Allegation of plagiarism
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Mon, 14 Sep 2026 1:07:54 PM -0300Inbox
"Agustin Ostachuk"<aostachuk@evolutio.ar>

Dear Dr Ostachuck

I am writing in my role as Editor-in-Chief of Biological Theory to let you know that we have now completed our in-house investigation into the allegations that you have made against Michael Levin concerning plagiarism, and its impact on our recent publications.
I would like to reassure you that these allegations were taken very seriously by the editorial team at the journal, and that we have taken time to study the relevant materials and consult with relevant parties. Below I detail our conclusions.

You requested that Biological Theory issue an editorial note of concern about a recently published article by Mazviita Chirimuuta, which cites a Levin preprint *Ingressing Mind* that you claim plagiarises your work. We have decided against doing so, for a number of reasons: (i) Dr. Chirimuuta has every right to cite a preprint, and doing so is currently common practice at most academic journals; (ii) Dr. Chirimuuta assures me that she was unaware of any dispute surrounding your preprint at the time of publication; (iii) the editors of academic journals cannot realistically be expected to check whether all cited sources in the articles they publish are subject to disputes. Hence, until such a time as any allegations of plagiarism are proven, I see no reason for the journal to issue an editorial note of concern in this matter.

We were also mindful that we have just published online two (*Mind Everywhere*) articles by Levin, ostensibly on a related topic to the *Ingressing Mind* article that concerns you. While you seemingly were less concerned about these works, we nonetheless conducted a further investigation to ascertain to what extent these articles build on the disputed material. Had they done so, then that might have been grounds for an editorial note of concern. However, our investigation, conducted independently by two editorial staff, is that *Mind Everywhere* does not build meaningfully on *Ingressing Mind*.

Finally, while any dispute between you and Dr. Levin is none of our business, and in my judgment it is not our place to attempt to evaluate it, nonetheless one of our staff who has expertise on the topic sought to evaluate whether there is evidence to support your accusation that *Ingressing Minds* is a plagiarism of your *A theory of evolution as a process of unfolding*. They noted that (i) some of the core features of *Ingressing Minds* are already independently present in Levin's work before the Ostachuk 2020 publication. They (ii) point to conceptual precursors from other scholars that predate the ideas shared in Levin's and Ostachuk's publications, concluding "to my mind, it is absolutely possible that Levin could have developed his theory independently from Ostachuk's publication by drawing on existing intellectual traditions." Finally, (iii) they point to conceptual differences between the two publications, including "a substantial difference in the conceptualization of possible evolutionary trajectories" and the absence in Ostachuk of anything equivalent to Levin's specific pointer/interface concept. In this individual's judgement it is highly plausible that Levin could have arrived in a similar conceptual space to you quite independently.

In conclusion, an investigation conducted by editorial staff at Biological Theory does not leave us with cause for concern that Chirimuuta's article was wrong to refer to Levin's *Ingressing Minds* work, that Biological Theory were wrong to publish Levin's *Mind Everywhere* articles, or that Levin's *Ingressing Minds* article may have plagiarised your work. Thank you for your patience in awaiting the outcome of our investigation. I now consider the matter closed.

Kevin

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