

My Answer

Scientists (physicists) today struggle with a serious problem. The powerful physical tools that man has developed fail in explaining or even in really describing life. No meaningful statement could be made about life by physics. For the physical minded person this is a disaster! Physics was supposed to be the answer to everything! Ever more accurate descriptions were supposed to lead to some kind of theory of everything, and while this beautifully describes the physical world and builds us atom bombs and incredibly powerful electronics, it completely fails at describing something as simple as the organism! (Laughter)

The problem is remedied as I see it: physics is but one of three and any close examination at the particular one while blind to the others is an incomplete observation. The other two of this tripartite division are the virtual and the symbolic. I profess at this moment to not know very much about virtual nature: I do know that the name is misleading and is in no way related to computer simulation. Physicists do not seem to be sure about the virtual either. My concern is symbolic nature. (Applause)

Briefly, the ontology is (it seems to me) either a linear or a reticular model: in both models virtual particles interact to produce phenomena known as physical particles, physical particles interact to produce phenomena known as symbolic, mental, ideal, or platonic particles. The question is whether this phenomenal increase ends at the symbolic or loops back around to the virtual. The reticulate model is what is being suggested to me, but I cannot understand how the mind influences virtual nature, and thereby physical nature. These conclusions are concerning.

I am convinced that the organism is entirely symbolic. My reasoning for this is as follows: Primarily, interpretation. Secondly, the relational nature of life. Meaning is an object of symbolic nature. No meaning belongs to, or is contained by, physical objects.

This being the case, physiology, medicine and related fields are the domains of the description by physics and not of the life sciences. Only the abstract sciences could be described as a life science.

I have elaborated before at length about my thoughts on science. Please allow me a moment here to do that again. Any theory, any arrangement of ideas is a possible science. The act of collection, the consumption of signs is what it means to be a scientist. (Applause, followed by a standing ovation)

Agents living in nature have been organizing signs long before man came to be. Here is the answer. Science and life are both the same thing.