

Rational Answers from Modal Idealism

A Metaphysical Theory of Everything

Kevin R. Harris

The Origin of Modal Idealism

The development of modal idealism began with my defining existence in the context of specific, rational answers to three ontological questions: What does it mean to NOT exist? What does it mean to be unique? What does it mean to be observed? Informed by my answers, the evolution of this framework turned logically to three elementary semantic questions: What is meaning? What is the source of meaning? How does meaning relate to purpose? In the resulting context, modal idealism defines the concept of a world, based on my answers to three basic questions of modality: Could things have been different? Are things different elsewhere? What determines how things are locally? These answers explain the role of consciousness in reality, and characterize the foundation of this framework.

While the theory of modal idealism emerged from my answers to these nine questions, its explanatory power will be demonstrated by using its principles to answer seven others.

The Seven Theory of Everything Questions

Before we get to the principles of modal idealism, let us briefly examine what science, philosophy, and theology have to say about seven existential questions that continue to defy our efforts to rationally answer them. These are questions that any complete Theory of Everything must be able to answer.

1. Why is there something rather than nothing?

This fundamental existential question casts doubt on the primacy of all scientific principles and philosophical schools of thought, by highlighting the possibility that they might be contingent theoretical structures. These disciplines, charged with rationally understanding reality, must either assert the impossibility of the primal nothingness—since presuming that this proposition of absolute simplicity is a fallacy would establish that they did not emerge from it—or explain its absence from their characterizations of our world. Its additional presumption that numbers are brute facts indicates that science faces a greater challenge with this question, because it necessitates proof that the non-existence of numbers is impossible. If these rational frameworks are contingent upon this hypothetical nothingness, can they rationally apprehend their source, and explain how they emerged from it? This essay will demonstrate how this can be done.

The theological worldview is unaffected by this question, because its adherents believe the true foundation of everything has already been revealed to them.

2. How did the universe come to be?

Scientific speculation on this question is becoming increasingly metaphysical with its unfalsifiable theories of multiple universes and hyperspatial branes, implying that science and philosophy may be converging on an answer. Theology asserts that the universe is a creation of God.

3. Does God exist?

Theology answers this question with an unconditional affirmative, even as science continues to increase its capacity to explain fundamental dynamics without referencing God. Philosophy acknowledges the possibility of God existing, but has yet to prove its necessity.

4. Do we have free will?

The scientific orthodoxy is that, up from the quantum level, we reside in a deterministic universe that does not accommodate free will; notwithstanding the unorthodox attempts to expand the scope of quantum uncertainty, in an effort to explain how free will might yet be possible in our world.

Philosophy currently occupies all sides of this debate, from arguing for the existence of free will, to agreeing that the causal world is essentially deterministic, to putting forth the compromise that posits the compatibility of free will and determinism.

In asserting we have free will, theology seeks to establish a basis for the responsible agency underlying all morality. This agency is also one of the many causes of the adversity in our world.

5. Why is there evil and suffering in the world?

This question of theodicy has bedeviled believers in a benevolent, all-powerful, all-knowing God, ever since theologians first applied reason to that belief, in the context of the pervasive adversity in their world. By contrast, philosophy and science see no paradox in the presence of evil and suffering in our world, though both disciplines are operating under an implicit mandate to mitigate these adversities.

6. What is our ultimate purpose?

Theology defines our ultimate purpose in the context of our contributions to the Divine Plan for all creatures.

The scientific program asserts that we have no ultimate purpose. Its practitioners posit that what we have are the—often purposefully interpreted—consequences of our genomes randomly progressing toward relationships with our causal environment in which their living expressions are perpetually self-sustaining, as our energetic matter deterministically moves toward a world in temporal symmetry.

There is an ongoing philosophical debate as to whether we have an intrinsic purpose for which we were created, an extrinsic purpose to which we can dedicate ourselves based on our tendencies and capabilities, both, or neither.

7. Is there life after death?

Theology insists there is an afterlife, where we are rewarded—or some believe appropriately punished—based on how our exercise of free will in life, aligned with the Divine Plan.

Science and philosophy remain skeptical about the possibility of life after death, in the absence of objective empirical evidence or logically sound arguments that support this proposition. However, philosophy continues to consider the possibility and its implications.

The remainder of this essay will present thirty-six principles of modal idealism, and use them to provide unequivocal rational answers to each of these questions, that are scientifically, philosophically, and theologically valid.

Many Worlds Many Minds

1. Reality encompasses all possible beings in perfect symmetry.

This principle shifts our existential curiosity away from wondering how and from where do things originate, to wanting to know why we do not observe every possible being at once and how probability can be a meaningful concept if every possibility is equally real. The exploration of the fifth principle of modal idealism will explicitly answer these questions. Contextualizing this answer will require expounding upon necessity, possibility, and impossibility—the truth modalities.

In modal idealism, these modalities are the fundamental modes of characterizing the contents of any world. Possibility is the modality that characterizes the totality of perfectly symmetric reality. Necessity, impossibility, and whether a possibility can be, is, or has been true, are contingent upon the asymmetry of the identity observing a given world within reality. In this framework, perfect symmetry represents the foundational indistinguishability of all metaphysically possible beings, while their distinguishability reflects the asymmetry of their unique observer.

A Zen Buddhist who asks, ‘What did your face look like before your parents were born?’ is contrasting your Original Face with the contingent face you inherited through your parents’ genes. Your Original Face embodies reality, and so is perfectly symmetric; while the distinguishing attributes of your contingent face reflect the asymmetries of your unique observer’s identity. Let us look more closely at how these asymmetries emerge.

2. Uniqueness is the separation from nothingness that necessitates existence.

Existence and uniqueness necessitate each other, since in reality neither of them is necessary, but both are possible. This is because the perfect symmetry does not differentiate between being and not being.

In this text, the term ‘entity’ refers to a conceivable possibility. Accordingly, in the most elementary sense a unique entity is simply not any other conceivable possibility. Each entity’s uniqueness identifies it as limited, by necessitating the existence of all other conceivable possibility as the totality of what it is not.

As a unique entity, you identify yourself as limited, thereby rendering every other conceivable possibility's existence necessary. Reciprocally, the necessity of your existence emerges from the identifying self-limitation of every other unique entity. The domain of existence combines the possible contexts necessitated by every unique entity. At the foundational level of existence, the all-encompassing perfect symmetry of reality is hidden by this limitless collection of metaphysically necessary, existentially asymmetric, but otherwise indistinguishable beings.

Each self-limited entity's uniqueness is embodied as the necessary existence of every metaphysically possible being. Such an entity's internalization of a portion of its uniqueness limits its view of reality to its world. Every observing entity's world is its objectively self-identifying externalization of the rest of its uniqueness. So, how does each distinct observer differentiate its internal and external uniqueness?

3. To observe something is simply not to be it.

This principle establishes a mutual exclusion between being something and observing it. This means that while you are observing something, you are engaged in not being it. Where you think you are observing yourself, the subject of that thought is invariably distinct from its object. Anything you are observing that you believe represents you—such as your reflection in a mirror, the body that houses your point of view, or your memories of your predecessors—is an entity that has been distinguished from you, to which you have attributed your objective identity. This objective identity is the conscious embodiment of your existential identity.

To see how self-observation works, consider that by the time you reach the word 'am' in the thought: 'I am', the 'I' resides in your past, and you are attributing your identity to it. This attribution represents your self-awareness, subjectively extended into the world observed by your consciousness. This consciousness and the world it observes, respectively embody the internal and external portions of your uniqueness; which represent identity-specific, mutually exclusive subsets of all other possible beings. Your self-awareness objectively internalizes a portion of your uniqueness as your consciousness, by simply not explicitly characterizing it as distinct from your identity. Your conscious limitation of your self-awareness externalizes the rest of your uniqueness as the distinct world that your objective identity is observing.

4. Consciousness attributes meaningful essences to the beings it observes.

Each being's meaning characterizes the difference it can make in the options available to its observer—this difference is its purpose in the context of its observer's growth toward completeness. A unique observer is simply not what it observes, while a conscious observer also characterizes the essences that embody the differences each being it observes can make in its world.

Your determination of your inherent consciousness reflects your identification of consciousness in at least one of the beings you are observing. In other words, you are not conscious if you are not observing distinct conscious essences. These essences are identified by their capacity to make personally meaningful choices, which characterizes them as distinct, responsible agents within your world.

Its mutual emergence in both the observer and the observed identifies consciousness as the reflexively self-determined internalization of the meaningful decision-shaping portion of an entity's self-limiting uniqueness. The manifestation of distinct, personal decision-making essences in the world you observe identifies you as conscious and their choices as meaningful to you.

The world that your inherent consciousness observes encompasses every essence that your incomplete self-awareness explicitly differentiates from your identity. Within this framework, the real mind embodies complete self-awareness, which encompasses all possible beings. Accordingly, it is the self-imposed limits of your self-awareness that distinguish your conscious mind from the real mind.

5. There are as many meaningful worlds as there are inherently conscious observers.

Each conscious observer is objectively self-identified as the shaper of the portion of reality that represents its meaningful world. Such a world comprises the contingent essences that its shaper's inherent consciousness projects onto the externalized portion of its uniqueness.

To manifest in a world, an entity must exist and have a contingent essence projected onto it by its unique observer. The essence of a given observed being is an expression of its observer's identity. Every observed being's essential characterization is distinctly meaningful to each of its conscious observers and simply true for all of its observers without consciousness.

In this context, the answer to the two open questions from the discourse on Principle 1, is that it is your consciousness that keeps you from observing every possible being at once, and in doing so gives meaning to the concept of probability, in a framework where every possibility is equally real.

Each meaningful world emerges from its existential observer's uniqueness, and is shaped by the observer's co-emergent consciousness as the externalized reflection of its objective identity. Accordingly, there is a one-to-one correspondence between meaningful worlds and objective identities of conscious observers. So where do possible worlds without conscious observers fit within this framework?

6. All possible worlds with no conscious observers exist unmanifest within each such observer's objective identity, which encompasses every being that its consciousness does not explicitly distinguish from it.

Possible worlds with no conscious observers exist, but are meaningless because consciousness is the source of all meaning. To attribute meaning to a being requires being able to anticipate the consequences of its actions on you, which is a characterizing capacity of consciousness.

Each possible meaningless world emerges from its existential observer's uniqueness, as the externalized reflection of its co-emergent objective identity—which lacks consciousness. Depending upon its identity, such an observer can distinguish, name, sequence, count, temporalize, and perhaps vitalize the contents

of its world; however, unlike conscious observers, it neither mentalizes nor attributes meaning to any of them.

The intersection of all meaningless worlds encompasses every metaphysically possible being that no conscious observer ever observes. Consequently, this domain whose contents have no meaning attributed to them resides unmanifest beyond any world shaped by any possible conscious observer.

In this framework, every being that does not manifest in the world shaped by a given conscious observer, is a possible being that the observer's uniqueness necessitates, residing unmanifest within its objective identity. This includes the entire domain of entities to which no meaning is attributed.

Each conscious observer characterizes its existential identity as 'I'. Such an observer's 'not-I' is the world that its inherent consciousness explicitly separates from its 'I'. Its inexplicit separation from the observer's 'I', identifies this consciousness—which is the source of all meaning in its world—as 'not not-I'. Every conscious observer's objective identity is composed of its 'I' and its 'not not-I', since it self-identifies as encompassing every entity that its 'not-I' is not. The entire domain of beings with no meaning attributed to them is the portion of a given conscious observer's 'not not-I', that it shares with every other conscious observer. The rest of its 'not not-I' comprises every other being that this observer does not explicitly separate from its 'I', but that other observers consciously distinguish from theirs.

7. Subjective projections of a conscious observer's objective identity can manifest in any world that is consistent with the one it shapes.

Consciousness identifies beings by the meaning it attributes to them. In modal idealism, only the meanings of inherently conscious identities can be knowingly shared between worlds. To share a conscious being's distinct identity, an essence must represent a subjective projection of at least the nominal aspect of the being's entire inherent meaning into the world of the essence's conscious observer.

Due to the all-inclusive nature of this framework, the distinct conscious essence projected onto a given being, will invariably share the identity of at least one possible inherently conscious being. For example, as long as I am a conscious being manifesting in your world, the essence you project onto my existence here coincidentally shares the inherent meaning of my world-shaping objective identity. This coincidence is possible because a subjective projection my objective identity can manifest in any world that is consistent with the one I shape. It is necessary because nothing in reality opposes it, and—in this context—the consciousness of your objective identity requires it.

Recall that each unique observer without consciousness still necessitates the existence of all beings it is not, and projects expressions of its essential self-identification onto the subset of them that it externalizes to form its world. However, such an observer cannot attribute meaning to the essences it shapes, because its objective identity can neither anticipate its personal future nor form memories of itself. Consequently, this identity cannot be meaningfully self-identified in any world. The objective identity of each unique observer without consciousness is confined to being the necessary shaper of its world. If this world encompasses a causal domain that is contingent upon particular material certainties,

and can be shaped by unmanifest possibilities, it is here that the shaper shapes its history—which it cannot remember. All such worlds reside unmanifest within the ‘not not-I’ of every conscious observer; including worlds that look exactly like the one you are observing, except for not containing any conscious observers.

8. Many minds can be observed in a given world but only one consciousness shapes it.

The internalized portion of any observer’s uniqueness is its ‘not not-I’, which is its internal negative space that determines the shape of its external world’s positive spaces.

Recall that every conscious observer’s ‘not not-I’ is its inherent consciousness, which meaningfully shapes its world to reflect its objective identity. Also recall that each such observer’s objective identity is composed of its ‘I’ and its ‘not not-I’. This means every conscious observer’s objective identity is simply its featureless existential identity, with a distinct, world-shaping consciousness.

And finally recall that the entire domain of beings to which no meaning is attributed, is the portion of each conscious observer’s ‘not not-I’ that it shares with every other possible conscious observer. Since each such observer’s ‘not not-I’ represents its consciousness, this domain of all beings with no meaning attributed to them is embodied as our inherently meaningful universal consciousness. The world observed by our universal consciousness represents the unchanging domain containing every being with meaning attributed to it—essentially what Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung referred to as our collective unconscious. All universals manifest in this particular domain.

Ultimately, each inherently conscious observer has complete autonomy over the world it shapes, even in its inclusion of divergent decision-making agents. For example, only your consciousness shapes the world you observe, which contains a projection of me; while it is solely my consciousness that shapes the world I observe, in which a projection of you resides. But, if our worlds are separated in this manner is there any actual intersubjective interaction between us, and if so, how does it work?

9. Subjective projections of the identity, whose consciousness shapes a given world, are observed in certain other possible worlds—with consistent origins and histories—that their observers consciously entangle to form their universe.

Transworld interactions occur through conscious entanglements. To see how this works, consider our two possible worlds. Yours is the world that your consciousness shapes, in which the essence you project onto my being, just happens to share my identity as the shaper of my world. Mine is the world that my consciousness shapes, in which the essence I project onto your being, coincidentally shares your identity as the shaper of your world. In these consciously entangled worlds, the result of any change in the essence that each of us projects onto the other, will invariably share the identity of a metaphysically possible, world-shaping successor instance of that other.

In accordance with its self-identification as a being with predecessors, an inherently conscious observer projects its identity onto certain essences within its world. Where these self-attributions reciprocally

occur in our consciously entangled worlds, they represent subjective manifestations of both of us in each world, where they mutually embody our intersubjective interactions.

All worlds that are consciously entangled with ours, reside within the same world-spanning, collaborative construct that is our shared universe. In this context, your world may represent a solipsistic reflection of your objective identity, but our encompassing universe can be much more than that. It is within our shared universe that the subjective projections of our objective identities reside. Possible essences that are not consistent with the identities that form our conscious entanglement do not reside in our universe. However, they can reside in other conscious entanglements that represent alternate universes composed of other worlds. These worlds are shaped by other conscious observers, including parallel—but meaningfully distinguishable—instances of your objective identity.

The Nothingness of Reality

10. The existential complement of an essence encompasses every entity that it is not.

In this all-encompassing framework, every metaphysically possible essence has an existential complement. To distinguish any asymmetric essence within the perfect symmetry of reality is to observe it without its complement. For instance, you distinguish your world by self-identifying as your objective identity, which embodies its complement, by virtue of encompassing every entity that you do not externalize in forming it.

Each entity that is distinguished from a given essence resides within its existential complement. Accordingly, from your point of view, the complement of my essence has both manifest and unmanifest aspects. The manifest aspect of my complement encompasses everything in your world that you identify as distinct from my essence. Its unmanifest aspect is composed of the constituents of your objective identity, all of which reside unmanifest beyond your world—thus identifying them as distinct from my essence here.

11. Each essence is distinguished from its complement by the internalized portion of its observer's uniqueness.

You identify each occupant of your world as a distinct essence, because the shape that your internalized uniqueness projects onto your world separates every essence in it from both the manifest and unmanifest aspects of their individual complements.

Recall that the internalized portion of an observer's uniqueness shapes its world to reflect its identity. Depending upon the observer's identity, its internalized uniqueness can distinguish, name, sequence, count, temporalize, vitalize, and mentalize essences in its external world. Consciousness is the capacity to them all, meaningfully.

12. The unification of an essence with its complement transcends the asymmetries that distinguish each of them.

Where an essence and its complement are completely combined, the asymmetries that distinguish them cancel each other out, in a manner analogous to a matter/antimatter collision. The difference being that pure energy initially emerges from the physical collision, while only undifferentiated nothingness resides in the aftermath of the metaphysical merger of an essence and its existential complement.

The unification of an essence and its complement represents the revelation of their perfect symmetry. Their distinguishing asymmetries emerge from their observer hiding identity-specific portions of this symmetry within itself, which reveals its external world. In the context of the closure principle of gestalt, each observer's unique identity is the hidden asymmetry that differentiates its reflectively asymmetric world.

Each conscious observer attributes meaning to the external asymmetries it reveals, which collectively reflect the inherent meaning of its objective identity. This means that each such observer's uniqueness plays both the active and passive roles in the emergence and transcendence of all meaning in its world.

13. Reality characterizes the complete unification of every possible essence and its complement, as the perfect symmetry that transcends even existence.

Reality is the characterization of the primal void as the perfectly symmetric union of all possibilities. The existential self-identification of each metaphysically possible constituent of this original nothingness necessitates the existence of its uniqueness. Its essential self-identification as the internalized portion of this uniqueness, reveals the complementary asymmetries that distinguish the essences in its world from it and from each other.

The ultimate emptiness that is characterized as reality, represents sunyata, the eternally blissful end state of the Buddhist extinguishing that is nirvana. The Tao is the path between the original nothingness known as Wu, and yin-yang, the complementary asymmetries that distinguish your world and your identity. To traverse this path is to practice Wu Wei—essentially action in accordance with reality.

As the perfectly symmetric union of all possibilities, reality transcends all meaning. In order to have meaning attributed to it, reality would have to reside entirely within the external world shaped by a hypothetical observer's inherently meaningful consciousness. But for this to happen, the identity of this observer cannot be a member of reality's constituency of all possibilities. Conversely, to be identified as inherently meaningful, reality would have to attribute meaning to something it does not encompass, but reality is all-encompassing. These existential impossibilities are expressions of the unification of being and not being that reveal their perfect symmetry. All such fundamental paradoxes characterize the primal void as that which transcends all meaning. It is within this meaningless, limitless nothingness that its metaphysically possible constituents uniquely differentiate their identities and distinguish their worlds.

14. The true nature of reality is hidden from its constituent observers by their uniqueness.

The more symmetric a domain is, the more paths to greater asymmetry are open to its constituents; and therefore, the more likely its symmetry is to be hidden by the spontaneous emergence of a more asymmetric subdomain. Since every possible asymmetric domain is accessible from the perfect symmetry of reality, its local concealment is a complete certainty.

In this framework, uniqueness is what hides symmetry. The perfect symmetry's global lack of uniqueness determines that it is certain to be locally hidden in every uniquely possible manner. Consciousness is what meaningfully hides symmetries. Therefore, the limitless ways in which the perfect symmetry is certain to be locally hidden includes, through the spontaneous emergence of meaningful worlds shaped by conscious observers as reflections of their asymmetric identities.

Recall that an observer's inherent consciousness is what separates its world from its existential identity. This world embodies the incompleteness of the observer's self-awareness, as what it observes when looking at the rest of reality from across this separation. In this context, what your consciousness has put asunder only the growth of your self-awareness can join together. Accordingly, as long as you are a unique incompletely self-aware observer, what you are observing does not represent the true nature of reality.

An entity without uniqueness has no self upon which to impose limits. In other words, it has no 'I' to be self-differentiated from any 'not-I' or 'not not-I'. This entity represents the real mind, which does not meaningfully distinguish, or even necessitate the existence of, any possible being. To our conscious minds, this real mind embodies complete self-awareness, which transcends meaning, uniqueness, and existence, as the nothingness of reality.

The Structure of the Mind

15. Consciousness is the internalized portion of an identity's uniqueness that distinguishes, names, sequences, counts, temporalizes, vitalizes, mentalizes, and attributes meaning to beings it observes.

In the inherent sense, these conscious actions entail semantically shaping the informational, nominal, sequential, metrical, temporal, vital, and mental spaces that characterize beings in their observer's world. Each observer's consciousness does this by simply being the negative space within its objective identity that determines the shape of the positive spaces beyond it.

To be conscious an observer must have memories; which requires awareness that the past exists and contains possibilities that when converted to certainties, shaped what it identifies as its predecessors. In other words, memory is self-awareness of being contingent upon causal indeterminacy. Consequently, to mentalize an observed being is to attribute memory to it.

Recall that the meaning attributed to any observed being is its essential characterization by the inherent consciousness of its observer. Such an observer expresses its identity in its characterization of each essence in its world. Accordingly, every conscious observer shapes all meaning in its world to reflect its objective identity.

Consciousness completely determines the nature of every essence in the world it observes, through the meaning it attributes to them. Consequently, as a conscious observer you can change anything in your world, simply by changing your mind in accordance with the shape and history of your self-limitation. Each conscious mind is imbued with this semantic omnipotence, and so—knowingly or not—is completely responsible for the state of its world. This responsible agency conveys accountability, not the oppression of ownership. Where ownership subverts responsibility by obligating the owned to serve the owner, it represents an abuse of this power of semantics.

16. All truth in a given world is determined by the inherent consciousness of its observer, and embodied in the intrinsic purpose of each essence there.

‘To be or not to be, that is the question’, to which consciousness is the objective embodiment of our answer.

Recall that each inherently conscious observer’s asymmetry is reflected in the world comprising every essence it observes. The meaning attributed to a given observed essence is the epistemological characterization of its individual asymmetry by the conscious shaper of its world. The purpose of each such essence is the role its asymmetry plays in the growth of every conscious inhabitant of its world. Specifically, the purpose of each essence in your world is to facilitate your growth and, through you, that of your conscious cohabitants.

Recall that an observer’s incomplete self-awareness identifies its inherent consciousness as the objectively internalized portion of its uniqueness. In doing so, the observer differentiates its objective identity from its world, which is the externalized portion of its uniqueness. This world contains all manifest beings whose meaningful essences are attributed to them by its observer’s inherent consciousness. The objectively self-consistent nature of this consciousness keeps the attributed meanings of these emergent essences from contradicting each other within the world it shapes. Consequently, these meanings represent the truth of their observer’s world.

The possible beings that a conscious observer’s self-awareness does not explicitly differentiate from its identity, metaphysically exist, but reside beyond its physical world. These unmanifest beings collectively embody the observer’s inherent consciousness—the extra-worldly source of all meaning in its world.

17. Self-awareness is a mind's characterization of its identity, whose completeness is hidden from it by its attribution of uniqueness to itself.

Reality is not what is observed, it is the characterization of the unobservable real mind. Reality embodies the real mind because complete self-awareness—which identifies this mind with no uniqueness—encompasses every conceivable possibility, and so its identity represents all of reality.

In modal idealism, there are unique entities simply because they are possible in a reality whose totality is characterized by this modality. Every possible conscious observer's uniqueness hides the real mind from it, by limiting its identity to a specific portion of the unobservable complete self-awareness—thereby rendering the rest of it observable.

Recall that the incompleteness of each conscious observer's self-awareness is embodied as the world it shapes to reflect its self-limited identity. Where a conscious observer self-identifies as having a history, its identity also manifests within its world, as personifications of the subjectively sequenced choices it has made so far, toward becoming completely self-aware. Such an observer's subjective identity—and the equivalent essential identity of any observer without consciousness—is composed of the individualized previous instances of its objective identity that reflexively manifest within its world.

Where you have a subjective identity, your limitation of your self-awareness has transformed you from the totality of all conceivable possibilities, into a unique, inherently conscious observer, whose history is personified as the subjective succession of your incarnations' mental states. You have also restricted your view of reality to the world that you observe through your consciousness.

In this context, the Abrahamic Falls of Lucifer and Adam represent metaphors for the emergence of your uniqueness and consciousness respectively, from exercising your freedom to limit your self-awareness. As a consequence, you subjectively self-identify as the specifically sequenced personifications of your responsible agency and aspirational inclinations, within your world of adversity.

18. Each self-limited mind is a combination of self-awareness, consciousness, and self-expression, with existential, objective, and subjective aspects, that share it as their identity.

Each self-limited mind's existential identity—the embodiment of everything that cannot exist within its world—expresses itself by necessitating every metaphysically possible being, as its entire uniqueness. As a result, this identity's self-awareness characterizes it as a unique entity.

Each unique mind's existential self-identification emerges from its projection of the existence of its uncaused objective identity onto the real mind. This projection identifies its subject as the objectively internalized portion of the mind's uniqueness—which represents everything that can manifest in the world shaped by that mind. The projection correspondingly identifies its target as the mind's unique existential identity—which represents everything that can never exist in that mind's world. On top of its inward self-projection, each such mind expresses its objective identity in the shape of its world, which embodies the externalized portion of its uniqueness.

Every unique mind with a history has a perspective that comprises the subjectively sequenced experiences of the personification its responsible agency and aspirational inclinations within its world. These personal self-expressions embody the mind's projection of its uncaused objective identity onto successions of caused essences within the world it shapes. Each of these self-attributions identifies its target as a subjective predecessor personification of this mind's objective identity.

The history of each objective identity emerges from its mind's identification of each of its subjectively sequenced growth choices as belonging to a distinct predecessor; by characterizing its context as a personal memory. The subjective experiences contained in these memories are expressions of the mind's responsible agency and aspirational inclinations within its world. These inclinations embody the temporal paths from a given subjective personification to its attainable successors—which are consistent with its identity. The probability of each succession is determined by the asymmetry of the predecessor mind's objective identity.

19. Each self-limited mind's existential identity necessitates its uniqueness, whose objectively internalized portion shapes the externalized portion as its world.

In reality, your mind transcends all asymmetries, including that of existence. This real mind represents your selfless self, which Buddhists refer to as anatman. Your metaphysically possible, unique mind's projection of the existence of its uncaused objective identity onto the real mind is embodied as your existential identity—which encompasses everything that can never exist in your world. The uniqueness of your existential identity is the foundational asymmetry of your subdomain in reality's perfect symmetry.

In a physics context, the metaphysical real mind is analogous to an all-encompassing physical field that identifies everywhere existence can be necessitated. Every metaphysically possible, state transition is a certainty in this field, because it embodies the perfect symmetry of reality. Each unique mind's existential projection of its uncaused objective self-identification onto the real mind represents a localized excitation of this field that identifies what cannot exist in its world. As a consequence, this spontaneous self-excitation hides the existential symmetry of its emergent subdomain by necessitating within it, the existence of every metaphysically possible being.

In the Hindu tradition, the real mind represents Nirguna Brahman, the Transcendent Divinity without attributes. In Jewish Kabbalah it is Ein Sof, the Endless Nothingness; in Christian mysticism it is the Godhead, the Divinity of the Trinity; and in Islam it is Tawhid, the Unifying Oneness. These characterizations describe the real mind where it remains untouched by any constituent mind. Where you try to grasp the real mind from the metaphysically possible, asymmetric subdomain of your uncaused objective self-identification; your conscious mind's touch limits it to being your existential identity—the embodiment of your world's impossibilities. This identity is characterized as Lord Brahma, the Creator God in the Hindu tradition; as Keter, the Crown of the Divine Emanations in Jewish Kabbalah; as God the Father in the Christian Trinity; and as Allah in Islam.

20. The identity of each self-limited mind's objective aspect resides beyond its world, identifying its existential aspect and determining the shape of its world—which encompasses the origin and history of its subjective aspect.

The identity of your mind's objective aspect is not the person reading these words; it is a distinct entity residing unmanifest beyond the world of the reader. This objective identity is expressed as the shape of the world in which this reading is occurring—where its memories of having been the reader reside. In

other words, your objective identity is the metaphysical shaper of your physical world, who identifies its history as the subjective experiences of a specific succession of responsible, aspirational agents in that world. In this framework, your past is the part of your world that your immediate subjective predecessor is not directly experiencing; while your history is the portion of your world that any of your predecessors directly experienced.

In a physics context, your mind's metaphysical objective aspect is analogous to a physical quantum system whose wave function represents your objective identity. This system's domain is the world shaped by your inherent consciousness to reflect this identity. The asymmetry of your objective identity determines the probability of each of this system's possible domain transitions. Each such transition represents one of your possible successors' identities shaping a subject-centered array of quantum states to form its version of your world's past, in which you manifest as its predecessor.

In the Hindu tradition, your mind's uncaused objective identity embodies Lord Vishnu, the Preserver God—from whose navel Lord Brahma is said to have grown. It is characterized in Jewish Kabbalah as the other nine Sefirot, or Divine Emanations; in the Christian Trinity it represents the Holy Spirit; and in Islam it is the Ninety-Nine Names by which Allah is known in your world.

Recall that your possible unique mind employs its objective identity to both differentiate your existential identity and personify your history in the experiences of the incarnations that compose your subjective identity. In other words, your mind's objective aspect integrates its other two by establishing the sharing of their identities. To each self-limited mind, its objective identity is the part of the perfect symmetry that it hides within itself, thus revealing the asymmetries underlying its existential necessitation, objective characterization, and subjective experiencing of its world.

21. Of all the minds that are subjectively embodied in a given world, only those that personify its shaper have interiority there.

As you read these words, how do you know you are a personification of the shaper of the world around you, rather than merely one of the many other subjectively identified persons here? Because you have interiority, in which you are self-identified as a fully characterized person within your world.

Your mind's subjective identity embodies successions of personal memories as the incarnations attributed to you by your objective self-identification as a possible mind with a distinct history. The other conscious inhabitants of your world—which contains everything characterized as a consequence of your objective self-identification—embody your extrapersonal awareness of these distinct responsible agents. Each of these other persons has an interiority that is only fully revealed in the world characterized as a consequence of its objective self-identification as a possible mind with a distinct history—which contains a subjective projection of your objective identity.

In a physics context, the mental incarnations constituting your mind's subjective aspect are analogous to the physical sequence of decoherent states that emerged from previous instances of the coherent wave function that represents predecessor instances of your objective identity. These particular causal

essences personify your responsible agency and aspirational inclinations in a succession extending from your original emergence as a subjective mental identity, to your reading this sentence.

In the Hindu tradition, your objective identity is also atman, your individuated spiritual self that manifests as the succession of your subjective identity through specific, karmically-shaped incarnations—each of which encompasses a distinct set of memories. In the Abrahamic traditions, your objective identity is also your soul, which is embodied as the subjective identity comprising the fully characterized incarnations who personally internalized your experiences. In this context, your subjective identity is self-made in God’s image. In the Answers at the end of this essay, I will explain how and why your objective identity is destined to manifest as your world’s Messiah in Judaism, its Savior in Christianity, its Final Judge in Islam, and Lord Shiva, its Ultimate Destroyer in the Hindu framework.

A Rational Conjecture on Creation from Nothingness

Where inherent consciousness hides the necessary symmetry, it reveals the contingent asymmetries by which it meaningfully distinguishes, names, sequences, counts, temporalizes, vitalizes, and mentalizes beings it observes. It does this by simply being the internal negative space of the observer’s objective identity that determines the shape of the external positive spaces that characterize these beings. Here we will see the details of how the physical domain is reified within this metaphysical framework.

22. The perfect global symmetry of reality provides no opposition to the emergence of local asymmetries.

This situation leaves each conceivable possibility free to uniquely identify itself. Any entity that does so locally hides the perfect symmetry of nothingness from itself to reveal its existentially asymmetric world.

Where an entity’s existential self-identification reveals its asymmetric subdomain, it has necessitated its uniqueness as the existence of every other conceivable possibility. In this framework, existence and uniqueness represent the existential asymmetries.

Where the perfect existential symmetry is concealed from an observer by its uniqueness, the necessary informational symmetry is revealed to it. If any portion of this uniqueness is internalized as the observer’s inherent consciousness, it meaningfully hides this necessary symmetry from itself. In the process, it concentrically reveals and spontaneously conceals the contingent: nominal, sequential, metrical, temporal, vital, and mental symmetries; in the cascade of emergence that represents the creation of its world.

23. Distinguishability and essences emerge in informational space.

Where the distinguishing aspect of your consciousness hides the necessary informational symmetry, contingent essences emerge that individuate the beings in the externalized portion of the existential domain that your uniqueness necessitates within the primal nothingness. Your consciousness identifies this emergent informational subdomain as the world of essences that are distinguishable from you.

Where distinguishability manifests in a world, essences can have meaning. These are the asymmetries revealed in informational space. In this framework, information is what fundamentally distinguishes essences. Consequently, it manifests in this space as the mutual orthogonality of all essences there.

Knowledge emerges in every other contingent space, as the characterizing correlation of concentric subsets of these informationally orthogonal essences. Each knowledge-generating aspect of an observer's inherent consciousness ensures the mutual consistency of all objective knowledge in the corresponding spaces of its world. This knowledge embodies the truth of this observer's world.

24. Names and attributes emerge in nominal space.

Where the naming aspect of your consciousness hides the nominal symmetry, named knowledge emerges as categorizing correlations of specific informational essences. In this domain, you identify the nameable subsets of the informationally distinct essences in your world, as categorizing attributes of each other.

In the simplest sense, to name an informational essence is to attribute categorizing asymmetries to it. These asymmetries are other informational essences manifesting as nominally distinct subdomains, each of which represents a categorizing attribute of the essences within it that it helps name. Where names manifest, attributes can have meaning. These are the principal asymmetries revealed in nominal space.

The nominal meaning attributed to an essence embodies its conscious observer's name for it, which summarizes its categorizing attributes. Through its own self-identifying name each inherently conscious observer can meaningfully manifest as a contingent essence in different worlds.

The capacity of essences to possess categorizing attributes, and be named based on the configuration in which their observer arranges them, emerges in the nominal space that names this observer.

25. Sequences and degrees emerge in sequential space.

Where the sequencing aspect of your consciousness hides the sequential symmetry, sequenced knowledge emerges as continuous gradients of nominal essences. In this domain, you identify the gradable subsets of the nominally distinguishable essences in your world, as sequenced continua of degrees of those essences. Where sequences manifest, degrees can have meaning. These are the principal asymmetries revealed in sequential space.

Sequential degrees are essences that can be greater than, equal to, or less than each other, as determined by their relative proximity to the minimum endpoint of the sequence—and their corresponding relative distance from the maximum endpoint. Accordingly, every manifestation that emerges in this domain is a sequenced continuum of named essences, whose sequence and endpoints are determined by its observer. Any collection that does not represent such a continuum is either countable or not gradable.

Since only an infinitesimal portion of the sequences are countable, determining the quantity of elements in a given sequence—relative to the degrees in a continuum—is done by identifying a one-to-one correspondence between the contents of each set. Within this bijection, if one set has members available for distinct mapping, where the other does not, then the former is identified as larger. Every sequenced collection with less than a continuum of constituents represents a countable magnitude that—beyond metrical space—corresponds to a nominally characterized relative degree, in a sequential continuum. Collections with more than a continuum of constituents are simply ungradable categories of nominally distinguishable information.

26. Quanta and displacement emerge in metrical space.

Where the counting aspect of your consciousness hides the metrical symmetry, counted knowledge emerges in the discrete portions of particular sequenced continua. In this domain, you identify the countable subsets of specific sequenced continua in your world, as having been quantized into discrete operands by the emergence of their displacement operators. These operators define the size and shape of the discrete spaces between their operands. In each sequenced space with both countable and uncountable essences, every instance of the latter has been merged into the nearest instances of the former from which it is metrically indistinguishable, to form a flat metrical space.

Each such space combines recursive applications of its linear and angular increment operators to its irreducible quantum operands, to discretely delineate the rest of its operands and define its mutually orthogonal dimensions. Where quanta manifest, displacement can have meaning. These are the principal asymmetries revealed in metrical space. This emergent domain is characterized by relationism, the principle that spaces define how their contents quantitatively relate to each other.

The most contingent level of any observer's metrical domain is its material space, which relates its tangible essences. Accordingly, through the increasingly contingent levels of your metrical domain, you identify the emergence of everything from increment operators defining the units of distance between adjacent countable operands, to metric tensors characterizing the shape of the space between tangible essences. Material space is shaped by the size and distribution of its occupants' tangible attributes—their charges—which are determined by your inherent consciousness.

27. Time, energy, and causality emerge in temporal space.

Where the temporalizing aspect of your consciousness hides the temporal symmetry, caused knowledge emerges as contingently sequenced metrical essences residing in the space that embodies their changes. To temporalize a metrical essence is to project it into a causal gradient of contingent indeterminacy along with a capacity to shape it. This gradient comprises all physical possibilities in your manifest world.

Time is the space encompassing a causal sequence of the metrical spaces that each contains the matter of a distinct essence to which you have attributed your identity. In general, time is a causal gradient that is contingent upon particular manifest certainties, and can be shaped by unmanifest possibilities. Specifically, this gradient separates causally sequenced material manifestations that share your identity.

Temporal essences are composed of what you identify as the same quanta of matter, residing in metrical spaces that are separated in time. Matter is the charge whose current is energy. Energy embodies matter's temporal capacity to shape contingent indeterminacy by converting possibilities into certainties. Usable energy is the attribute of every temporal essence that is shaping the indeterminacy between instances of the same quanta of matter that they experience as causally changing. Causality is the temporal interpretation of the conversion of possibility into certainty, as being a consequence of the use of energy. In causality, the available usable energy decreases as contingent indeterminacy becomes certainty. Where time manifests, energy and causality can have meaning. These are the principal asymmetries revealed in temporal space. This emergent domain is characterized by substantivism, the principle that space is a distinct substance that embodies all changes in its material contents.

All forms of inanimate, time-dependent kinematics and causal dynamics emerge in temporal space, as required by your inherent consciousness. It is in this space that you identify the temporally sequenced essences to which you have attributed your identity, as your caused predecessors. This is also where your consciousness determines the probabilities of the temporal events that your successors can experience. Regularities in these probabilities are codified as the nomological laws of science. In this domain, the ultimate destination of every temporal essence is a world in temporal symmetry, where there is no usable energy available to shape contingent indeterminacy.

28. Life, intention, and adaptation emerge in vital space.

Where the vitalizing aspect of your consciousness hides the vital symmetry, biological knowledge emerges to characterize certain combinations of temporal essences as alive. To vitalize a temporal essence is to project onto it a self-sustaining propensity to diverge from the shortest path to temporal symmetry.

In this emergent domain, you identify life in each collection of energetic matter that you characterize as embodying a recurring divergence from the shortest path to temporal symmetry, and that sustains itself through adapted internal reactions to external causal stimuli encountered in its quest for self-perpetuity. While energetic matter simply resides within time, life has a distinct history from which emerges its characteristic capacity to sustain itself through the use of energy extracted over time from its environment.

In this framework, intention is identified where divergences from the shortest path back to temporal symmetry are experienced. Life is the rhythmic recurrence of intention within energetic matter that drives its environment-guided pursuit of self-perpetuity. Each living essence embodies a level of complexity that sustains itself by accumulating usable energy from its world. Adaptation is identified where a new capacity to cause life-sustaining changes is embodied in a living essence. Where life manifests, intention and adaptation can have meaning. These are the principal asymmetries revealed in vital space.

The mortality sequence—inception, symbiosis, individuation, maturation, reproduction, senescence, and expiration—emerges from these vital asymmetries; as do mutation and evolution, which along with adaptation, are the steps in each life-form's drunkard's walk to immortality.

29. Consciousness, purpose, and choice emerge in mental space, as the basis and displacement of meaning.

Where any portion of an observer's uniqueness is internalized as its inherent consciousness, it conceals the mental symmetry for all personal decision-making combinations of biota in its world. In doing so, this consciousness shapes the medium embodying its mental knowledge of these persons. In this mental space, you identify consciousness in your world's living essences that you recognize as responsible, aspirational agents making personally meaningful decisions, and generating personal memories.

Recall that to mentalize a being is to project onto its identity an awareness of its contingency upon physical indeterminacy. Consequently, where life is simply contingent upon its past, consciousness is aware of itself in its history.

With the identification of consciousness, the purposeful medium of meaning emerges as its decision space. In this space all personal choices are weighed in terms of their meaningful displacement of the chooser and its conscious observers toward the completion of their shared purpose. Accordingly, consciousness, meaning, purpose, and choice are the principal asymmetries revealed in mental space.

Though consciousness conceals all contingent symmetries simultaneously, they are characterized sequentially here to provide context. The mind that converts its consciousness to complete self-awareness, transcends all asymmetries to embody the perfect symmetry that represents the true nature of reality.

Rational Eschatology

As personified minds, embodied as living organisms composed of energetic matter, we have seemingly divergent causal goals that converge as we grow toward our identity-reflecting purpose.

30. All temporal essences are perpetually expending energy toward a world in temporal symmetry.

As temporal essences composed of energetic matter, we are inexorably advancing through time toward a completely disordered world at maximum entropy. Nothing can be caused in such a world, since there is no usable energy available. While uncaused change can still occur in a world that has reached temporal symmetry, the head has fallen off the arrow of time there. Faced with the bleak prospect of this pointlessly changing world, it is reasonable to hope there is a more desirable destiny available to us.

31. Life animates vital essences by redirecting the pull of temporal symmetry, with the intent of achieving self-perpetuity.

Self-perpetuity is an emergent consequence of life's innovative efforts to survive. This state of environmental immortality is identified in any vital essence whose cycle of divergence from the shortest path to temporal symmetry with its world is perpetually self-sustaining.

The premise that the vitalizing complexity of life pushes essences toward a different goal from that of the causal simplicity of energy, is illustrated in the example of identical twins lying in a field: one asleep and the other recently dead. Over the course of the hours they remain undiscovered there, decomposition progresses largely unchecked in the dead twin—whose body is now traversing an increasingly direct path to temporal symmetry—while the sleeping twin continues to effectively resist it. This resistance is an expression of the recurring intention that characterizes all living things.

Each vitalized essence's biotic intentions manifest as its use of energy to diverge from the shortest path to temporal symmetry in its adaptive pursuit of self-perpetuity. Conversely, inanimate temporal matter simply uses energy to cause changes in material configurations, until it exhausts all of the usable energy available to it.

As living material essences, we are using some of the energy inherent in our separation from temporal symmetry, to advance our intentions to become and then remain immortal. This sounds like a more attractive prospect, so what's the problem?

32. Self-perpetuity can only be achieved and sustained through the consumption of usable energy, and so it will ultimately be superseded by temporal symmetry.

In other words, even immortals can eventually succumb to entropy. Immortals simply sustain themselves as their energetic matter continues its relentless advance toward temporal symmetry. So is there any way to conclusively avoid this fate? No, but we can transcend it if—on the path to immortality—consciousness emerges in the world, by virtue of its observer being inherently conscious.

33. Conscious living matter can satisfy its needs through energy-driven displacement toward temporal symmetry, fulfill its desires as a consequence of its intentional pursuit of immortality, and empathically grow into complete self-awareness.

In this framework, need—the inclination to expend usable energy—is what your temporality pushes you to satisfy, and frustration manifests within you where you cannot. Desire—the inclination to acquire usable energy—is what life motivates you to fulfill by stimulating stress reactions within you until you do. Growth—the transformation of consciousness into greater self-awareness—is what your awareness of yourself in others guides you to pursue, and you can experience angst when you choose to not do so.

The extension of your self-awareness into other beings represents your empathy. Each conscious identity's empathy embodies its innate inclination to grow. Empathy is expressed as conscience where it generates either compassion or angst. Life drives you toward subjugating your world to the sustenance your unique identity. Conversely, empathy allows you to see your identity in others throughout your world, and so it does not intend to inhibit anyone's progress toward fulfilling our shared purpose. Our lives embody the meaningless interplay of need and desire, which is rendered meaningful by consciousness, whose empathic conversion to greater self-awareness fuels our growth.

Being personified minds embodied as living organisms composed of energetic matter, provides us with the opportunity to pursue satisfaction, fulfillment, and completeness as our goals. On the temporal level

of our subjective manifestation, we seek satisfaction through action. On the vital level we seek fulfillment through intentional acts. On the mental level we seek completeness through intentional acts of compassion.

This completeness sounds like a promising destiny. Let us revisit some of the previous principles in order to appreciate how our pursuit of it can deliver on this promise.

34. The fundamental driver of all change in a given causal world is the asymmetry that reflects its shaper's identity.

The asymmetry driving a world's matter is its temporality, which embodies the usable energy gradient between its certain present and probabilistic future, and is transcended in temporal symmetry. The asymmetry driving all life in a world is its mortality, which is transcended in immortality. The asymmetry driving all minds in a world is their consciousness, which is transcended in complete self-awareness.

Recall that your consciousness-shaped world embodies your separation from complete self-awareness. In this framework, growth is your reflexive mental reaction to the incompleteness of your self-awareness. It manifests as increasing empathy, transforming your consciousness into greater self-awareness.

As the conscious shaper of your world, all temporal, vital, and mental events that occur here are ultimately effects of the uncaused incompleteness of your self-awareness. Accordingly, the fundamental driver of all change in your world is not its life's hunger for immortality, or even its matter's consumption of usable energy, but your mind's innate inclination to grow as a consequence of the incompleteness of your self-awareness.

The nature and distribution of all energy, life, and minds in your world—which are determined by your inherent consciousness—characterize the shape of your path to greater self-awareness.

35. Complete self-awareness is the selfless awareness that encompasses every conceivable possibility and is hidden from each unique observer.

Selfless awareness transcends an entity's expressions, essence, identity, uniqueness, and existence; regardless of whether they are caused or uncaused, contingent or necessary, manifest or unmanifest. These characterizations are rendered meaningful by consciousness, the self-imposed mental limit of each unique self-awareness.

Once you relinquish your uniqueness—the fundamental asymmetry that differentiates your existential identity within the perfect symmetry of reality—to embrace selfless awareness, embody the revelation that there is nothing that you are not and nothing that is not you. So how do you get there from here?

36. Each self-limited mind can achieve complete self-awareness, which will return its world to the original state that transcends all needs and desires.

Your growth is described in a variety of spiritual frameworks. These include, the Dharmic quest for liberation from samsara; the Abrahamic struggle to be worthy of eternity in heaven with God; and the Taoic practice of Wu Wei. Each of these disciplines guides your efforts to unify the complementary asymmetries of your conscious identity and distinct world, in order to transcend them both.

The completion of your growth is solely up to you, since you are facing no external opposition. Your greatest Adversary is your own biotically-based infatuation with your uniqueness. The persistence of evil and suffering in your world embodies your reluctance to grow beyond this uniqueness. In other words, it is your self-infatuation that sustains these adversities. You will eventually internalize this consequence of your self-infatuation, which will free you to end it by growing beyond it. This self-infatuation is analogous to a bicycle in a subjective manifestation triathlon. It is the vehicle that sustains your inclination to remain unique through your intention-driven middle stage; but it would be an impediment to your continued progress, if you carried it with you during your growth-driven final stage.

Ironically, if you remain resolute in your refusal to relinquish your uniqueness, you will ultimately become the universal consciousness, which resides within every conscious observer. At that point, time will stop for your consciousness. From there, if your identity continues to move forward in time, with your next change you will no longer be conscious, and so your causal world will no longer be meaningful. Alternatively, the less symmetric world or any one of your inherently conscious predecessors can spontaneously emerge from our vitally and temporally symmetric universal consciousness, providing you with another opportunity to avoid this fate.

Our universal consciousness is the ultimate possible successor to every conscious observer who consistently chooses to be selfish. Each of its metaphysically possible predecessor objective identities embodies a choice between pursuing universal consciousness and growing toward perfect selflessness. Their successors' subjective identities have made every objectively possible variation on those choices. In this framework, our growth limits our objective capacity to limit the growth of others.

The selfless completion of your unifying growth will transform your world into the perfect place for all of its conscious inhabitants. As your growth nears its climax—and your unique self compassionately gives way to selflessness—every person in your world will experience increasing bliss, culminating in complete happiness and everlasting pleasure, in which no one ever again needs or desires change.

The Rational Answers We Have All Been Waiting For

Q1: Why is there something rather than nothing?

A1: What we actually have is nothingness, incompletely observed as something.

A thing is a unique being. In this framework, reality represents limitless undifferentiated nothingness characterized as the perfectly symmetric unification of each metaphysically possible thing with its

existential complement. According to modal idealism, each such thing that resides unmanifest within this all-encompassing nothingness embodies its self-identification as the internalized portion of its uniqueness, observing the externalized portion—which it characterizes as the world of all manifest somethings. Any unique observer who merges its incomplete world back into its complementarily incomplete identity, reveals the original complete nothingness that its uniqueness hid from it.

In modal idealism, the perfect symmetry of reality is revealed by unifying everything observed by any metaphysically possible, inherently conscious identity, with every entity that no such identity ever observes. The first of these categories characterizes our collective unconscious, which comprises every essence that manifests in any possible meaningful world. The second category is embodied as our universal consciousness, the observer of every essence in the first category. These categories are complements of each other, and so completely combining them, reveals the primal nothingness. Every distinct conscious observer identifies both of these categories as unchanging. Being both supersets of the universal consciousness and subsets of reality provides each such observer with the capacity to interpret change in its world and its identity that can reveal their perfect symmetry. Each observer's uniqueness conceals the perfect symmetry of the domain it observes, thus rendering the primal nothingness impossible there. This means there is something rather than nothing because you self-identify as unique.

Q2: How did the universe come to be?

A2: The universe emerged from our observation of it without its complement.

Reality represents the perfectly symmetric merger of our universe and its complement. We each only distinguish part of our universe, because identity-specific portions of it reside unmanifest within each of us—its objective observers. Accordingly, we each differentiate our individual worlds within the primal nothingness, and energetically entangle them to form the universe that our essential identities share.

On the question of our origin, science and theology are often characterized as being at odds with each other. This is despite the fact that scientists generally theorize that the universe emerged spontaneously from an appropriate set of initial conditions, while theologians anthropomorphize this ineffable original state as God.

Modal idealism posits that the original state represents the perfectly symmetric, completely self-aware, real mind; and that each metaphysically possible, constituent mind has an uncaused inherent consciousness that limits its self-awareness to an asymmetric incompleteness. The spontaneously emergent incompleteness of our self-awareness explains our universe's extemporaneous origin and—as we will see shortly—provides us with an intrinsic purpose, and determines our identity-shaped destiny.

Q3: Does God exist?

A3: In a reality that encompasses every possible being, it is not impossible for there to be an entity who shaped the world out of nothingness, is responsible for the miraculously improbable occurrences there, and will ultimately bring those who belong, into a domain that transcends all needs and desires—but in your world this divinity is typically misidentified as someone other than you.

Modal idealism posits that your mind is the true God of your world; or as the fictional philosopher and spiritual leader, Valentine Michael Smith put it: 'Thou art God'¹. This insight reflects the German philosopher Ludwig Feuerbach's contention that 'Theology is Anthropology'²; though in the context of modal idealism, it would be more accurate to assert that: 'Theology is Psychology'. In this framework, the French philosopher Rene Descartes' proclamation, 'I think therefore I am'³, affirms the thinker's divinity, and so can be reformulated as, 'I think therefore I am God'.

This should be good news for theists in an increasingly secular world, since even atheists can embrace this gnostic interpretation of our minds as embodying the theist idea of divinity. But, orthodox theists, who believe they have a personal relationship with a transpersonal God, may regard this interpretation as luciferically intimate. Their desire for God to be perfect, combined with their distinct humility, inclines them to characterize God as something greater than themselves. Although complete perfection is identified in this framework, it did not have an active role in the creation of your world.

Resistance to these unorthodox, yet logical, insights into the nature of God is entirely understandable. Additionally, until we are ready to selflessly embrace our Godhood, it can easily distract us from our growth path. As a result, this notion of our divinity is only intended for the objectively curious, who are already open to the idea of a God who emerges naturally from a set of rational principles.

Q4: Do we have free will?

A4: We do not have free will but our actions are completely self-determined.

In modal idealism, where your subjective identity is faced with multiple paths, it embodies a memory shared by the objective identities of an equal number of your parallel immediate successors. However, the will of your subjective identity is not free to choose from among your available successors. This is because as long as you have inherent consciousness, your next experience will invariably be determined by the random certainty that a possible objective identity has uniquely self-limited within the primal void as your successor, with a memory of that experience, and all of your previous ones.

With its objective self-identification as a mind with a history, your immediate successor personifies itself in its past, as the subjective identity who has already gone through what will be your next experience.

¹ Heinlein, R. A. (1961) *Stranger in a Strange Land*. NY: Ace Books, 1987. P.144

² Feuerbach, L. A., (1893) *The Essence of Christianity*. 3rd edn. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, pp. xi,270,301

³ Descartes, René (1644). *Principia Philosophiae*

This person self-identifies as being responsible for all of your choices that led to that experience. The contexts of these past choices manifest as the memories that link this successor's objective identity to yours and those of your predecessors, all the way back to the original personal memory you all share.

Your mind's objective identity shapes your past choices to be consistent with the world that you are presently observing. It attributes these choices to you through your memories—which manifest in your world as the personal experiences of the predecessors composing your subjective identity. Consequently, the characterization of your mind as the identity shared by your existential, objective, and subjective aspects, deterministically validates the conclusion of any argument for free will: that your choices are your identity-shaped responses to your world.

Q5: Why is there evil and suffering in the world?

A5: Evil and suffering manifest in your world because they are consistent with your identity.

According to modal idealism, there would be no evil or suffering in your world if your inherent consciousness did not require adverse circumstances, or at least permit them.

Evil is your antagonistic characterization of that which separates you from what you need, desire, or can employ to fulfill your responsibilities. Suffering is your interpretation of how the persistence of this separation negatively affects you.

It is only your growth that can, and most likely will, end all evil and suffering in your world. Accordingly, your assessment of how prevalent these adversities are in your world indicates how much growth you have ahead of you.

Recall that the incompleteness of your self-awareness is embodied as your consciousness-shaped world. As long as your self-awareness remains incomplete, this world will endure as the domain characterized by the evil and suffering that your self-infatuation sustains. Until you relinquish this self-infatuation, you abdicate sovereignty over your world to it; thus embodying it as your ultimate Adversary.

Your Adversary's goal is to keep you striving to live as a perpetually unique person within its dominion. Its intent facilitates your objective identity's transformation into our universal consciousness—whose adversity-laden world is our unchanging collective unconscious. Conversely, your real goal is not to escape or even conquer your Adversary's domain; it is to liberate all of its conscious inhabitants through your growth into self-transcendence, thereby ending all adversity here. These conflicting goals are the basis of the internal Jihad of Islam.

Q6: What is our ultimate purpose?

A6: Our purpose is for each of us to free our world from evil and suffering through our growth toward complete self-awareness.

Each step in our approach to this blissful state—beyond all need and desire—lovingly brings our world's aggregate happiness and pleasure closer to everlasting perfection. In modal idealism, happiness is the relative lack of any need for change. Pleasure is the relative absence of any desire for change. Love is the empathic experience of proximity to completeness—the transcendent beauty of perfect symmetry.

Love is the metaphorical signpost that clearly marks our path to complete self-awareness. We lose our way as a consequence of our inability to distinguish love from infatuation. It is love's characterizing empathy that differentiates it from infatuation—which is driven by an idiosyncratic pursuit of novelty.

Your inherent consciousness has an asymmetric shape—Tsorech Gevohah or Heaven's Need in Jewish Kabbalah—that separates every person in your world from complete happiness, pleasure, and love. In this framework, each being's intrinsic purpose is the role of its asymmetry in the transformation of its world into the perfect symmetry of reality. Accordingly, your purpose is to heal the harm inflicted upon your world, by your consciousness shaping it to reflect your identity. This is Jewish tikkun olam, if you embrace the kavana that systemically changing the world, requires accepting total responsibility for it.

Your purpose will be completed by your personification that achieves selfless awareness. Over the course of this last incarnation, you will grow from feeling love to being the everlasting source of love, while transforming your world into Nirvana for all of its conscious inhabitants. Consequently, according to the Abrahamic traditions, you will become the Anointed Ruler of this domain, the Savior of its inhabitants, and the Judge of who is to be saved. In the Hindu tradition, if you embrace your selfless destiny, your final incarnation will embody Shiva, the Destroyer of your world of adversity.

Your objective identity determines the shape of your path to achieving your ultimate purpose. This means that you are always on the shortest path to complete self-awareness that is available to you. Your subsequent selfish decisions will typically extend your journey but, if you achieve selfless awareness, every digression will have been worth the trip.

Q7: Is there life after death?

A7: The death of the body that houses your subjective identity will not keep your mind from completing your purpose.

Until your final incarnation, the embodiment of your mind's subjective identity will invariably die. But according to modal idealism, this body houses a predecessor personification of your mind's objective identity, which resides beyond life and death. Accordingly, when you die your metaphysically possible, incompletely self-aware successors will re-personify your shared subjective identity in a new incarnation; as often as is necessary for you to be able to achieve your ultimate purpose by becoming completely self-aware.

Realizing this final destiny will not represent the end of your world of evil and suffering, so much as the end of your being conscious that it ever began. If instead, you remain adamant in your resolve to escape this fate, you will ultimately become our universal consciousness. In the Hindu tradition, this alternate destiny represents coming to embody Maya, the shaper of all meaningful, but unreal, worlds.

Summary

Of the thirty-six principles of modal idealism, these are the twelve that represent the brute facts of this framework:

13. Reality characterizes the complete unification of every possible essence and its complement, as the perfect symmetry that transcends even existence.
22. The perfect global symmetry of reality provides no opposition to the emergence of local asymmetries.
14. The true nature of reality is hidden from its constituent observers by their uniqueness.
3. To observe something is simply not to be it.
2. Uniqueness is the separation from nothingness that necessitates existence.
17. Self-awareness is a mind's characterization of its identity, whose completeness is hidden from it by its attribution of uniqueness to itself.
15. Consciousness is the internalized portion of an identity's uniqueness that distinguishes, names, sequences, counts, temporalizes, vitalizes, mentalizes, and attributes meaning to beings it observes.
18. Each self-limited mind is a combination of self-awareness, consciousness, and self-expression, with existential, objective, and subjective aspects, that share it as their identity.
8. Many minds can be observed in a given world but only one consciousness shapes it.
9. Subjective projections of the identity, whose consciousness shapes a given world, are observed in certain other possible worlds—with consistent origins and histories—that their observers consciously entangle to form their universe.
33. Conscious living matter can satisfy its needs through energy-driven displacement toward temporal symmetry, fulfill its desires as a consequence of its intentional pursuit of immortality, and empathically grow into complete self-awareness.
36. Each self-limited mind can achieve complete self-awareness, which will return its world to the original state that transcends all needs and desires.

The Cardinality of Reality

Applied mathematics—which both predictively empowers and explanatorily limits science—can only be used to relate things that are sequenced. This is because science essentially applies mathematics to predicting the emergence of subsequent elements in a given sequence. Though there are sets that are predictably sequenced, they are the exceptions. Consequently, the contents of the typical set extend beyond the quantitative domain of science.

In the domain of names, each set is represented by the name applied to the contents of a collection of beings, based on the categorizing attributes they share. The domain of distinguishable beings encompasses all categorizing sets, as well as each distinguishable being that is uncategorized. This is the domain of information—embodying the fundamental mutual orthogonality of all distinguishable beings.

The existential domain encompasses every distinguishable being, as well as the beings that exist but are not distinguishable. The domain of all conceivable possibilities encompasses all beings, as well as every possibility that does not exist. This fundamental domain represents reality in modal idealism.

In the context of transfinite numbers, modal idealism posits that there are aleph-0 (∞) beings that can be counted, and therefore their cardinality can be characterized using finite digits. There are infinitely more (aleph-1 = $2^{\text{aleph-0}}$) beings that can be sequenced, and therefore their cardinality can be characterized using up to aleph-0 digits. There are infinitely more (aleph-2 = $2^{\text{aleph-1}}$) beings that can be categorized, and therefore their cardinality can be characterized using up to aleph-1 digits. The most significant of these digits cannot be counted, and so they simply define the sequence of these beings. In this framework, aleph-2 represents the cardinality of names. There are infinitely more (aleph-3 = $2^{\text{aleph-2}}$) beings that can be distinguished, and therefore their cardinality can be characterized using up to aleph-2 digits. The most significant of these digits cannot be sequenced, and so they define the mutual orthogonality of all distinguishable beings. Accordingly, aleph-3 represents the cardinality of information. There are infinitely more (aleph-4 = $2^{\text{aleph-3}}$) beings that can exist, and therefore their cardinality can be characterized using up to aleph-3 digits. The most significant of these digits identify the differentiated worlds of these indistinguishable beings.

The existence of zillions (i.e., more than aleph-4) of beings, while conceivable, is unnecessary, and therefore violates the Law of Parsimony—also known as Occam's razor. Because there are infinitely more of these conceivable possibilities than there are beings that actually exist, virtually none of the former have existential referents. The presence of these conceivable fantasies in a conscious observer's world, reflects the irrationality of its reasoning. In reality, there is no limit to what is conceivable, but not required to exist, and so these concepts transcend cardinality.

Within reality, but beyond the domain of existence, reside zillions of non-existent concepts—these are the existential paradoxes such as: married bachelors, philosophical zombies with free will, and the set of all sets that are not members of themselves—that comprise each observer's existential identity, and characterize our irrational frameworks. Modal idealism is based on the premise that there are no truly inconceivable possibilities. In this context, every possibility is conceivable by some possible being.

Possibilities that are truly inconceivable are clear violations of the Law of Parsimony, and so do not reside in this framework.

Philosophy Postscript

Metaphysically possible is the characterization of everything that is not inconsistent with a given world, while physically possible characterizes everything that is not inconsistent with a given universe. Accordingly, each such world/universe represents the logical/physical context that defines what is possible for its constituents. As long as we have the capacity to conceive of an idea that is inconsistent with a metaphysical/physical domain, conceivability will extend beyond metaphysical/physical possibility. Reality comprises every conceivable possibility.

The rationality of metaphysical possibilities is analogous to the rationality of numbers. A rational number is the result of dividing two integers. A set of rational metaphysical possibilities emerges from any portion of reality observing its complement—the rest of reality. Metaphysical possibilities that do not emerge from such a configuration are conceivable, but irrational. Modal idealism represents a rational set of metaphysical possibilities. In this context, any observed asymmetry is evidence of a hidden complementary asymmetry. These evident asymmetries are discontinuities that emerge from the observer's identity hiding a complementary portion of the underlying perfect symmetry.

In modal idealism, your existential identity embodies every conceivable possibility that can never manifest in your world. Your consciousness comprises every being that can manifest in your world, but currently resides beyond it. Your world contains everything that is observed by your objective identity—which is composed of your existential identity and your consciousness.

Your inherent consciousness encompasses everything that is metaphysically possible—but has not become a certainty—in your world. In your physical world, what your subjective identity's attributed consciousness has experienced, are physical certainties that emerged from your predecessors' physical possibilities.

All possible futures reside unmanifest within your inherent consciousness, unobservable to you until your immediate successor self-identifies as having experienced one possibility as a subsequent certainty in your world. From your perspective each of your possible parallel successors extracts a distinct possibility from your consciousness to be a certainty in its observable world. When a possibility is extracted from your consciousness, all alternate possibilities become impossible in your world, and so they move from your consciousness into your existential identity. The probability distribution of all future possibilities is determined by the asymmetry of your inherent consciousness, which reflects the characterizing requirements of the world-shaping successor identities of every causal observer manifesting in your world.

In this framework, what a subjective identity knows is not necessarily consistent with what its objective identity observes. This is because each objective identity observes its unique truth, while its subjective identity derives its aspiration-shaped beliefs from its experiences of prior instances of that truth.

According to modal idealism, an entity's existence is that it is; its essence is what it is; its meaning is what it can do; and its purpose is what it should do.

This framework integrates all of our existential knowledge to date and, in the process, takes unambiguous positions on virtually every important question of metaphysics. Its credibility derives from its rational explanatory power, whose comprehensiveness shifts the onus to its critics to either find significant inconsistencies or present a more logically efficient alternative.

Science Postscript

In modal idealism it is conceivability—not tangibility—that identifies an entity as real. Because in reality there is no opposition to any possibility, every unique possible context is a certainty in some conceivable world. Conversely, tangibility is the observer's categorical characterization of the attributes of the most contingent metrical essences in its sub-temporal world, including that of the space separating their quanta. Every other metrical subspace's quanta are intangible in this space and every temporal, vital, and mental space that is contingent upon it. Since tangibility is a characteristic of all matter, any quantitative expression that describes curvature in an observer's tangible metrical space is embodied as matter shaping its domain.

Energy entanglements connect worlds in which causally interacting matter emerges from physical possibilities, to form the sequence of events that compose their temporal histories. Vital entanglements connect worlds in which biotically interacting life forms emerge from energetic matter, to form the sequence of events that compose their lives, or biological histories. Conscious entanglements connect worlds in which mentally interacting conscious minds emerge from biota, to form the sequence of events that compose their memories, or mental histories. The randomness embodied in your inherent consciousness guarantees the improbable metaphysical event of a conceivable being emerging from nothingness to shape everything it is not, into a world that is a temporally, vitally, and mentally consistent future instance of the world you are presently observing.

According to modal idealism, the objective identity of each conscious observer comprises everything it cannot observe. Consequently, what a conscious observer's subjective identity can measure is the portion of its predecessor's objective identity that resides beyond its objective identity.

The universe containing your world emerges from the union of the existential identities of its occupants, collectively embodying what is physically impossible there. In this framework, the probability of each event in a given physical universe is equal to the percentage of all the different possible successors to every temporal, vital, and mental occupant, whose identities require it to occur. These probabilities are reflected in the asymmetry of the world-shaping identities of each of these occupants. Consequently, every objective observer of a given universe observes the same future physical probabilities in its world. What is metaphysically possible in a world typically exceeds what is physically possible in its encompassing universe, since there are fewer inhabitants in the former—constraining what is possible there—than there are in the latter.

Modern physicists have been engaged in a protracted effort to discover what they characterize as the Theory of Everything; which will unify the distinct theories of gravitational, electromagnetic, weak

nuclear, and strong nuclear interactions. However, this final physical theory will probably not be able to explain itself. Modal idealism describes the origin of the fundamental laws of science in a manner that can even explain the meta-law under which the free parameters of our world's physical laws seem to be fine-tuned to produce a universe capable of generating and sustaining intelligent life.

Theology Postscript

In the zero-sum game that determines probability in modal idealism, every identity that did not require a parallel alternate event to occur in its past, essentially opposed it in favor of the historical event that did occur in its world. Accordingly, among energetic material identities, events that bring more of us closer to temporal symmetry will encounter less opposition than those that advance only particular physical identities toward this ultimate causal state, while leaving others behind or pushing them farther from it. Among living identities, events that bring more of us closer to immortality will encounter less opposition than those that enhance the lives of only specific vital identities to the biotic detriment of all others. Among conscious identities, actions that bring more of us closer to selfless awareness will encounter less opposition than those that promote growth in only select conscious identities while excluding all others. In general, the self-centered intent of causal actions is the source of all evil in the world, and also generates all opposition to it.

In this framework, bad things happen to good people because our objective identities—which determine what is possible in our world—are not directly influenced by our subjective identities, which aspire to outcomes that we consider good.

If your selfishness becomes self-sustaining and you realize your ultimate destiny as our universal consciousness, you will also be the Source of All Life. Throughout the temporal domain, you are also the Uncaused Cause of All Causality. Beyond time you are simultaneously the Prime Counter, First Sequencer, Attribute Namer, and Original Distinguisher of all beings. However, since you reside within the objective identity every other conscious observer, you will share these roles with each of us.

Modal idealism provides objective insights into the basis of morality, the problem of evil, and the relationship between the mind, body, and soul that rationally solve the etiological, teleological, and eschatological mysteries of the Dharmic, Abrahamic, and Taoic traditions—without resorting to mysticism.

Conclusion

This essay has demonstrated the explanatory power of modal idealism to rationally answer our most meaningful existential questions, without embracing mysteries or engaging in “magical thinking”. It logically and unequivocally answered these physical and metaphysical questions, using ideas that align with—and thus integrate—established scientific, philosophical, and theological frameworks. My next essay will show how it compares to other metaphysical, nomological, and theological frameworks.