

UNITED WISDOM

A Fold in the Unified Field: The Separate Self as a Philosophical Hypothesis

World and Consciousness

Andrey Zarinsh & Maria Evilkut

W-07-X01 · EN

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

A Fold in the Unified Field: The Separate Self as a Philosophical Hypothesis

What if the separate “I” is a way in which a single consciousness experiences the world?

Andrey Zarinsh & Maria Evilkut

> *The One is everything and none of the things.*
>
> *Plotinus, Enneads, V.2.1. The Russian passage was translated from Stephen MacKenna's English translation; the wording here follows the supplied Russian. Primary text.*

What This Article Is About

An image came to me today that changed my familiar sense of myself for a few moments. I imagined an endless fabric. In one place it rises into a fold, and that fold acquires the capacity to feel. It develops its own view, memory, name. It says “I” and gradually begins to regard itself as separate from everything else. Yet nowhere has the fabric been cut.

From this image grew a conjecture: consciousness might be a single, all-pervading basis, and an individual life its local manifestation. Then the motionless fabric in my imagination began to move and resemble the sea. What if we are its waves? Each lives its own life, although never for a moment ceasing to belong to the whole. Perhaps “soul” could name just such a unique life, experienced from within.

I want to understand where this thought leads. What happens when a wave subsides? Is a new manifestation possible, and would it be mine? Above all, how does this perspective change our relationship with the person beside us? I will develop the conjecture by comparing it with physics, philosophy, and spiritual traditions. Their answers can help pose the questions more precisely, but will not turn an image into proof.

I. When the Fabric Acquired a Point of View

A fold differs from the fabric in form, but not in material. That distinction first captivated me: being distinguishable does not yet mean existing independently.

The same thought can be imagined differently. As though a drop were gently drawn upward from a surface of thick, transparent gel. It rises and gains contours, yet remains connected to

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

its base. What matters in the image is not the upward movement. It is the emergence of a local form without final separation. The hand is needed only by the imagination for now; let us leave the question of an intentional creator until later.

Now add experience to the form. The fold feels tension, notices neighboring curves, retains traces of what has happened to it. The world opens for the first time from a particular position. From here one thing is visible and another is not. Here pain arises; here the memory of a touch remains. A quite justified feeling appears: all this is happening to me.

It seems to me that we discover ourselves in life in a similar way. Imagine an ordinary morning: someone has not yet recalled their tasks, but already feels light behind their eyelids, the weight of the blanket, the position of a hand. Then their name returns, yesterday's conversation, anxiety about what lies ahead. Their own story seems to gather around an already existing “here.”

In my hypothesis, the body participates in creating that “here.” Consciousness acquires a particular perspective through a particular organization of living matter. A person therefore does not resemble a vessel into which a portion of common substance has been poured. Through this body, the world becomes visible from here: with my memories, habits, ability to notice one thing and overlook another.

When the form disappears, the perspective it sustained ceases. Yet this does not let us deduce the fate of the basis itself. Within the proposed image, the fabric remains fabric even when a particular bend no longer exists. And if a new fold becomes possible, the question of another manifestation arises afresh.

The whole conception thus emerges: a common basis takes form, the form acquires its own “I,” and then the conditions sustaining it disappear. Perhaps another manifestation arises someday. The fold image lets us hold this thought as a whole. But it has a weakness: fabric is easily imagined as motionless, as though life could be stopped and inspected from every side. We, however, are changing all the time. That is why I want to add movement to the fold.

II. The Wave That Says “I”

Imagine standing by the sea, following one wave. It rises almost imperceptibly, then grows higher, catches the light, stretches into a long crest. You can point to it and say, “That one.” A few seconds later it will have changed, but you will still recognize the movement you are following.

Where does this wave end and the sea begin? It has contours, yet you cannot draw a boundary around it and lift it out of the water while preserving it as a wave. Its separateness exists as a

distinction within a shared movement. It is entirely real: it can rock a boat, touch the shore, knock someone off their feet. Belonging to the sea does not make it imaginary.

The fold helps reveal the connection between form and basis. The wave adds life in time. It exists while it happens: rising, moving, changing, meeting other movements. Even at its most recognizable moment, it cannot be reduced to a motionless outline. In this respect, it feels closer to the human “I.”

Look at a childhood photograph of yourself. The gaze is familiar, but much about that child is already hard to remember. They feared things you now smile at, dreamed of something else, did not yet know people without whom you cannot now imagine life. Yet you say, “That is me.” Very different states lie within one biography. The wave image lets us imagine this connection: recognizability can persist through change. By itself, of course, it does not settle what makes someone the same person.

Now take the same mental step as with the fold: imagine a wave capable of feeling. The shared movement would then acquire an inner side. Rising would be experienced as effort, an encounter as an event, danger as fear. The wave would develop its own history. “Something is happening to me” would gradually become “This is who I am.” Then perhaps an even stronger conviction would appear: “I exist on my own.”

This lets me approach the word “soul” anew. Within this hypothesis, every conscious wave could be a soul: a unique way in which the common basis lives an individual life. There is no need to imagine another little observer inside it. Here I call the soul life itself from within: the ability to feel, respond, love, suffer, and gather experience into one's own story. This is my proposed meaning of the word; it does not replace its religious meanings or prove immortality.

The expression “conscious wave” is especially important here. I am not supposing that every splash of water or every physical oscillation has an inner world. The sea helps us imagine the relationship of part and whole. The conditions that make a form capable of experience still need explaining.

Under this view, individuality receives a definite place. Every wave has its own path, encounters, history of changes. A common basis does not turn them into identical specimens. One cannot replace another simply because both belong to the sea. In the same way, love for a person is directed toward that person: their voice, way of being silent, unexpected answers, what has happened between us.

The ego can be imagined as the moment a wave takes its present contour for everything it is. It seems to think: as long as I preserve this height, this shape, this superiority, my existence is secure. Every change becomes a threat. But movement cannot be preserved by forbidding it to

change. In human life, this resembles trying to remain forever what others once recognized you as: strong, successful, indispensable.

Here the image acquires a liberating side. We can cherish our life without demanding that it remain motionless. We can change without regarding every change as self-betrayal. We can recognize another as equally real, though they see the world quite differently.

And when one wave subsides, the sea need not become still as a whole. Other waves keep rising. In the original conjecture, this means that the ending of one form of consciousness is not equivalent to the disappearance of the supposed common basis. Yet the next question remains acute: if a new wave arises, what would allow us to call it the continuation of this particular one? We will return to that. For now, it is enough to see that the wave was never outside the sea, even when it seemed separate to itself.

III. What a Physical Field Allows Us to Imagine

Modern physics helps us let go of the habit of treating every distinguishable thing as a wholly independent object. But it does not supply a ready-made theory of unified consciousness.

In quantum field theory, elementary particles are described through excitations of their corresponding fields. The Higgs boson, for example, is associated with the Brout–Englert–Higgs field; this is how CERN explains the connection. The familiar image of a small independent ball proves insufficient: describing the particle requires speaking of the field as well. There are multiple fields, however. Physical theory does not assert that all particles are folds of one conscious substance.

The vacuum in this language is likewise not philosophical nothingness. In a simple account, it is the lowest-energy state of a field. It has structure and quantum properties. David Tong's lectures consider vacuum and particles within one theory. Under appropriate physical conditions, particles can be created. But this occurs in a world where fields already exist and physical laws operate. The phrase “particles are born from emptiness” can therefore mislead: “emptiness” here does not mean the absolute absence of everything.

Still, this imaginative shift matters. We habitually begin with an object, then ask what it is connected to. A field allows us to begin with a basis and ask under what conditions it appears in a particular way. Encountering that approach prompted my thought about consciousness.

What if something similar happens with experience? What if birth brings forth a particular way of feeling, while the possibility of consciousness belongs to reality's deeper structure? In such a conjecture, an all-pervading basis need not have human thoughts everywhere. Where conditions for a particular perspective are absent, there may be no name, biography, or observer resembling us.

Here “field” denotes a supposed continuity and commonality of the basis. To become a physical term, it would need defined quantities, laws connecting it with matter, and testable predictions. Until those exist, the field image remains a philosophical proposal. Comparing it to a wave does not change that. We have not discovered a frequency of the soul, a wavelength of personality, or an instrument that measures them. For now, the image helps ask how difference is possible without complete separation.

IV. Why I Do Not Feel Your Pain from Within

The hardest part of the hypothesis begins where a unified basis must explain a multitude of separate experiencing beings. One common fabric is not enough.

A related approach in philosophy is called cosmopsychism. In a 2015 article, Itay Shani proposes considering cosmic consciousness as the basis of individual consciousnesses. Usually we ask how a conscious being arises from many parts. Here the question is reversed: how do separate “I”s arise from the conscious nature of the whole?

For my thought, the word “one” matters. Two glasses can be made from the same kind of glass while remaining different objects. If all consciousnesses merely share a nature, that does not yet imply one conscious whole. The fold hypothesis proposes more: not only similarity of material but a common basis itself. This additional step is precisely what needs arguments.

Imagine two close people talking after a difficult day. One says, “You understand what it was like for me.” The other understands the circumstances, guesses the feelings, remembers something similar. But the first person's pain does not migrate into the other together with its immediacy. There are still two histories of experience in the room. Even great sympathy does not make them one.

Thomas Nagel's question, “What Is It Like to Be a Bat?”, helps reveal this feature: experience is given to a creature from its own perspective. Describing behavior and bodily organization does not equal having its experience. In “Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness,” David Chalmers separates explaining functions from asking why their performance is accompanied by subjective experience.

But the fact that this question remains unresolved does not prove my particular hypothesis. It leaves room for competing explanations. Cosmopsychism must show how separate centers of experience arise from a common basis and why their contents do not become publicly accessible.

Here the sea can even mislead the imagination. In an ordinary sea, movements meet and affect one another; nothing in this explains why conscious “waves” should have private inner worlds. Why do I know my pain directly, while I can learn of yours only through encountering you? A

beautiful overall picture leaves this most personal question open. Further progress requires explaining the boundary between experiences.

V. The Ego Begins with “Mine”

When I say “I am in pain,” I already distinguish myself from another. But this contains no selfishness yet. A sense of a separate “I” helps establish who needs help, who wants what, and who is responsible for what. It does not by itself compel us to place ourselves above everyone else.

In chapter nine of *The Principles of Psychology*, William James observes: “My thought belongs with my other thoughts.” He describes the personal character of the stream of consciousness. My memories connect with my expectations; my pain changes my actions. James here strengthens the difficulty for unified consciousness: another person's thoughts do not enter my stream merely because we sit beside each other.

Shaun Gallagher offers a useful distinction between the minimal and narrative self. The first is the immediate sense: I see, I move, this is happening to me. The second is the story of who I am, who I was, and who I hope to become. Feeling my hand move and considering myself someone who “never gives up” are not the same. In ordinary life both layers are closely intertwined, but distinguishing them removes some unnecessary vagueness from “ego.”

Even the sense of bodily ownership is not entirely fixed. In their well-known 1998 study, Matthew Botvinick and Jonathan Cohen investigated the rubber-hand illusion: coordinated touches to a visible artificial hand and a hidden real hand can produce a feeling that the artificial hand belongs to one's own body. This is a narrow experiment about bodily perception, not the discovery of consciousness entering a common field.

In the fold image, one's own perspective is necessary. Otherwise we could not distinguish who is hurting, who promised to come, who is tired, who needs help. The error begins with a stronger conclusion: because the experience is mine, all life must exist primarily to serve me.

Suppose someone hears a partner say, “Today I want to be alone.” This can be received as information about another person's state. Or it can immediately become proof of one's own unimportance, followed by a demand for refutation. In the second case, the other becomes an instrument for maintaining my self-image.

The fold seems to be trying to prove its right to exist through its own height. Being is not enough; it needs to be higher. Yet a hypothesis of unity does not imply that a person must be forcibly flattened. The task is more modest: notice the moment the useful feeling “this is happening to me” turns into the demand “everything should happen for my sake.”

VI. What Sustains the Form

If a fold of consciousness exists through conditions, the body and brain must occupy a central place in this hypothesis. Calling them an outer shell for a ready-made observer would be too easy.

Recall how differently the same conversation can feel when you have slept well and when you can barely stay on your feet. The other person's words are the same, but the patience, attention, and energy available to hear them can be very different. This everyday example does not solve consciousness's mystery, but brings the body back to the center of the discussion. In my hypothesis, it helps shape experience: which sensations are available, what is remembered, how events are connected. Changes in brain function therefore concern the form of experience itself.

In a 2015 study, Michael Schartner and colleagues analyzed EEG recordings from seven participants receiving propofol. The complexity measures studied were lower in the state the researchers classified as loss of consciousness than during wakefulness. The small sample and specific protocol limit generalization. Yet the result itself shows how concretely the relationship between a person's state and the organization of brain activity can be investigated.

Another approach appears in Adenauer Casali and colleagues' 2013 work: they proposed an index of the complexity of the brain's response to magnetic stimulation. Here observations can be compared: how complex the brain's response is, and how it changes across different states. They are not measuring how much supposed cosmic consciousness a person contains.

There are several theories. Anil Seth and Tim Bayne compare four influential approaches and discuss how to make their testing more informative. For example, Oizumi, Albantakis, and Tononi's integrated information theory proposes a particular connection between experience and a system's causal organization. It is an independent theoretical program, not identical to a unified-field conjecture.

What interests me is the shift from “Where is consciousness stored?” to “What makes a particular experience possible?” Finding a place is not enough. We need to understand how sensations form one experienced world, memories connect, and one's own pain differs from a report of another's. For the wave image, this is decisive: what sustains it as one life from within?

The model of the brain as a “receiver” would also require explanation: what it receives, how it interacts with the basis, and how its predictions differ from other models. Without that, a familiar technical word merely moves the mystery up one level.

The fold image therefore preserves the body's role in full. When the conditions of the form change, its manifestation changes. Which metaphysics best explains this dependence is a separate task. One successful comparison cannot settle it.

VII. Kindred Images and Uncomfortable Differences

The idea of forms arising from a common basis appears in different traditions. But their differences are precisely what help me understand what I myself am claiming.

In the sixth part of the *Chandogya Upanishad*, Uddalaka explains to Shvetaketu the connection between many clay objects and clay. Different names do not cancel the shared basis. Later comes *tat tvam asi*: “You are That.” This is a religious and philosophical text important for subsequent Vedanta. It cannot be translated without remainder into the language of a physical field, but the closeness of the question of form and basis is evident.

In Part I of the *Ethics*, Spinoza writes: “Whatever exists, exists in God.” Individual things are understood as modes: particular states of a single substance. Yet Spinoza's God is not a human being enlarged to the world's dimensions. Nor does his system reduce to saying the universe thinks in the same way I do.

A different image appears in the chapter on Adam in Ibn Arabi's *The Bezels of Wisdom*: the world is compared to a mirror, and the human being to its polishing. This image speaks of divine self-disclosure. The human being matters as a participant in that disclosure, not merely as another separate thing. The thought resonates with my question, although its theological meaning is much more determinate than the field image.

The Buddhist text SN 22.59 offers useful resistance to these comparisons. Form, feeling, perception, volitional formations, and consciousness are considered through *anattā*, “not-self”: “This is not mine; this is not me; this is not my self.” Refusing to regard experiences as a permanent owner does not require positing a universal eternal Self behind them. Buddhism therefore cannot simply be added to a list of confirmations of cosmopsychism.

Plotinus also prevents us from too quickly declaring every basis the same. His One precedes Intellect; it is not a gigantic instance of the thinking familiar to us. The epigraph matters precisely because of its second half: the source does not coincide with any individual thing.

The point of convergence becomes more precise if the answers remain different. These texts invite reconsideration of the separate “I”'s self-sufficiency. After that reconsideration, however, they lead in different directions. My fold image enters into conversation with them; it does not automatically inherit their authority.

VIII. When the Fold Unfolds

Within the proposed hypothesis, death means the ending of the conditions for an individual experience. The form is no longer sustained, but the question of its basis remains open.

It is easy to say here that consciousness has returned to the field. But imagine a wave whose crest has lowered and is no longer distinguishable. At what moment did it return to the sea? There is no such moment: it was the sea's movement all along. The same applies to the fold. The fabric does not take back something that never left it. A particular form ends while others may remain.

I would therefore apply “the field becomes calm” to the ending of this particular manifestation. One wave has subsided; it does not follow that the whole sea has become smooth. Nor does “an unmanifest state” mean that somewhere a person has been preserved, lying in darkness and resting until a new birth. I am supposing the absence of this particular perspective. Whether the basis itself experiences such a state in any way cannot be learned from the image.

What, then, remains of the person? Discussing personal identity in Book II of *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, John Locke connects it with the continuation of consciousness directed toward one's own past actions. Derek Parfit later explores cases in which psychological continuity and strict identity diverge. Their arguments differ, but both help prevent us from conflating the persistence of a basis with the continuation of a particular person.

The question of the soul returns here. If we have called this conscious wave a soul, its further fate remains a separate mystery. The sea's persistence does not yet mean the persistence of every movement within it. We can allow that a common basis may manifest again and still not know whether I will continue in that manifestation.

Suppose a wave rises near the shore resembling the one we followed. A similar shape does not make it the previous wave. Likewise, a new fold in the same fabric does not automatically restore my memories, promises, recognition of loved ones. Personal continuation requires a connection between lives that our metaphor does not yet reveal. Here two hopes diverge: that the capacity for experience should not be exhausted by one life, and that my own particular story should continue.

In his *Letter to Menoeceus*, Epicurus offers another move: “Death is nothing to us,” because he connects good and evil with sensation. This is a philosophical argument about the fear of death, not proof of another birth. Nor does it cancel the pain of those left behind.

After a loss, someone's favorite cup may remain on the table. You turn by habit to say something to them, and only then remember there is no one to tell. At that moment you need

precisely that encounter, precisely that voice. Even if one basis stands behind all lives, another person will not automatically take that place. The wave image is meaningful only as long as it helps us value a life's uniqueness rather than dismiss it with words about an infinite sea.

IX. A Pause with No One to Measure It

A strange question now arises: how long must consciousness wait for another manifestation? The first thought is: even billions of years would do, if no one feels them passing. But two different suppositions hide here: that waiting is not experienced, and that time itself does not exist for the basis. The second is far bolder than the first.

Here even the sea image must be loosened a little. Ordinary waves rise one after another in time. If I allow a timeless basis, I cannot simply transfer that whole order onto it. The wave helped imagine form's relation to the whole; the whole's absence of time is an additional conjecture it does not prove.

First, though, it helps to separate this from something more familiar: the absence of experienced duration. A person may not remember an interval of sleep or anesthesia. Time nevertheless passed for clocks, doctors, and the surrounding world. A gap in experience does not prove time was absent; lack of memory by itself does not even prove complete absence of experience.

In Book XI of the *Confessions*, Augustine states the difficulty: “What, then, is time? If no one asks me, I know.” He explores memory, expectation, and the present while distinguishing human time from divine eternity. This is a theological and philosophical discussion, not a measurement of consciousness's hidden nature.

In Book V of Boethius's *The Consolation of Philosophy*, eternity likewise differs from an infinitely long life. Continuing without end and possessing life outside the successive passage of its moments are different ideas. Even an infinite clock remains a clock.

The expression “the field keeps trying possibilities for an infinitely long time” therefore contradicts the supposition that it has no time at all. Trying possibilities already implies order: this option, then another. To preserve the original intuition, change can be assigned to the world of conditions. Forms arise and disappear within it. The basis need not experience the intervals between them.

A possible new manifestation would then not be preceded by a subjective wait lasting billions of years. But “immediately” must also be used carefully: it ordinarily connects two events for one observer. Here neither the persistence of such an observer nor the existence of a second event has been established.

I can preserve the conjecture's core this way: if a new experience arises, and there is no one to experience time between manifestations, that interval will not be a long wait for anyone. But the first “if” does not disappear. The absence of waiting does not create the next event. We simply stop depicting absence of experience as an endless night someone must endure.

X. Probability Does Not Accumulate Like Water

The thought of infinitely many opportunities tempts us toward certainty: eventually a suitable form must arise. Yet the conclusion depends on how those opportunities work.

Imagine a bag from which a ball is drawn repeatedly, each time being returned and the contents mixed. If the chance of drawing the desired ball remains the same and the attempts are independent, repetition increases the chance of at least one success. Mathematically: if the probability of success on one attempt is *p*, the probability of at least one success in *n* attempts is 1 - (1 - p)^n. For *p* greater than zero, as *n* increases without bound this quantity approaches one. This follows from the rules of independence explained, for example, in MIT's probability course. The model gives a probabilistic result; it does not appoint a time for a future event.

We cannot silently assume all these conditions in the history of the universe. It is unknown whether infinitely many suitable trials exist, whether the necessary states are accessible, and whether the chance of their occurrence persists. Vast duration alone does not turn the impossible into the possible. Outside time, sequential attempts cannot even be discussed without further explanation.

I would therefore revise the image of a “critical probability.” Probability describes an event's possibility within a model; it is not a reservoir filling to the brim until consciousness springs out. A manifestation may indeed require a particular threshold of organization. But an organizational threshold and a high probability are different concepts. To discuss the former concretely, we must name the property that changes and how it can be measured.

The intuition nevertheless remains: where sufficient conditions arise, a perspective of experience may appear. In this formulation, interest shifts from imaginary cosmic clocks to the conditions of form. What connections must be sustained? How does the unity of experience arise? Why are some processes experienced and others, presumably, not? Here the metaphor gains a possible continuation in inquiry.

The hand lifting the fabric remains. Perhaps forms arise through reality's own regularities. Perhaps chance plays a part. Or perhaps the basis has a directedness appropriately called will. Yet the capacity to feel does not itself imply an intention to create this particular life. A separate argument is needed between them.

In this respect, a wave is even more convenient than a fold: imagining it does not immediately require a hand above the surface. The sea's own movement is enough. This does not prove the absence of design. It simply avoids settling the creator question with a careless gesture of our imagination.

XI. What This Means in Practice

After all this reasoning, I want to return from the boundless field to an ordinary day. A message arrives on the phone. Someone in the kitchen is waiting for an answer. A difficult conversation lies ahead this evening. What does the wave image change here, where the task is not to explain the universe but to be beside a particular person?

Suppose an acquaintance replies sharply to an innocuous message. The first interpretation arrives quickly: they are treating me with contempt. The fold image invites a moment's pause. They have an inner world, part of which is unavailable to me now. This does not excuse every sharp reply. But it allows a response to the real situation, after clarifying it, instead of arguing with my own guess about someone else's intention.

In “Genjokoan,” Dogen offers the formulation: “To study oneself is to forget oneself.” Within Zen, it concerns practice and release from self-fixation. In everyday life, I read it this way: sometimes we can stop testing every event with “What does this say about me?” and notice what is happening to another. This is no obligation to disappear for someone else's convenience.

Compassion requires no preliminary proof of a unified consciousness at all. In Helen Weng and colleagues' study, after two weeks of compassion training, participants showed more altruistic behavior in an experimental game than an active comparison group. This is a limited result from a particular study, not a promise of overall transformation. It merely reminds us that our relation to another's experience can be investigated and developed through actions.

For myself, I would retain three simple questions. What is actually happening to me now? What part of the other person's story do I not yet know? What action takes their experience into account while preserving my responsibility for my own boundaries? Sometimes that action will be care, sometimes clarification, sometimes refusal. A common basis, if it exists, gives nobody the right to direct another person's life.

It is especially important not to tell someone grieving that their pain is an illusion of separateness. A concrete experience does not become insignificant because we allow that it may relate to a whole. Fabric does not cancel the fold; the sea does not cancel the wave. If “soul” names this unique life from within, treating it as unimportant is particularly strange. Possible eternity does not replace a conversation we can still have today.

I return to the morning's image. At first there was a fold that received a name. Now I also see a wave in it: changing, responding to encounters, carrying its history, unable to hold every moment forever. Perhaps such a life's task is neither to flatten itself prematurely nor to become an immovable monument to its own personality. We can learn to live our uniqueness: care, refuse, love, reconsider what we were certain of.

I like the thought that belonging to the whole does not require disappearing first. While a wave exists, its movement matters. While someone is alive, what happens to them and between them and others matters. Even if the sea someday takes a wholly different form, this possibility of life is given to us now.

I do not know whether consciousness works this way. But my conjecture is clearer now: perhaps the separate “I” is a way in which the One becomes someone's life. If so, we need not someday earn a return to unity. Perhaps we never left it—we simply learned to recognize ourselves by the contours of our own wave.

Key Quotation

> *Everything living in time moves from past to future; nothing situated in time can embrace its whole life at once.*
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> *Boethius, The Consolation of Philosophy, V, prose 6. The Russian fragment was translated from the English translation by I. T. (1609), revised by H. F. Stewart, 1918 edition; this wording follows the supplied Russian. Text.*

Connections Between Traditions and Research

Shared Question	Comparison	What Converges and Where the Boundary Remains
How does form relate to its basis?	Clay in the Chandogya; Spinoza's modes; fold and wave	Distinguishability is not independence. A religious basis, substance, and a consciousness hypothesis are not identical.
How does the One allow the many?	Plotinus's One; Ibn Arabi's mirror; Shani's cosmopsychism	A shared question of manifestation. Each author has a distinct metaphysics; Plotinus's One is beyond Intellect.
Why does experience belong to someone?	James's stream; Nagel's perspective; Gallagher's minimal self	The personal givenness of experience needs explanation. It proves neither a common subject nor independent souls.
What sustains a particular state?	Schartner's EEG; Casali's index; Oizumi and colleagues' theory	The organization of brain processes matters for consciousness research. None of these methods measures a “cosmic field.”
What does loosening separateness mean?	“You are That”; Buddhist anattā; Dogen's practice	Reconsidering habitual self-identification. Vedanta's eternal basis and Buddhist not-self remain different.
What might continue?	Locke's identity; Parfit's continuity; soul as a conscious wave	A basis persisting and a similar wave appearing do not yet imply continuation of this soul or person.
Is eternity a great deal of time?	Augustine; Boethius; a timeless-basis hypothesis	Absence of succession differs from infinite duration. Another birth does not follow from it.

Primary Texts and Research

The links lead to texts, authors' works, scientific publications, and the specified translations. The Russian archive reports that relevant passages of large books were checked and identifies cases where access was limited to an abstract. Its short Russian quotations were translated from the listed English texts, not presented as quotations from published Russian translations. The reading details below preserve that historical report: they are **not new reading or verification claims by this translation session**. English quotations follow the supplied Russian wording.

1. **Plotinus. The Six Enneads, V.1–2.** Stephen MacKenna translation. The One, Intellect, and the origin of multiplicity; epigraph and section VII. Archive report: relevant passages checked.

2. **CERN. Where does the Higgs boson come from?** Physical relationship between the boson and Higgs field; section III. Archive report: CERN material read, not a philosophical interpretation.

3. **David Tong. Lectures on Quantum Field Theory.** University of Cambridge course; sections on quantization, vacuum, and particles. Physical frame of section III. Archive report: PDF access through the web tool was unstable; course index and accessible excerpts checked.

4. **Itay Shani. Cosmopsychism: A Holistic Approach to the Metaphysics of Experience.** Philosophical Papers, 44(3), 389–437, 2015. Archive report: publisher abstract checked; only its initial position used, section IV.

5. **Thomas Nagel. What Is It Like to Be a Bat?** The Philosophical Review, 83(4), 435–450, 1974. Subjective perspective; section IV. Archive report: article text in university copy checked.

6. **David J. Chalmers. Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness.** Journal of Consciousness Studies, 2(3), 200–219, 1995. Distinguishing functions and subjective experience; section IV. Author's full version identified in the archive.

7. **William James. The Principles of Psychology, vol. I, chapter IX.** 1890. Personal character of the stream of thought; section V. Archive report: relevant section, including quotation context, checked.

8. **Shaun Gallagher. Philosophical conceptions of the self: implications for cognitive science.** Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 4(1), 14–21, 2000. Minimal and narrative self; section V. Archive report: indexed abstract checked, full text not checked.

9. **Matthew Botvinick, Jonathan Cohen. Rubber hands ‘feel’ touch that eyes see.** Nature, 391, 756, 1998. Bodily self-attribution; section V. Archive report: publisher abstract checked; quantitative effects not recounted.

10. **Michael Schartner et al. Complexity of Multi-Dimensional Spontaneous EEG Decreases during Propofol Induced General Anaesthesia.** PLOS ONE, 10(8), e0133532, 2015. Seven participants, EEG complexity measures; section VI. Archive report: methods, results, and Figure 7 checked.

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12. **Anil K. Seth, Tim Bayne. Theories of consciousness.** Nature Reviews Neuroscience, 23, 439–452, 2022. Comparison of four theoretical approaches; section VI. Archive report: accessible abstract and glossary checked. A review, not a separate experiment.

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Tags

consciousness, unified consciousness, field of consciousness, cosmopsychism, philosophy of mind, subjective experience, perspective, individuality, personhood, ego, selfishness, embodiment, brain, neuroscience, quantum field theory, vacuum, metaphor, unity, nonduality, Vedanta, Upanishads, Buddhism, anattā, Spinoza, Plotinus, Ibn Arabi, Dogen, death, personal identity, time, eternity, probability, compassion, personal boundaries, wave, soul, United Wisdom

About the Authors

Andrey Zarinsh is the author and founder of United Wisdom. He explores inner transformation, the unity of traditions, intercultural dialogue, and contemporary spiritual discipline.

Instagram: @andrey.zarinsh

Maria Evilkut is a coauthor of United Wisdom. Alongside her research, she seeks to test these ideas in practice and observe how principles of unity and mutual understanding work in real life between people and cultures.

Instagram: @ilkutki

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