**Markus Gabriel’s new book (2017) with INCREDIBLE similar ideas to my ideas (2002-2008) regarding the mind-body problem**

It is well-known the UNBELIEVABLE similarities between markus gabriel’s ideas from his book 2013 and my ideas (2002, 2005, 2008, etc.) (see my article or my manuscript). Not amazing, markus gabriel (mg) publishes (2017) more UNBELIEVABLE similar ideas to my ideas (2002, 2005, 2008)! So, let me investigate mg’s ideas from his last book 2017:

**Markus Gabriel (2017) *I am not a brain.* *Philosophy of Mind for the Twenty-First Century,* Polity Press**

I draw the attention that markus gabriel has never written an article on the Philosophy of Mind! However, we see now even in the title of his book that he talks about the Philosophy of mind for 21th Century!

As previously mentioned, I adopt the stance of **antinaturalis**, according to which not everything which exists can be investigated by the natural sciences. I thus contend that there are immaterial realities which I consider essential for any accessible insight of sound human understanding. When I consider someone a friend, and consequently have corresponding feelings for him and adjust my behavior accordingly, I do not suppose that the friendship between him and me is a material thing. (17)

In this paragraph, mg (markus gabriel) indicates that he “adopt” “antinaturalism”, i.e., the “immaterial realities”. (Even if mg explains nothing about these “immaterial realities”!) Obviously, remembering his previous UNBELIVABLE similar ideas form his book 2013 to my ideas, we can understand that these “immaterial realities” are quite similar to my EDWs referring to “minds”. Moreover, “corresponding”, (in this case for “feeling”) is exactly my expression for the same meaning!

Mainstream philosophy of mind for quite a while has sought to provide a theoretical basis for neurocentrism. This seemed necessary given that neurocentrism cannot yet claim to be based on empirical results, as neuroscience is infinitely far away from having solved even “minor” problems, such as finding a physical/neural correlate for consciousness, not to mention finding a location in the brain which correlates with insight into some complicated quantum-mechanical truth or the concept of justice. It has participated, sometimes even enthusiastically, in the decade of the brain. Yet, in the course of the

unfolding of mainstream philosophy of mind it has become apparent to many that it is anything but obvious that the self is a brain. (21)

Obviously, the ideas of this paragraph can be found in many of my works (2002, 2005, 2008, etc.) Since 2002, I have underlined many times that the self/mind cannot be explained by the neuroscience. Amazing, mg introduce even “complicated quantum mechanical truth”, so it means next year he will publish a short book about quantum mechanics problems!

Let us call the idea that we are our brains the **crude identity thesis**. A major weakness of the crude identity thesis is that it immediately threatens to encapsulate us within our skull as minded, thinking, perceiving creatures. It becomes all too tempting to associate the thesis with the view that our entire mental life could be or even is a kind of illusion or hallucination. I have already criticized this thesis in *Why the World Does Not Exist*, under the heading of **constructivis**. (21)

Again very similar ideas to my ideas.

My own view, **New Realism**, is a version of the idea that we can actually grasp reality as

it is in itself by way of our mental faculties. We are not stuck in our brains and affected by an external world only via our nerve endings such that our mental life is basically a useful illusion, an interface or computational platform with a basic evolutionary survival value. (22)

The same verdict: all these ideas can be found in my works. It is not amazing that these main ideas are surrounded by quotations/ideas from Shakespeare, Sartre, Luc Besson, etc. and other authors like these. Amazing is that an author like this mg (without any background in philosophy of mind and cognitive (neuro)science) can give advices for researchers working in these fields!

In particular, for its interpretation of neuroscientific knowledge, neurocentrism brings to bear *philosophical* concepts such as consciousness, cognition, representation, thinking, self, mind, free will, and so forth. (24)[[1]](#footnote-1)

Very important is that mg introduce, very shortly - of course, different concepts (like “theory reductionism”, behaviorism”, “the principle of the causal closure of nature”, “theory of everything”, eliminative materialism, for instance) without indicating the source of this notion![[2]](#footnote-2) Moreover, he introduces ideas of other authors (for instance Kim), without indicating the pages in of those authors’ works.[[3]](#footnote-3) It is not surprising if we know that mg has no background at all in philosophy of mind/cognitive science! Moreover, all these notions are investigated in my works…

Se for instance this paragraph:

Even if the physical discoveries concerning time – in particular, relativity theory – are indeed spectacular breakthroughs with major impact on our understanding of our awareness of time, they cannot replace that very awareness or fundamentally explain it. (107)

What does mg wanted to express using “our awareness of time”? Or see this paragraph:

**Neuromonism** claims that the consciousness-thing is identical either to the entire brain or to some areas of the brain and their activities. However, both positions presuppose that consciousness is a thing in the universe, which is the crucial mistake. (121)

“Neuromonim”? mg needs to invent something, at least to replace identity theory with “neuromonism”!

Later, mg investigated Descartes and others authors investigated by myself. Of course, everybody can investigate these authors, but the analyses are quite similar to my conclusions! Amazing is this statement:

To be sure, neuroscientists to this point have told us that this is not yet feasible, because the self has

yet to be found. It is unclear how multiple streams of information can be incorporated into a unity at all at the level of our perception, which is known as the **binding problem**.

Not to mention the question of how all the processes that are relevant for perception could be bound together in such a way that a self could be perceived in them. But let us assume for the time being that this will be solved in the future. Then I could see my self flickering in the fMRI. Yet, this self would still not be the self that we are looking for. The self perceived in the fMRI would be no more strictly identical to the perceiving self than in the case of my perception of the coffee mug. The very reason why I cannot be identical to a coffee mug I perceive counts against identifying myself with any object I can perceive by means of an fMRI! According to Meister Eckhart, then, we thinkers of thoughts are categorically distinct from any object we could ever perceive or think of. (156)

In our work 2012, my brother and I dedicated a chapter (no 7) to the binding problem! In the same work in a different chapter, we investigate fMRI. To save the situation, mg introduce Meister Eckhart’s and Fichte’s opinion about the self and later about Nagel and Searle. I haven’t investigated Eckhart and Fichte but a lot Nagel and Searle…

Knowledge that can be communicated and shared is universal. “The self” is Fichte’s name for the universal dimension of knowledge. It is the universal knowledge subject. “The divisible self,” in contrast, is Fichte’s name for the fact that many thinkers can know the same thing. (167)[[4]](#footnote-4)

Of course, the central statement (the self “is the universal knowledge subject”) is identical to my definition of self (2005, 2008, etc.)! In this context, I want to introduce a paragraph fro mg:

And yet Freud is on the right track. His reflections must be modernized, however, which in this case means above all freeing them from the erroneous assumption that the self or the ego is a biological entity that is formed by the interaction between organism and natural environment (external world), and that, moreover, a long cultural history has led to the emergence of a superego. (180)

It is, again, amazing that, working on Fichte, Freud, etc. markus Gabriel knows that today the self is a biological entity that is formed by the interaction between organism and natural environment (external world)”! Obviously, everybody knows about the dynamical system approach!

**Metaphysics**, in general, is concerned with absolutely everything, with absolute totality, the world, the universe, reality as a whole, the cosmos, or whatever else you want to call it. But, as I have argued at length in *Why the World Does Not Exist*, absolute totality does not exist anyway. Hence, there is no overall metaphysical reason to assume that there is a single enormous causal chain by which everything that ever happens is linked. For this reason, determinism should not offer itself as a metaphysical thesis and attempt to inflate itself into a world picture which weakens its case. Also, qua metaphysical world picture, determinism would be fundamentally unscientific, as one could neither prove nor falsify it by actually observing the universe – or, for that matter, the brain. It would have already been decided in advance that there is a single enormous causal chain, which is neither a presupposition of physics and neuroscience nor anything that follows from empirical, scientific discoveries that have been made up to this point. Causal determinism is simply a myth from the past. At best, it is a philosophical, metaphysical claim. 9 (207)

In my works I indicated exactly the same idea (but much more developed): there are no causalities between entities that belong to EDWs! At page 218, mg writes: “The laptop on which I am composing these lines, according to the advocates of the thesis of the “extended mind,” supposedly belongs to me just as much as my liver does.” (218) but he does not indicate at all the sources of this notion! (In my books I dealt a lot with the dynamical system approach and the extended mind!) Moreover, I introduce another notion discussed by mg but I want to mirror his investigation (very superficial) on many concepts and approaches (but surprisingly the majority of these notions are quite strong investigated in my books!!). mg’s notion is about “functionalism”

This dehumanization from above is also operative in **functionalism**, which claims that consciousness or mind is a formal functional structure that can be implemented or realized in various materials – in the age of Silicon Valley, silicon is repeatedly cited as an alternative to our brain tissue. One might think that functionalism is a new thesis that came into play with the arrival of computers. But here Benn is remarkably clear-sighted. In his “Speech to the Academy,” he describes the basic structure of neurocentrism, which has not changed to the present day, as follows:

A new stage of cerebration seems to be around the corner, a more frigid, colder one: to conceive our own existence, history, the universe in only two categories: the concept and the hallucination. From Goethe’s time, the *disintegration of reality* has transgressed every measure, so that even the wader, if he notices it, must plunge into the water: the earth is ruined by pure dynamics and by pure relation. *Functionalism*, you know, means the time of unbridled movement, inexistent being.33

Just like Goethe and Nietzsche before him, Benn recommends that we reflect on the historical background of modern intellectualization. In Goethe’s epic *Faust: The Second Part of the Tragedy*, a homunculus succeeds in escaping from the phial in which he had been living by smashing it on “the bright throne.”34 As the philosopher Thales – who appears on the scene in the “Classical Walpurgis Night” – remarks, the homunculus is “beguiled by Proteus”35 into giving himself over to “Eros … who gave all things beginning”36 and causes the glass in which he is trapped to shatter. (219)

mg continues mentioning Schelling, Goethe, and other such writers! Not amazing already, in the end of his book mg writes:

In this book, I have sketched the outlines of a philosophy of mind – or, rather, of *Geist* – for the twenty-first century. In so doing, my intention was to elaborate the concept of spiritual freedom and to advocate it against reductionist and eliminativist programs that would like to persuade us that we have neither minds in any demanding sense nor freedom. (224)

Obviously, being a “genius”, mg can indicate the future roads for the people who have been working within the philosophy of mind (cognitive neuroscience) even if his lectures on this area are very, very, weak!

Hence an important task for us in our century is to take a new look at our situation as minded animals. We must overcome materialism, which would have us believe that all that exists is what is found in the universe (in the sense of the reality of hard anonymous causes, of matter and energy), and which for that reason desperately seeks a conception of the mind that is able to reduce *Geist* to consciousness and then reduce consciousness to an electrical storming of neurons. We are citizens of many worlds, we move in the realm of ends. This provides us a series of conditions for freedom. (226)

In this paragraph, we understand why mg is against “materialism” (even if his lectures on materialism are so weak – but being a genius he can denies whatever he wants without many arguments): because he is working on the framework of “many worlds” – not explained by mg, but I supposed it is something quite similar to the framework of EDWs - or better expressed, what mg (his background being on *Phenomenology*) would understand reading my works (all my works being mainly on Physics, Cognitive Neuroscience, Philosophy of Mind, Kant, etc.).

Amazing is that the title of mg’s book is not CLEAR explained inside it! If the self/I is not the brain, what is it then? What is then the relationship between the self and the brain, if not that of identity (but it is not dualism, which it seems to be rejected by mg)? There are many questions have no answers in this “phenomenological” book on the mind-brain identity!

The conclusion of my analysis: mg does not furnish any argument for his main idea given by the title of the book, he does not even explain the title of his book!

1. Amazing, he mentions important authors without indicating the source: Incidentally, the fact that the Big Bang theory, as well as the theory of the expanding universe – aside from an anticipation in Immanuel Kant’s work on the universe (in his *Universal Natural History and Theory of Heaven* of 1755) – can be traced back to the Belgian priest and theologian Georges Lemaître (1894–1966), who had already formulated both theories some years before Hubble, is quite conveniently ignored by many popular physicalists. Remarkably, Einstein initially rejected Lemaître’s Big Bang theory because it struck him as too strongly influenced by the Christian doctrine of creation, while the Catholic Church accepted Lemaître into the Pontifical Academy of Sciences for his discoveries. In one word, the Catholic Church accepted the Big Bang theory before the scientific community did.” (mg 2017, 105) He did this way many times in his book. (Other example: he talked about “entropy” without indicating the source. Maybe he learned about entropy when he was in primary school….) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Essential: when mg mentions an author firs time, the name is followed by the year of born! (instead of the year of published work)! [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Just an example: mg mentions Bernard Baars, Stanislas Dehaene and Jean-Pierre Changeux’ ideas about consciousness and neurons in firing (page 62), but he does not indicate the work and the year! In the same paragraph he moved to Plato and to Kant. This example: “In contemporary psychology and cognitive science this is called a “theory of mind”: the capacity to form assumptions about other minds and thus about the feelings, intentions, hopes and beliefs of others.” (79) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “We now know what the self is: it is the subject of universal knowledge. To be a self means to know something and to be able to communicate it. In no way does it mean to be alone with oneself or to dwell like a homunculus in the brain. That said, it is already clear: the self is not a brain.” (168) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)