

Did Markus Gabriel (Bonn University) plagiarize my ideas?¹

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“The hell is empty and all the devils are here.”
Shakespeare, *The tempest*

Abstract

In this paper, I analyze the unbelievable similarities between my ideas from my works (2005, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012) and Markus Gabriel’s ideas (Bonn University) from his book published in 2013 and his TED clip (2013).

(The same ideas on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/WLpzaaSE8L8>)

1. The “epistemologically different worlds” perspective

I have been employed at the Department of Philosophy, Bucharest University (Romania) since 1998. I have studied at various universities around the world (I received scholarships from University of Oxford, New York University, University of New South Wales Australia), I have published four books at the Bucharest University Press (all in English), many articles in Romania (almost all in English) and in foreign journals (two papers at *Synthese* journal, I edited one special issue at *Synthese*, one issue at *Philosophia Scientiae* both issues having articles written by researchers that are among the best in (philosophy of) cognitive (neuro)science, in 2000 I started a CEEPUS project on cognitive science for Eastern European countries etc.) My full CV can be found at this address: http://filosofie.unibuc.ro/cv_gabriel_vacariu. My books and articles are available in an electronic format on my university webpage. I have also presented my general framework in the prestigious philosophical journal *Synthese* in the paper (“Mind, brain and epistemologically different worlds”) published in December 2005 (special issue on “philosophy of neuroscience” edited by John Bickle) and I further developed this framework in my later books and papers, (books which are published in 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012 by the University of Bucharest Press).

In Vacariu (2005) and my book from (2008), I showed that the mind-brain problem is a pseudo-problem constructed within a wrong framework, the “world” or as I called, the “unicorn world”. In the introduction, I indicate:

Within this framework, there is one key element that represents the major error: the postulation of ‘one world’, one single ontological world in which everything has been placed (all the entities like Gods, angels, minds, bodies, planets, tables and micro-particles). Paradoxically, everyone before Descartes and after him, including his critics, has embraced the same framework. And here is, I think, where the mistake resides: assuming the existence of one world, the universe. Metaphorically, I will call this unique world or “uni-verse” the “*unicorn-world*”, to emphasize its mythological-religious roots. (p. 516)

And one page later:

The main aim of this paper is to show that the famous mind–body problem is a false problem or a pseudo-problem; the notion of the unicorn-world is the origin of major pseudo-problems (like the mind–body problem) in philosophy and science. Only by abandoning this concept – the unicorn-world – can we avoid all these pseudo-problems. (p. 517)

¹ This paper is the appendix of my book: “More troubles with cognitive neuroscience” (2014), University of Bucharest Publishing Company.

In my paper from 2005, I elaborated 5 principles that constitute my approach, the epistemologically different worlds (EDWs) perspective. These principles show that the “world” does not exist (I argue that the thing-in-itself does not exist: “Thing-in-itself” would mean an entity that has no limits of interaction and this is not possible.”, p. 532), but only the EDWs exist. Here, I offer the analogy between table-microparticles and mind-brain: the table and “its” microparticles, the mind and the brain exist but in the EDWs not in the same “world” (the unicorn world).

In my next books and articles, I continued developing my perspective and I increased the principles from 5 to 13. Let me introduce these principles from Vacariu (2011, 2012, 213):

- “(1) Epistemologically different interactions constitute epistemologically different its, and epistemologically different its determine epistemologically different interactions.
- (2) Any it exists only at "the surface" because of the interactions that constitute it.
- (3) Any it exists in a single EW and interacts only with the its from the same EW.
- (4) Any EW (a set of its – and eventually Its – and their interactions) appears from and disappears in the hyper-nothing.
- (5) Any EW is, therefore all EDWs have the same objective reality.
- (6) Being corresponds to an It.
- (7) Being is an EW. Therefore being is.
- (8) Having certain determinations, from our viewpoint an It is composed of an amalgam of Its/its and their relationships.
- (9) Certain states and processes form knowledge that is being.
- (10) As an entity, being has unity as indeterminate individuality.
- (11) Being is, therefore EDWs are.
- (12) The set of judgments that describe the phenomena of each epistemological world must observe the rule of conceptual containment that is given by the conditions and limitations within the concepts of the judgments. These conditions and limitations are governed by the properties of external tools of observation or some abilities (introspection, consciousness) that the “I” has.
- (13) Since human attention is a serial process, the human being cannot simultaneously observe EDWs.” (Vacariu 2011, 2012, 2013)

In my books/articles, with the EDWs perspective, I showed that the main four problems (and many other related problems) from science and philosophy are pseudo-problems. The main four problems are: the old mind-body problem (and all its related problems), the relationship between an organism and live, the great mysteries of quantum mechanics and the relationship between Einstein’s theory and quantum mechanics are all pseudo-problems. Moreover, I showed that cognitive neuroscience is a pseudo-science and the search for the unified theory in physics is meaningless (in both cases there is a mixture of information referring to EDWs). Without offering any more details about my perspective (see mainly my books at my webpage), in the next sections, I will analyze TED clip with Markus Gabriel and his book published in 2013.

2. The unbelievable coincidence: two individuals elaborated the same completely new framework of thinking in the same decade!

Recently, one of my colleagues informed me about a clip posted on TED.com (September 2013, 18 minutes) of Prof. Dr. Markus Gabriel (Philosophy, University of Bonn, and Director of the

International Centre for Philosophy, Germany) with the title “Why the world does not exist” on YouTube at this address:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzvesGB_TI0&feature=youtube_gdata_player

In 2013, Markus Gabriel has also published a book (in German) with the same title *Warum es die Welt nicht gibt*, Ullstein: Berlin 2013. Watching the clip on TED (in English), I realized to my big surprise, Markus Gabriel’s ideas are incredible similarly with my ideas (I published in my papers and books in the last seven years) that reflect my general framework, the EDWs perspective, within which I proved the same idea, namely, the “world” does not exist. The similarities between my ideas and Markus Gabriel’s ideas from TED clip are so striking and I want to mention few of them in the next sections. The main 5 notions/ideas (from which results the same framework of thinking the world does not exist) are “unbelievable similarity”:

- (i) Vacariu: The “**world does not exist**” but “epistemologically different worlds” (EDWs) exist. (in my 2005 + book).²

Markus Gabriel: “*Why the world does not exist*”. (title for TED clips and book)

- (ii) Vacariu: All objects/entities exist but in **EDWs**.

Markus Gabriel: All objects are in different “*lists*”.

- (iii) Vacariu: The objects/entities from one EW **interact**.

Markus Gabriel: The objects from a list *intersect*.

- (iv) Vacariu: Only the objects that belong to a particular EW interact. The objects from one **EW do not interact** with objects from the other EDWs.

Markus Gabriel: All objects exist but *not* any object is “*connected with*” all other objects.

- (v) Vacariu: We need to change the definition of “existence”: For instance, in Vacariu (2008): “As I mentioned above, we have again to **change the notion of existence...**” (p. 141) (in many places)

Markus Gabriel: we have to *reconsider the definition of the “existence”*...

Having in mind the unbelievable similarity of these ideas that represent a new framework of thinking, let me introduces some particular ideas from TED clip (with Markus Gabriel) and his book (published in 2013) that are unbelievable similar to my ideas from EDWs perspective (elaborated during the last 7-8 years).

3. Markus Gabriel’s TED clip

- Markus Gabriel starts his presentation posted on TED site talking about the “*unicorn*”, even if the term it is regarded from a slightly different perspective. He considers that the unicorn exists in a particular context, which points to the same idea that the “world” does not exist.

My comment: In my paper from 2005 and in all of my books, I use the concept “unicorn-world”, a concept invented practically by me to express the uni-dimensionality of the world postulated by scientists. (See above Vacariu 2005, also Vacariu 2008 p. 15; Chapter 1 from Vacariu and Vacariu (2010): “1. The hyperversus versus the “unicorn-world”, and section 1.1 “The oldest paradigm of human thinking: the unicorn-world”; part 1 from Vacariu 2011 (“The „Unicorn-World”, the House of Knowledge – the Human Greatest Illusion), etc. In Vacariu (2008): “After Copernicus, Darwin and Freud’s revolutions against myths in human thinking, we have to reject yet another myth: the “world” does not exist and we are not the only observers.” (p. 363) I start my article from 2005 and all my books with the idea of the “unicorn”. It is

² I indicate the reader to compare the **bolded** notions from my paragraphs with *italic* notions from Markus Gabriel’s paragraphs.

amazing that Markus Gabriel starts his TED clip with the idea of the unicorn considering we can believe the “unicorn” exist in a certain context. However, he does not really believe the unicorn really exists.³

- In my theory I claim that an object exists because of the “interactions” with other objects from the same EW. For instance in Vacariu (2008), one of my principles is this one: “The determining epistemologically different entities and their corresponding constitutive epistemologically different interactions represent the epistemologically different worlds.” (p. 108); or Vacariu (2011), principle nr. 1.)

Markus Gabriel: He replaced EDWs with “list” and “interactions” with “intersections”.

- Let us see some paragraphs from my works and some affirmations made by Markus Gabriel (I bolded some words in all paragraphs):

- There is a fundamental issue here which needs to be noticed: Descartes’ approach is grounded in a **pre-existing framework (paradigm) which has dominated human thinking since the Ancient Greeks**. Within **this framework, there is one key element that represents the major error: the postulation of ‘one world’, one single ontological world in which everything has been placed (all the entities like Gods, angels, minds, bodies, planets, tables and micro-particles)**. Paradoxically, everyone before Descartes and after him, including his critics, has embraced the same framework. And here is, I think, where the mistake resides: assuming the existence of one world, the universe. Metaphorically, I will call this unique world or “uni-verse” the “**unicorn-world**”, to emphasize its **mythological-religious roots**. We can identify this key element, the unicorn-world, within the majority of myths, theological doctrines, philosophical approaches, scientific theories, frameworks, etc., which explain both the “universe” and human beings. (Vacariu 2005, p. 516)
- This framework does not involve only the relationship between mind and brain (body), but also all the problems that flow from the singular conception of **the world, the universe, or reality.**” (Vacariu 2008, p. 101)
- In this work, I will try to show that the greatest **illusion** of human knowledge that has been surviving from the oldest times is the notion of “world”, of “uni-verse” or as I called it the “unicorn world”. (Vacariu 2011, p. 13)
- The main mistake that led to the creation of the unicorn world is that we, the human beings, believed (consciously or not) that we are the only observers of the “world. As a result, Gods, all beings (**humans** with their mind, brains and bodies, and **plants**, cells, microbes, animals) and **all objects** (tables, stones and **planets**, electrons, waves and fields) have been placed within the same world, the unique world, the uni-verse. The world is all the entities and their relationships inevitably placed within the **same spatio-temporal framework**. (Vacariu 2011, p. 14)
- The **world is all the entities** and their relationships inevitably placed **within the same spatio-temporal framework**. (Vacariu 2012, p. 15)
- Situating all entities within the same spatio-temporal framework, the creation of the unicornworld was inevitable; and vice-versa. (Vacariu 2011, pp. 48-9)
- For more than two millennia the human being has been thinking within the unicorn world. (Vacariu 2011, p. 173)

Markus Gabriel: He uses many of my expressions (but not EDWs, of course). For instance, he tells us that the “*nature, reality, the universe... the world*” does not exist. “I think that this really thing is an *illusion...*” “What is the *world*? Philosophers have tried to clarify this *for pretty much 2500 years*”, “*the world is the totality of things, the totality of spatio-temporal*

³ For many people, it have been quite surprisingly the similarities not only between many ideas from my EDWs perspective and Markus Gabriel’s ideas, but also another striking similarity, the notion of the “unicorn”: I used this notion in the introduction of my paper from 2005 and also in the introduction of each book, Markus Gabriel starts his TED clip with the “unicorn”!

things”, *the world is planets and trees, and stars and people and friends and etc.*” He speaks about a myth...

- “In order to show that the **‘world’ does not exist**, I will investigate the eternal philosophical topic (a topic that science has undertaken in the last century): **‘What exists?’** and **‘What are the relationships between entities that exist?’**. (Vacariu 2011, p. 17)

Markus Gabriel has almost the same expressions in TED clip.

- For me something to exist means to belong to a particular EW:
“An **entity exists** only if it has certain limits of **interaction with other entities;**” (Vacariu 2008, p. 151) “To exist means to have certain limits. The conditions of interactions have certain parameters that reflect the limits of that entity... Explicitly, any nonliving entities (for instance, a **table or a planet) exist only as a result of its external constitutive interactions.**” (Vacariu 2008, p. 152) Or: “These two notions, **‘existence’ and ‘interaction’, are strongly interrelated.** Proposition (1) can be re-written in the following way: **‘To exist means to interact’.**” (Vacariu 2011, p. 34)

Markus Gabriel: “*Existence is something that appears in context. To exist is to be in context.*” “*Any object intersects with other objects from the same list.*” These words are perfectly synonyms with my words! Is it not clear yet?

- “The philosophy of the hyperverses is **a step forward** to pass beyond the eternal and scorching pseudo-disputes of the last century. In order to avoid wasting time working on such pseudo-problems through creating marvelous Ptolemaic epicycles, people now have the opportunity to **replace the unicorn world with the EDWs.**” (Vacariu 2011, p. 175)

Markus Gabriel: “... *an important step for humanity*, we really have to give up to the idea that all things are connected. Something are connected and something are not. We have to *give up the idea of over structure that settles things.*”

- I graduated four years Computer Science and then philosophy, I read many books and papers on (philosophy of) physics and this is the reason I dedicated a chapter for the problems in physics (the theory of unification included) in my first two books and some papers. In my book from (2010), I have a section dedicated to the theory of unification. (Vacariu and Vacariu 2010, “7.4 The hyperspace versus the hyperverses”) in which I showed that the **“theory of unification”** created by string theory is the greatest Ptolemaic epicycle in the history of human thinking.

Markus Gabriel: Without having any background or study in physics, he sustains that the idea of *“unified physics”* is wrong! (Even this expression is wrong!)

- Vacariu (2008, p. 5): “... the major **error**: the postulation of “one world”, one single ontological **world** in which **everything has been placed** (all the entities like Gods, angels, and mind and body, planets, tables and micro-particles).”

Markus Gabriel: He claims that it is *wrong* to consider “*the world is as being the sum of all things/objects*”.

- At the end of his presentation, Gabriel considers that we are “free” because “*human beings avoid the determinism, not because of God or universe*”, but because we have “infinite possibilities”.

My comment: My idea is that the “I” is an EW, so there is nothing “determinate” in our mind, since one EW does not exist for any other EW. We can talk about determinism in the macro-EW where the brain/body is placed, but not in the self, that is an EW.

4. Markus Gabriel’s book: “*Why the world does not exist*” (2013)

In this section, let me analyze six paragraphs from only two pages (pp. 11-12) of his book *Why the world does not exist* (2013) (in Germany). Using Google translation program from Germany to English and correcting some words, my colleague (Gheorghe Stefanov) helped me translating these paragraphs:

- "Mir ist jedenfalls nicht bekannt, dass die Physik oder die Biologie inzwischen auch die Soziologie, die Rechtswissenschaft oder die Germanistik integriert hätten. Auch habe ich noch nie davon gehört, dass die Mona Lisa in einem Chemielabor auseinandergenommen wurde."

English⁴: "I certainly do not know that physics or biology have also *integrated* sociology, law or German. Also, I've never heard that the Mona Lisa was taken apart in a chemistry lab."

My comment: I dedicated chapters of my books and articles to show that the knowledge from certain **particular sciences** (physics, biology, cognitive science) cannot be **integrated** in a scientific or philosophic theory or approach. However, in this paragraph, Markus Gabriel brings into discussion something new: "Mona Lisa"!

- "Doch genau dieses Allumfassende, die Welt, gibt es nicht und kann es auch nicht geben. Mit dieser Hauptthese soll nicht nur die Illusion zerstört werden, es gebe die Welt, an der die Menschheit ziemlich hartnäckig festhält, sondern gleichzeitig möchte ich sie auch nutzen, um daraus positive Erkenntnisse zu gewinnen. Denn ich behaupte nicht nur, dass es die Welt nicht gibt, sondern auch, dass es außer der Welt alles gibt."

English: "But it is precisely this all-embracing, *the world, that neither exists, nor can it be given*. With this main thesis, that the world does not exist, not only the illusion that there is a world will be destroyed, an illusion in which *humanity believes quite stubbornly*, but at the same time I also want to use it in order to extract positive findings. Because I argue not only that there is no world, but also that *everything is apart from the world*."

My comment: Here we can find exactly my main idea: the **world does not exist, but EDWs exist**. Instead of EDWs, Markus Gabriel uses "everything is apart from the world". He mentions, as I did many times, the illusion of humanity of believing, "quite stubbornly", of the "world". Moreover, he claims that he shows us not only that the world does not exist, but also that everything - except this world - exists! Such affirmations are exactly like many of my sentences from my books/papers: it is about the EDWs, no more or less. Moreover, in my paper from 2005 (and my books) I strongly emphasized all these ideas (see above the quoted paragraphs from my works). Using synonyms, Markus Gabriel writes the same thing here in the above paragraph.

- "Das klingt vielleicht merkwürdig, kann aber überraschend leicht anhand unserer alltäglichen Erfahrungen illustriert werden. Stellen wir uns vor, wir treffen uns mit Freunden zu einem Abendessen im Restaurant. Gibt es hier nun einen Bereich, der alle anderen Bereiche umfasst? Können wir sozusagen einen Kreis um alles ziehen, was zu unserem Restaurantbesuch gehört? Nun, mal sehen: Wir sind vermutlich nicht die Einzigen im Restaurant. Es gibt also mehrere Restaurantbesucher an Tischen mit unterschiedlichen Gruppendynamiken, Präferenzen und so weiter. Außerdem gibt es die Welt des Servicepersonals, der Restaurantbesitzerin, der Köche, aber auch der Insekten und Spinnen und der für uns unsichtbaren Bakterien, die sich im Restaurant aufhalten. Darüber hinaus gibt es Ereignisse auf subatomarer Ebene sowie Zellteilungen, Verdauungsstörungen und Hormonschwankungen.

⁴ I would like to thank you very much to Casia Zaharia and Paul Sandu for their translation from German to Romanian, respectively to English. Unfortunately, I cannot read in German, otherwise I believe I would find much more "similarities" between my works and Markus Gabriel's book. I let specialists in philosophy and German speaking language to find them in detail.

Einige dieser Ereignisse und Gegenstände hängen zusammen, andere überhaupt nicht. Was weiß die von allen unbemerkte Spinne im Deckengebälk schon von meiner guten Laune oder von meinen Speisepräferenzen? Und dennoch gehört die Spinne zum Restaurantbesuch hinzu, wenn auch meist unerkant. Dasselbe gilt für Verdauungsstörungen, die man auch nicht ins Zentrum der Aufmerksamkeit rückt.”

English: “This may sound strange, but can be surprisingly easy using our everyday experiences to illustrate it. Let us imagine that we meet with our friends for a dinner in the restaurant. Is there now an area that includes all other areas? Can we speak or draw a circle around everything that belongs to our restaurant visit? Well, let's see: We're probably not the only ones in the restaurant. So there are several diners at tables with different group dynamics, preferences and so on. In addition, there is the *world of the service staff*, the restaurant owner, the cooks, but also the insects and spiders and bacteria are invisible to us, who are in the restaurant. In addition, there are events at the *subatomic level*, and cell division, digestive disorders and hormonal imbalances. Some of these events, and objects are related, others not at all. What do the unnoticed at all spiders in the ceiling joists of my already good mood or my food preferences? And yet, the spider is added to the restaurant visit, though mostly unrecognized. The same goes for indigestion, which is also not the center of attention engaged.”

My comment: This paragraph is one of the most important because Markus Gabriel considers that there are “many worlds” (see below). One of such “world” is composed of dinners at table, service staff, restaurant owner, cooks, insects, spiders and bacteria “who are in restaurant”. There is another “world” of “subatomic level” and another world of “cell division” or digestive disorders. Essentially, “some of these events, and objects are related, others not at all”. This is exactly my idea of **EDWs** but Markus Gabriel did not fully understand it!

- “Es gibt beim Restaurantbesuch also viele Gegenstandsbereiche, gleichsam kleine isolierte Welten, die nebeneinander existieren, ohne dass sie wirklich zueinanderfinden. Es gibt also viele kleine Welten, aber nicht die eine Welt, zu der sie alle gehören. Dies bedeutet gerade nicht, dass die vielen kleinen Welten nur Perspektiven auf die eine Welt sind, sondern dass es eben nur die vielen kleinen Welten gibt. Es gibt sie wirklich, nicht nur in meiner Einbildung.”

English: “There is within the restaurant visit so many subject areas, as it were *small isolated worlds that exist side by side without really meeting each other*. There are so many little worlds, but *not a world to which they all belong*. This means *not* just that the many small worlds are *only perspectives on the one world*, but that there are only many small worlds. They not only exist in my imagination, but *their existence is real*.”

My comment: The last two paragraphs are strongly related: there are “small isolated worlds that exist side by side without really meeting each other”! What does it mean this sentence for Markus Gabriel? The next sentences in this paragraph indicate me that Markus Gabriel “borrowed” my ideas without fully understanding them! He didn't understand my main idea that unifies epistemology with ontology and thus creating the EDWs. Markus Gabriel writes that these “small worlds” are “side by side without really meeting each other”. **These words reflect almost entirely my EDWs**. Moreover, this paragraph – as other paragraphs - indicates that in Markus Gabriel's view it is not about Carnap's “linguistic frameworks” (I don't know how much Markus Gabriel has worked on Carnap's philosophy), since he considers that these “worlds” really exist! Moreover, Markus Gabriel indicates that these “small worlds” are not “just perspectives of the world” but “small worlds”. As I did in my books (2008, 2010), with EDWs perspective, I avoided Spinoza's dual property approach. Markus Gabriel insists in writing that these “small worlds” really exist. In reality, exactly as I have done in my works, Markus Gabriel

rejects “world-in-itself” but, probably without understanding completely my ideas, he wrongly replaced EDWs with “small worlds”. In this frame, Markus Gabriel did not notice there are some ontological contradictions. Given his academic background, it is easy for everybody to remark that Markus Gabriel would not be able to understand completely EDWs perspective.

- “Genau in diesem Sinne kann man meine Behauptung verstehen, dass es die Welt nicht gibt. Es ist einfach falsch, dass alles mit allem zusammenhängt. Die populäre Behauptung, der Flügelschlag eines Schmetterlings in Brasilien löse möglicherweise einen Tornado in Texas aus, ist schlicht falsch. Vieles hängt mit vielem zusammen, aber es ist falsch (genau genommen sogar unmöglich!), dass alles mit allem zusammenhängt. Natürlich stiftet jeder Einzelne von uns andauernd Zusammenhänge.”

English: “It is in this precise sense that one can understand my contention that there is not the world. It is simply *false that everything is interconnected*. The popular assertion that the flap of a *butterfly's wings* in Brazil might produce a tornado in Texas is simply wrong. Much has to do with many things, but it is wrong (actually impossible!), that everything is interconnected. Of course every one of us creates lasting relationships.”

My comment: Obviously, in my EDWs perspective, many times I indicate that **not all entities (objects) intersect**, or, in Markus Gabriel’s words, “interconnected”. In his TED clip, he indicates that there are “lists” of objects, and these lists are such “small worlds”. The example with the butterfly is taken from the theory of complexity, and I doubt Markus Gabriel has any idea about this theory. A subchapter (6.2) in one of my books (2010) is dedicated to Kauffman’s **theory of complexity** applied to biology, another one is dedicated to the string theory. My opinion is that Markus Gabriel would not be able to understand the applications of my perspective to “special sciences”.

- “Analog verhält es sich mit der Welt im Ganzen. Diese gibt es ebenso wenig wie einen Zusammenhang, der alle Zusammenhänge umfasst. Es gibt einfach keine Regel oder Weltformel, die alles beschreibt. Dies liegt nicht daran, dass wir sie bisher noch nicht gefunden haben, sondern daran, dass sie gar nicht existieren kann.”

English: “The situation is similar with the world-as-itself. This is just as rare as a context that includes all contexts. There is simply no rule or universal formula that describes everything. This is not because we have not found it yet, but because of the fact that the *world in itself cannot exist*.”

My comment: Again, in all my books **I reject Kantian idea of thing-in-itself**, while Markus Gabriel uses this expression: “the world-in-itself cannot exist”. For me, only the entities that belong to EDWs exist. As I indicate in section 1, in my article from 2005, for instance at p. 532, I write: “thing-in-itself” would mean an entity that has no limits of interaction and this is not possible.” My perspective is an extension of Kant’s theory, but, in many places, I strongly emphasize that, within my EDWs perspective, the Kantian distinction between noumenon and phenomenon is wrong.

5. Remarks about the unbelievable similarities between EDWS perspective and Markus Gabriel’s ideas

There are many other incredible similarities between my ideas and Markus Gabriel’s ideas (from the TED clip and from his book). This title of his book, “Why the world does not exist” (in German language) is identical with my main idea. My colleague told me that he did not offer arguments for this idea in his entire book. Just taking a look at his book, my colleague - who knows German - told me that, at pp. 11-12, we can find a very similar idea with my main idea of

EDWs. Markus Gabriel introduces the idea of “restaurants”: it is not only one restaurant, it is a restaurant of humans, a restaurant of bacteria, a restaurant of subatomic particles. There is no one restaurant but more, that is there are more isolated worlds that “exist near the other, without really finding them”. He also wrote that these worlds are not parts of a unique big world. Later, he wrote that it would be false to affirm that the movement of butterfly’s wings in Brazil does not produce a tornado in Texas, the things are not all “connected” – here “connections” means “interactions”. These ideas are almost identical with my main ideas from my books/papers: if we replace EDWs with “restaurants” and “interactions with “intersections” we re-create exactly the main ideas from my perspective. Even if later, Markus Gabriel defines the existence as “*appearance in a conceptual field*”⁵ (Sinnfeld) (probably, this is “context”, in English), anyway, in his TED clip, he claims that all objects exist on different “lists”.⁶ Very probable, not to be accused of plagiarism, Markus Gabriel moves his main idea toward Carnap’s “**linguistic frameworks**”. Reading his CV, I believe Markus Gabriel he does not know too much about Carnap’s philosophy, but he was inspired also by my work: in my book from 2008, I dedicated a section to Carnap’s linguistic frameworks showing that my EDWs means a movement from such linguistic frameworks to EDWs, that is a movement from the linguistic entities to the epistemological-ontological entities. The problem is that he could not write the title of his book and TED movie, “Why the world does not exist”, if he were working within Carnap’s “linguistic frameworks”! He could not claim that all objects exist, but on separate “lists” and an object is not “connected” with all other objects but any object exists in a “conceptual field”! Only working in a completely new framework of ontology-epistemology, could Markus Gabriel write the title of his book and the above sentences.

According to my colleague, “in his book, Markus Gabriel writes many names: Rilke, Adorno, Scheller, Heisenberg, Derrida, Putnam, Quine, Heidegger, Gadamer, Marx, Weber etc. etc., some ideas about art, religious, about everything and nothing. For many things, I don’t see the links with the thesis that the world does not exist, even if this should be the main idea of the book”. It seems that, Markus Gabriel needed two things: (1) to choose the title of the book and TED clip as being very similar with the most important consequence of my perspective (2) to fill his small book with something that has nothing to do with the framework and the main consequence (that the world does not exist)! We can clearly understand that with his unscientific

⁵ In his TED clip, Markus Gabriel just mentions this expression without clearly explaining it. It is clear that he wants to refer to the real existence of objects and not to Carnap’s linguistic frameworks.

⁶ At “International Summer School in German Philosophy” organized by Markus Gabriel at his university (the announcement at <http://selfandworld.blogspot.ro/2010/01/international-summer-school-in-german.htm>), we can read this text: “One of the aims of the summer school is to argue that the thinkers of Post-Kantian Idealism defend a new ontology, one which lays out the conditions of possibility for transcendental, higher-order thought. Despite Kant’s negative verdict on ontology, these conditions appear precisely ontological as soon as the existence of the alleged transcendental subject is confirmed. Since the world cannot be reduced to a strictly ”external world” in the Cartesian sense, **the conditions of possibility for referring to determinate objects in the world** come to be conceived as **themselves determinate objects in the world**. With this **re-evaluation of the status of ontology** in mind, we will read key texts by Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, with specific attention to the **relation between epistemology and ontology**.” (I added bold to these words.) The bold expressions of this text clearly reflect my EDWs perspective (that is, as I wrote everywhere an extension of Kant’s transcendentalism). The Kantian expression of “conditions of possibility” is extended from human being to the all objects. Amazing, Markus Gabriel did the same thing: he considers that these conditions of possibility “themselves determinate objects in the world” and focus on the relationship between ontology and epistemology. It is exactly what I have done in my works!

background and the topics of his published papers and books, Markus Gabriel could not offer any strong (analytical philosophical or scientific) argument for supporting the main idea that appear in his book (and the main idea from his TED clip).

On the contrary, I have a background of studies in science (four years computer science) and then philosophy, I have been working in philosophy of science (mainly philosophy of cognitive (neuro)science and philosophy of physics) all my carrier. Surprisingly, I have noted that Prof. Markus Gabriel has written in the past mainly on different topics (Ancient philosophy, German philosophy, etc.) completely different from this last book. (He got his PhD on Schelling's philosophy.) I believe that the relationship between my ideas and Markus Gabriel's "ideas" **cannot be considered just a coincidence!** My ideas are not just simple ideas because the EDWs perspective is a **completely new framework** and this is the main reason nobody could elaborate an approach (the world does not exist) until me. Therefore, I am convinced that it is impossible for two persons to elaborate the same ideas in the same decade of time, i.e., it is impossible that Markus Gabriel elaborate few ideas that "coincides" with the main ideas from my EDWs perspective. There can be a coincidence regarding some simple ideas, but it is impossible to be a coincidence regarding a totally new framework of thinking for scientists and philosophers. If it were possible such coincidence, then this framework would appear long time ago, maybe even 200 years ago as a reply to Descartes' mind-body problem or immediately after the elaboration of Einstein's theory of relativity and quantum mechanics!⁷ If we consider that Markus Gabriel did not plagiarize my main ideas, then how was possible a person working on Ancient and classical philosophy to come with a **new framework of thinking** for scientists and philosophers in our days? Statistically, such process of thinking (changing the "paradigm" of thinking) happens one per century realized by one person! Therefore, I repeat that it is impossible such of complex approach, the EDWs approach (= the worlds does not exist because of the "lists" of "objects that intersect") to be elaborated by two different persons in the same decade.

I succeeded in creating this general framework and its applications to particular sciences due to my extensive work on philosophy of cognitive science (cognitive neuroscience and philosophy of mind, mainly on the mind-brain problem), philosophy of physics (the problems of quantum mechanics, the relationship between this theory and Einstein's theory of relativity, string theory, etc.), philosophy of biology, philosophy of science, theory of complexity, on Descartes, Kant, Carnap, Vienna circle, Putnam, and many other philosophers' approaches. Having worked for many years on the mind-brain problem (an unsolved philosophical problem in the last 350 years) and other related problems, I discovered the existence of EDWs. Then, I applied this theory in quantum mechanics (and other problems from physics) and biology. Only working on all these problems, I was able to elaborate a completely new paradigm, different from any other philosophical approach of all times. On the contrary, someone getting the PhD on Schelling and working on Ancient Philosophy, Hegel, and such old philosophy, without having a background in science would be impossible to discover that the "world does not exist", could not

⁷ It is not the first time somebody plagiarizes my framework. One of my ex-student, Dinu Patarniche (actually a PhD student at one university in Munich) had a presentation at one of his seminars. One of my colleagues found his presentation on "Prezi". Surprisingly, in his presentation, Patarniche used exactly my expressions (like "epistemologically different worlds") and sentences from my books without quoting my name at all! When I asked him by email about this plagiarism, he wrote me that he orally pronounced my name during his presentation. A copy of this presentation is still on Prezi.

indicate the existence of EDWs and could not think of applying this perspective to many problems from particular sciences.

6. Conclusion

Did Markus Gabriel plagiarize my ideas? Reading his CV (he knows many foreign languages, including Ancient Greek and Latin), I believe Markus Gabriel has great ambitions. Markus Gabriel is from Germany (the core of the history of philosophy and the economical core of UE), I am from Romania (“*No man’s land*” - without access to the Internet) so can we speak he plagiarized my ideas? After reading this paper and noticing so many “similarities”, I leave the reader to answer this question.⁸

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- (All my books and almost all my papers are at http://filosofie.unibuc.ro/cv_gabriel_vacariu)

⁸ “Have no fear of perfection, you will never reach it.” (Salvador Dali) Nevertheless, perfection in philosophy is reached when your philosophical work is plagiarized by a professor of philosophy from a German university.