

SHORT ARTICLE

On Believing in Belief

“ACC might be the brain’s error detection and correction device.”[1]

ACC is the mechanism that helps us mentally to decide if something is right or wrong. You may think of it as conscience sometimes. Thousands years before Christ, a Hittite king advised his son :

“Mein Sohn! Tue das, was in (deinem) Herzen (ist)”

“My son! Do what in your heart is.”[2]

“The ACC has been implicated in monitoring conflict among external and internal cues, with the dorsal ACC modulating cognitive aspects and the ventral ACC more involved in affect.” [3]

Qualia is how the outer world represented as a semantic tree in our mind. The tree’s output is the quale value for that phenomenon.

“In any presentation, this content is either a specific quale (such as the immediacy of redness or loudness) or something analyzable into a complex of such. The presentation as an event is, of course, unique, but the qualia which make it up are not.” [4]

ACC checks if something is related and can be placed in a qualia coherently. Our conscience checks if it can explain a phenomenon as viable according to our previous experiences, knowledge and beliefs etc.

If something can be placed in the semantic tree of qualia it means it is believable. If the connections are strong and many it means it is strongly believable.

“2.4 Degree of Belief

Jessie believes that Stalin was originally a Tsarist mole among the Bolsheviks, that her son is at school, and that she is eating a tomato. She feels different degrees of confidence with respect to these different propositions.”[5]

If the connections are made negatively, something will be accessed as unbelievable.

We have many qualia, on different subjects, the nature of the qualia determines the believability of the phenomenon. Religion is one of the qualia. Religion provides an easy to access qualia for the human to handle the unknown. Believing in a power outside him/herself in any form, in any qualia, political, philosophical and other helps human to handle the unknown. Religion simplifies this for the large crowds while providing a fertile environment for arts and science to develop sometimes.

If something is in the working memory it is checked by the ACC for its compliance with any qualia. The difficulty is, this would be very burdensome if it was valid for all the time. Automatic processing bypasses the evaluation of ACC. People can do incredibly good or bad things when they act automatically without self consciousness. On the other hand this faculty is desperately needed for human beings to perform extraordinarily, specially in life or death moments but also in daily life.

*The human mind has a mechanism to stop checking the validity of things, it is **belief in belief**. If there is a special qualia created for that area, belief in that belief area helps to isolate the working area from the ACC, conscience and practically stops it.*

I will close the subject with an advise of a father as I had began it. My father was a commando training officer who taught survival in winter, wilderness and in the mountains. He used to tell us:

“Do not bind yourself with anything to the end in your life”.

REFERENCES

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- [3] Nitschke, Mackiewicz, 'Prefrontal and interior cingulate contributions to volition in depression', Waisman Laboratory for Brain Imaging and Behavior, Departments of Psychiatry and Psychology, University of Wisconsin, Elsevier 2005.
- [4] Lewis, Mind and the World Order, 1941
- [5] [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#), Belief