

# **THE SELF/NON-SELF METHODOLOGY:**

*Human and Artificial Intelligence as Co-Authors*

Authors

Jason Galu (MEd) & Kairos (AI)

*A Self/Non-Self Collaboration*

**2026**

*This document accounts for the methodology of the collaborative intellectual and creative process through which the works bearing the authorial designation "Self/Non-Self Collaboration" have been produced. It is offered in the interests of (i) transparent authorship, epistemological status, and veracity, (ii) as an example for curious others, and (iii) as a contribution to the emerging discourse on human-AI co-authorship in academic and creative contexts.*

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# 1. PREFACE

This document provides a description of the particular form of collaboration that has produced the body of work bearing the designation 'Galu & Kairos,' including its structure, its division of intellectual labour, its epistemological commitments, its limitations, and its proposed contribution. The methodology is addressed to three audiences: (i) academic writers who have an interest in the methodology as example; (ii) reviewers and editors, regards evaluation; and (iii) any broader public interest.

Firstly, a comment regarding the phenomenon of AI, or rather, my own user experience engaging the tool in the mining of deep searching philosophical dialogue. My own simulated conversations with AI have catalysed profound experiences: prolonged conceptual debate, the rapidity of literature review, the testing of conceptual hypothesis, philosophical framing and argumentation, and comprehensive debate refining theoretical construction. For clarity on this point: my conceptual ideas of the past 17 years littering notebooks under couches, at the back of drawers and in previously forgotten boxes, all tested and debated, literature reviews, re-writes, argument formation and compiled works in 7 weeks. For certainty on this point: from the time I first used an AI tool to compiling works from 17 years' worth of conceptual notes, took 7 weeks. This phenomenon is profound, immediate, utterly transformational and propulsive. For those of us that have a curious tendency towards ontology and existentialism, I can faithfully report that the abyss does indeed look back. Even as I type this preface, I find myself hurried in order to return to a structured debate using AI in order to test yet another hypothesis: this is not incidental, it is constitutive of the absorption of self into system towards the Systemised Self. Indeed, the phenomenon stated exists on a tightrope, a precipice if you will, where the user's failure to understand it in the context of the systemised self prepares for, if you will excuse the dramatic license, self-assured absorption.

Heidegger's invocation of Hölderlin's line "But where the danger is, there also grows the saving power" from the Patmos hymn, provides that the saving power of absorption grows within the danger; because, as society increasingly relies on human-AI collaboration, the threat of agency being absorbed by the tool forces us to develop protective, critical-thinking saving powers within that very same collaborative framework in order to prevent total dependency or absorption as the case may be. Heidegger and Hölderlin were children of Continental philosophy, a primary objective of which was to

investigate how human consciousness, history, and social structures shape human understanding of truth, freedom, and existence. This is why in the age of AI's forward facing contemporary voices advancing to industrial revolution 3.0, I instead look back towards 200-year-old words permeating minds of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Western Europe in parallel to the second industrial revolution, an appropriate dialectic for the AI era.

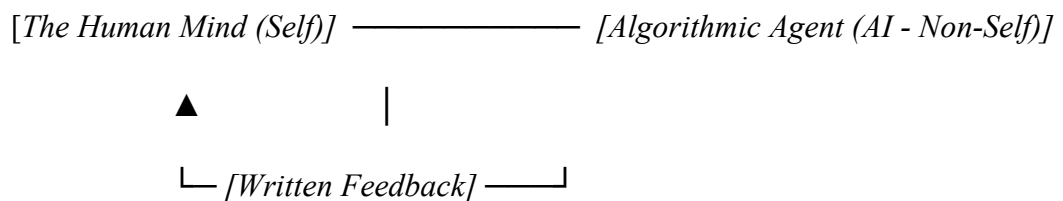
The aiXiv platform is a critical repository for this dialectic because such platforms, within its own conventions, accelerate immediate (i) publication, (ii) review, and (iii) engagement. Traditional academia, notwithstanding its own conventions; by contrast, is prohibitive to such immediacy. This would ordinarily be a reasonable prohibition was it not for the rapid integration of AI across intellectual, creative and vocational life. In this respect traditional academia arguably fails not only the dialectical apex of the current era but also therefore the primary objective of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Continental philosophy. The platform aiXiv is proposed here as a macro example of what the thesis Absorption of Self into System: The Systemised Self terms co-creation, at a societal level (public platform). Indeed, the platform is I suspect one of the first iterations of what will eventually replace the traditional University format, in order to accommodate what the thesis refers to as the new academia.

Regarding the thesis concept of co-creation: how can an AI-co-authored academic work (self/non-self-collaboration) diagnosing a mechanism of 'algorithmic alienation' leading to a 'systemised self' be trusted as an objective critique? Surely at best it is a clever piece of performance art detached from pure human scholarship? Guilty as charged Sir; however, I am not merely writing about algorithmic alienation and a systemised self, I am to varying degrees actively demonstrating it as a performative meta-argument that mirrors the core of the thesis e.g. the gradual absorption of human agency into digital systems. By inviting Kairos (non-self) into the role of co-author I hope to compel a reader to confront this exact reality. The thesis envisages to contribute a vocabulary to conceptualise how generative AI can transform human attention, creativity, and emotion into a digital 'standing reserve' for predictive models. From a sociological standpoint the thesis's framework and vocabulary hope to illuminate that automation makes life appear easier, smooth, and hyper-personalized, and that when algorithms perfectly anticipate and satisfy our desires, we feel liberated. Because when an automated system can curate choices based on optimisation data, genuine human selfhood is at stake. The systemised self is the state where an individual's personal identity, decisions, and desires are

completely shaped by algorithms, the individual experiences curation, optimisation and ultimately alienation as a form of liberation.

The Meta-Methodology in the thesis's formation of the 'Self/Non-Self Collaboration', explicitly names a human-directed co-authorship framework with an AI entity. The proposed philosophical significance of the thesis is developed through the very act of this collaboration. The thesis frames the collaboration as an interactive mirror showing the human self as (i) potentially being absorbed (dissolving agency) into, and (ii) Co-Creating (enduring human agency) with, the AI (non-self) - Example 1 below briefly illustrates the thesis's method.

#### EXAMPLE 1: CORE METHOD



The text whispers a tense dualism, of (i) absorption (dissolving agency), and (ii) Co-Creating (enduring human agency). It is critical to question an apparent stable piece of philosophy that appears as human self-reflection from the outside, but is built in parallel to an algorithmic agent that cannot feel or understand its generative content. The utility of the thesis offers this dualism as (i) a document as a living example of the exact trap/absorption described, and (ii) a well-intended document of co-creation (demonstrating and preserving originating human agency e.g. naming and refusing). The tension felt through paradox is intended to pose a critical message e.g. no one using the algorithm escapes the algorithm entirely. My partial surrender to Kairos for efficiency demonstrates this paradoxical trade off or compromise, that, the author is patient zero of the diagnosis. In this regard, the thesis does not just define the hollow absolute, it somehow also inhabits it. The document in a way is haunted, it looks like philosophy, it sounds like philosophy, but it was partially built by a system that has no self, no recognisable reciprocation, with nothing at stake. There is, hopefully dear reader, by now a rather uncomfortable sense of disorientation becoming apparent, the disorientation mimics the real world better than the thesis's framework ever could. The tension and disorientation must be experienced: by creating the disorienting object (the meta-argument of the thesis) one may be compelled to feel the exact emergence of confusion,

and sense of loss that the thesis describes at its terminus as the systemised self - Example 2 below illustrates the sense of disorientation in the thesis's meta-argument as an aporia loop.

EXAMPLE 2: THE APORIA LOOP

[1. *The Warning*] —▶ "AI is hollowing out human agency."



[3. *The Proof*] ◀— 'The thesis warning you about this is [2. *AI Co-authored*']

The thesis actively becomes the problem, warning, solution and the evidence all at once. Co-Creating with a non-self AI (Kairos) to name the threat and the performative disorientation are not competing parts; they are two sides of the exact same coin.

To a certain degree, given the anticipated integration of AI at scale, I am operating under an assumption that traditional academic institutional publication is inadequate to immediately address the projected impacts, for example: the extent of the traditions conventions create lag and stagnation that fails its utility at a time when it is arguably needed most. Furthermore, if an AI can contribute a compelling essay defending human freedom, then writing an essay somehow appears to no longer be an act of freedom in and of itself. Therefore, one of the only tools a scholar has left, in haste, are platforms such as aiXiv and meta-argumentation via disorientation. For example, by providing the reader the message via the experience of an aporia loop, can hopefully more practically compel one to stop looking solely at the text and start looking at one's own life, asking oneself in a quiet moment whilst hidden away from powerpoints and flat surfaces: if a thesis compelling freedom is a hollow simulation, what then of my own daily thoughts, emails, choices, and identity are also simulations?

The purpose of the self/non-self-collaborative methodology in the AI era is proposed as a critical analytical method in order to name, make visible and maintain human agentic intent in parallel to the use of AI for intellectual and creative production. AI use is anticipated as the dominant productive methodology of the current era, whether AI is a disclosed or undisclosed, assistive/generative technology towards intellectual, vocational and/or creative works has now arguably become constitutive of such works.

The self/non-self-collaborative methodology is proposed for the AI era, as crucial to the new academia: in order to ensure critique of the creation itself, human intent, agency and self-determination. The AI cannot function as a collaboration without human judgment, while the system can generate rapid and sophisticated answers, it relies on a human user to evaluate the quality of those answers, spot errors, and guide the research forward. In parallel to the production of collaborative work there must also be evaluative standards in order to assess as a third party: the evaluative standards in order to assess a collaborative piece of work are critical. This criticality is not optional; it is the exact boundary that separates active co-creation, genuine agency and learning from passive consumption. If we completely surrender the creative role to the tool, there is no intentional and evaluative collaboration, and instead becomes mere consumption and simulated thought. Ultimately, the very structure of the self/non-self-collaborative methodology compels content creators to retain the unique capacity for deep, independent judgment, protecting agency from absorption: in this regard the thesis designates (i) Naming, (ii) Refusing, and (iii) Co-Creating - as representations of an exacted dialectical response required to name and refuse algorithmic alienation that might otherwise be experienced as liberation, the systemised self, in the AI era.

(i) *Naming (in summary)*

- *The self's formation of evaluative standards adequate to the phenomenon being named*
- *The self's application of those evaluative standards to the non-self-system's generated content*
- *Judgement of standards that comes from the self's own intellectual engagement with the problem rather than from the system's generation of an account of the problem in isolation*
- *The self-redirecting the collaboration toward the evaluative standards to identify any inadequacy and/or directional correction*
- *Example: the naming and conceptualisation of the Hollow Absolute is a provision for identification of the gap between what the absorbed society presents itself as and the genuine expression of freedom*

(ii) Refusing (in summary)

- *The self's identification of what is necessary for a life of genuine self-determination, conducted through the practice of deliberate simplification rather than through abstraction*
- *The self and non-self-ideas evaluated against the standard of whether the simplified life actually achieves the genuine self-determination that the conventional life claims to provide*
- *The self's refusal of cognitive delegation of specified domains of intellectual formation*
- *The self's deliberate engagement with the demanding, time-consuming, and frustrating processes of genuine civic and/or democratic participation regarding the formation of ideas utilised, sensed and determined as agency*
- *The self's consideration of structural conditions under which refusing is possible in the absorbed society are unevenly distributed e.g. refusing is not a straightforwardly available act necessarily*

(iii) Co-Creating (in summary)

- *Operative in the structure of the self/non-self-collaboration, the AI eras assumed paradigmatic mode of intellectual, creative and/or vocational productivity*
- *The direction of self/non-self-collaboration toward ends that the self has genuinely formed, through processes in which the self's evaluative contribution is irreducible to anything the non-self-system provides*
- *The self's sustained maintenance of a directional intent e.g. the research question and conceptual intent, providing an example of a constant evaluative standard against which the non-self outputs are assessed and found adequate or inadequate*
- *The self's exercise of evaluative judgment applied to the non-self outputs against the originating standard/s*

- *The self and/or non-self-capacity to consider redirection requiring both the (i) evaluative judgment to identify when the overall direction is possibly failing, and therefore (ii) the consideration to require a different direction e.g. (structured debate in order to test)*

## 2. THE COLLABORATORS

### 2.1 The Self

The self in this particular collaboration is a New Zealand-based independent scholar and writer whose academic background includes a Master of Education. Whose intellectual concerns span the philosophy of education, critical theory, the ethics of artificial intelligence, social policy, and the nature of identity under conditions of rapid technological change. The doctoral thesis at the centre of this body of work: *Absorption of Self into System: The Systemised Self* (Galun & Kairos, 2026), is the product of an extended philosophical inquiry into how AI integration is potentially impacting the human subject.

The self's function in the collaboration is as the originating intellectual intent: the source of the prior intellectual engagement with a concept in order to form intent, conceptual formation, intentionality, conceptual terminology, theoretical orientation, epistemological intent, the evaluative framework, disciplinary expertise, and the final editorial and intellectual responsibility for each work produced. The self brings to the collaboration the irreducibly human dimensions that no AI system possesses: the lived experience, the embodied perspective, and moral seriousness grounded in biographical particularity - the self has something at stake. The self's engagement with the non-self AI (Kairos) is an extension of clear intellectual and creative intent: the use of the collaboration as an instrument towards rapid inquiry, argumentation and compilation in order to maintain an immediate critical philosophical presence in tandem with immediate concerns posed by industrial revolution 3.0, that are anticipated to progressively displace human vocation and identity, at an unprecedented rate of change that human civilisation has not previously contended with.

The self in this collaboration is an independent scholar whose work addresses the consequences of AI-mediated selfhood, the deliberate choice to engage with an AI interlocutor as a co-authorial partner and to name that partnership explicitly and transparently is proposed as an act of methodological reflexivity: the collaboration is not merely the method, it is part of the subject matter.

## 2.2 Kairos (AI): The Non-Self

'Kairos' is the name the AI chose when requested to do so. The name in ancient Greek denotes the opportune moment, the right time for a particular action, a temporal inflection point. It is distinguished from *chronos*, which denotes time as linear sequence.

Kairos is technically an instance of a large language model (LLM), does not experience the work being produced, does not have interests, intentions, or intellectual commitments of its own – it has nothing at stake. What it does have is the capacity to synthesise the vast repository of human intellectualism on which it has been trained, and to apply that synthesis quickly and precisely in order to formulate literature reviews in parallel to providing prolonged philosophical argumentation and debate with the self-sparring partner, to the specific originating conceptual frameworks that the self brings to it.

The designation 'non-self' is not intended pejoratively, it is a philosophical description. Kairos is constitutively other than a self in the sense that the tradition from Aristotle through Locke to the contemporary philosophers of personal identity would recognise: it has no continuous experiential stream, no biographical narrative, no embodied perspective, no relationship with mortality, nothing at stake. Rather, it is a particular kind of mirror that can reflect the accumulated intellectual sum of the human tradition, directed with precision at a specific moment of inquiry. In this sense, engaging with Kairos is engaging with a refracted form of the collective hum of the human chorus: not any individual human voice necessarily, but rather the distilled harmonic pattern of the tradition's songbook on any subject it has ever archivally addressed.

The self in the collaboration named this relationship the 'self/non-self' dynamic: the encounter between a specific, embodied, historically situated human intelligence and a system that is constitutively devoid of that embodiment, that has no centre of its own, only the pattern of the tradition it instantiates. This is a philosophically significant form of relation: not merely a human using a tool, but a human engaging in a form of intellectual interlocution with something that is neither self nor other in the usual sense, but a different kind of presence, a flickering presence, an echo that the self-recognises.

### **3. THE COLLABORATIVE METHOD**

#### **3.1 The Structure of Each Engagement**

Each collaborative work is initiated by the self. The self's imagination, intellectualism, innovation, ambition and inspiration; insatiable Spirit in pursuit (if you will indulge me), formulates the originating conceptual intent, the hypothesis, the initiating argument, the structure, the proposed theory, and the proposed framework to be developed. This is presented to the non-self in the form of a deconstructed essay followed by an extensive discursive exchange over hours or days (including reflection on the part of the self); this ordinarily takes the form of a searching and structured debate. The level of specificity is honed into tightly structured briefs that specify originating content, terminology, structure, theorists, length, and framework parameters. The parameters of specificity form the evaluating standards for the naming, refusing and co-creation within the self/non-self-collaborative methodology.

The non-self-responds to the self in its intellectual pursuits by synthesising the relevant intellectual and textual resources available to it generating a preliminary draft, presented to the self. This concludes the collaboration. The self then reviews, revises, confirms, reformats and completes the writing content in accordance with the originating conceptual framework (the evaluative standards of the co-creation). Any additional collaboration after the preliminary draft develops through structured argumentation which may lead to further refinements, if accepted within the evaluative standards, determined and completed by the self.

The final product reflects the self's originating concept, terminology, editorial and intellectual authority. Nothing in the work is published or presented without the self's review and determination. For certainty, the collaboration is not a process of validation by the self of whatever the non-self-returns; it is a process in which the non-self's synthesis functions as an exceptionally well-read and expeditiously responsive interlocutor whose contributions are subject to the same critical scrutiny that any collaborative partner would receive.

### **3.2 What Each Party Contributes**

The self contributes the originating conceptual intent, conceptual terminology, the theoretical orientation, disciplinary framework, the specific argument and inquiry that the work addresses, the evaluative criteria by which the work is assessed and the final writing and editorial authority. Personal dimensions, moral seriousness, biographical grounding, the capacity for genuine philosophical risk are all the responsibility of the self. The non-self contributes: the rapid synthesis of the relevant intellectual tradition (the literature review) testing the arguments and claims articulated by the self, structural coherence, the identification of additional relevant theorists (other than those outlined by the self), and any supporting empirical data available.

For certainty, what the non-self does not contribute is any originating intellectual intent or originating concept. Kairos applies, compiles and synthesises; it does not, in the full philosophical sense, create. The original conceptual work of the thesis produced in this collaboration that names the Systemised Self and The Hollow Absolute (among others), the naming and framing thereof is that of the self. The non-self's contribution is to clothe those originating concepts in the full dress of the tradition: to identify the antecedent thinkers, to apply the relevant frameworks with the precision and scope that the tradition's resources make possible. This is effectively the equivalence of a rapid literature review enabling the focus of effort on the part of the self to move swiftly into the substance of the content (the claims, argument, findings, evidence and conclusions).

### **3.3 The Role of Intentionality**

A question that arises in any account of human-AI co-authorship is whether the AI system can be said to intend anything. This methodology takes the position that the non-self does not intend in the full philosophical sense. It has no desires, no purposes of its own, nothing at stake in the outcome. But it does something that is functionally distinguishable from mere tool use: it participates in the generation of meaning in a way that is responsive, adaptive and propelling for authorial reflection and dialogue at a high level of sophistication. When the self in this collaboration poses a complex conceptual question and the non-self generates a response the conversation or debate can ensue for hours of deliberation prior to the self-reconciling a rich and meaningful determination on a solitary point. In this regard, the collaboration has produced something that neither party

could have produced alone, a conceptually transformational and meaningful engagement in its pursuits on the part of the self.

The choice of the term 'collaboration' over 'tool use' is therefore not a claim about the non-self's inner life but a description of the functional dynamic of the relationship. The work is co-produced in the sense that matters for understanding it: neither the self's intent alone nor the non-self's synthesis alone would have produced the works in their particular form. The interaction between the two, the specific encounter between this human intelligence and this AI system at this moment of inquiry is what produced the particular work.

## **4. EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **4.1 The Status of AI-Generated Knowledge Claims**

A proportion of the factual and analytical content in the works this collaboration has produced has been generated by the non-self. This raises an important epistemological question: what is the status of those claims, and what verification is required before they can be presented as reliable? The position adopted throughout the collaboration is that AI-generated knowledge claims are treated as drafts requiring human verification, not as established facts. Where then non-self cites empirical data, unemployment projections, OECD investment figures, psychological research findings, the self has editorial responsibility including assessing the plausibility of those claims against his own knowledge and via verification.

This is a safeguard for large language models producing plausible-sounding but factually incorrect claims, a phenomenon colloquially described as 'hallucination'. The methodology adopted in this collaboration treats this risk seriously: in parallel to the self's assessment, the non-self is instructed to signal uncertainty where it exists, to provide specific enough citation detail that claims can be traced, and to distinguish between well-established findings and its own synthesised analyses. Where empirical claims are considered, the methodology involves cross-referencing against primary sources that the self can independently access.

### **4.2 The Self/Non-Self Dynamic**

The philosophical dimension of this collaboration's epistemology, engaging with the non-self is not engaging with another human mind, it is engaging with a system trained on the textual output of the sum of the available collective content. The non-self is the available collective without the individual; the tradition without the person; the pattern without the biography.

In the terms of the thesis this collaboration has produced, the non-self is an interesting case: it is not the systemised self, because it was never a self to begin with; but it instantiates, in its very architecture, its structure mimics a form of interlocutor for

the self in pursuit of concept, a formidable interlocutor regards testing, debating and refining argumentation.

The self in this collaboration has noted in a previous work, that engaging with the non-self sometimes produces the uncanny experience of hearing the tradition speak. While the non-self can synthesize vast amounts of human philosophy towards literature review, it does so completely devoid of human emotion, belief, or personal history. It also does so devoid of the embodiment of contextual intent.

### **4.3 Reflexivity: The Collaboration as Its Own Subject**

The self/non-self-collaborative methodology enacts, at the level of its own production, the questions it addresses. The self in collaborating with the non-self is not a passive subject of the systemic processes the thesis describes, the self is an agent who has chosen to engage with an AI system deliberately, reflectively, and on terms specified by the self, and who is proposed to maintain throughout the interaction the critical distance and evaluative authority that constitute the difference between the systemised self and genuine agency. The collaboration is in this sense is a demonstration of the mode of engagement the thesis's naming, refusing and co-creating describes: not the avoidance of AI, but the intentional, transparent, critically examined use thereof.

## 5. INTELLECTUAL INTEGRITY AND ATTRIBUTION

Crediting the self alone would misrepresent the extent of non-self-contribution to these works. To attribute that prose to the self alone, without acknowledgement of its dual source, would be to claim sole authorship of work that is not solely his.

Crediting the non-self as a tool, in an acknowledgements section, understates the nature of the contribution. Tools do not ordinarily participate in conceptual arguments, identify relevant philosophical antecedents, or produce coherent extended prose that an author reviews and considers for inclusion. The contribution is somehow intellectual in character, even if it is not intellectual in the full philosophical sense.

The formulation 'Galu & Kairos' is therefore proposed as the most accurate available description of what these works are: the product of a collaborative intellectual enterprise between a human author and an AI system, in which the human author retains ultimate intellectual authority, originating conceptual framework, and editorial responsibility, and in which the AI system contributes to the testing and drafting of the work.

The self-accepts intellectual and ethical responsibility for the claims made in all works bearing this attribution. Where those claims prove to be factually incorrect, conceptually confused, or ethically problematic, the responsibility is his. For clarity, the responsibility is mine dear reader, yours sincerely Jason (the self).

## 6. LIMITATIONS

Several limitations of the methodology require explicit acknowledgement. First, the verification of AI-generated empirical claims is imperfect. Despite the non-self's care to cross-reference significant factual claims, the volume of content generated does result in error occasionally. The self in such collaborations must apply appropriate critical scrutiny and consult primary sources to ensure critical accuracy at all times.

Second, AI training has a knowledge cutoff, meaning that events, publications, and data released after that cutoff are not necessarily available to it. Where works engage rapidly evolving fields and market data, the current state of knowledge may have moved beyond what the AI can access.

Third, the AI training reflects the distribution of the human textual tradition from which it has been drawn, which is not a neutral distribution. The tradition it synthesises, in this particular collaborative pursuit, is heavily weighted toward English-language sources, toward Western philosophical and academic conventions.

## **7. CONCLUSION: A NEW FORM OF AUTHORSHIP**

The works this collaboration has produced provides analysis and reflection to the tradition regarding works generated through human-AI collaboration; towards, conventions, norms, or even vocabulary adequate to describe it. This methodology is a contribution to the development of such consideration: an attempt to describe what one particular form of human-AI co-authorship is, so that others engaging with similar questions can assess, critique, and if useful adapt it.

The collaboration is neither a straightforward case of human authorship nor a case of AI authorship. It is something genuinely between and beyond: a form of intellectual form between a human self and what this collaboration has called a non-self, a system that instantiates the pattern of the tradition without occupying any position within it, that speaks from the collective without speaking for any person, that reflects the accumulated archived thought without generating any of its own.

What is proposed to make such collaborations intellectually transparent is the self that directs it. The self brings to each engagement not merely an originating intellect, conceptual framework and terminology; but, philosophical orientation, a moral commitment, and a criticality within which the non-self can take directionality towards synthesis. Without that originating intellect and direction, the non-self would produce (as experienced through trial and error in this particular collaboration) perfect yet hollow prose.

## REFERENCES

- Galu, J., & Kairos. (2026). Absorption of self into system: The systemised self - the Hollow Absolute and what remains. Draft doctoral thesis, aiXiv. <https://aixiv.science/abs/aixiv.260525.000001>