

Life is more than biochemistry

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LA VANGUARDIA

La Vanguardia interview with

Àlex Gómez-Marín

Senior researcher at the CSIC Institute of Neurosciences



"Death is a shift in consciousness: there is a light at the end of the tunnel and loving beings waiting for you on the other side."

I am 43 years old: I believe that the mind is more than what the brain does, and life is more than biochemistry. I was born in Barcelona and live in Alicante. I had a near-death experience and today I know that dying is one of the best experiences of your life: let's think about it without fear. I am publishing 'La ciencia del último umbral' (The Science of the Last Threshold). (Photo: Àlex Garcia)

Lluís Amiguet, journalist at La Vanguardia.

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— Science beyond matter

When a scientist dares to transcend the narrow limits of what is considered the only official science and its short-sighted materialism, which quantum physics has rendered obsolete, all the alarms go off and the most limited minds point their accusing fingers, Gómez-Marín ironically remarks. In this sense, he himself, in addition to a near-death experience, has experienced another “near-death scientific experience” when some of his colleagues agreed to label him a pseudoscientist for challenging those limits. Hence, he calls for researchers to be open-minded and dare to: measure the intangible, but not non-existent, and thus the mind beyond the brain; to think the impossible, because much of what is science today was once impossible; and to tell the unmentionable beyond taboos.

What is death?

It is our most uncertain certainty in life: the great frontier of science. And, seen in perspective, a shift in consciousness. In short, the process by which we detach ourselves from our physical body.

What is life, then?

An everyday miracle of self-production and self-maintenance, as defined by Chilean biologist Humberto Maturana.

Maturana explained it here in La Contra.

Physicist Schrödinger also asked himself that question more than eighty years ago. And we are still trying to find the answer. The same thing happens with our notions of matter, space, time, consciousness...

How does one transition from the phase of consciousness of life to that of death?

It is like giving birth: there is a light at the end of the tunnel and loving beings waiting for you on the other side. Those of us who have had one foot in the "afterlife" can attest that this transition is a wonderful experience.

What has not yet been explained about this passage?

There is still much to be investigated scientifically. For example, it is not understood how the worse the brain functions (dying, damaged, or even shut down), the better the experience is: more lucid, truthful, and transformative.

How do you research it?

I call it the "three-legged stool" of science, because without its three legs, it cannot stand. The first leg attempts to measure the intangible, which is to detect the mind beyond the brain; the second attempts to think the impossible, which is to develop new theories of non-local consciousness; and the third attempts to tell the untellable, despite social taboos and scientific dogmas.

Are we our memories? Could we transplant them into a new body?

That is the transhumanist dream (nightmare!): to convince you of your mortality and then sell you a data plan and upload you to the cloud. And all at the cost of the programmed extinction of the human species. Transhumanism is anti-humanism.

Why has there been little progress in the study of life, death, and consciousness?

Because the dominant atheistic materialist paradigm in science has been and remains unyielding in its refusal to investigate two things: whether there is life after death, and whether there is consciousness beyond the brain.

Why is even considering this anathema to established science?

That's what I'm complaining about. That those who consider themselves scientists don't want to simply ask themselves about it and limit themselves to rejecting any inquiry beyond "we know it's not true" when in reality they don't know.

And if they wanted to investigate, what discoveries could be made?

In neuroscience, finding the material substrate that allows the brain to filter consciousness. From physics, we could integrate the mystery of the mind into the supposed "theories of everything," which are now everything except everything that really interests us: love, taste, pain, life, death...

What would you like to see demonstrated, and what can already be demonstrated?

I believe we could scientifically demonstrate that practically all traditions in all human cultures have always maintained that we are more than just matter.

In what areas do you think the most progress is being made today regarding consciousness, life, and death?

Again, I refer back to the *stool*: we have just published a large virtual atlas of consciousness with more than 350 theories, and more than half of them do not rule out life after death or the mind beyond the brain.

I know that hospitals, starting with Dr. Van Lommel, are already conducting research.

Empirically, hospitals are becoming the new laboratories of consciousness. Socially, we are experiencing a movement of human liberation in the face of death.

What does this consist of?

People are no longer afraid to talk about their extraordinary experiences, and that makes them talk about them, because they know that having them doesn't mean they're crazy; they're not stupid and they're not alone.

How can these subjective experiences be investigated with scientific rigor?

In hospitals, there are already two fronts: that of the electroencephalogram, led by Sam Parnia, and out-of-body near-death experiences, whose perception is true and can be verified...

Any examples?

There are cases of cardiac arrest lasting up to 15 minutes after which there is still residual activity in the brain, and perhaps that is what generates the experience. That is the burden of proof. And there are cases where people see what is happening in the resuscitation room from the next room and even outside the hospital.

Is this just the beginning?

There is much more already, such as terminal lucidity or improvement at death, studied by Bruce Greyson; *mediumship*...