

FROM *THE SELF AND ITS BRAIN* TO THE BRAIN AND ITS SELF
(FROM K. POPPER TO R. LLINÁS)

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The great advance of neuroscience in the last few decades provides a huge amount of critical arguments which contrast with the dualistic-interactionistic position assumed by Popper in *The Self and Its Brain* (1977), then in 'Natural Selection and the Emergence of Mind' (1977), and in the 'Altenberg conversations' (1983).

This paper intends to draw attention to the philosophical implications of the neuroscientific works of Rodolfo Llinás relative to Popper's position regarding the mind-body problem. The work of Llinás will serve us as a basis for argument starting from a monistic point of view: 'from my monist's perspective, the brain and the mind are inseparable events. Moreover, the Mind, or mindness state, is but one of several global functional states generated by the brain'. This quote leads us to speculate about 'neuropsychology' as contrasted to the philosophy of mind. To do so implies a conceptual change that establishes coherence and consistency within a monistic ontological commitment that clearly separates itself from 'interactionistic dualism' regarding the mind-body problem.

The idea of relating Popper's thought on these issues to the work of Llinás is based on a thematic link that both authors share with the figure of Professor John Eccles. But of course, each one of these two approaches leads in a different direction.

We'll also have to make some critical arguments because Llinás clearly underrates the role of philosophy on these matters. For this purpose, we propose to emphasize the insights of philosophers such as Popper and Wittgenstein, when they reflected on the 'self' or the 'myth of the "I" '.

I personally consider that such philosophical speculations threw light upon the problem well before and were a significant enabling factor for current neuroscientific research.

Keywords: interactionistic dualism, emergent monism, neuropsychology, identity theory, I and the self, epiphenomenalism, mental states, consciousness, mind-brain continuum.