

Evolutionary Threads relating Animal Life to Self-consciousness

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Evolutionary perspectives on consciousness are now part of science of consciousness (<http://faculty.philosophy.umd.edu/pcarruthers/Evolution-of-consciousness.htm>, <https://philpapers.org/rec/VELTCO>).

But consciousness remains a very complex entity that has to be addressed through different concepts. One of them is self-consciousness that can be considered as a human specificity. What is proposed here is to look at several aspects of self-consciousness as being already part of the animal world in a primitive form, and position these aspects as evolutionary threads. Looking for aspects of human consciousness in animal life is not new in philosophy of mind. What comes in addition here is to use these aspects as feeding evolutionary threads converging toward an evolutionary nature of self-consciousness.

Among the many aspects of self-consciousness the following ones can be taken as starting points:

- Intentionality (<https://philpapers.org/rec/MENBAM-2>),
- Meaning generation (<https://philpapers.org/rec/MENCOI>),
- Self (<https://philpapers.org/rec/BEKCAS>),
- Representations (<https://philpapers.org/rec/MENCOI>),
- Inter-subjectivity (<https://philpapers.org/rec/MENPFA-3>).

The proposed approach relies on an existing evolutionary scenario for self-consciousness where the evolutionary advantages come more from the overall process than from direct benefits (<https://philpapers.org/rec/MENPFA-3>). Self-consciousness as object and as subject are part of the scenario. A link with phenomenal consciousness is also introduced by an evolutionary source of pre-reflexive self-consciousness.

Such evolutionary approach brings to highlight some aspects of self-consciousness that need more developments in an evolutionary perspective. It also underlines the need for a better understanding about the performances of life which are generally taken as givens.

Continuations are proposed.

Keywords

consciousness, self-consciousness, life, evolution, intentionality, meaning, self, representation, inter-subjectivity