CHAPTER 5

CONSCIOUSNESS, SUBJECTIVITY AND QUALIA

What is the reality of consciousness? There is a debate among philosophers as to whether consciousness is a physical process or a mental process. As we have seen the materialist theory of consciousness, computationalism and functionalism have failed to capture that which is the essentially subjective or the qualitative aspects of the mental states. The subjective experience have the phenomenal quality, so there is “something it is like” for one to have these experiences.

In this chapter, we will discuss subjectivity and qualia which are the most essential features of consciousness. The subjectivity of consciousness is an essential feature of mental states, which can prove that the ontology of mental states is an irreducible fact of first person ontology. We will show that qualia are the most important part of consciousness. In this connection, we will discuss the arguments against physicalism advanced by Thomas Nagel and Frank Jackson. The qualities of conscious experience are the qualia or raw feels. This subjective experience is a part of the phenomenal feature of consciousness.

I. Subjectivity and the "I"

Consciousness is a specific feature of living organisms. Human beings as conscious beings have this specific feature, i.e., have conscious experiences. Thus, conscious experiences are the basic part of the conscious human life. Each human being has a uniqueness of seeing or experiencing things, and it is important to understand the very nature of the subjective experiences. Our mental states have a phenomenal side, a subjective side.

Consciousness seems to involve something which is essentially subjective. In case of a conscious mind, there is a subjective point of view, which is accessible only to the conscious being itself. Consciousness is a phenomenon, which cannot be measured, observed or experienced in public, because it is a personal matter. It can be known only from a first-person perspective, but not
from the third-person, objective or scientific perspective. Thomas Nagel shows that subjectivity is the fundamental cornerstone of consciousness. According to him, consciousness is what makes the mind-body problem intractable as 'subjectivity' is its most troublesome feature. Self is the subjectivity, which encompasses our feelings, thinking, and perception. It is the first-person existence. The qualitative character of experience is what it is like for it's subject to have the experience. In his article, "What it is like to be a bat?", Nagel presents the notion of subjectivity, which proves the idea of an irreducibly subjective character of experience. He writes:

Conscious experience is a widespread phenomenon. It occurs at many levels of animal life, though we cannot be sure of its presence in the simpler organisms, and it is very difficult to say in general what provides evidence of it... no matter how the form may vary, the fact that an organism has conscious experience at all means, basically, that there is something it is like to be that organism...But fundamentally an organism has conscious mental states if and only if there is something it is like to be that organism—something it is like for the organism.¹

That is, we can know the physical facts about bat but we do not know what it is to be like a bat. According to Nagel, we cannot comprehend bat's experience, that is, we cannot adopt its point of view. The subjective experiences of the bat are beyond our comprehension. The objective facts regarding the organism do not and cannot explain the subjective character of the bat's experiences. Scientific knowledge cannot give the answer to the question "what it is like to be a bat". Thus, Nagel sees the subjectivity of consciousness as posing a special challenge to physicalism. He argues that physical theories cannot explain one's phenomenal consciousness. For this reason, subjectivity is so hard to capture. According to him, subjectivity is:

...the subjective character of experience. It is not captured by any of the familiar, recently devised reductive analyses of the mental, for all of them are logically compatible with its absence. It is not analyzable in terms of any explanatory system of functional states, or intentional states, since they could be ascribed to robots or automata that behaved like people though they experienced nothing.²
What is essential to experience, only its subject can have and it is not something that can be brought under objective concepts, which can capture only the subjective aspects of experience. It cannot be brought under the concepts of physical science, since these are only objective concepts. The conscious experiences vary from person to person. There is a "subjective feeling" attached to one's conscious experience. We not only see a variety of things in the world, but we tend to see them from our subjective point of view. The subjective feelings are the outcome of our conscious experience. It is fundamental and highly specific that each human being has a unique way of seeing, feeling, or experiencing things.

According to Nagel, objective facts, which are the concern of science, are the observer independent features of things, and the way things are in and of themselves. However, conscious experience is the representation of subjectivity. Facts about conscious experience, therefore, do not exist independently of a particular subject’s point of view. Objective phenomena have a reality independent of appearances, but subjective phenomena are just phenomenological appearances. Nagel claims that science stands little chance of providing an adequate third person account of consciousness, as there is no objective nature to phenomenal experience. Phenomenal experience cannot be observed from multiple points of view. As Nagel puts it:

The reason is that every subjective phenomenon is essentially connected with a single point of view, and it seems inevitable that an objective, physical theory will abandon that point of view.³

Hence, from the subjective point of view, we know what it is to be like us, but we do not know what it is to be like a bat. This is because, we do not know what it is like to have sonar experiences. In order to know about sonar experiences, we should have sonar experiences. Thus, sonar experiences imply a subjective perspective and that we must occupy that particular point of view in order to know the bat's sonar experiences. Nagel writes:

...we may ascribe general types of experience on the basis of the animal's structure and behaviour. Thus we describe bat sonar as a form of three-dimensional forward perception; we believe that bats feel some versions of pain, fear, hunger, lust, and that they have other,
more familiar types of perception besides sonar. But, we believe that
these experiences also have in each case a specific subjective
counterpart, which it is beyond our ability to conceive. And if there is
conscious life elsewhere in the universe, it is likely that some of it will
not describable even in the most general experiential terms available to
us.

In contrast to subjective experience, knowing that the square root of 144 is
12 or table salt is a compound of sodium and chlorine does not require any kind of
experience. This is not to deny that it may require some experience. It could be
that any one who has this knowledge must also have experience. However, what
makes mathematical and scientific knowledge objective is not the particular kind
of experience accompanying that knowledge. However, to know what it is like to
see red entails having a particular kind of experience, which is the experience of
seeing red. As Nagel puts it:

In the case of experience, on the other hand, the connection with a
particular point of view seems much closer. It is difficult to understand
what could be meant by the objective character of an experience, apart
from the particular point of view from which its subject apprehends it.

This subjective character of experience cannot be captured by any functional or
causal analysis. Therefore, we do not know how physicalism can explain
consciousness. Physicalism rules out the subjective point of view and so it fails to
explain human experiences. According to McGinn, consciousness is a natural
process of the brain. However, we cannot form concepts of conscious properties
unless we ourselves instantiate those properties. Because the man born blind
cannot understand the concept of a visual experience of red like we cannot
conceive of the echolocatory experiences of bats. We know that there are
properties of the brain that are necessarily closed to perception of the brain.
Consciousness itself cannot be explained on the basis of what we observe about
the brain and its physical effects. While rejecting physicalism, McGinn
emphasizes that:

Conscious states are simply not, qua conscious states, potential objects
of perception: they depend upon the brain but they cannot be observed
by directing the senses onto the brain. You cannot see a brain state as a conscious state/1

That is, consciousness itself cannot be established simply on the basis of what we observe about the brain and its physical effects. We cannot explain which property of the brain accounts for consciousness. Distinct cognitive properties, namely perception and introspection, necessarily mediate our relationships with the brain and with consciousness. We cannot understand how the subjective aspects of experience depend upon the brain that is really the problem.7

According to William Lycan, in case of subjectivity, experiences are representations. For example, my visual experience of my blue shirt is a mental representation of the shirt as being blue. When I introspect my experience, I form a second-order representation of the first-order representation of the shirt. Other people have syntactically similar second-order representations. But each individual can introspect only his own experiences. For Lycan, this is the ultimate explanation of subjectivity. He acknowledges Nagel's view and replies that, "...seeing someone’s brain in a state of sensing-blazing-red is nothing at all like sensing blazing red oneself".8 Similarly, in case of the bat’s sonar sensation S:

We do not have the sonar sensation S; we cannot ourselves feel S.

We do not know what it is like to have S (we do not have cognitive access to S) in the way the bat does.9

For Lycon, these facts are obviously true and accepted even by the materialists. When we observe the bat at that time, we observe only some physical or functional state, but thereby we do not have that conscious state ourselves; we do not have the same perspective with respect to it. However, a materialist account of the mental should not claim otherwise. As he puts it:

...the felt incongruity is just what anyone, materialist or antimaterialist alike, should expect. Therefore, the incongruity affords no objection whatever to materialism, and to take it as impugning or even embarrassing materialism is simply fallacious.10

From Nagel’s point of view, the individual consciousness can be understood or reported only from the first-person point of view and not from the third-person objective point of view. An objective representation can be described in an
objective way. This representation or concept is a function from the world to the individuals. As Lycon says:

...any such function is objectively describable, or so it would seem...
there is nothing intrinsically perspectival about functions from worlds
to individuals: any one could be described by anyone who had the right
sort of mental apparatus or brain wiring."

However, his view is that the functional state of the bat having sonar sensation S is different from the bat's subjective consciousness. A functionalist takes it as an objective fact and tries to describe it as functions of mind. However, an experience is held to be a conscious experience just in case there is something, which it is like for the subject of the experience to have it. Thus, we have to accept the qualitative feel of experience. This qualitative feel, unique to every distinguishable experience, is supposed to be what it is like for the subject of the experience to have the experience.

J. Searle argues that consciousness is subjective. Subjectivity is the most important feature of conscious mental states and processes, which is not possessed by other natural phenomena. Judgements are taken as 'subjective' when their truth or falsity is not a matter of fact or 'objective' criteria, but depends on certain attitudes and feelings of the maker of the judgement. For Searle, the term 'subjective' is an ontological category. Take for example, the statement 'Someone is feeling pain in his/her leg'. In this case, the statement is completely objective, because it is true by the existence of a fact and is not dependent on the attitude or opinion of the observer. But the actual pain itself has a subjective mode of existence, and in that sense, consciousness is subjective. The term "pain" is subjective as it is not equally accessible to any observer, because it is a first-person experience. Therefore, for Searle, every conscious state is always someone's conscious state. Someone has a special relation to his/her own conscious states, which is not related with other people's conscious states. Searle says:

Subjectivity has the further consequence that all of my conscious forms of intentionality that give me information about the world independent of myself are always from a special point of view. The world itself has
no point of view, but my access to the world through my conscious states is always perspectival, always from my point of view.'

According to Searle, a theory of consciousness needs to explain how a set of neurobiological processes can cause a system to be in a subjective state of sentience or awareness. We accept the view that subjectivity is a ground floor, irreducible phenomenon of nature science, being objective, cannot explain how this is possible. According to Searle, 'consciousness' stands these subjective states of sentience or awareness that we possess during the period we are conscious, that is, during the period we are not in coma or are not unconscious.

Consciousness is, according to Searle, essentially a subjective, qualitative phenomenon. It is not a mechanical state or a certain kind of set of dispositions to behavior or a computer program as many philosophers believe. There are two most common mistakes about consciousness such as that it can be analysed behavioristically or computationally. The Turing test shows that conscious mental states are mechanical or computational states. It gives us the view that for a system to be conscious, it is both necessary and sufficient that it has the right computer program or set of programs with the right inputs and outputs. There is no logical connection between the inner, subjective, qualitative mental states and the external, publicly observable output. Our mental states cannot be fully represented in a machine or in a computer. Because somehow we have subjective mental phenomena which require a first-person perspective for understanding properly.

Searle describes 'subjectivity' as a rock-bottom element of the world. The world that we know to exist consists of particles, which are organized into systems including the biological systems. Some of these biological systems are conscious and that consciousness is essentially subjective. The subjective consciousness occupies a special ontological position. It is so fundamental that it is not an object of perception. As Searle puts it:

But when we visualize the world with this inner eye, we can't see consciousness. Indeed, it is the very subjectivity of consciousness that makes it invisible in the crucial way. If we try to draw a picture of
someone else's consciousness, we just end up drawing the other person (perhaps with a balloon growing out of his or her head). If we try to draw our own consciousness, we end up drawing whatever it is that we are conscious of.

That is, when we try to observe the consciousness of other persons, we observe their conscious behaviour, structure and the casual relation between these behaviours and not the subjectivity of the person. There is something called subject of experience, which is an inner state and which eludes our observation. Observation is impossible in case of subjectivity, as there is no distinction between observation and the thing observed, between perception and the object perceived. Therefore, though we can easily observe another person, we cannot observe his/her subjectivity. Similarly, in our own case, we cannot observe our own subjectivity though we can be intuitively aware of it. It is our inner self, which is ontologically identical with myself. All observation presupposes an observer who occupies a subjective point of view. The observer observes from a subjective point of view, and has a subjective feel about it. Thus, Phenomenal consciousness has distinctive subjective feels.

The subjective feeling or experience is a mental state. What we feel is not such that each part of our body feels it. It is "I" that feels such emotions. The 'I' is the central problem of consciousness. Neurosciences try to explain how conscious experience arises from the electrochemical processes of the brain. Even if they can prove conscious states to be caused by the neural states the brain, they cannot show how and why the conscious states belong to an I. The 'I' is not a part of the brain. It is something extra to the brain states. Consciousness therefore is not identical with the brain states which cause it. The I that has consciousness is not identical with the brain states either. The I is distinct from the body.

One's desires, beliefs, and intentions are formed according to one's interaction with the world. There is a qualitative difference between the mental states of one person in comparison with others. This qualitative feature of one's mental states is therefore treated as the subjectivity of consciousness. Qualia are a part of subjective experience realized in the brain. Conscious experience involves neural activity and information processing. Thus, consciousness is defined in
II. Nature of Qualia and Phenomenal Consciousness

The term ‘qualia’ means the qualitative character of experience. Every experience has a distinctive qualitative character. The subjective or qualitative feel of a conscious experience is characterized as something, which the organisms necessarily have in order to be conscious. Thus, qualia are the qualitative subjective experiences of mental states and the properties of conscious experience.

Are these subjective experiences or qualia real? It is a controversial question among philosophers whether qualia are definable in functional terms and whether qualia are the physiological states of the brain. The most important argument is that qualia are the functional states of the brain and, thus, are real only as the physical states of the brain. Opposed to this is the argument that qualia are the qualitative feel of the conscious states and so are subjective in character. Subjective experiences, thus, have qualia inherent in them. In other words, an experience is a conscious experience, if and only if there is some raw feel in it which is subjective.

Qualia are experiential properties of sensations, feelings, perceptions or the way it feels to have a pain or the ways it feels to see. According to Ned Block, the qualia:

...include the ways it feels to see, hear and smell, the way it feels to have a pain; more generally, what it is like to have mental states. Qualia are experiential properties of sensations, feelings, perceptions and...thoughts and desires as well.17

The first-person experiences such as pain, colour sensation, the sensation of touch and smell, etc., are the qualitative experiences of menial states. These mental states are the common stuff of our mind. For example, in having the smell of flowers or the taste of ice cream, we have subjective experience of these things, but we cannot describe them because these experiences have a distinctive

terms of the qualitative feel of experience. This qualitative feel is supposed to be for the subject of the experience.
phenomenological character. Our color experiences are such that there is something like to have them with a phenomenological image. A quale is thus a mental state that has the property of being a phenomenal experience.

Qualia constitute the essence of the conscious states. For example, the quale ‘pain’ is the feeling of pain rather than a mere bodily sensation. Thus, the qualia are the raw feels associated with the conscious states. Flanagan writes:

Specifying the types of conscious experience is something we cannot do without if we are to generate and test hypotheses about the links between the phenomenological, the psychological, the physiological, and the neural.\textsuperscript{18}

The qualitative experiences like experiences of color, smell, taste, pain, etc. can be explained in neuroscientific terms. These experiences play a causal role in the domain of mental states. The experience of pain, for example, has the belief that he is in pain and he acquires a desire to take steps to recuperate. When he is in a state that definitely has a range of causal or dispositional properties. However, in addition to their functional role, the qualitative experience have a characteristic phenomenal feel called qualia.

Searle\textsuperscript{19} argues that every conscious state has a certain qualitative feel to it. For example, the experience of tasting beer is very different from hearing some music and from smelling a rose or watching movie, both of these have a different qualitative character. Hence, there are the different qualitative features of conscious experience. Thus, qualia constitute the essential properties of conscious experience. That is why, one cannot derive pleasure of drinking beer by listening to music, or the pleasure of witnessing sunset by smelling a rose. That is a logical, not an empirical truth, and Chalmers characterizes it as “the subjective quality of experience”.\textsuperscript{20} According to him:

...a mental state is conscious if there is something it is like to be in that mental state. To put it another way, we can say that a mental state is conscious if it has a \textit{qualitative feel}—an associated quality of experience. These qualitative feels are also known as phenomenal qualities, or qualia for short. The problem of explaining these phenomenal qualities is just the problem of explaining consciousness.\textsuperscript{21}
According to Chalmers, the phenomenally conscious states are not functional states, but can be realized through our experience like the experience of red. The phenomenal consciousness does not supervene metaphysically on lower level facts. That is to say, even though two functional states are isomorphic, they differ in phenomenal consciousness. An experience or other menial entity is 'phenomenally conscious' only when there is something to be like to be in that state. For example, perceptual experiences like tasting, seeing, feeling, etc. are cases of such experiences. The qualities available to us in conscious experience are the qualities which represent objects in the world. Thus, qualia are conceived as the qualitative characteristics of mental states which include perception, sensation, affection, desire, thought and belief. For every 'conscious experience' or "conscious mental state", there is something, which is like for the subject to have it or to be in it. They have a phenomenal feel or raw feel. Hence, problem of phenomenal consciousness is the problem of explaining how subjective feel is instantiated in the brain.22 According to Peter Carruthers:

Phenomenal consciousness is a form of state-consciousness: it is a property, which some, but not other, menial stales possess. More specifically, it is a property which mental states have when it is like something to undergo them...phenomenally conscious stales have distinctive subjective feels; and some would say: they have qualia.23 Moreover, phenomenal conscious properties are experiential properties. For example, we have phenomenally conscious states when we see, hear, smell, taste and have pains. These properties are the experiential properties of sensations, feelings and perceptions, thoughts etc. Thus, the phenomenal feature of the mind is characterized by what it is like for a subject to have that feature. As Robert Van Gulick puts it:

Phenomenal experience is not merely a succession of qualitatively distinguished sensory ideas, but rather the organized cognitive experience of a world of objects and of ourselves as subjects within that world.24

However, according to the functionalists, minds are complex arrangements of functional states, states that bear the right kinds of causal relations to one
another and to inputs and outputs. A functionalist may therefore assert that experiences themselves lack qualities of their own, qualities identifiable independently of the qualities of objects experienced. Or, although an experience may have qualities, these are not qualities we are in any sense aware of in undergoing the experience. If what we experiences are realized in our brain, then the qualities of our experience will be neurological qualities.

There is a debate about whether such qualities really inhere in objects or whether they are simply subjective effects in the mind of the observer. According to the reductionists, qualia can be explained in terms of the neurophysiological events in the brain and its interactions with the environment. For epiphenomenalism, qualia are causally dependent or ‘supervenient’ on the brain events, but cannot be directly identified with such events. An epiphenomenalistic account of mind is that mental states have no causal powers of their own and that they are causally derived from the brain processes. However, for non-reductionism qualia have physical causes but are real nonetheless. For dualism, qualia are independent of physics, and autonomous in this existence.

The knowledge argument aims to establish that conscious experience involves non-physical properties. It depends on the idea that someone, who has complete physical knowledge about another conscious being, may yet lack knowledge about how it feels to have the experiences of that being. According to Van Gulick, "Its basic underlying assumption is that there is some knowledge about experience that can be acquired only by undergoing the relevant experience one-self." For example, someone has knowledge about what is the character of phenomenal red colour only by having a red colour experience. Physical knowledge is not sufficient to know the experience of red colour.

Frank Jackson argues that before release from the black-and-white room Mary knew only the physical information. After her release, she learned something about the world and our visual experience of it. According to him:

She knows all the physical facts about our environment, in a wide sense of ‘physical’ which includes everything in completed physics, chemistry, and neurophysiology, and all there is to know about the
causal and relational facts consequent upon all this, including of course functional roles.\footnote{1}

However, Mary seems to make some new discoveries when has knowledge of the world by having visual experience of it. She finds out things she did not know before. There is something about her experience, a property of it, which is subjective. There are phenomenal qualities associated with colour which Mary comes to discover upon her release from the black-and-white room. Before she left her room, she only knew the objective, physical basis of those subjective qualities, their causes and effects, and various relations of similarity and difference. She had no knowledge of the subjective qualities in themselves.

Some philosophers raise the question: Does Mary get any knowledge when she first experiences red? What sort of knowledge she gets and does it include new knowledge of facts, propositions or information? The opponents of qualia argue that in knowing what it is to be like Mary does not get any new knowledge, except the ability to recognize the physical facts which she already has. They also argue that Mary in her room lacks certain phenomenal concepts, certain ways of thinking about or mentally representing colour experiences and colours. Once she leaves the room, she acquires these new modes of thought as she experiences the various colours. Even so, the qualities the new concepts pick out are ones she knew in a different way in her room, for they are physical or functional qualities like all others. Against the physicalists, Jackson argues that in fact, Mary would not know about colours and she could not imagine what it is like to sense red before her release. After release, she has new experience, the colour experiences she has never had before. However, some philosophers may still argue that Mary gains new knowledge only in the sense that she comes to know in a new way fact and propositions, which she already knew. Before she knew only indirectly by inference, and now she knows directly by introspection. Thus, the knowledge argument of Jackson is as follows:

(i) Mary (before her release) knows everything physical there is to know about other people.

(ii) Mary (before her release) does not know everything there is to know about other people (because she learns something about them on her release).

(iii) Therefore,
There are truths about other people (and herself), which escape the physicalist theory.\textsuperscript{27}

What she knows beforehand is only physical knowledge and after release she be able to get extra knowledge about what it is to experience phenomena in the first-person. So it is reasonable to say that Mary comes to know some new things upon her release in addition to her knowledge of the particular physical facts about the real-world. In this case, some philosophers insist that the difference between the old and the new concepts is such that there must be a difference between the properties these concepts stand for in the world. Some of these properties Mary knew in her cell; others she understood only upon her release. Mary has made a real discovery that she must come to associate with the new qualities the experience of red which she did not associate with it in her room.

The knowledge argument has been criticised by Paul Churchland in order to show that qualia are not different from the brain states. He presents the argument as follows:

(i) Mary knows everything there is to know about brain states and their properties.

(ii) It is not the case that Mary knows everything there is to know about sensations and their properties.

(iii) Therefore, by Libniz’s law.

Sensations and their properties ≠ brain states and their properties.\textsuperscript{9}

He shows that there is a distinction between the knowledge involved in the first premise and the knowledge involved in second premise. Hence there is ambiguity about the use word 'knowledge'.\textsuperscript{29} To this, Jackson’s reply is that Mary does not ‘know’ about certain qualia which are associated with brain states and their properties. She gains the ‘knowledge’ about how phenomenal red appears only after her release. Churchland’s another objection is that the knowledge argument claims that “Mary could not even imagine what the relevant experience would be like, despite her exhaustive neuroscientific knowledge, and hence must still be missing certain crucial information.”\textsuperscript{30} But, according to him, there is nothing other than the neurological facts which Mary could know. Jackson’s knowledge
argument refutes this charge by arguing that whatever information Mary gained by her own efforts after leaving the room, is not physical information. Now she knows what it is like to see red, which she did not know earlier. There are two points here, one is we have certain physico-functional descriptions of certain states which are related to the psychological subjects. On the other hand, we have experience of these states from one's first hand experience. Moreover, the property of the conscious states having qualitative character, which is given in the first-person point of view, is distinct from the property of a certain functional states from the third-person point of view. The physicalists always try to prove that the qualitative character is a physical or functional property. Nevertheless, having a certain qualitative character is irreducible to a state's physico-functional properties. Thus, there is an explanatory gap between these two cases, the psysico-functional property and the qualitative character of the experience.

According to Dennett, there are no such things as qualia or the qualitative subjective experiences. He does not accept the reality of the qualia, because he believes that the qualia is the private experience of how things look like, and there is nothing in the mind which can correspond to these qualitative features of the mental states. Dennett writes:

Qualia is an unfamiliar term for something that could not be more familiar to each of us: the ways things seem to us... Look at a glass of milk at sunset; the way it looks to you—the particular, personal, subjective visual quality of the glass of milk is the quale of your visual experience at the moment. The way the milk tastes to you then is another, gustatory quale, and how it sounds to you as you swallow is an auditory quale. These various "properties of conscious experience" are prime examples of qualia. For him qualia are supposed to be properties of a subject's mental states that are by definition ineffable, intrinsic, private and immediately apprehensible in consciousness. But such properties have absolutely no use in our understanding of consciousness. They are as good as non-existence. As he puts it:

...I do not deny the reality of conscious experience; I grant that conscious experience has properties. I grant moreover that each person's states of consciousness have properties in virtue of which
those states have the experiential content that they do... Qualia are supposed to be special properties, in some hard-to-define way. My claim—which can only conic into locus as we proceed—is that conscious experience has no properties that are special in any of the ways qualia have been supposed to be special.32

The qualitative experiences, according to him, are the functional states of the brain. These are not different from what happens in the brain when the brain is stimulating by the external environment. Thus, Dennett concludes that qualia do not exist.

Dennett’s third-person perspective relates qualia with the neurophysiological functions of the brain. To say that our subjective experience of color, beauty, etc., embody quale is extrinsic rather than intrinsic. The brain states explain what sensations we have when we have first-person experience. Whether qualia are private sense experiences can be publicly judged by attaching a perfect neuroscientific machine into human head. In addition, that will certainly provide the causal explanation of the visual experience, which are called qualia. Thus, this functionalist approach of Dennett proves that qualia are non-existence.33 It is because the mechanism is sufficient to explain how qualitative experiences occur according to inverted qualia.

If qualia are defined broadly as the properties characterizing what it is like to have conscious experiences, then their existence is hard to deny. Qualitative features are only the first-person conscious experiences or the subjective attitudes of experiencing things. Therefore, qualia belong to the first person point of view and the first person ontology. As R.C. Pradhan point out, “the mental life of man cannot be fully represented in a mechanistic system and that there are subjective mental states which need a first-person perspective for their proper understanding.”34

III. Inverted Qualia and Other Issues
Our conscious mental states have distinctive qualitative features. For example, a man has a visual experience of red colour, which differs qualitatively from the kind of experience he has when he looks at a green thing. Here his experience of red and green things involves different colour qualia. But let us invert his colour experience now he sees something, different from what he used to see earlier. According to the inverted spectrum, or inverted qualia argument if our functional organizations were realized in a different physical substrate, a system may still have experience, but it would have a different kind of experience. A person who sees something as red today and may see yellow tomorrow. Here the thing remains constant, but his color experience can vary from red to yellow. In this case, the person’s color experience is inverted in the sense that he sees something different from what he used to see earlier. He only describes his previous experience of red as that of yellow now.

We cannot deny the logical possibility of our qualia being inverted in the case of oneself and of others. A person’s colour experience can vary from seeing red to green. His experience is inverted in the sense that he sees something different from what he had seen earlier. Qualia inversion would not possible if the conscious states would have been functional states of the brain. In case of consciousness, qualia— inversion is possible because qualia are the properties of the mental states, which cannot be ascribed to the physical and machine states. The machine functionalist’s view about consciousness that it must be rejected because conscious states are not physical states, and because conscious states have qualia.

According to Flanagan, inverted qualia are a problem primarily because they are alleged to be undetectable. But the very possibility of inverted qualia challenges computational functionalism, because the computational states cannot have any qualia. For example, two people with red-green inversion have different inner lives. Such persons may be input-output equivalent, but they are not mentally equivalent. It is because, even if the two systems are mechanically equivalent, they do not have the same mental properties. Thus, inverted qualia are an epistemic problem, even if they are not metaphysically problematic.
According to the functionalists, states of mind are functional states. There can be a complete explanation of qualia without any reference to consciousness or conscious thought experiences. Functionalism is able to explain the qualia in terms of functional states of the brain but not the inner or qualitative nature of our mental states. The problem for functionalism is— even if my spectrum is inverted related with yours, we remain functionally isomorphic with each other. My visual sensation is functionally identical with your visual sensation. Therefore, they are the same type of state, and it does not make sense to suppose that my sensation is ‘really’ a sensation-of-green. If it meets the functional conditions for being a sensation-of-red, then by definition it is a sensation-of-red. According to functionalism, a spectrum inversion of the object described is ruled out by definition.

According to Shoemaker, in the case of inverted spectrum, "there should be a systematic difference between the character of someone’s colour experience at a certain time and the character of that same person’s colour experience at another time." Both the intrasubjective and intersubjective qualia-inversions are possible. For him, the qualitative similarity and difference is well defined only for the intrasubjective case. It is conceivable that two people have similar functioning visual systems, but only the things that look red to one person look green to the others. In this spectrum inversion, the way things look is possible but that cannot be given a functional description. The way things look to a person is an aspect of that person’s mental life that cannot be explicated in purely functional terms. If somebody finds yellow things more similar to orange things and less similar to blue things other person finds just the opposite. For Shoemaker, in this intersubjective inversion case, the colour ‘quality spaces’ of the two people should have the same structure that requires the same conditions they make the same judgments of relative colour similarity about the same visual objects. However, if one claims to have undergone spectrum inversion, then it is difficult to know about the change in his colour experience and his memory of how things appeared to him in the past. Therefore, there is no answer to the question— how is intersubjective inversion possible? We cannot comprehend the inverted experience of others. According to Shoemaker, the possibility of spectrum
inversion leads to skepticism about our ability to acquire knowledge about the qualitative character of experience of other persons. 1 le writes:

...the behavioural evidence that establishes intentional similarities and differences between experiences of different persons is not by itself sufficient to establish qualitative similarities and differences between such experiences.40

In the inverted spectrum case, we have two persons whose experiences are functionally and intentionally same but qualitatively inverted. There are two kinds of content of experience, one is intentional or representational content and the other is qualitative or sensational content. If my spectrum is inverted with respect to John’s, then in the qualitative sense red things look the same to me as green looks to John. According to Ned Block:

...if an inverted spectrum is possible, then experiential contents that can be expressed in public language (for example, looking red) are not qualitative contents, but rather intentional contents.”

For him ” the intentional content of experience is functional. An experience has the intentional content of looking red if it functions in the right way—if it is caused by red things in the right circumstance and used in thought about red things and action with respect to red things rightly.”42 The functionalists argue that in case of interpersonal spectrum inversion, it is most implausible to suppose that the subjects concerned would really be functionally equivalent in respect of their colour experiences. That means, there are causal relations between our colour experiences and our emotional responses. There is no reason to think that the different physiological realizations of the experience of red things involve any experiential difference. For example, the mental state like the experience of red has alternative physiological realizations, and this is held to be just a case of alternative realizations of the very same experience. Thus, if qualia inversion is possible, functionalism is false.

Ned Block discusses a case of two persons whose experiences are qualitatively the same but intentionally and functionally inverted in his Inverted Earth case. Inverted Earth is just like earth, except that the colors around us change. When one uses inverted spectrum spectacles, appearances change: grass
becomes red, sky becomes yellow, etc. In addition, on this Inverted Earth the color vocabulary is also inverted - they call their yellow sky "blue", their bright red grass "green", and so forth. Suppose mad scientists make John unconscious, insert color-inverting lenses in his eyes, change his body pigment so that it will look normal to him upon awakening, and then move him to Inverted Earth. When he wakes on Inverted Earth, he notices no difference. As Block says:

What it's like for you to interact with the world and with other people does not change at all...So once 50 years have passed [during which time the "causal groundings" - the reference - of your color terms shift to those standard on inverted earth], you and your earlier state at home would exemplify...a case of functional and intentional inversion together with same qualitative contents...the converse of the inverted spectrum case. This is enough to refute the functionalist theory of qualitative content and at the same time to establish the intentional/qualitative distinction. According to Block, our new linguistic and physical environment will eventually produce changes in the intentional contents of our mental states. In time, our blue experiences will be about yellow things, our red experiences will be about green things, and so on, just like the other inhabitants of the Inverted Karth. According to Block's view, we will be intentionally and functionally inverted with respect to our former self, but our qualia will remain invariant. Inverted Karth also challenges representationalism, the view that qualia are just representational or intentional properties. On that view, blue experiences are equated with perceptual states that represent blue things.

David Chalmers argues that the absent-qualia hypothesis challenges not only functionalism but also versions of physicalism. Just as a qualia-free functional duplicate of a conscious human being seems possible, a qualia-free physical duplicate seems possible. Such creatures are known as phenomenal zombies. We cannot see any conscious experience in such a system. In this case, a zombie may have mind just like us, beliefs, desires and even pains functionally equivalent to us, but it would never enjoy mental states with qualitative character. Here the qualia are absent and there is a zombie externally identical to ourselves but lacking an inner life. Chalmers discusses 'fading qualia' as a positive argument
against the possibility of absent qualia. A thought experiment is involved with the replacement of parts of a brain by silicon chips. Here a system (functional isomorph Robot) is functionally same with a conscious system like a man, which lacks conscious experience entirely, and is made of silicon chips instead of neurons. Every neuron in the system has been replaced by a chip, and there are no biochemical mechanisms playing an essential role. The system, Robot, is processing the same inputs and behaviour like human beings but by hypothesis is experiencing nothing at all. According to Chalmers, "fading qualia are logically possible. There is no contradiction in the description of a system that is so wrong about its experiences. But logical possibility and natural possibility are different things."45

Chalmers" dancing qualia is also an argument against the possibility of inverted qualia. In this case, the structural features of these systems' experiences are preserved throughout.40 There can be two functional isomorphic systems in the same functional state but having different experiences. This thought argument takes a silicon circuit and install it in human beings head as a backup circuit. After the install, the switch can operate directly between the neural and silicon circuits. When upon flipping the switch, the neural circuit becomes irrelevant and silicon circuit takes over. Suppose somebody is having a red experience and his/her silicon isomorph is having a blue experience. When we flip the switch that time his/her experience was red. After the switch, he/she has a blue experience. Chalmers describes the situation as:

What will happen, then, is that my experience will change "before my eyes." Where I was once experiencing red, I will now experience blue. All of a sudden, I will have a blue experience of the apple on my desk. We can even imagine flipping the switch back and forth a number of limes, so that the red and blue experiences “dance” before my eyes.47

According to Chalmers “qualia are dependent not just on functional organization but on implementational details, it may well be that our qualia are in fact dancing before our eyes all the time.”48 Therefore, in dancing qualia a functionally isomorphic silicon system may experience blue where human being experience red. Chalmers argues that though it is logically possible to have dancing qualia and fading qualia, it is not practically possible to have them. It follows that we
have good reason to believe that the principle of organizational invariance is true, and that functional organization fully determines conscious experience.\textsuperscript{49}

Functionalists and physicalists sometimes respond by challenging the coherence of the absent qualia hypothesis. For example, Shoemaker argues that a true functional duplicate of a conscious human must have introspective beliefs about its own sensory states, which in his view entails that some of its slates have qualia. Another reply is to concede that the absent qualia hypothesis is coherent, but deny that it undermines functionalism or physicalism. Here we can discuss Kripke’s view on necessity, according to whom, “water is H\textsubscript{2}O” is a metaphysically necessary truth, which is found even if the laws of nature are different. Yet, we know that the truth is only \textit{a posteriori}; conceptual reflection alone cannot reveal the metaphysical impossibility of water existing without H\textsubscript{2}O. Likewise, the argument shows that conceptual reflection alone cannot reveal whether absent qualia cases are metaphysically possible. This argument depends on the clear-cut distinction between the ordinary concept of water, which is given by its superficial features, and water itself, the essence of which consists in its molecular structure.

We have some subjective character of experience or raw feeling, which involves something ‘intrinsic’, not reducible to behaviour. For example, the red things, which look red and our feelings of red, are the way the red thing appears to us. These appearances are the phenomenal properties of the things, these are also in our subjective consciousness, and as such they make our colour experience. The phenomenal properties of colour red are given only in the subjective consciousness. The raw feels are intrinsic in a certain sense in which the character of an individual’s raw feeling is logically independent of its relations to external things. As R. Kirk claims, “raw feeling is inner” in a special way.\textsuperscript{50} In other words, raw feelings are subjective. These are involved in all varieties of sensation and conscious perceptual experience, dreaming, after-imaging, etc.

The friends of qualia argue that there are qualitative features of consciousness that are facts of intersubjective understanding. The conscious states, which constitute our mind, have some features like being experienced. This
type of aspect of our consciousness cannot be studied by the brain sciences. This
subjective aspect can be studied only by the phenomenology of the psychological
states which is known as the qualitative features of consciousness. The first-
person point of view only takes the mental states as belonging to a person from
his/her subjective point of view. The raw feelings of our consciousness are
ontologically real, because they are the ultimate qualitative objects, which make
up the phenomenal mind. The qualia constitute the essence of consciousness and
are intrinsic to the conscious subjects.

Functionalism fails to explain our color experiences. In case of spectrum
inversion, there is no difference in functional terms between my colour experience
and that of others. In respect of color experiences, we are functionally equivalent.
It, thus, means that my color experience and others experience would exhibit
exactly the same pattern of causal relations to environmental states, and other
mental states or behaviour. After all, they would have exactly the same causal
role. However, our color experiences have the most striking feature "qualitative
character".

Lastly, we cannot doubt the fact that other human beings can see colors
differently. Even in our own case, we may see colors differently in different
situations. Therefore, both the intrasubjective and intersubjective quale inversions
are possible, and we can always imagine what could happen to our present color
experience in a different situation. This inversion is possible because we have all
the relevant conceptual resources to think of the inverted qualia. A theory of
subjective consciousness gains its motivation from the need to explain the
heterogeneous qualitative character of our mental life. Prof. Pradhan writes:

The mind has irreducible conscious states that collectively constitute
the phenomenal structure of our mind. Mind in this sense is not just a
machine that acts on the world but is a conscious entity that
presupposes a conscious subject to which it belongs. The world of
consciousness thus is not a mere function of the physical system of the
brain.
Thus, our knowledge or awareness of our qualia could not constitute by any of the physical processes occurring in us. The similar processes would occur in beings that are physically just like us yet completely lack qualia.

IV. Consciousness as Primary

Searle points that computers can never become conscious due to lack of personal experience of qualia, or the internal subjective reelings. This aspect of consciousness is phenomenal consciousness, or conscious experience. Conscious experience refers to the quality of experience, the feeling of an experiencing subject. It is that which we have as difficulty in communicating to someone who has not encountered it.

The question is whether conscious experience is amenable scientifically. Can we account for the existence of conscious experience within the scientific framework? We cannot observe consciousness outside ourselves. This sets consciousness apart. Most philosophers and scientists have concluded that the traditional scientific method would never work for consciousness. However, consciousness is no more "magic" than electricity. We study electricity by studying the elementary particles that give rise to it. We can study consciousness, if we can identify the particles and their properties that give rise to it.\(^{52}\)

The main problem is the lack of an empirical test for consciousness. We cannot deduce whether a being is conscious or not. We cannot even "measure" its consciousness. We cannot rule out that every object in the universe, including each elementary particle, has consciousness.\(^{53}\) The point is that our mind is capable only of observing conscious phenomena at its own level and within itself. Our mind is capable of observing only one phenomenon that is itself.

There is no question that experience is closely associated with physical processes in systems such as brains. It seems that physical processes give rise to experience, at least in the sense that a physical system such as a brain with the right physical properties inevitably yields corresponding states of experience. Nevertheless, how and why do physical processes give rise to experience? This is
the core problem of consciousness, which is discussed as the hard problem of consciousness. Above all, we discuss that human beings have subjective experience: there is something it is like to be them. We can say that a being is conscious in this sense or is phenomenally conscious when there is something it is like to be that being. Each of conscious states has a phenomenal character, with phenomenal properties or qualia characterizing what it is like to be in the state.

Flanagan holds that consciousness has a complex structure. To define this complex structure, it requires the help of phenomenological, psychological and neural analysis. According to him, there is a gap between the first-person and the third-person points of view. The gap between the subjective and the objective is an epistemic gap, not an ontological gap. According to Flanagan:

...to sketch a naturalistic theory of consciousness consistent with our natures as biological creatures with nervous systems of a certain kind. There are possible creatures that are identical to us at the level of observable input-output relations but that lack inner lives altogether. We are not like this. Consciousness is essential to human nature and to the human mind.

Consciousness in the human beings is a higher order property. Conscious beings are not only sensitive to the environment, but they also change their behaviour according to the change in the environment. This change occurs not only in the physical structure of the organism, but also in the realm of the mental. Creativity is another of the higher order features of human consciousness. Creativity is manifested in language using, emotion sharing, creativity in art and science, etc., which demand definitely a higher order consciousness rather than having mere sensitiveness. Human behaviour is more sophisticated than animal behaviour. Creativity is an esteemed feature of the human mind. The essence of creativity requires that the entity be conscious. The problem is, if this is essential then, we need to consider how we can make our artificial system conscious, and that problem itself presents a major task. Creativity is the ability, which comes up with ideas like concepts, poems, scientific theories, etc. Only human beings have creative power. From the psychologist point of view, creativity is like intuition. According to Margaret A. Boden, "creativity is a puzzle, a paradox, some say a
mystery. Inventors, scientists, and artists rarely know how their original ideas arise. They maintain intuition, but cannot say how it works. Many creative ideas are surprising in a deeper way. For example, creating machines or computers is an unexpected use of everyday objects that could not have happened before. However, the question is: Can computer be creative? Many people argue that no computer could be genuinely creative. Whatever the machine produces is due to the programmer's creativity. Since the machine is not conscious, and has no desires, preferences or values, it cannot appreciate or judge what it is doing. Whereas a work of art is an expression of human experience and it expresses a communication between human beings.

Creativity itself is a mystery, something that makes it difficult to see how it is even possible. Mysteries are beyond the reach of science. There is something paradoxical about the creativity and there is something, which makes it difficult. M.A. Boden writes:

Many creative ideas, however, are surprising in a deeper way. They concern novel ideas that not only did not happen before, but that—in a sense to be clarified below—could not have happened before.

Generally, Artificial Intelligence studies the nature of intelligence and its method is to try to make possible computers to do the things that minds can do like seeing, speaking, story telling, thinking, etc. But how can computers have anything to do with creativity? Whereas a computer can do only what its program enables it to do. In short, computational ideas can help us to understand how human creativity is possible. This does not mean that creativity is predictable, nor even that an original idea can be explained in every detail after it has appeared. From the mechanical point of view, we can draw on computational ideas in understanding in scientific terms how 'intuition' works. However, intuition itself is a creative process beyond the reach of the computer.

Moreover, computers are limited in a way that human beings are not. In particular, they would have no inner life, no conscious experience, no true understanding. Artificial Intelligence could not explain consciousness in the machine. Consciousness is subjective experience and can only be realized in the first person perspective. It is often thought that the essence of creativity requires
that the entity be conscious, thus be able to deliberate on a particular problem. If this is essential, then we need to consider how we can make our artificial system conscious, and that problem itself presents a major conceptual problem.

Consciousness is the primary state of our mental states. Some things such as stones and trees are absolutely lacking any subjectivity. While other things such as you and me or human beings do have points of view i.e., private, perspectival, inner ways of being apprised of some limited aspects of this world. We lead our lives, suffering and enjoying, deciding and choosing our actions, guided by this "first-person" access that we have. To be conscious is to be an agent with a point of view. Chalmers claims that consciousness is not reductively explainable. From this result, he goes on to propose a new theoretical framework called "naturalist dualism" in which consciousness stands as an unreduced entity next to basic physical entities like energy or matter. His argument is that a reductive theory of consciousness would need an analysis of consciousness such that physical facts could conceivably imply facts about experience. A functional account seems to miss the essence of conscious experience, and it is hard to see how a structural analysis may do any better. The fact that we do not even have an idea of how such an implication could possibly go shows that consciousness is different from all other phenomena: it is not reductively explainable.

Similarly, Searle's theory of consciousness is that consciousness is irreducible. For Searle, consciousness is essentially a first person, subjective phenomenon, and conscious states cannot be reduced because simply misses the essential features of conscious states i.e., their subjective qualities. The Chinese room argument shows that semantics is not intrinsic to syntax. Something is a symbol only relative to some observer, user or agent who assigns a symbolic interpretation to it. Computation exists only relative to some agent or observer who imposes a computational interpretation on some phenomenon. Thus, consciousness can be considered as primary, as it is though the conscious subject that everything is considered as a known phenomenon.
Notes and References


2 Ibid., p. 519.

3 Ibid., p.520.

4 Ibid., p. 521.

5 Ibid., p.523.


7 Ibid.


9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., p.77.

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14 Ibid., p.96.

15 Ibid., p.97.

16 Ibid., p.99.


21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., p.25.


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27 Ibid., p. 568.


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Ibid., p. 644.

Ibid., p. 645.

Ibid., p. 648.


Ibid., p. 680.

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Ibid., p. 257.

Ibid., p. 266.

Ibid., p. 268.

Ibid., p. 269.

Ibid., p. 274.


53 Ibid.


57 Ibid. p.76.