well, the principle of the Building Block Approach and the Unified Field Approach are perfectly suited to the project of the three stages (C.C.N.)- the Neural Correlates of Consciousness- these stages being the most important method among those who attempt to solve the problem of consciousness [Searle, 2007, p.123].

Most neurobiologists, according to Searle, affirm an approach similar to the Building Block Approach in their pursuit of solving the problem of consciousness. Searle calls upon those engaged in the question of consciousness to adopt an **atomic approach** to understanding the problem of consciousness, and he clarifies this approach by saying: *"We divide the problem of consciousness in its entirety into a large number of smaller problems, and we try to solve smaller, individual problems; do not ask, in general terms, how the brain produces consciousness, but ask: how does the brain produce one specific conscious experience of the color red of a rose? This atomic approach has been very successful in the rest of science. Therefore it seems natural to suppose that we shall succeed in our work on consciousness as well."* [Searle, 2007, p.123].

Searle then divides the building blocks into three pathways. The first he sees as the investigation of what is called **blindsight**, which he regards as an ideal wedge-shaped introduction to the problem of consciousness. Patients suffering from blindsight have damage in the area responsible for vision in the brain, yet they are still able to give answers about events that happen in portions of their visual field. What Searle seeks to get at is: where exactly lies the point at which

the visual experience occurs, if it is not in that damaged part? The principle of Searle's Building Block Approach is to locate the precise point responsible for this visual experience [Searle, 2007, pp.123-124].

As for the second pathway or entry to understanding the functioning of the building blocks, according to Searle, it is what is known as **binocular rivalry** within the Gestalt switch phenomenon, through which he seeks to penetrate and follow this perceptual switch all the way to the center of this point in the brain- such as perceiving a duck at one time and a rabbit at another- his argument being that the sensory stimulus is constant while the experience is what changes. In other words, Searle sees that the existence of this pathway enables us to discover the point in the brain through which the experience changes from perceiving the stimulus as the first image to perceiving it as the second image. And if this point is located and confirmed, then one of the building blocks will have been solved, making the pathway to solving the problem of consciousness easier, through the transition from the level of building blocks to the level of the unified field [Searle, 2007, p.124].

Thus, Searle arrives at the third and final pathway, which includes a set of building blocks that can contribute to discovering the building points in the brain. These pathways are embodied in a single pathway that consists of tracing all the external perceptual stimuli as they arrive at the brain, focusing on how they cause conscious visual experiences- and this last approach is the one most commonly adopted at present [Searle, 2007, p.124]. Searle holds that if the stages of this research project could be combined with his own proposed elements- if we could think according to his atomic view of things- it would be possible to reach a solution to the problem of consciousness as a whole.

6.Understanding Consciousness Requires Grasping Its Relation to Intentionality

Searle maintains that in order to know what consciousness is, one must think of it as part of ordinary biological history, just like growth, digestion, mitotic division, and other naturally biological phenomena [Searle, 1993, p.310]. Based on this, Searle concludes that: we know that the brains of humans and some animals are conscious, and that they contain living systems with certain kinds of nervous apparatuses- these being the only systems in the world that we know with certainty to be linked to consciousness. We also know that consciousness in these systems occurs due to particular neurobiological processes, even if we do not yet know the details of how brains actually accomplish this. Nonetheless, we know that we feel, and that consciousness exists [Searle, 1997, p.170].

Searle argues that to understand consciousness we must recognize its connection to **intentionality**- though this does not mean that Searle reduces consciousness to intentionality. Rather, intentionality is a necessary conceptual

tool for understanding consciousness. This raises the question: what is the relationship between consciousness and intentional states? Is there necessarily a link between an intentional state and a conscious state?

There are indeed cases of conscious states that are not intentional- meaning that they are not directed toward any particular object. The essence of intentionality is that there can be no thought without a *thought-of*, and no desire without a *desired-object*. This raises difficult questions: in which direction is one's feeling of pain "directed"? Toward what does a sour or irritable mood tend in the course of daily life? In fact, there are conscious states that lack any object toward which they are directed- that is, cases of **absent intentionality**. For this reason, we may sometimes become anxious suddenly and without warning, or feel a rush of happiness without knowing why [al-Shabandar, 2014, p.339].

On the other hand, some philosophers deny the existence of any non-intentional conscious states. They maintain that every mental state must necessarily be accompanied by intentionality- that there can be no purely involuntary or non-directed mental state. For them, there is a necessary connection between mental states, consciousness, and intentionality, regardless of the identity of the state or the object it is directed toward. Whether the state in question is belief, joy, desire, pain, anxiety, or sadness, there is always some object or referent embedded within it. The object may not be clear to us, but it exists nonetheless. Likewise, just as there can be no thinking without a thought-object, there can be no pain without a pain-object.

Those who defend this position disagree, however, on the question of priority: does intentionality depend on consciousness, or does consciousness depend on intentionality? [al-Shabandar, 2014, p.339]. Searle's answer is nuanced. He writes: "*Not all intentional states are conscious, and not all conscious states are intentional.*" [Searle, 2006, p.102].

This implies that some conscious states are intentional, while others are not- and conversely, some intentional states are conscious, while others can exist without being conscious. For example, belief in the existence of God is an intentional and conscious mental state. But there are no intentional elements in certain cases: when I am in a state of joy or delight without any specific cause for this joy, that state is conscious but non-intentional, since there is no object or explanation for my sudden happiness. On the other hand, in the case of belief- such as my belief that Jesus (peace be upon him) is a prophet and not the son of God- even when I go to sleep and fall into deep slumber, the intentionality of my belief remains, but it is no longer conscious, having been suspended during sleep [Searle, 2006, p.102].

7. Conclusion

Searle concludes, based on what has been previously discussed, that consciousness is a biological phenomenon just like digestion, cell division, mitosis, and other such biological processes. Furthermore, he arrives at the view that consciousness, as a uniquely human property, possesses several distinctive features in addition to its internal, qualitative, and subjective states [Searle-Rust, 2009, p.26]. Searle provides a general description of the *structure of consciousness*, which can be summarized as follows:

- Consciousness is characterized by **internality**, **qualitativeness**, and **subjectivity**, and it is precisely this that grants it a **presence ontology** (or ontological immediacy).
- Since consciousness possesses a presence ontology, it cannot be reduced to *absent* phenomena in the same way as natural phenomena such as heat, liquidity, or solidity, which exist as properties of objects that merely *cause* conscious states.
- Consciousness, beyond dispute and without debate, is a **biological phenomenon**, and conscious processes are biological processes.
- Conscious states are caused by **neural processes** at a lower level in the brain.

Searle deliberately refrains from posing questions in the *old style*, which he has abandoned, as he puts it- questions such as: *How can life exist in a world of non-living matter?* or *How can consciousness exist in a world of non-conscious matter?* or *How can intentionality exist in a world of non-representational matter?*

Searle answers that these questions no longer belong to philosophy, for he believes that the first can be answered through **evolutionary biology**, while the second and third- those concerning consciousness and intentionality- can be answered through **neurobiology** [Searle, 2018, p.123].

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