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ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM OF CONSCIOUSNESS USING THE LAW OF THE ABSENCE OF ABSOLUTE NOTHINGNESS

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Abstract

Mystical and psychedelic experiences induce extraordinary states of consciousness They are therefore special states. These experiences offer valuable insights into the source of consciousness, a central issue in the philosophy of mind. Because, logically, if a subject contains certain number of specific states, focusing on them enhances the likelihood of finding a solution. Unraveling the source of consciousness involves addressing fundamental ontological questions. Why does everything exist? Could there have been such a thing as nothing existing?What is the source of existence? Of course, it is also consciousness that asks such questions and seeks answers. Thus, this study presents a philosophical perspective. This philosophy is based on the laws of emergence from essence, the presence of inexhaustible potential, and the absence of absolute nothingness. These laws are supported by both logical reasoning and observational evidence, similar to the cause-effect relationship. They collectively demonstrate that the answer to the three fundamental ontological questions lies in the same principle: Absolute nothingness has never existed and can never exist.

Keywords: *Psychedelics, Mystical experiences, Consciousness, Islam, Taoism.*

MUTLAK HİÇLİĞİN YOKLUĞU YASASI KULLANILARAK BİLİNÇ SORUNSALININ ANALİZ EDİLMESİ

Öz

Mistik Deneyimler ve Psikedelik Deneyimler, olağanüstü bilinç durumlarına yol açan özel durum deneyimleridir. Bu nedenle, zihin felsefesinde problemli bir konu olan bilincin kaynağı sorunsalını çözmeye önemli ölçüde katkıda bulunabilirler. Çünkü mantıksal olarak, ele alınan bir konu içinde önemli sayıda özel durum mevcut olduğunda, çözüm için araştırmayı bu özel durumlara odaklamak faydalı olabilir. Bilincin kaynağını çözme girişimi, şu derin ontolojik soruların yanıtlanması arayışıyla ilişkilidir: Her şey nasıl ve neden var oldu? Hiçbir şey var olmasa olmaz mıydı? Varlığın kaynağı nedir? Elbette, bu tür soruları soran ve yanıt arayan da bilinçtir. Bu nedenlerden dolayı, doğal olarak bu çalışma, bir felsefi görüş sunma girişimi haline gelmiştir. Bu felsefe, sırasıyla, özden oluş, tükenmez potansiyelin varlığı ve mutlak hiçliğin yokluğu yasalarına dayanmaktadır. Bu yasalar, en az neden- sonuç ilişkisi kadar hem mantıksal hem de gözlemsel hakikatlerle sürekli

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ispatlanmakta ve aslında yukarıdaki üç temel sorunun da cevabının aynı hakikatte olduğunu göstermektedir: Mutlak hiçliğin hiç olmamış ve hiç olamayacak bir şey olması hakikati.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Psikedelikler, Mistik deneyimler, Bilinç, İslam, Taoizm*.

Introduction

Understanding consciousness has been a central question in philosophy and science. This interdisciplinary pursuit has led to ongoing debates across multiple fields. At the outset, this paper focuses on scientific data and philosophical implications, asked whether consciousness is an emergent property of the brain or an intrinsic aspect of existence. The findings suggest that while neuroscientific explanations provide valuable insights, they may not fully account for the depth of mystical experiences (ME) and psychedelic experiences (PE). These experiences point toward a broader conceptualization of consciousness, one that transcends purely materialist interpretations. For this teason, this study has focused on the intersection of ME and philosophical perspectives on consciousness. While many questions remain, the findings highlight the need for a broader framework that integrates both subjective and scientific perspectives on consciousness. ME are commonly described as states of unity, ineffability, and deep personal transformation. Across various religious traditions, these experiences are regarded as profound sources of wisdom and insight. Recent neuroscientific research suggests that such states correlate with altered neural activity, indicating a possible link between spiritual experiences and brain function. This intersection of spirituality and science raises important questions about the nature of consciousness, which will be explored in the following section. Psychedelics, on the other hand, alter perception and self-awareness, providing insights into the nature of consciousness. Some religious views related to ME and PE enable inferences to be made about levels of consciousness. For example, Taoist philosophy examines altered states of perception, though it primarily does so through meditative practices rather than external substances. This parallel suggests a deeper connection between traditional spiritual methodologies and contemporary psychedelic research. This study is based on such data and inferences, argues that consciousness cannot be reduced to neurobiological mechanisms alone, and that by drawing on ME and PE and metaphysical traditions, consciousness is a fundamental component of reality. Because the fact that consciousness is not merely a byproduct of neurobiological activities may be an indication that it is a fundamental aspect of existence. By examining mystical and psychedelic experiences through the lens of Islamic and Taoist philosophies, this study seeks to demonstrate that the source of consciousness is inherently metaphysical.

Recent studies in the literature on neuroscientific perspectives on consciousness and PE suggest that the therapeutic effects of psychedelics may

be mediated through ME (Letheby, 2021; Athéa, 2023). While some researchers argue that MEs provide profound insights beyond traditional naturalistic perspectives (Koç, 2024a), others contend that these experiences might be neurobiologically explainable as transient disruptions in default cognitive functions (Carhart-Harris, 2019). This debate highlights the need for a deeper philosophical analysis of whether MEs reflect an independent metaphysical reality or are merely the result of altered brain states. Recent studies suggest that classical psychedelics, such as LSD, psilocybin, DMT, and mescaline, influence brain function through serotonin 2-a and 5-HT2A receptors (Athéa, 2023). This mechanism has led to increasing interest from researchers across psychiatry, psychology, and neuroscience. Psychedelics are being explored as potential treatments for depression, addiction, and anxiety, offering advantages over conventional therapies in terms of speed and efficacy (Nutt and Carhart-Harris, 2021; Andersen et al., 2021). However, despite these promising findings, the exact nature of their therapeutic effects and long-term consequences remain subjects of ongoing debate. Under controlled conditions, psychedelics induce intense yet brief conscious experiences that lead to significant therapeutic benefits (Letheby, 2021). Patients frequently describe Psychedelic Experiences (PE) as 'mystical' or 'spiritual' (Lutkajtis, 2021). Empirical studies confirm that these effects arise through ME (Letheby, 2021; Athéa, 2023). Experimental evidence and philosophical perspectives suggest that the core mechanism of psychedelic therapy is the alteration of the 'sense of self' through ME. (Taves, 2020). People who experience ME during the effects of such substances tend to be those who experience lasting benefits (Letheby, 2021). The existence of this pattern has even led to the formulation of the soothing delusion objection in the literature (Martin & Sterzer, 2022).

Since ancient times, natural psychedelics have been used in rituals to access transcendent consciousness (Richards, 2015; Wittmann, 2018). Shamanism and Animism similarly attribute special significance to ME and PE (Koç, 2022). For, psychedelic substances can influence the brain's gateways and connections. The Default Mode Network (DMN) can deactivate, especially during psychedelic experiences. Carhart-Harris (2019) suggests that psychedelics reduce the functioning of the DMN, allowing ego dissolution. However, critics argue that these effects do not necessarily indicate a fundamental shift in consciousness (e.g., Letheby, 2021). The deactivation of the DMN may help individuals detach from ego-related concerns and transition into a broader state of awareness. In other words, it can facilitate the transition from the superficial realm mentioned in discussed below and Taoism to essential self-awareness.Researchers found that disruptions in internal brain networks enhance global functional integration (Carhart-Harris, 2019). Emerging findings indicate that disruptions in the DMN are related to increased global connectivity and neuroplastic functions (Ly et al., 2018). These are fundamental factors in the therapeutic effects of psychedelics (Nutt, 2019).

The term psychedelic, first used by Humphry Osmond (1957), means 'manifestation of the mind'. It is a combination of the Greek words psyche and deloun (manifestation). This term aptly reflects the idea that these substances enhance perception, reveal latent mental processes, and amplify cognitive potential. Because of these connections, psychedelics are often described as amplifiers of consciousness. (Schneider, 1967; Lee and Shlain, 1992; Higgs, 2006; Grof, 2008). Similarly, Richard Dolye suggests the term "ecodelics" to describe psychedelics as substances that emphasize or magnify the importance of external objects (Hartogsohn, 2018). What these overlapping terms have in common is that they suggest psychedelics intensify mental phenomena. Things upon which consciousness intensifies appear to be larger, broader, and more dramatic than others (Strassman et al., 2008). These situations, which can lead to psychospiritual experiences, have the potential to direct individuals towards deepening their spiritual dimensions and seeking meaning. For it allows the individual to experience oneself and one's connection with others at a deeper level. This facilitates the experience of psychospiritual growth and development. As a result, individuals may undergo emotional, intellectual, and spiritual deepening, experiencing mystical or transcendental moments.

Both 1960s researchers and contemporary scholars highlight a key feature of psychedelics: their capacity to evoke profoundly meaningful experiences. Griffiths and colleagues (2006), in a study that established a methodological approach to examining the psychological effects of psilocybin on mystical experiences, found that 67% of volunteers evaluated their psilocybin experience as the most meaningful experience of their lives. Leary (2007) and Johnson et al. (2017) documented that 67-86% of those who had psychedelic experiences in a supportive therapeutic setting considered them either one of the top five most meaningful and spiritually significant experiences of their lives or the single most meaningful experience. Griffiths and colleagues (2006) found significant increases in personality traits among participants. MacLean and colleagues (2011) identified changes in healthy adults that were much higher than the personality changes typically observed over decades of life experience. The suggestion of personality flexibility supports the claim that psychedelics could offer a new therapy for treatment-resistant mental illnesses. Studies provided evidence that psilocybin-assisted therapies rapidly and enduringly treat anxiety and depressive effects (Carhart-Harris and Goodwin, 2017; Nichols, 2016). The study by Carhart-Harris and colleagues (2018) on psilocybin treatment for treatment-resistant depression was promising. The literature on this topic presents strong evidence for further research, reinforcing the importance of combining psychotherapy with psychedelics (Carhart-Harris et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2008).

PE can contribute to individuals moving away from ordinary thought patterns, delving into deep inner experiences, and seeing events from a different perspective. PE often elicits a sense of sacredness, ineffability, direct intuitive knowledge, and transcendence beyond time and space, fostering deep

peace and joy in users (Winkelman, 2017). PE research, due to these types of unusual consciousness experiences and therapeutic benefits, constitutes a rapidly developing field of research internationally (Andrews and Wright, 2022). At high doses, users often report experiences of a mystical nature and a sense of ego dissolution (Griffiths et al., 2006). Psychedelic substances that facilitate access to different layers of consciousness can lead individuals to reassess their relationship with themselves and their surroundings, gaining a broader perspective. Encounters with symbols, metaphors, mythological images, or semantically loaded experiences may occur. Psychedelics can induce dream-like experiences filled with hallucinations, strange visions, synesthesia, childhood memories, and personal revelations. Although these compounds stand in stark contrast to traditional psychiatric pharmacology aimed at normalizing mood, researchers suggest that it is precisely these profound and extraordinary subjective experiences that underpin the therapeutic mechanism (Yaden and Griffiths, 2016). Because phenomenologically, individuals can engage in transcendental and psychospiritual experiences during psychedelic therapy. These experiences may include cosmic consciousness and spiritual discoveries. Psychedelics, which can cause users to experience transcendental or mystical experiences, can contribute to the individual's understanding of himself, the universe, and his relationship with the universe from a greater perspective. Psychedelic therapies can lead to explorations of existential questions and metaphysical matters, including topics such as death, time, energy, and consciousness.

It is important to increase academic studies on philosophical approaches to mystical and psychedelic experiences in the literature. In the intricate fabric of human understanding, science and philosophy have long occupied separate yet interconnected domains. While science attempts to uncover empirical truths about the world, philosophy investigates the fundamental nature of reality, knowledge, and existence. Despite being perceived differently, the disciplines of science and philosophy have fundamentally influenced and shaped each other under a complex network of relationships (Zhong, 2023). In this context, ME and PE should be examined from a philosophical perspective, and theoretical studies should be conducted (Koç, 2024a).

A key challenge in studying consciousness is reconciling its subjective nature with the objective constraints of neurobiological models. This character is not actually produced by intra-plane neurobiological mechanisms; it takes shape, evolves, but derives its primary source from a metaphysical plane. Over the past three decades, comprehensive theories of consciousness have been proposed to overcome this fundamental challenge. Below, some of these theories will be analyzed in relation to each other and the first steps will be taken towards creating a thesis that encompasses all of them, which is the aim of the study. Therefore, at this point, it will be useful to express the conclusion reached in the study: This study suggests that consciousness does not originate solely from matter-energy. Instead, it posits that both consciousness and

matter-energy share a common source—one that must inherently be conscious.

Taoism's advice to "see what is non-temporary and non-provisional" parallels the potential of Psychedelic Experiences (PE) to guide individuals in exploring the potentials of the human mind. While the concept of “non-temporal” is more related to time, that is, it emphasizes permanence, the concept of "non-provisional" means not being dependent on conditions, that is, unconditionality or immutability. When these two terms are used together in a Taoist context, they convey a deeper meaning: not being deceived by what is temporary, but grasping what is unchanging in essence and enduring. In other words, it points toward a spiritual or existential truth.Spiritual dimensions are often associated with an individual's deep inner experiences and personal transformation. Psychedelic substances, which can induce changes in consciousness and expand perception, may create phenomena such as more vivid colors, intensified patterns, and heightened sensory perception. Time and space perception can often undergo changes, where minutes might feel like hours. This phenomenon may be explained by the manifestation of universal consciousness as an entity independent of matter and energy. Since time arises from changes in matter and energy, any existence beyond these must inherently transcend time. Inevitably, the state in which consciousness becomes open to universal cognitive states that are independent of time and space will alter the perception of time and space. In Hua Hu Ching, the universal consciousness that is present in every moment and place due to its emanation from the absolute existence is expressed as follows (Tzu, 1992): "How can Divine Unity be seen? It is always present and always ready. If you want to live with it, you will see it everywhere, even in the most ordinary things. Tao does not come and go. It is always everywhere. Just like the skies. If your mind is cloudy, you cannot see it. But that doesn't mean it's not there."

It is also important to look at religious and cultural interpretations of ME and PE in the literature. It is known from archaeological data that PE have occurred throughout human history and left similar traces in different geographies (Koç, 2024b). For example, indigenous tribes living in the Amazon rainforest used ayahuasca, a psychoactive beverage, to expand their perception of the spiritual world (Şahin, 2021). Shamans used ayahuasca in their rituals for various purposes, such as magic, prophecy, and the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Similarly, there is evidence that psychoactive plants were used in rituals in Mesopotamia and Anatolia. These plants are known for their psychedelic effects that affect the human central nervous system and cause unconscious delusions. The use of such plants dates back to ancient history. They have played roles in healing practices, cultural rituals, and religious ceremonies (Koç, 2025). In addition, archaeological sites such as Göbekli Tepe provide clues about the ritual use of psychedelic substances in prehistoric societies. The hypothesis that Göbekli Tepe was a place of worship

suggests that such substances may have been used to deepen spiritual experiences (Bakırcı, 2019).

ME are deep inner experiences that go beyond the limits of the naturalistic perspective of traditional knowledge, aiming to conceptually understand the universe (Koç, 2024a). They can be characterized by the transcendence of time and space, a sense of sacredness, indescribability, paradoxicality, and deeply felt positive moods (Letheby, 2022). Such experiences have been expressed in various traditions with terms like "Samadhi" in Hinduism (Vimal, 2009), "Satori" in Buddhism (Cho & Youn, 2011), "Mystical Union" in Christianity (Grobien, 2023), and "Fana-Fillah" in Islam (Nizami, 2002). The study of meditation and psychedelic use allows for the integration of philosophical insights across various traditions, including Sufism, Hasidic spirituality, Christian mysticism, and Eastern belief systems. This interdisciplinary approach aligns with the broader aims of naturalist science. (Koç, 2024a).

In this study, examples from the mystical-based philosophical implications of Islam and Taoism will be presented for now. In Taoism, the verse 'When names are born/ It is time to stop/ Knowing how to stop prevents evil' highlights the inherent duality of existence, where good and evil coexist. In Taoist terms, this is the realm where 'yin and yang' govern. This reality can only be known as emptiness from the perspective of beings that have focused their consciousness on the superficial realm. However, beneath this apparent superficial realm, there is a reality that is inherent in this realm but at the same time transcendent of the realms. "The Way is like an empty bowl / Yet it may be used and never filled / It stays in the background and nourishes all things." However, this emptiness actually, on the contrary, indicates an absolute existence. The state of emptiness mentioned is also reflected in the Tao Te Ching with the following verses (Tzu, 2009):

"The space between the sky and the earth is like a bellows. It is empty but inexhaustible, producing more as it is used up." “Thirty arrows meet in a center/ What makes the wheel useful/ It is where there are no arrows/ The potter's wheel makes the pot/ What makes the pot useful/ It is the space inside/ There is no room without doors and windows/ What makes sitting possible/ It is the space in the room.” In the words of Taoism, the way to reach the utmost of emptiness and cling single-mindedly to interior peace (Tzu, 1992) involves stopping the mind from focusing on this world of occurrences that we perceive. In this state, relative consciousness will flow into a more universal consciousness, that is, to its source, which is essentially what meditation techniques aim to achieve. The concepts of nirvana in Buddhism and fanafillah in Sufism are also based on this truth.

In Taoism, stopping the mind halts the activity sustaining duality. As action ceases, existence also mentally freezes, revealing the essential dimension. According to Taoist interpretations, without the empty space where the spokes of the wheel meet, or the emptiness enclosed by the walls of

a room, the wheel and the room would have no use. Hence, "existence and non-existence give birth to each other" (Tzu, 1992) and are interdependent. Existence takes on specific forms at certain times, with observable elements, while non-existence is associated with the intrinsic, hidden potential within the essence of the observable and the universe of possibilities. Therefore, existence is understood through the rational state of the mind, i.e., consciousness shaped by logic and intelligence, while non-existence or essence is comprehended through pure reason and intuitive understanding. The consciousness that embraces everything in the Tao surpasses the limitations of the human mind. In Taoist thought, the mind dies, but consciousness lives. So, in the worldly life, consciousness shaped by logic returns to its original formlessness beyond death. This suggests the possibility of pure consciousness persisting beyond bodily constraints. For this reason, "the wise one makes the eternally living effective in his existence, not the one who is going to die." Because, "The Way is infinite. The death of the body does not obstruct the Way."

The following Quranic verse appears to describe individuals in a conventional state of consciousness: "Those whose eyes were veiled from my remembrance and could not hear a sound." (Quran, 18/101), Phenomenologically, PE lifts this veil, so to speak, by creating experiences of ego dissolution and unity. An individual can experience themselves as a whole with the universe, and ego boundaries may weaken. This phenomenon can offer new perspectives in understanding and addressing the challenging problem of consciousness.

The perception of cosmic consciousness mentioned above and emerging with PE, aligns with the Qur'an's assertion: 'To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Allah encompasses everything in His knowledge.' (4/126). When the situation of Allah encompassing everything is considered together with the fact that Allah is rich from the worlds and does not need anything (3/97; 4/131; 6/14; 39/7; 10/68; 35/15; 22/64), it means that God surrounds the thing in a transcendental and immanent way. According to Islamic philosophy, Allah is present in place, distant from place, and without place. Because He is both transcendent and immanent. His transcendence is with his essence, his immanence is with his knowledge. This means that the Absolute Pure Existence manifests in its consciousness the existence of the worlds, not in its own existence. Therefore: "My Lord has encompassed everything in the form of knowledge." (6/80) "He encompasses everything in the form of knowledge." (20/98) "You too should know that Allah has complete power over everything and that He encompasses everything in His own knowledge, and that nothing can happen outside of His knowledge." (65/12) "Allah's knowledge encompassing everything comes from nothing being hidden from His knowledge, and Allah's encompassing everything includes our actions in a conscious way." (2/284; 3/109) "Therefore, Allah is with us at every moment, and what we conceal from

people cannot be hidden from Allah." (4/108; 57/4) Again, this is because of being an entity as consciousness, encompassing things with an existential consciousness. Therefore, whatever is in the heavens and on the earth belongs to Allah." (10/61; 34/3)

1. CONSCIOUSNESS OF MATTER- ENERGY

Consciousness research is the scene of important discussions in the fields of neuroscience and cognitive science. Chalmers (1996) argues that conscious experiences cannot be reduced to physical processes and suggests that the concept of phenomenal consciousness (qualia) should be considered as a separate category of entity. In this context, ME and PE provide important examples that show that consciousness cannot be explained solely by neurobiological mechanisms. Metzinger (2009) and Varela, Thompson & Rosch (1991) have presented important findings on how ME and PE transform an individual's perception of reality. According to Metzinger, consciousness is an illusion produced entirely by the brain, and psychedelic experiences break this illusion and enable access to different levels of consciousness (Metzinger, 2009). Similarly, Varela and his team argue that bodily awareness and meditation have transformative effects on consciousness (Varela et al., 1991). Experimental studies also show that mystical states of consciousness can be triggered by psychedelics. Pahnke's (1966) "Good Friday Experiment" demonstrated that psilocybin greatly increased ME and that these experiences produced lasting psychological effects. More recent studies have shown that ME suppresses DMN activity in the brain, leading to ego dissolution and radically altering an individual's sense of self (Griffiths et al., 2006). All of these findings emphasize the importance of ME and PE in the study of consciousness. Can consciousness be reduced solely to neurological processes, or are ME phenomena that point to a deeper source of consciousness? This question is a major topic of debate at the intersection of psychedelic research and the philosophy of consciousness.

In answering this question, examining ME and PE as phenomena that defy traditional materialist explanations raises another important question:If consciousness is not merely an emergent property of neural activity, what fundamental principles govern its existence? For to accept that the source of consciousness is not merely neural activity is to say that the real source must be something other than matter-energy. Thus, the investigation of consciousness naturally leads to deeper ontological investigations into the nature of material-energetic existence. Therefore, or rather as a result of this orientation, the following sections of this study will increasingly develop the idea that consciousness is deeply intertwined with metaphysical realities. At this point, the discovery of altered states of awareness has provided a framework for questioning the limitations of physicalist interpretations and has directed the discussion towards a broader ontological analysis. This trajectory will ultimately lead, as in some religious and philosophical

movements throughout human history, to the proposal of the impossibility of absolute nothingness and the necessity of a fundamental, unchanging reality as the source of all existence. But first, in this section, the fundamental aspects of consciousness related to matter-energy will be determined. The next section will examine the metaphysical implications of these findings in more depth, especially in the context of Islamic and Taoist philosophies.

Living beings, as products of matter-energy, exhibit varying levels of consciousness, from implicit and closed states to explicit and open states. States of consciousness can be considered as existing along a spectrum: At one end are implicit and closed states, where awareness is low; at the other end are states of clear awareness and openness to the external world. Here, "explicit" refers to a condition that is clearly expressed, distinct, and outwardly manifested — a state in which conscious awareness is explicitly present. "Open", on the other hand, refers to a mind that is receptive — not closed in on itself, but open to external interactions or internal introspection. Since the source of living beings is matter-energy, the source of consciousness emerging in living beings should also be matter-energy. The only condition for the source of consciousness to be matter-energy is the existence of consciousness potential in matter energy. Otherwise, it means saying that a potential that does not exist in the source has emerged in the quality of the product. However, a quality without potential at its origin cannot come into existence. To claim otherwise would mean stating that quality emerges from non-existence. In this case, by looking at the consciousness in the products, we must say that the presence of consciousness in the source is essential. This implies accepting the existence of an inherent consciousness in matter and its essence energy. However, the problem is whether the energy is self-conscious or whether it derives from another conscious and, in the final analysis, deepest source. I will leave the analysis of this to the next section and continue from the point that energy carries consciousness. In accordance with this acceptance, consciousness has manifested itself implicitly since the first emergence of life. It is enough to look at the studies on bacteria to see this:

Bacteria, often through perception, engage in conscious communication with other bacteria in the colony when they detect critical masses that threaten their well-being. These messages provide information to neighboring cells about nutrient deficiency (Liu et al., 2015). These external cells slow down cell division and nutrition until metabolic balance is restored. When positive messages start coming from the inner cells, they release different molecules, and collective functions return to normal. It can be said that this observed behavior within both colonies and among species carries critical traces of a primitive form of sacrifice (Beagle and Lockless, 2015). Plants also convey critical information about their well-being and release specific informative compounds to alert neighboring flora and fauna (Gagliano et al., 2012).

All these behaviors are clear indications of consciousness inherent in them. Because communication, one of the higher indicators of consciousness,

is evident in these behaviors. In the conventional sense we know, language, a form of communication, may have emerged as a product of human consciousness, but this does not necessarily prove that language is the most sophisticated way of communication. Even if it were, this does not deny the fact that the reflection of consciousness is not only language but, in general, communication. Moreover, today we perceive language as a complex set of advanced functions and behaviors that is part of a broader continuity: communication. Language is undoubtedly the most significant feature of how we communicate with each other and ourselves. However, language is not a new form of communication but a new signifier. In essence, communication as a reflection of consciousness has manifested in the living world long before language, even before multicellular organisms. Communication is a way of information exchange within single-celled prokaryotes, occurring both within organisms and between them (Liu et al., 2015). This is clearly an indicator of consciousness.

Another clear indicator of consciousness, learning, and memory, is also evident in the examples above, if observed closely. Moreover, bacteria not only learn but also exhibit the ability to learn patterns. They even learn the characteristics of arbitrary spatial sequences. For instance, in their studies, Mitchell et al. (2009) shifted bacteria's nutrient preferences from maltose to lactose. In response, they found that bacteria make adjustments in their metabolic functions. Single-celled protists learned ways to avoid contact with repellent substances like caffeine and quinine. Pattern learning and controlled movement are quite complex "cognitive" behaviors. Such behaviors, seen in the most primitive living forms, provide clues not to mental activities in the conventional sense but rather to implicit consciousness. LeDoux argues that behavior is not primarily a tool of the mind, contrary to what we generally assume.

Evolutionarily relevant behaviors emerge before the mind (Morales, 2023). Because, these behaviors may originate from the intrinsic properties of matter-energy, potentially linked to consciousness. However, Naturalist scientists say that consciousness is a derivative that does not exist in origin, based on the fact that behavior emerges before the mind. Therefore, according to LeDoux (2023), the roots of behavior are deep, but consciousness has a more superficial history. However, this thesis is related to the emergence of relative-individual consciousness in the matter-energy plane. A plausible interpretation is that if consciousness emerges at any stage, it must already be inherently present within matter-energy. In other words, what LeDoux calls this superficial history is nothing more than the gradual manifestation of the deep history I am talking about. Because, according to naturalism, even low-level rodents are not just machines with stimulus-response habits. They are creatures that also select actions based on the value of expected outcomes. This is a clear indication that non-mammals are also conscious. In mammals, internal representations and mental models are more advanced. Evidence, at

least at this point, suggests that non-mammals do not possess cognition at the level of mammals.

Consciousness, which is reflected more implicitly in the earliest forms of energy, matter, and life, may have evolved into an environment in which it could emerge more fully in mammals. According to naturalism, however, the situation is the opposite. In other words, the creation of a suitable environment has facilitated the emergence of consciousness (Damasio & Damasio, 2022). For example, according to Damasio, emotions and consciousness exist in organisms with complex open minds (Damasio & Damasio, 2022). This type of intelligence relies on mapping activities in neural systems that represent actions and objects. The source of the spatiality that forms the essence of the mind is the neural mapping and pattern spatialization strategy. This strategy is much more complicated than unidirectional simple perceptual actions like vision. The interaction of bodily signals with neural signals creates senses and consciousness (Damasio & Damasio, 2022). The organism's ability to filter influences from the environment as good or bad enables it to be informed. This process of being informed technically constitutes feeling. According to Baluška and Reber (2019), life at its inception was cellular and sentient. The first cell, with a limiting membrane, made it possible to distinguish between the subjective internal space and the objective external space. All future generations and species have evolved from these original proto-cells. From the most primitive reflexes and instincts directed by genes to the most complex cognitive processes, all features, functions, and behaviors have undergone parallel evolution.

In socio-biological or physical sciences, almost no one doubts the process of evolutionary development. Therefore, the evolution of consciousness will undoubtedly be accepted eventually (Baluška and Reber, 2021). The reason it is still not widely accepted today is due to the persisting biases of Naturalism. These biases do not reject evolution on the material plane, as Naturalism operates on the same plane and scientifically proves evolution. However, it rejects the cognitive evolution that extends beyond the material plane. This is because, from the Naturalist perspective, anything beyond this plane cannot be observed. Nevertheless, science does not shy away from discussing the brain-based nature of emotions, even if it cannot precisely define the brain state that constitutes a feeling (Aftab, 2023). According to Naturalism, emotions emerge from a computational process that involves highly context-dependent and complex dynamic interactions (Barrett, 2017). The differing interpretations brought forth by Naturalist scientists and open-minded innovative scientists regarding the same facts actually demonstrate that consciousness is where the observer looks. The reason for this is the inherent presence of consciousness (Baluška and Reber, 2021).

At this point, it would be appropriate to mention a discovery made by Humphrey decades ago. This discovery could actually be interpreted as

evidence for the claims in this article, even though Humphrey's intention was quite the opposite. Humphrey, an experimental psychologist, was the first scientist to observe the phenomenon of blind vision in a monkey. The monkey, named Helen, could still detect the spatial location of an object that typically required normal vision even after being blinded. This remarkable discovery not only paved the way for groundbreaking advancements in the natural sciences but also prompted Humphrey, who was curious about consciousness, to reexamine the relationship between sensation and perception. Because when the visual cortex was removed, Helen seemingly had no visual perception. However, her ability to freely navigate in an obstacle-filled environment and even locate and pick up dry grapes on the ground clearly demonstrated her visual sensitivity (Humphrey & Weiskrantz, 1967). However, it is worth noting at this point that, contrary to my claims, Humphrey's stance on consciousness, as a close friend of Daniel Dennett, is also reductionist. He believed that consciousness is an experience generated by the brain. However, according to Humphrey, having only cognitive consciousness without extraordinary awareness is akin to having perception without sensation (Humphrey, 2012). According to him, ordinary cognitive consciousness enables us to perceive the world around us; however, a deeper level of consciousness, which he calls extraordinary awareness, enriches these perceptions and adds an emotional dimension to them. This gives meaning and value to cognitive processes, just as sensation gives depth to perception. He argues that consciousness is not just a means of processing information, but also an experience that makes life meaningful.

Since PE and ME provide unique insights into altered states of awareness that challenge traditional materialist explanations of the mind, it is necessary to examine philosophical perspectives, experimental studies, and cross-cultural interpretations to explore the potential of these experiences to reveal the underlying mechanisms of consciousness. A comprehensive analysis of consciousness necessitates engagement with both scientific and philosophical literature. It would be useful to look at the insights developed regarding the metaphysical foundations of consciousness in a comparative manner. In addition, in order to understand the relationship between consciousness and matter-energy, it is necessary not to be limited to biological organisms but to consider large-scale systems in nature. This also requires considering the concepts offered by modern physics. Quantum mechanics challenges classical deterministic approaches. Its findings necessitate reconsidering the boundaries between consciousness and the physical world. For example, quantum superposition, quantum entanglement, and the observer effect bring to the agenda the interaction between the observation of a conscious being and the states of physical systems (Penrose, 1994). Thus, if consciousness is not merely a derivative of matter-energy, the question of how consciousness relates to fundamental existential structures becomes inevitable. Quantum mechanics studies have even opened the door to new discussions on how consciousness affects the physical world. For example,

according to the famous Copenhagen Interpretation, a quantum system cannot be said to be in a certain state before it is measured; however, when the measurement is made, the system collapses to a certain state (Bohr, 1935). This situation has led to speculations that consciousness can affect physical reality, and some physicists who question the role of consciousness in the universe have concluded that there may be a direct connection between consciousness and physical reality. While Wigner (1961) suggested that the consciousness of the observer can trigger quantum collapse, Penrose and Hameroff (2014) claimed that conscious experience may be related to quantum processes occurring in microtubules in the brain. The Orchestrated Objective Reduction (Orch-OR) theory proposes that conscious experience cannot be explained solely by classical neurophysiological processes and that quantum processes play a role in the formation of consciousness. This theory suggests that quantum processes occurring in microtubules may play a decisive role in the nature of consciousness (Hameroff & Penrose, 2014). If these hypotheses are correct, consciousness may not be merely the result of neuronal networks but rather a fundamental component of physical reality.

Parallel to the conclusions of some scientists working in the field of quantum mechanics, various philosophers have previously questioned whether consciousness has a feature that cannot be reduced to matter-energy. For example, Whitehead's process philosophy considers consciousness as a fundamental component of the universe and points out that consciousness is not only composed of brain processes or even reflections in biological organisms (Whitehead, 1929). In this context, his process philosophy has prepared the ground for modern approaches that consider consciousness as a universal phenomenon and an inherent part of matter-energy. Whitehead's (1929) philosophy also overlaps with today's panpsychism movements, which see consciousness as one of the fundamental dynamics of the universe. In Western philosophy, modern discussions of consciousness began with the dualism of Descartes (1641) and were later developed in different directions by philosophers such as Spinoza (1677) and Leibniz (1714). While Descartes (1641) considered consciousness as a substance completely independent of the body (Meditations on First Philosophy), Spinoza (1677) and Leibniz (1714) argued that consciousness is somehow integrated with matter and is not completely detached from physical processes. In contrast, while Spinoza considered consciousness and matter as two different aspects of the same substance, Leibniz suggested that consciousness is derived from immaterial monads (Nadler, 2006).

Considering all these approaches, the question of whether matter-energy is the fundamental source of consciousness remains an open-ended issue, both scientifically and philosophically. However, one possibility is that consciousness does not only emerge at certain levels of organization within matter-energy, but is instead a quality already inherent in matter-energy. In this case, a new framework that includes ontological and metaphysical

concepts in addition to physical mechanisms will be needed to explain the emergence of consciousness. Therefore, it is useful to look back further into the studies on consciousness in the history of thought. In ancient philosophical and religious teachings, the idea that consciousness is independent of matter or a fundamental component of it has frequently taken place. In Taoist philosophy, consciousness has been seen as a flow that is compatible with the fundamental functioning of the universe, and the individual's adaptation to this flow has been considered an important element in terms of accessing the truth (Tzu, 1992). Plato proposed that the soul has an existence independent of the body and argued that true knowledge can only be obtained by the soul's liberation from the body (Müller, 2011). There have also been important discussions in Islamic philosophy about the relationship between consciousness and matter. Ibn Sina (2005) argued that consciousness is an entity independent of the body and supported this view with the flying man thought experiment. According to this experiment, if a person is considered as a being floating in the air, completely isolated from the senses, he will realize that he still has self-consciousness even though he does not have physical senses. According to Ibn Sina, this shows that consciousness and self are independent of the physical existence of the body and that consciousness cannot be reduced to matter (Ibn Sina, 1027). However, Ibn Sina does not consider consciousness as an absolutely non-material phenomenon, but as a reality that metaphysically interacts with matter. Ibn Sina was not satisfied with this and developed the theory of the soul to explain the existence of the soul and the nature of conscious experience. According to him, the soul, that is, the spiritual and mental existence of the individual, is not dependent on matter but continues its existence in interaction with it (Gutas, 2001). Just before him, Farabi (872-950) evaluated consciousness not only as an individual phenomenon but also as a part of the cosmic intelligence process within the general structure of existence. According to him, consciousness is not only a faculty possessed by individual organisms, but also a part of the intelligence process that plays a central role in the functioning of the universe. Farabi's concept of active intelligence suggests that there is a cosmic intelligence beyond individual consciousnesses that shapes the knowledge and conscious potential of all beings (Farabi, 1990). This approach also overlaps with the views called panpsychism in contemporary philosophy, which argue that consciousness is a fundamental feature of the universe. Farabi's active intelligence is a kind of superconsciousness connected to individual consciousnesses and affects individual consciousnesses in the process of acquiring knowledge. Therefore, Farabi evaluates consciousness as a fundamental feature of universal existence (Skrbina, 2005). Just before Farabi, Razi (865-925) considered the source of consciousness as independent of matter-energy, but argued that this independence should be seen as an epistemological inference rather than a metaphysical necessity. According to him, consciousness may be a phenomenon that emerges in interaction with matter but ultimately has an existence independent of matter (Adamson,

2016). This perspective overlaps with emergentism in modern philosophy; that is, consciousness emerges as a new and irreducible reality at a certain level of organization, despite being directly connected to matter-energy (Chalmers, 1996).

In light of all these views, it seems that the discussions on the relationship between consciousness and matter-energy have not yet reached a definitive conclusion. However, one possibility is that consciousness does not emerge solely through biological processes, but rather is shaped by the emergence of a potential inherent in matter-energy under certain conditions. This perspective requires a new framework at the intersection of physics, philosophy, and religious thought. If consciousness is truly connected to quantum processes, active intelligence, or a fundamental feature of the universe, then matter-energy must have the potential for consciousness. For something that does not have potential cannot come into being. The relationship of consciousness to matter must be not only causal, but also metaphysical. Because purely physical explanations cannot encompass all aspects of consciousness. Consciousness must be a part of the general functioning of the universe, not just individual minds. This is supported by many different ideas, from Farabi's theory of active intelligence to panpsychism. All these discussions show that the relationship of consciousness to matter-energy is essentially an ontological and metaphysical problem. In light of these theories, if consciousness is not merely a by-product of neuronal activity, then consciousness is either a fundamental property of matter-energy or derives from a source transcendent to matter-energy.

2. MATTER ENERGY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

It is natural to think that the source of consciousness, which manifests itself in the matter-energy world, is matter-energy. The reason for this is that the source of matter-energy and the source of consciousness emerging in the matter-energy world are the same. The source of this common resource is the matter-energy of this common resource. It is necessary for this ultimate source or ultimate matter-energy to be a constant, unchanging absolute existence. Likewise, this fixed entity must be in a state of pure consciousness. The philosophy I have briefly summarized is based on the emergence from esence, the presence of inexhaustible potential, and the absence of absolute nothingness, which are explained below in order:

2.1. The Emergence From Essence

Liberated from the imposed bias of God dictated by institutional religions, when we observe the Universe, or its closest reflection to us, nature, and even ourselves, we realize that every creation is realized with a power that comes from its essence. A seed germinates upon encountering suitable conditions in the soil. Likewise, a fetus develops within the womb, utilizing

external influences to sustain and advance its existence. The cells in our bodies are also formed by the same principles. While the contribution of the external environment here shows the dependency of existence on other things, it does not deny the fact that existence realizes its creation with a power that comes from its own essence.

For example, even though we do not consciously manage, every entity in our body that constitutes the entirety we refer to as "I" continues its creation on its own. Cells, red and white blood cells, antibodies, hormones, etc., seem to live somehow separate from our consciousness with their own method of consciousness and existence. But they are found in our physical existence, where we assume that our self and therefore our consciousness are located. We think that they are under the control of our brain, which we accept as the source of our consciousness. Even though we assume that they are not part of ourselves, the countless bacteria in our body are also included in our body integrity.

When considered across all times, creation persists within infinite units, interacting with each other among units. This interaction and spontaneous emergence are described in the Taoist text Hua Hu Ching as follows: "When a wise person looks at a tree, they do not see it as a single entity. They understand the tree as roots, leaves, trunk, water, soil, and sunlight. Each entity is connected to another. The tree emerges through relationships between entities. For the wise, everything is like this. The wise person knows there is a similar appearance in everything. Then the sage sees that both themselves and others are also the result of such interactions. Thus, the wise person says that everything is equal in creation." (Tzu, 1992). However, philosophical inquiries often explore the concept of a transcendent entity capable of perceiving and actualizing creation beyond the constraints of motion and spontaneity. In fact, God, in one aspect, must not be separate from the essence of each unit. In one sense, God is existence itself. It is the power within matter. As astrophysicist Hubert Reeves stated: "The history of the cosmos is the history of self-regulating matter." (Reeves, 1998).

Creation from essence also has an important place in Islamic thought. This idea is particularly parallel to the concept of Unity of Being. According to Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, existence is one and all beings are different manifestations of this unity. Allah's names and attributes manifest themselves in the universe and bring beings into being (Arabi, 2006). In this context, it can be said that creation is a continuously ongoing process and that everything exists with the divine power in its essence. Ibn Arabi states that man is directly connected to the Muhammadan Reality, that is, the essence of creation. This provides an Islamic basis for the idea that existence is created with its essence. One of the concepts in Islamic thought that expresses that everything has a principle of creation in its essence is nature. The Quran states, "Every being was created on the nature of Allah" (Quran, 30:30). This verse implies that there is a system in the essence of beings that realizes their creation. Farabi

states that every being in nature has a unique nature and that beings act in accordance with their nature. According to him, "Everything strives to realize the perfection given to it" (Farabi, 1990). This statement is an important philosophical argument supporting the idea of creation from essence. Islamic philosophers such as Ibn Sina and Farabi argued that every being in nature develops according to an internal principle. The concept of essence expresses that every being exists with a unique principle of creation. Ibn Sina divided beings into contingent beings and necessary beings. Allah is the Necessary Being (Vacibul Vücud) and His existence is from Himself. However, everything else is a contingent being, that is, it may or may not gain existence in terms of its essence. According to Ibn Sina, it is clear that every being has an essence (nature) of its own and is created with this essence. This supports the view that beings are created with a power that comes from their essence (Sina, 2004). It is stated in the Quran that Allah breathed into man from His own spirit when He created him: "I breathed into him from My spirit" (Quran, 38:72). Imam Ghazali states that the existence of man is possible with the "entrusted divine breath". This idea supports the idea that man develops as a being with a system that comes from his essence. According to him, Allah created man by giving him a mind, heart and soul, and this creation is completed through a direct connection that man establishes with God (Ghazali, 1992). Imam Maturidi stated that existence operates within the framework of divine laws and that nature establishes its own order. The concept of Sunnah of Allah, which Maturidi systematized and which is also mentioned in the Quran, explains the idea that the order that operates in nature is a divine law. Maturidi states that the creation of every being is dependent on a measure (fate). "Allah has created everything in an order and this order originates from the essence of being" (El Maturidi, 1979). This thought provides an Islamic explanation for the process of creation that comes from the essence of nature. As a result, Islamic thought offers many concepts that express that creation occurs with its essence. Concepts such as the Unity of Being, nature, divine nature, the principle of possibility and necessity are Islamic perspectives that support the idea that beings in nature are created with the power hidden in their essence. Although the systems operating in nature operate within a self-regulating structure, there is a divine principle underlying this order. The thoughts of Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Arabi, Ghazali and Maturidi provide an Islamic framework for the idea that beings are created with the principle found in their essence. Therefore, the idea that creation occurs with a power coming from their essence also finds a strong response in Islamic thought.

2.2. The Presence of Inexhaustible Potential

Since matter and energy, which are the building blocks, are in constant change, all the beings we know are also constructed 'on continuous change.' Therefore, "existence" is not a stable "being" "Existence" cannot be found as

"existence" even for the smallest moment. It is in a constant state of becoming every moment. This situation is emphasized in the Quran regarding Allah, stating, "He is constantly engaged in a new creation at every moment" (55/29). However, in the relative state of consciousness, it is not comprehensible when Allah is engaged in creation. Because, according to the Quran, Allah is completely subtle at that stage (6/103, 42/19, 67/14). According to Islam, Allah can truly and solely be known through reason. This is due to His invisibility. It is possible to comprehend invisibility only by considering what is visible. In my view, this means: Since everything is constantly in a state of change, they cannot exist from eternity to eternity based solely on themselves and things like themselves that change. At some point, change must consume everything. More precisely, 'things' are inevitably destined to be consumed by change. This leads to absolute nothingness.

However, absolute nothingness cannot emerge at a later point than existence. If it did, it would be something that nothing else could ever be. Therefore, the only way to escape the consumption of change is the necessity for change to be based on originally unchangeable. This unchangeable thing is the inexhaustible potential that keeps all formations based on change standing from eternity to eternity.

That's why in Islam, one of the names-attributes of Allah is the one who stands with His essence. Only a consciousness that is as subtle as possible can perceive Allah, who is subtle to that extent, which is impossible. Because Allah is in the highest degree of perfection in all His attributes, there is no equal or likeness to Him in His attributes and Essence. Even the highest being among all entities, possessing the most subtle consciousness, cannot be as subtle as Allah. The subtleness of such a high being can only be superior to the subtleness of other entities; it is relative, subjective, and 'compared to other entities.' Therefore, since God's position of Nothingness is, according to us, a relative nothingness, in reality, He is the only real Absolute Being; what is non-existent or nothing is, in fact, us. Because the Absolute is the unchangeable. We understand this best through mathematics, chemistry, and physics. There are universal constants in chemistry and physics. Equations have variables and constants. In order for the variables of an equation to gain meaning, they need constants. In physics and chemistry, unchanging principles such as Planck's constant, the speed of light, and the gravitational constant show that the order of the universe can only be based on a fixed reality. Variables within the logic of equations can take any value. However, constants never change. This means: For variables to be changeable and equations to be possible, there must be something constant. Therefore, change must somehow be based on the constant.

According to Taoism, we give names to what we see, classifying them with labels. Our words are nothing more than symbols. Our definitions are built on the relativity of things, their relationships to each other, and their classifications. Words cannot represent the true Tao, which embraces

everything and the nameless name. Namelessness is a designation that shows our inability to fully comprehend the Transcendental Unity that cannot be openly understood in our realm, or, more precisely, our inability to fully know it. Logic guides the mind towards formal channels shaped by the data of the observed material world. The mind categorizes various aspects of observed phenomena, assigning names to relationships and defining them as rules or laws. Based on these, it predicts the outcomes of the events it has either realized or witnessed. In other words, intelligence is the mind operating within any logical structure. Absolute Reality, on the other hand, is a formlessness distinct from form and entities, a state of Namelessness or Nothingness.

According to Cleary (1998), seeing the hidden is possible through infinite emptiness. To see the secret is to observe it dispassionately, to direct attention to the void. This situation is conveyed by stating, "He who has no passion sees the hidden / He who has passion sees the visible." "The supreme virtue seems empty/The all-encompassing virtue appears to be non-existent/The largest rectangle has no corners/The largest vessel is filled the slowest/The greatest sound is barely audible/The greatest dream is formless/The greatest form has no limit/The path is hidden behind namelessness / The supreme perfection appears incomplete / Yet its use is infinite." What we do not see when we look, we call simplicity/What we do not hear when we listen, we call subtlety/What we try to understand but do not grasp, we call mystery/These three cannot be fully discovered/Thus they become one/It is neither bright above nor dark below/It is ongoing, nameless, returning to nothingness/This is called the form of formlessness is the symbol of nothingness/ This is called mental abstraction/ Look at it, you don't see its face/ Follow it, you don't see its back/ If you have the reins of the Ancient Way,/ You can guide the possibilities of the present world." Focusing consciousness entirely on the realm of existence is referred to as "going mad" in Taoism. Here, going mad symbolizes getting lost in the existence of things in the realm of existence. Those who know this realm as the only reality are in a frenzied pursuit to possess the materials in this realm. Mawlana summarizes this situation, which represents the greatest handicap of contemporary individuals who have achieved scientific progress through the filter of materialism, by saying, "You have abandoned humility and embarked on the path of your own ego; you have harnessed the horse of ambition to the stars. You acquire information about them, measure distances, discover new stars, but you cannot discover yourself. You do not know the first prophet Adam, whom the angels prostrated to." (Rumi, 1925)

Maturidi (853-944) emphasizes the continuity and direct effect of Allah's act of creation and states that beings do not have an independent power. Since everything is created with Allah's knowledge and will, nothing can exist outside of His knowledge (Aygün, 2017). This view reveals that the continuous change in the universe depends only on Allah's absolute knowledge and power and that nothing can resist change in its essence. This

unchanging being is Allah, because He is eternal and everlasting. According to Farabi (872-950), every being in the universe carries its own essence and tries to realize its own perfection by changing during the process of existence. The fact that everything strives to reach the perfection required by its own nature causes dynamic continuous processes to occur in the universe (Erdoğan, 2019). However, it is not possible for this change to continue infinitely; because in a universe where everything is subject to change, there is a necessity to rely on an unchanging principle. At this point, Ibn Sina (980-1037) distinguishes between beings as contingent beings and necessary beings. Contingent beings are beings whose existence or non-existence does not originate from their own essence; that is, their existence is based on another cause. However, Allah, the Necessary Being, is the one whose existence is necessary; He is the only being that does not undergo change, and everything else owes its existence to Him (Karakaya, 2015).

Ghazali (1058-1111) brought a critical perspective to the concept of causality observed in the realm of formations, arguing that every event in the universe originally occurred through the continuous creation of Allah. He drew attention to the fact that beings do not have a power of their own, but continue to exist through the power of Allah. Since beings can only survive through the creation of Allah, and are condemned to perish without His creation, they do not have an original existence. In reality, only Allah exists (Okşar, 2016). This idea shows that beings cannot exist on their own and are in constant change, but they must rely on a fixed principle that makes this change possible, namely Allah. Fakhr al-Din Razi (1149-1209), on the other hand, discussed the change and continuity in the universe, arguing that Allah's creation is a whole with the laws of causality. The universe created by Allah is subject to certain orders and laws. However, these laws also undergo constant renewal in Allah's knowledge (Bozkurt and Kafrawi, 2011). This idea represents an important view in Islamic philosophy regarding the relationship between deterministic laws and constant change in modern science.

Ibn Rushd (1126-1198) also defended the continuity of natural laws. According to him, there are certain principles and laws in nature, and although these laws are determined by God's creation, they operate without direct intervention. In other words, beings continue in a kind of deterministic order (Alper, 2001). This thought accepts that the process of change in the universe continues in a certain order and that God creates at every moment, but emphasizes that physical laws are fixed and continuous. In this respect, it is a system of thought that parallels the foundations of modern physics and natural sciences. According to Ibn Arabi (1165-1240), existence is a manifestation of God's names and attributes. He explains change as a manifestation of God's constantly renewed creation. Existence is a reflection of God, the absolute being, and God is independent of time and space. The renewal of the universe at every moment is a result of God's constant control over being. Existence is

the mirror of God and everything exists only with Him (Coşkun, 2008). This approach considers change not only as a physical process but also as a metaphysical phenomenon. The constant transformation of existence is a reflection of God's absolute creative power.

Nasiruddin Tusi (1201-1274) argued that the change in the universe is systematic and gradual. According to him, all beings in nature can transform into more complex and competent types of beings over time. According to Tusi, who brought an evolutionary perspective especially on the development of living things, it can be said that material beings have the potential to transform into each other by undergoing continuous change (Taştan, 2001). This view offers ideas that can be associated with the theory of evolution in modern biology. Tusi argued that beings are in constant change, but this change is not random, but subject to a certain order and law. Mevlana (1207-1273) also considers change not only as a physical reality, but as a spiritual and existential necessity. Man is in change and transformation at every moment, because the manifestations of Allah are new at every moment. Therefore, man must be born in a new state every day for his evolution (Tunagöz, 2015). This perspective associates the constant change in the universe with the internal development of man. Man, just like beings in nature, is in a constant state of change and evolution. In these contexts, Islamic philosophers have emphasized that change is a fundamental reality, but that it does not occur randomly but according to a certain principle.

In Taoist philosophy, it is stated that there is a fundamental principle on which change is based, but that this principle cannot be defined. In terms of Islamic philosophy, this principle is defined by the Essence and Attributes of Allah. In Taoist thought, the unnameable can be explained in Islamic thought as the Essence of Allah, which is known by His Attributes, but whose essence cannot be grasped. As stated in the Quran: “There is nothing like Him. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.” (Quran, 42:11). This statement states that Allah, who is absolutely unchangeable, is a reality too sublime for the human mind to grasp.

3. THE ABSENCE OF ABSOLUTE NOTHINGNESS

The previous chapters have shown that consciousness cannot be fully explained within materialist or reductionist frameworks. Discussions of mystical and psychedelic experiences have shown that altered states of awareness provide profound insights into the nature of consciousness, often transcending traditional scientific paradigms. This raises a fundamental ontological question: If consciousness is not merely a byproduct of neural processes, what is its ultimate source? In seeking an answer, a fundamental metaphysical principle becomes necessary. If there were absolute nothingness, nothing could exist, let alone consciousness. However, since there is consciousness and existence, then absolute nothingness is impossible. This chapter systematically examines why absolute nothingness cannot exist

and how this conclusion leads to a deeper understanding of consciousness and reality. By integrating philosophical principles with the findings from previous discussions, this chapter aims to demonstrate that existence, rather than emerging from a void or non-existence, is based on an unchanging ontological foundation. But first, it would be useful to give some examples from Islamic and Taoist philosophies regarding the topics discussed in this section:

According to Maturidi, existence does not arise from non-existence; everything that exists owes its existence to a necessary existence. Maturidi examines this view in the context of Mu'tazila's criticism of the concept of ma'dum (non-existence). Maturidi criticizes Mu'tazila's definition of ma'dum as the known, which has no existence, and avoids recognizing a reality for non-existence. In this context, according to Maturidi, the universe cannot be formed from lâ shay', that is, from non-existence in every respect (İpek, 2024). According to Ibn Sina, contingent existence cannot exist without necessary existence (Hourani, 2010). In Rumi's Divan-ı Kebir, it is emphasized that shadows can only be removed by the sun and that the skill of playing with shadows should be sought in the sun. According to this perspective, the existence of Allah is absolute and real, and all other beings are His reflections and manifestations. This understanding is based on the principle of wahdat-i vücûd (unity of existence) and accepts the unity of Allah in the essence of all beings (Vargün, 2020). Ibn Rushd argues that God is indivisible and one, and that there is no multiplicity in His essence. According to him, the unity of God is also supported by the order and unity in the universe; because the being who provides the unity and order in the universe, creates it and maintains its continuous existence is God (Aydın, 2020). In Imam Ghazali's thought, divine consciousness, that is, the knowledge of Allah, is the source of all consciousness and knowledge. In his understanding of marifat (divine knowledge), Ghazali states that the light that Allah throws into the heart forms the basis of man's inner knowledge and consciousness. This divine light plays a fundamental role in man's access to correct knowledge and becoming truly conscious. In addition, reason and logic have an important place in Ghazali's understanding of knowledge. He emphasizes that the divine and logic complement each other and that both reason and divine consciousness must work together for man to reach true knowledge (Bedriye, 2017). In Ibn Arabi's thought, man is the most perfect mirror in which God's names and attributes are manifested. According to him, the İnsani Kamil (Perfect Man), that is, the mature man, is the most perfect manifestation of God and is a being in which all divine names are reflected. In this context, man's consciousness is a divine reflection and is directly related to God's knowledge. Ibn Arabi sees man's heart as the mirror in which the divine consciousness is manifested and emphasizes the importance of cleaning this mirror (Yiğit, 2019).

In Taoism, Tao is eternal because it has no beginning or end. It is an indescribable and beyond-comprehension entity that is the fundamental

principle of the universe. It is both the source and ultimate purpose of everything. Since it is both limitless and timeless, it is eternal (Kumbasar, 2017). Tao is a wholeness within unity. Unity is the nature of Tao. Opposites such as Yin and Yang complement each other and provide balance in the universe. The harmony of these opposites is a reflection of the holistic nature of Tao. Tao is the source of awareness. True knowledge involves grasping the nature of Tao, yet Tao itself cannot be fully defined by consciousness (Watts, 1999). The nature of Tao, the fundamental principle of the universe and the source of all beings, is so deep and abstract that it cannot be fully defined or limited by direct consciousness or awareness. Therefore, in order to understand Tao, it is important to be in harmony with nature and develop inner awareness. True knowledge is directly experiencing and grasping the nature of Tao (Robinet, 1997; Waley, 2013). The arguments put forward below are directly related to both the Metaphysics of Being in Islamic philosophy and the concepts of Nature and Tao in Taoism. The impossibility of absolute non-existence and the necessity of absolute existence are supported in the essence of both systems of thought. The systematic inferences based on this law are listed below:

1-) Absolute nothingness has never existed. Because nothing can arise from complete nothingness. Nothing can come into existence from nothing, and existing things cannot turn into nothing. Entities must derive from other 'existences.' Therefore, material essence or energy must have existed from eternity.

2-) The realm of matter-energy (the realm of existence) is based on continuous motion and change. What we call time is the comparison of existences, their changes. Therefore, time is a derivative of the change in matter-energy and is a concept that does not have an independent reality on its own. It is relative, dependent on existence. There is no such thing as absolute time.

3-) The beginning of time means the beginning of the realm of existence. However, since existence cannot emerge from absolute nothingness, there is no beginning for both time and existence. Since they cannot reach absolute nothingness, they also have no end. Therefore, existence and time are in a perpetual state of being from eternity to eternity.

4-) In the world of becomings, occurrences cannot have been causing occurrences since eternity based solely on beings that are constantly in motion and subject to change, just like themselves. In the realm of existence, entities cannot be perpetually in a state of continuous motion and change solely by relying on other entities like themselves. They must originate from a continuous and constant potential inherent in the material essence (energy).

5-) The necessity for the potential to be unchanging, continuous, and constant implies that it cannot increase or decrease. Otherwise, it cannot have been in existence from eternity. To claim otherwise would mean stating that the potential was born from absolute nothingness, and it increased or

decreased, ultimately returning to absolute nothingness. In this case, it is necessary to assert that what has been in existence from pre-eternity will continue to exist for eternity

6-) It is impossible to contemplate the possibility of absolute nothingness existing before or after any segment or moment in the realm of existence because absolute nothingness does not allow any existence before or after.

7-) Therefore, the impossibility of absolute nothingness ever having existed or being possible necessitates the existence of the complete opposite, referred to as absolute existence, the source of an unchanging potential, which is immutable, constant, and unchangeable, and requires the pure existence to remain constant from eternity to eternity. In fact, since pre-eternity and eternity are also temporal expressions, they cannot be used to define absolute existence. Because absolute existence must be separate from matter-energy, i.e., existence, space, and the reflection of their changes in time.

8-) Since entities must necessarily come into existence based on an unchanging potential, when viewed from the realm of existence, the term 'infinite' becomes necessary in describing this potential.

9-) The necessity for absolute existence to be unchanging proves its compulsion to be a singular, pure existence.

10-) The source of consciousness observed in the realm of existence must also be infinite potential. Due to the shared source, it is assumed that consciousness in the realm of existence is derived from matter-energy. Similarly, consciousness in infinite potential also originates from the matter-energy of infinite potential, where the matter-energy of infinite potential is the unchanging, constant absolute existence itself.

Conclusion

The evidence reviewed in this study indicates that consciousness may extend beyond purely neurobiological explanations. Therefore this study has argued that consciousness cannot be reduced to neurobiological activity alone. Although more interdisciplinary research is needed to fully understand the nature of consciousness, this study integrates insights from mystical experiences and philosophical traditions, suggesting that consciousness is a fundamental aspect of reality rather than a simple byproduct of the brain. In the study, a comparative framework was applied to evaluate different ontological perspectives on consciousness. The findings are then synthesized to propose a holistic understanding of ME and PE within a broader philosophical context. In this study, a thesis on the source of consciousness has been put forward by making use of Taoism and Islamic Philosophies. The interactions of PE and ME with each other and with the source of consciousness were emphasized. As a result, it has been suggested that the worlds are realized on a consciousness-- science- knowledge-based formation.

It has been revealed that occurrences must exist from eternity to eternity together with the absolute existence, with the consciousness and energy overflowing from the absolute existence. The difference is that occurrences are always in a temporary state, while absolute existence is always in the same unchangeable state. The absolute being does not change but changes everything. How this is possible will be discussed in another study.

Wu Wei in Taoism, Moksha in Hinduism, Nirvana in Buddhism, Henosis in Plotinus' Neoplatonism, Bitul HaYesh in Kabbalah, Theosis in Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Fana-Fillah in Islamic mysticism express the annihilation of the self in the divine, which is a state of consciousness that transcends the ego and is in harmony with universal consciousness. This concept is very important for understanding the metaphysical dimensions of consciousness. Because it suggests that the ultimate source of consciousness is not the individual self but the divine essence. The divine essence is expressed as Tao in Taoism, Brahman in Hinduism, Shunyata in Buddhism, To Hen in Plotinus' Neoplatonism, Ein Sof in Kabbalah, divine light in Eastern Orthodox Christianity and the concept of Tavhid in Islamic mysticism. These concepts offer profound insights into the nature of consciousness. They suggest that consciousness is not merely a product of the material world but is rooted in a transcendent, divine source. It can be thought that this is the truth that emerges with Pe and ME. In this context, in the first part of this study, the relationship between consciousness and matter-energy was investigated and the basic principles were determined. In the second part, the metaphysical implications of these principles were examined through the lens of Islamic and Taoist philosophies. In the third part, the concept of absolute nothingness and the implications on the nature of existence and consciousness were systematized. This study may open new avenues for interdisciplinary research by closing the gap between philosophy, neuroscience and spirituality. Future studies may investigate the therapeutic potential of PE in light of the metaphysical insights provided by Islamic and Taoist philosophies. Moreover, Future research could empirically test the relationship between psychedelic-induced states and long-term cognitive shifts.

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