**Consciousness of the meaning of action**

The 20th century witnessed tremendous scientific progress in many fields. This has brought about a better understanding of the world we inhabit, of the forces that drive it, of the relationships between the human race and the rest of the universe. Scientific explanations have been provided for most of the phenomena that used to be considered divine events. We have learned how the universe was born, and how it gave rise to the galaxies and the stars and ultimately to our planet; and what life is, how it survives, reproduces and evolves; and what the structure of the brain is, and how it works.

The mystery is no longer in our surroundings: it is inside ourselves. What we still cannot explain is precisely that: "ourselves". We may have a clue to what generates reasoning, memory and learning. But we have no scientific theory for the one thing that we really know very well: our consciousness, our awareness of being us, ourselves.

No scientific theory of the universe can be said complete if it doesn't explain consciousness. We may doubt the existence of black holes, the properties of quarks and even that the Earth is round, but it is harder to doubt that we are conscious. Consciousness is actually the only thing we can be sure of: we are sure that "we" exist, and "we" doesn't mean our bodies: it means our consciousness. Everything else could be an illusion, but consciousness is what allows us to even think that everything else could be an illusion. It is the one thing that we cannot reject.

If our theory of the universe that we have does not explain consciousness, then maybe we do not have a good theory of the universe. Consciousness is a natural phenomenon. Like all natural phenomena it should be possible to find laws of nature that explain it.

Unfortunately, precisely consciousness, of all things in the universe, still eludes scientists. Physics has come a long way to explaining what matter is and how it behaves. Biology has come a long way to explain what life is and how it evolves. But no science has come even close to explaining what consciousness is, how it originates and how it works.

Neurology tells us an enormous amount about the brain, but it cannot explain how conscious experience arises from the brain’s electrochemical activity.

One wonders if there is still something about the structure of matter that we are missing.

We may have figured out the meaning of matter and the structure of life, but we were more interested in the structure of matter and the meaning of life.