

First Cause 2023

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The Physical/Material Perspective

Supported by rational/objective/intellectual/analytical human capabilities.

Heavily dependent upon on the human senses – especially vision,
Assumes reality is composed of an enormous number of separate “things,”
Assumes that as a separate entity, humans can “observe” other separate things,
Divides what we observe into separate entities, categories, scales, etc.,
Names all these “things,”
Looks to determine the relationships among these things,
Looks for what “causes” what else in these separately identified relationships,
Asserts that the changes we observe among things are causal,
Declares cause has a direction from past to present to future,
Declares the causal rate of change can be measured,
Imposes a time system of calculation,
Assumes that this overall conception reveals the nature of reality,
Searches through progressively increasing scales to identify First Cause.

Currently the Big Bang is proposed as accounting for the origin of the universe 13.8 billion years ago. But, there is always the question of what caused the Big Bang.

In a potentially infinite physical reality with an infinite number of potential scales,
it is impossible to determine First Cause.

The Spiritual/Unification Perspective

Supported by intuitive/subjective/spiritual/synthetic human capabilities.

Reality is Not made up of separate causally related things,
Everything we observe is in fact totally connected and integrated at every scale
both materially and energetically,
Everything exists as one infinite, totally unified, indivisible whole,
There is no separation, no independent observation, no separate causal
relationships, no direction for change, no time,
There just IS,
The only constant is directionless change/vibration/glow within All,

In a reality where there are no separable, identifiable causal relationships,
there can be no First Cause.

Commentary

These two perspectives seem contradictory, and various scholars and philosophers elect one or the other as primary, even holding the “other” to be false. Science has mostly pursued understanding reality from the material perspective, though as it begins to explore the immaterial energy domain in greater detail, it is having to entertain concepts in tune with the spiritual perspective. On the other hand, religion is based on the spiritual, unification perspective, but it tends to “concretize” its beliefs introducing a great many entities [gods, prophets, saints, devils, demons, prayer wheels, crosses, heaven] in tune with the material perspective.

In fact, both of these perspectives are supported by alternative human mental processes – the rational and the intuitive modes. Both of these mental modes are in operation together most of the time. And both modes are essential for humans to compete successfully in biological survival [material perspective/rational mode] and to cooperate adequately both socially and ecologically [spiritual perspective/intuitive mode]. The worldviews of different societies place greater or lesser value on one or the other of these modes/perspectives. Modern complex societies go wrong 1) when they fail to properly balance the input of these two perspectives and mental modes in their ethics and institutions and 2) when they fail to encourage the sophisticated development and utilization of both perspectives and mental modes.

The “debate” over First Cause reflects these two different aspects of human mental capability and the resulting differences in outlook on reality. As contradictory as these points of view seem, each is an essential component in being human. The greatest irony is that the great majority of the time the modes supporting these different perspectives are both functioning – just to different degrees depending on the demands of the particular task at hand. These are not either/or operations. So, carving them out and evaluating them at their extremes as if the views they present are entirely separate and conflicting is itself unrealistic. But in our intellectually dominant culture, we love interpretations based on extreme divisions – as in this essay!

Much more on this can be found in my general theory, “Dynamic Humanism,”
www.dynamic-humanism.com