

NOTES ON *BEING AND EVENT* (PART II)

PART II: BEING: EXCESS, STATE OF THE SITUATION, ONE/MULTIPLE, WHOLE/PARTS, OR \in / \subset ?

MEDITATION 7: THE POINT OF EXCESS

1) Belonging and Inclusion

- A) Set theory is a “foundational interruption” of ontological disputes.
 - I) Traditionally, there have been 2 couples and many inter-relations
 - (1) one / multiple [*un/multiple*] & whole / parts [*tout / parties*]
 - (2) e.g. Plato has the One prevail over the All [*l’Un sur le Tout*], and Aristotle the opposite
 - II) Set theory suppresses both relations
 - (1) The multiple is thought w/o unity or totality
 - (2) However, AST distinguishes two types of relations btw multiples
 - (A) Belonging = \in = multiple as element of another multiple
 - (B) Inclusion = \subset = multiple as “part” or “sub-multiple” of another multiple
 - B) Consequences of this distinction
 - I) “Ontological neutrality”: elements and parts / subsets are still pure multiples
 - (1) Power-set axiom: all multiples included in a set belong to another set
 - (2) IOW, you can count-as-one all “internal multiple-presentations” that were “already possible” in the initial presentation
 - II) Belonging is the only relation
 - (1) Inclusion can be defined in terms of belonging
 - (2) So the term “part” does NOT imply a “whole”
 - III) The power-set is a new multiple
 - (1) Set of multiples belonging to a set just is that set
 - (2) Set of subsets of a set is a new set
 - IV) The gap [*écart*] between set and power-set = “point in which the impasse of being resides” [*le point où gît l’impasse de l’être*].
 - V) Operational distinction of belonging vs inclusion (not 2 different ways to think the multiple)
 - (1) A set is a structured presentation; it has a count-as-one
 - (2) A power-set is a “metastructure”
 - (A) It is “another count”
 - (B) It gathers together
 - (I) All the inclusions
 - (II) All the “sub-compositions of internal multiples”
 - VI) The metastructure of a power set “counters the danger of the void”
 - VII) Gap btw set and power-set is “a permanent question for thought”
- 2) The theorem of the point of excess (power-set is immeasurably larger than the initial set)
 - A) Demonstration via Russell’s paradox that a power-set necessarily contains a multiple that doesn’t belong to the initial set
 - I) Preliminary definitions:

- (1) Multiples that do not belong to themselves = ordinary multiples
- (2) Multiples that do belong to themselves = eventual multiples
- II) Ordinary subset γ = set of all ordinary elements of a set α = set of all multiples that do not belong to themselves that belong to α = an “existing part” of α
 - (1) So γ is included in α , thus it belongs to powerset of α
 - (2) But γ does not belong to α itself
 - (A) If γ did belong to α
 - (I) γ is ordinary, that is, $\sim (\gamma \in \gamma)$, and thus belongs to ordinary subset of α
 - (II) But ordinary subset of α is γ
 - (III) And that means $\gamma \in \gamma$ [γ is “evental”] which contradicts (I)
 - (B) Therefore, γ does not belong to α
- B) Consequences
 - I) There is at least one element of power-set which is not element of initial set
 - II) IOW, no multiple can unify all that it includes; inclusion exceeds belonging
 - III) Subset of all ordinary elements of a set = point of excess over that set
 - IV) The “immanent resources” of a presented multiple exceed capacity of the initial count-as-one; thus the second count, the metastructure, is needed
- 3) Void and excess: what is effect of belonging vs inclusion distinction on void as proper name of being?
 - A) Two relations of void and inclusion
 - I) Void is a subset of any set: it is universally included in all sets
 - II) Void has a subset: the void itself
 - B) First property: universal inclusion of void in all sets = errancy of void in all presentation
 - I) Intuitive presentation:
 - (1) no multiple can prevent the inexistent from placing itself within that multiple
 - (2) void is presented everywhere in its lack [*présenté dans son manque*]
 - (A) not as counted (as a belonging element)
 - (B) but as included
 - II) Deductive presentation: “from the false, anything follows”
 - III) Formal presentation: “for all B, the void is included in B” = void is subset of any set
 - C) Second property: void has a subset, the void; IOW the void includes the void as a subset
 - I) Intuitively, this is strange
 - (1) It looks like the void is “filled” by itself
 - (2) But only belonging “fills” presentation
 - (3) Inclusion only entails that everything has itself as a subset, as its “maximal” subset
 - II) There is a power-set of the null-set; there is a metastructure of the void
 - (1) Whatever is included in a set belongs to its power-set
 - (2) So the power-set of the void is just the name of the void, not the void “itself”
 - (3) This is written as $p(\emptyset) = \{\emptyset\}$
 - (4) Implying that $\emptyset \in p(\emptyset)$, that is, the void belongs to the power-set of the void
 - III) Precautions
 - (1) The void has no elements; the name of the void, its mark \emptyset , “presents being in its lack”
 - (2) The void does not belong to the set $\{\emptyset\}$; what belongs to this set is the proper name of the void
 - (3) The excess of inclusion over belonging does not imply that belonging exceeds inclusion
 - (4) For certain multiples it is true that “for all A, ‘A belongs to B’ implies ‘A is included in B’”
 - (5) This is “particularly true” of the set $\{\emptyset\}$
 - (A) Its unique element, \emptyset
 - (B) Is also one of its subsets, since \emptyset is universally included in all sets

- 4) One, Count-as-one, Unicity and Forming-into-One
- A) We must distinguish count-as-one as operation and one as result (“fictive one-effect”)
 - I) The one is not (unity is not an ontological fundament); the one is result of an operation
 - II) In case of null-set, count-as-one is fixing a proper name for unrepresentable
 - (1) (= negation of any presented multiple)
 - (2) Danger here: assigning predicate of the one to suture-to-being that is the name
 - (3) AST is more rigorously paradoxical: the name doesn’t present anything but it is name of a multiple
 - B) Unicity (uniqueness): predicate of the multiple.
 - I) Belongs to same / other regime
 - II) A multiple is unique in that it is other than any other
 - III) Regarding the void: the name of the void is unique.
 - (1) This does not mean “the void is one”
 - (2) Rather it means that thinking “several” names would make us think the being of the one
 - C) Forming-into-one
 - I) Preliminaries
 - (1) Count-as-one can always be applied to an already counted one-multiple
 - (2) That is, any name of a set can be counted-as-one
 - (3) Modality of count-as-one used to describe count-as-one applied to a one-result
 - II) So set $\{\emptyset\}$ is “forming-into-one of the name” (that is, “void” as proper name of being)
 - III) The “singleton”: “first derived law” of AST
 - (1) Via the axiom of replacement, we know that $\{\emptyset\}$ can be transformed into $\{\delta\}$
 - (2) So we can “form-into-one” δ as $\{\delta\}$, which is a “singleton”
 - (3) So $\{\emptyset\}$ is the “first” singleton
 - (4) And we can make $\{\emptyset\}$ into another, recursive, singleton $\{\{\emptyset\}\}$
 - (A) \emptyset is an element of $\{\emptyset\}$
 - (B) But $\{\emptyset\}$ is an element of $\{\{\emptyset\}\}$
 - (C) And \emptyset , $\{\emptyset\}$, and $\{\{\emptyset\}\}$ are all different (via axiom of extension)
 - (5) And we get the “unlimited production of new multiples” from combined effect of
 - (A) Power-set axiom
 - (B) Operation of forming-into-one

MEDITATION 8: THE STATE, OR METASTRUCTURE AND THE TYPOLOGY OF BEING (NORMALITY, SINGULARITY, AND EXCRESCENCE)

- 1) State or metastructure as protection against the “danger of the void”
- A) Danger of the void
 - I) The void qua name of inconsistency w/in situation cannot be presented
 - II) This results in a “situational anxiety” of the void; void must be warded off
 - III) Must prohibit “catastrophe of presentation” = situation’s encounter w/ its own void
 - B) The count escapes the count: the “there is Oneness” reveals its operationality
 - I) It’s possible structure itself could be point where void is given
 - II) So structure as count must itself be counted; there must be a “metastructure”
 - C) The necessity of metastructure can be derived from observation:
 - I) Although the being of presentation is inconsistent multiplicity
 - II) Yet presentation is never chaotic; the void is never presented
 - D) Metastructure guarantees that gap btw consistent / inconsistent multiple is null in situation
 - I) This is a “fictionalizing” of the count

- II) Which insures that “pure operational transparency” of the count is fixed w/in the one
- 2) Metaphorical affinity w/ politics whereby metastructure = “state of the situation”
 - A) State of situation doesn’t just re-count the terms of a situation
 - B) Instead it counts the parts of a situation
 - I) Parts are “sub-multiples”
 - II) We can understand this w/ set theory
 - (1) Consistent multiplicity = result of first count = element belonging to a situation
 - (2) Sub-multiples = result of metastructure qua second count = part included in situation
- 3) Employing the ontological theorem of the point of excess
 - A) Inclusion exceeds belonging; sub-multiples exceed terms; parts exceed elements
 - B) Thus there are included parts that cannot be counted by the first count as terms
 - I) Thus they do not exist in the situation (= result of first count)
 - II) Thus inexistent part is “place in which the void may receive the latent form of being”
 - (1) Inexistent part is “possible support” of “the one is not” being recognized in the situation
 - (2) But that would be the “ruin of presentation”:
 - (A) In the situation, ones are ontological fundamentals
 - (B) But we know this is just a fiction
 - (I) The one is not
 - (II) The one is an operation producing a fictive unity of the situation
- 4) So the metastructure must step in here, so that “what is included in a situation belongs to its state”
 - A) As a final result, the first count is counted by the state
 - B) Thus there is the “total part” as complete set of everything counted in original situation
 - C) So the state is a “riposte” to the void
- 5) Immanence and transcendence of state
 - A) State of situation is structure transcendent / separate from first structure of situation
 - B) But it is always the state of a situation; it is attached
- 6) Typology of donation of being: difference btw presentation and representation
 - A) Normal = term that is both presented and represented (both belongs and is included)
 - B) Singular = term which is presented but not represented (belongs but cannot be included)
 - I) Cannot be re-secured by the state
 - II) It exists, but its existence cannot be directly verified by the state
 - C) Excrescence = term which is represented but not presented (included but do not belong)
 - I) A one of the state that doesn’t belong to the initial situation
 - II) Existent of the state that in-exists in the initial situation
 - D) [cf. p 125F / 108E: the void is neither presented nor represented]
- 7) Resulting requirements for situation of ontology
 - A) Theory of presentation must provide theory of the state; i.e., distinguish belonging / inclusion
 - B) But this doesn’t mean two axiom systems, one for presentation and one for the state
 - C) IOW, ontology as a situation cannot have its own excrescences
 - I) You can’t have representation w/o presentation
 - II) Because all ontology does is presentation of presentation
 - D) Thus the state of ontology’s situation is inseparable / inexistent
 - E) And thus the state’s anti-void functions are not guaranteed for ontology
 - F) The void is the sub-set par excellence; it is always included
- 8) Splitting situation and state of situation
 - A) Situation: presentation, count-as-one, structure, belonging, element
 - B) State: representation, count of count, metastructure, inclusion, subset / part

MEDITATION 9: THE STATE OF THE HISTORICAL-SOCIAL SITUATION

1) Marxist thought

- A) State deals with parts (classes), not terms (citizens)
- B) It's thus less related to social bond than to un-binding or internal oppositions

2) Badiou's take on Marxist theory of the State / ruling class

- A) The State works by forming-one out of parts of a situation
- B) The State works on an already structured situation as its necessary metastructure
 - I) There is Oneness not in the immediacy of society but in set of subsets
 - II) This is what is meant by "State of the ruling class"
 - (1) State is not an "instrument" possessed by ruling class, but "ruling class" means the "uniformity of effect" produced by metastructure
 - (2) State always re-presents what has already been presented
 - (A) State is not defined for Marxists in "statist" (governmental) form
 - (B) But in economic and social terms

3) Attachment and separation of the State from historical-social presentation

- A) State is tied to presentation bcs parts are multiples of already counted multiples
 - I) The state cannot bring forth a null-term whose elements are absent from the situation
 - II) So the state is purely administrative; this is more essential than State coercion
- B) State is necessarily a separate apparatus
 - I) Parts of society exceed the state (inclusion cannot be reduced to belonging)
 - II) State is thus subject to theorem of point of excess

4) The State's coercive function

- A) States don't deal w/ individuals as structured by situation
 - I) As "themselves"
 - II) As proper name of an infinite multiple
- B) Rather the individual is treated as a subset, as the singleton of himself
 - I) As an "indifferent figure of unicity," the forming-into-one of the name
 - II) So you as "voter" is not "you" in your self, but you as represented by the State as one voter
- C) This treating as a singleton is the state's coercive function
 - I) That is, the state doesn't treat you as belonging to society
 - II) But only as included in society
 - III) IOW, State doesn't care about your life, your self, but only you as citizen, as administered

5) Fatal ambiguity of Marxist analysis (Engels)

- A) Engels thinks the State is itself an excrescence
 - I) So representation (State) can be done away with
 - II) In favor of universal simple presentation (communist society)
- B) Source of Engels' ambivalence
 - I) Separation of state not from simple existence of parts but from their conflict
 - II) Hence w/o the state you would have permanent civil war
- C) State is not founded on social bond, but on prohibition of un-binding
 - I) So separation of state is due to danger of inconsistency
 - II) We do in fact see state's call out the riot troops when an inconsistent crowd arrives
- D) But Engels is really saying that
 - I) Bourgeoisie is a normal term (presented and represented)
 - II) Proletariat is a singular term (presented but not represented)
 - III) State apparatus is an excrescence (represented but not presented)

- E) Engels: real problem is different regimes of presentation btw bourgeoisie and proletariat
 - I) Reduces void to non-representation of proletariat, instead of its being unrepresentability
 - II) Reduces separate count of parts by state to non-universality of bourgeois interests
 - III) Reduces machinery of count-as-one to an excrescence (rather than as necessary)

6)Consequences

- A) For Engels, politics is an assault on the State (excrescence is intolerable)
- B) For Badiou, the State as such, as necessity of metastructure, cannot be destroyed
 - I) So it's not antagonism of classes at origin of State (void and excess are not antagonistic)
 - II) But politics = capacity to establish relation to both void and excess different from the relation established by the State
 - (1) So the militant is not a warrior against the State
 - (2) But a "patient watchman of the void instructed by the event"
 - (A) In a truth procedure militants construct means to be faithful to proper name
 - (B) They will be able retroactively to give to the void

MEDITATION 10: SPINOZA

1) Introduction

- A) Spinoza's circular logic
 - I) A thing is singular rather than a composition (a "multiple individual") if its elements contribute to a unique effect
 - (1) Its multiplicity is unified by its causal effects
 - (2) IOW, structure = causality
 - II) But you need a criterion of unicity to identify such unique effects
 - (1) What appears as a "unique effect" is itself a complex of individuals
 - (2) To identify this unique effect as unique I have to look to ITS effects, and so on
 - III) So you have an "infinite oscillation" btw
 - (1) Inconsistent individuals ("multiple individual")
 - (2) Consistent singular things
- B) "Deconstructing" Spinoza
 - I) Spinoza's intention: assure structure by metastructure (= God / Substance / Nature)
 - (1) He wants to in-distinguish belonging and inclusion
 - (2) He wants to foreclose the void
 - II) Spinoza's text ("unconscious awareness of his task")
 - (1) The void is named "infinite mode"
 - (2) This is the point where one can no longer avoid supposition of a Subject

2) Badiou's demonstration

- A) Essential identity of belonging and inclusion evident in definition of singular thing
 - I) Things are modes of God; the "in" of belonging is universal
 - (1) Any combination of things is just another mode of God
 - (2) IOW, God is the state of the situation and he saturates presentation
 - (A) Things are presented as one-multiples (elements of situations): belonging
 - (B) But are always able to be represented as modes of God (as "parts"): inclusion
 - II) Identity and difference: singular divine substance and infinity of attributes
 - (1) God's unity allows an infinity of intellectually separable situations ("attributes")
 - (2) Statist excess unifies presentative immediacy
 - (A) Although humans belong to two separable situations (thought and extension)
 - (B) They are unified bcs state of those situations is the same (both attributes of God)

- III) Foreclosure of the void follows from the preceding
 - (1) The void cannot belong to a situation; it is inexistent / unrepresented
 - (A) It would have to be counted-as-one, but the operator of the count is causality
 - (B) [JP: cf. the connection with Aristotle: for Spinoza the void is “not given in Nature”]
 - (2) The void cannot be included in a situation either
 - (A) It would have to be counted by the metastructure
 - (B) But that too is causality, qua “immanent production of divine substance”
 - (I) [JP: natural events are God’s way of modifying himself]
 - IV) Overview of failure of foreclosure of the void; irreducible “errancy”
 - (1) Singular things are essentially finite but God is infinite cause
 - (2) Infinity thus designates “statist excess” over presentation (of singular finite things)
 - (3) Void (as foundation of excess) = “errancy of incommensurability btw finite and infinite”
 - V) Detailed analysis of Spinoza’s failure
 - (1) Badiou’s account
 - (A) Nothing is given beyond substance and modes; attributes are not given
 - (B) Substance / modes couple doesn’t coincide with infinite / finite
 - (C) So we must think “infinite modes”
 - (2) Spinoza’s deductive procedure
 - (A) Immediate infinite mode = everything following from God’s attributes
 - (B) Mediate infinite mode = everything following from an infinite mode
 - (C) Everything following from a finite / singular thing is finite
 - (3) Badiou’s analysis:
 - (A) Excess of state / infinite substantial origin of causality is hidden in presentation
 - (I) Rift btw finite and infinite does not appear in the finite
 - (II) Chain of infinite modes is disconnected from presentation of finite things
 - (B) How then do infinite modes exist?
 - (I) Spinoza says very little about them and what he does say is not part of deductive argument of the Ethics
 - (II) When he does mention them he tends to present them as totalities
 - 1. Nature as “infinite immobile totality of singular moving things”
 - 2. Divine Understanding as “infinite totality of particular minds”
 - (III) But “totality” via addition ≠ divine substantial unity
 - (C) You cannot establish existence of infinite modes by experience or definition
 - (D) Spinoza’s impasse
 - (I) Either infinite modes exist but are inaccessible to thought and experience
 - 1. There is an “underworld of infinite things” that is unrepresentable
 - 2. Thus void for us in our situations
 - (II) Or they do not exist
 - 1. This directly creates a void
 - 2. Bcs causality as principle of presentation relies on inexistent infinite modes
 - (E) “Infinite mode” as “pure name”
 - (I) Its referent is “eclipsed”
 - (II) It is cited only as needed in proof
 - 1. Cancelled from all finite experience
 - 2. But it is precisely the foundation of the unity of that experience
- 3) Conclusion
 - A) Natural or ordinary multiplicities
 - I) Definition of “natural” = max equilibrium of belonging / inclusion

- (1) All terms are normal (cf Med 8) (= represented in place of presentation)
- (2) So for Spinoza, every term is natural (*Deus, sive Natura*)
- II) Price to pay for such foundation
 - (1) You have to name void by term w/o referent ("infinite mode")
 - (2) This "installs errancy in the deductive chain"
- B) "Great lesson of Spinoza"
 - I) You can never pin down the void; it will always wander around in "errancy"
 - II) This is what happens with the "necessary but inexistent" infinite mode