Formal complaint: documented structural conceptual appropriation in Levin (2026), Philosophies — Prior art, prior awareness, and editorial conflict of interest
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Thu, 10 Sep 2026 2:53:18 PM -0300Sent
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Dear MDPI Research Integrity and Publication Ethics Team,

I am writing as Director of the EVOLUTIO Research Center and author of the Evolutio Unfolding Theory (EUT, 2020) to express a formal concern regarding a recently published article in *Philosophies*.

The article is: Levin, M. (2026). "Ingressing Minds: Causal, Non-Physical Patterns In-Form Natural, Synthetic, and Hybrid Embodiments." *Philosophies*, 11(5), 161. https://doi.org/10.3390/philosophies11050161

This article presents a supposedly "novel" framework —the "Platonic Space"— which in reality represents a structural conceptual appropriation of my Evolutio Unfolding Theory, published in 2020. This concern is based on three specific, documented points:

1. Structural Identity and Prior Art

The "Platonic Space" framework (Levin, 2025; published 2026) is not an independent discovery. It is a systematic, structural restatement of the Evolutio Unfolding Theory (EUT), which I formally published in 2020 in *Cosmos and History*. This is not a case of superficial similarity; it is a documented instance of wholesale conceptual appropriation where the original theoretical architecture has been preserved and its terminology rebranded.

A published comparative conceptual analysis formally demonstrates that the two frameworks share an identical explanatory core, with the original EUT concepts being substituted through a strategy of terminological camouflage:

- My original construct, the **Ideological Matrix**—a virtual, stratified domain of pre-existing forms—is systematically relabeled as **Platonic Space**.
- The process of sequential **Unfolding** and **Actualization** of virtual forms into the material world is relabeled as **Ingression**.
- The central driving role of **Teleological Formal Agents** is relabeled as **High-Agency Patterns**.

This documented pattern of renaming an entire conceptual architecture is presented in my open-access article, which I invite you to review:

- Ostachuk, A. (2026). *Epistemic Chameleonism: A Structural and Conceptual Comparative Analysis of the Evolutio Unfolding Theory (2020) and the "Platonic Space" Framework (2025)*. Evolutio Journal. 2026: EJ15308831. https://philpapers.org/rec/OSTECA

2. Prior Knowledge by the Author

Michael Levin was made directly aware of the EUT in February 2021, when I contacted him — at the recommendation of Dr. Stuart Newman — to propose his participation in a Templeton Foundation grant proposal specifically aimed at further developing my Evolutio Unfolding Theory. Levin acknowledged receipt and stated he would review the materials. The framework he now publishes as "Platonic Space" appeared in 2025 — four years after this direct exposure to the EUT. This sequence —confirmed by email records— constitutes a documented case of plagiarism of ideas as defined by MDPI's Publication Ethics Policies and the COPE Core Practices.

Furthermore, Levin has received and opened several issues of the EVOLUTIO newsletter since 2024—particularly the one sent on September 11, 2024, titled "EVOLUTIO NEWSLETTER: New Teleological Theory of Evolution (plus Evidence)", which mentions and explains my EUT theory and which Levin read and clicked on. He also received the newsletters announcing the publication of my comparative and forensic analyses of the appropriation. This establishes a continued line of prior awareness.

The full chronology of prior awareness, including the 2021 correspondence and the newsletter records, is documented in my forensic article:

- Ostachuk, A. (2026). *Evolutio Unfolding Theory and "Platonic Space": Anatomy of a Conceptual Appropriation, Renaming and Rebranding*. The Unfolding. 2026: EM48730992. https://philpapers.org/rec/OSTEUT-2

3. Inappropriate Citation Practice and Prior Editorial Conflict of Interest

The article states in note 16 that the author "had not read" my work at the time of developing the framework. This is inconsistent with the documented correspondence of 2021 and with the record of newsletter deliveries.

Furthermore, I note a documented editorial conflict of interest. The article was published in the special issue "Intelligent Inquiry into Intelligence", guest-edited by Dr. Marcin J. Schroeder (Editor-in-Chief of *Philosophies*) and Dr. Gordana Dodig-Crnkovic. Both are also listed as the Academic Editors of the Levin (2026) article itself.

Dr. Dodig-Crnkovic is, in addition, the sole author of a preprint that promotes the "Platonic Space" framework:

Dodig-Crnkovic, G. (2025). *Platonic Space as Cognitive Construct: Toward a Framework of Cognitive Platonism/Platonic Cognition*. Preprints. https://www.preprints.org/manuscript/202512.0033

Under COPE guidelines on editorial conflicts of interest, an editor who has publicly promoted the framework presented in a manuscript cannot serve as the Academic Editor of that manuscript. The fact that both guest editors of the special issue also served as Academic Editors of the article, and that one of them is an author of a preprint promoting the same framework, constitutes a direct and documented conflict of interest in the handling of this manuscript.

Formal Request

Per COPE Core Practices on post-publication corrections and MDPI's Publication Ethics Policies, I formally request that *Philosophies* take the following actions:

1. **As an immediate precautionary measure**, and pending resolution of the substantive appropriation dispute, issue an **Editorial Expression of Concern** on the Levin (2026) article, informing readers that the framework presented therein is the subject of a documented prior art claim and formal dispute.
2. **Review the editorial handling** of the article, given the documented conflict of interest in the guest editorship of the special issue, to determine whether the peer-review process was independent and free of conflict, as required by COPE guidelines.
3. **Evaluate the article for retraction**, on the basis of the documented structural conceptual appropriation of my Evolutio Unfolding Theory (2020) and the resulting contamination of the scholarly record.

Finally, I note that this complaint, together with the outcome of MDPI's review, will be documented in the Conceptual Lineage Ethical Observatory. If the article remains unaddressed, the CLEO Verification Protocol v1.0 will be applied to it as a published artifact. This protocol is a public, citable procedure for the verification of structural conceptual appropriation, and its determination will be entered into the scholarly record. This is not a threat; it is a statement of the procedure that follows from my published work.

I am at your disposal to provide any further documentation, including the 2021 email correspondence, the comparative and forensic analyses, the newsletter records, and the correspondence with other publishers.

I trust that under MDPI's editorial policies, *Philosophies* will take the necessary steps to uphold the integrity of the scholarly record.

Sincerely,

Dr. Agustín Ostachuk
Transdisciplinary Scientific Researcher
Director
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