

NOTES ON *BEING AND EVENT* (PART 5)

PART 5: THE EVENT: INTERVENTION AND FIDELITY. PASCAL / CHOICE; HOLDERLIN / DEDUCTION

MEDITATION 20: THE INTERVENTION: ILLEGAL CHOICE OF A NAME OF THE EVENT, LOGIC OF THE TWO, TEMPORAL FOUNDATION

- 1) Recap / transition from previous Part.
 - a) Deciding that event belongs to situation must always be a decision: it must decide something undecidable / not pre-determined by the situation.
 - b) Bcs state cannot resecure event, which occurs in a site: a multiple on edge of void
- 2) Intervention = a procedure by which a multiple is recognized as an event.
 - a) There seems to be a self-cancelling of the two aspects of an intervention
 - i) Identifies that there has been some undecidability (*in re* event's belonging to the situation)
 - ii) Decides that the event belongs to the situation
 - b) This paradox of action is amenable to a Nietzschean interpretation (ER of the same)
 - i) Will to power as power of decision would only repeat laws of situation
 - ii) The Other would only be a new support for the Same
 - c) But "in reality" the paradox of intervention is "more complex"
 - i) Act of naming event constitutes it as decidable relative to the situation
 - ii) What is "nomination"? What resources enable us to connect event to its name?
 - (1) No presented term, nor the site itself name the event
 - (2) It's the "unnoticed of the site which founds the eventual nomination"
 - d) So "initial operation of intervention" is to name the event by "mak[ing] a name out of an unrepresented element of the site"
- 3) Consequences
 - a) Don't confuse unrepresented element (qua element of site) and its function of nomination
 - i) Double function of the unrepresented element
 - (1) It is 'contained' in the void at edge of which is the site
 - (2) It indexes event to arbitrariness of signifier (which must however emerge from void)
 - ii) It's the duality here that is key, the decision that takes an absent term as a name
 - b) The term that serves as name is anonymous: the event has the nameless as its name
 - c) Nomination is "illegal":
 - i) It conforms to no law of representation; state cannot choose what is name of event
 - ii) But term naming event is a representative of the site; its only name is "belongs to site"
 - iii) But the state cannot recognize this representative status
 - d) The event is "ultra-One"
 - i) Relative to the situation, the event is an interval rather than a term
 - ii) The event as ultra-One is an "originary Two"
 - e) The intervention is itself undecidable; it is only recognized in situation by its consequences

- f) State can only resecure belonging of name at price of pointing out void it forecloses
 - i) So the state can only capture that there has been some novelty in the situation, but for the state there is no discernable relation btw event and site
 - (1) So the state always thinks that some outside force is at work in events
 - (2) So for state, event is given as an excrescence whose structure is a Two w/o concept
 - g) An intervention presents an event for another event; it is an “evental between-two”
- 4) Time is intervention itself, the gap btw two events
 - a) We can’t think of a primal event then, as does “speculative leftism”
 - b) You can only work out the consequences of an event in the “discipline of time” = fidelity

MEDITATION 21: PASCAL

- 1) Theory of event as exemplified in Christianity (though w/in remains of ontology of Presence)
 - a) Evental multiple happens in a special site
 - i) Human life summoned to its limit in death
 - ii) Cross is symbol of this ‘senseless multiple’
 - b) Apostles are interveners; event belongs to itself
 - c) Essence of evental ultra-one is the Two
 - i) Division of divine into Father / Son
 - ii) Ruins recollection of divine transcendence into simple presence
 - d) Metastructure (qua Roman power) sees situation as a Two w/o sense
 - e) The intervention depends on circulation of another event:
 - i) Death of Christ is a relay
 - ii) Essential historicity of Christianity
 - (1) Evental recurrence
 - (2) Promise of future event of Last Judgment
 - f) Periodized time and diagonal of the situation
 - i) Institutional fidelity
 - (1) Jewish prophets
 - (2) Catholic Church and universality
- 2) Pascal’s “particular genius” is to maintain focus on event in context of modern subject of science
- 3) Pascal’s provocation is to insist that miracles be the justification for Christianity
 - a) Miracle is “emblem of pure event as resource of truth”
 - b) Pascal’s dialectic of prophecy and miracle, chance and recurrence
 - i) Meaning of prophecy is obscure at time of pronounciation and retroactive clear via event
 - ii) To see this, Pascal “invented reading for symptoms”
- 4) Intervention is a “precisely calibrated subjective operation”
 - a) Its possibility depends on “evental recurrence”
 - b) It is never necessary; it always results in an avant-garde
 - c) The belief of the avant-garde decides the event’s belonging to the situation
 - d) You need fidelity to the fidelity
- 5) Pascal needs the libertine to accept the wager
- 6) The divisions of the *Pensées*
- 7) Strength and weakness of the intervention: one must always choose; the threat of nihilism
- 8) Pascal and the “militant apparatus of truth”
 - a) Going against the flow is not reactive
 - b) But an invention of modern forms of an ancient conviction
 - c) “calm willingness to change the world and to universalize its form”

MEDITATION 22: THE FORM-MULTIPLE OF INTERVENTION: IS THERE A BEING OF CHOICE?

- 1) Introduction: Axiom of choice
 - a) Form of intervention
 - b) Provoked bitter math dispute and split btw intuitionists and the rest
- 2) Axiom of choice: there exists a multiple composed of representatives of non-void elements of a set
 - a) Affirmation of existence of a function establishing a delegation
 - b) With finite sets, there is no problem with this function; no need for a special axiom
- 3) Axiom of choice and infinite sets
 - a) Cannot guarantee existence of a function of choice / delegation
 - b) And yet this function was used by mathematicians after 1890
 - c) So mathematicians had to pose existence of something they couldn't produce an example of
- 4) Axiom of choice does not define the type of connection btw given set and produced set
 - a) This means the function of choice is "subtracted from the count"
 - b) Thus we have "presentability w/o presentation"
- 5) Badiou: axiom of choice formalizes predicates of intervention w/in ontology
 - a) The being of intervention, w/o reference to the event (which ontology cannot handle)
 - b) Once admitted, choice will (via deductive fidelity) command important results of ontology
- 6) The politics of mathematics
 - a) Axiom of choice required an intervention on behalf of choice / intervention
 - b) Steinitz and the ethics of fidelity: cannot hide abruptness of the intervention
- 7) Two characteristics of intervention: illegality and anonymity
 - a) Illegality: declaration of existence of representatives w/o any law of representation
 - i) A being (existence) w/o being "a" being (w/o a law for its count)
 - ii) Choice thus "exists out of the situation"
 - b) Anonymity: there is a representative, but we cannot identify it or name it
- 8) So choice does not guarantee existence of multiples in situation, but guarantees existence of intervention grasped in its pure being w/o reference to any event
 - a) So it affirms a "form-multiple": a function w/o provable realization in an existent
 - b) But the ultimate effect of axiom of choice is order
 - i) Revolutions produce state orders
 - ii) Looking ahead to Meditation 26
 - c) Most profound lesson:
 - i) From undecidable event and interventional decision, time and historical novelty result
 - ii) Power of intervention lies not in its being but in its efficacy
 - (1) Initial "disfunctioning of the count" that is the event
 - (2) Illegality of the event

MEDITATION 23: FIDELITY, CONNECTION

- 1) Definition of "fidelity"
 - a) Set of procedures which discern elements of a situation depending on event
 - b) Temporal orientation of dialectic of being and event
- 2) Three preliminary remarks
 - a) Fidelity is situated
 - b) Fidelity is an operation; it is evaluated by its results; what it counts as effects of an event

- c) Fidelity counts parts of a situation; its results are included in situation; fidelity is related to state and institution
- 3) Qualification of these three remarks
 - a) Even if fidelities are situated, we must still think the universal form of procedure
 - i) Different ways of being faithful to an event (Stalin vs Trotsky)
 - ii) Connection and the atom of fidelity; fidelity as chain of atoms
 - b) Fidelity is operation, but we can grasp provisional result or “instantaneous being” of fidelity
 - i) This “instantaneous being” of fidelity is a state concept
 - ii) But this is not an ontological foundation of the fidelity
 - (1) The provisional result of a fidelity is a finite set
 - (2) But every situation is infinite
 - (a) In its being, a situation is connected to natural multiples
 - (b) As an operation, fidelity is infinite if situation is infinite
 - iii) Consequences:
 - (1) So in its being, as a representation / state, fidelity result is finite
 - (2) In its operation, fidelity is infinite “adjacent to presentation”
 - c) Fidelity and state (institutionalization)
 - i) No a priori tie to belonging or inclusion
 - ii) Typology of fidelities
 - (1) Spontaneist / statist: only those taking part in event are connected
 - (2) Dogmatic / statist: everyone is part of event: no negative atoms
 - (3) Unassignable / generic:
 - (a) Doesn't make sense for the state (Med 31)
 - (b) Divides situation in two, via succession of finite states
 - (i) Those connected to event
 - (ii) Those indifferent to event
- 4) Fidelity as counter-state
 - a) Building an other situation
 - b) Necessary tendency to ontologization / institutionalization of “the Faithful”
 - c) Profound question: do events prescribe a type of connection / fidelity?
- 5) Subject as process of liaison between
 - a) Event / intervention
 - b) Procedure of fidelity / connection
- 6) Operator of connection as a “second event”

MEDITATION 24: DEDUCTION AS OPERATOR OF ONTOLOGICAL FIDELITY

- 1) Intro: are there mathematical events and fidelities?
 - a) It would seem there are not, as ontology / mathematics forecloses concept of event
 - b) But there is a historicity of mathematics
 - i) There are mathematical events and interventions
 - (1) A great mathematician intervenes at a site in the math situation
 - (2) There have been event-theorems and necessity of fidelity to them
 - ii) NB: ontology is a situation
 - (1) It is thus presented in time
 - (2) New propositions are the events that periodize this presentation
 - c) In principle, math is egalitarian
 - i) Propositions are true or false; it doesn't matter how they connect to events

- ii) But, symptom that mathematicians are always fighting over priority / honor of intervention
 - (1) Indicates an “outside” of math / ontology situation
 - (2) [JP: “real world” honors / fame / salary / prizes, etc.]
 - d) Within math / ontology
 - i) Imperative of demonstration: new theorem must attest coherence w/ situation
 - ii) Imperative of deductive fidelity: consequences must be regulated by explicit law
- 2) Formal concept of deduction
 - a) Definition: deduction = chain of propositions from axioms according to rules
 - b) Rules:
 - i) Separation / modus ponens
 - ii) Generalization
 - c) Despite the “poverty” of these rules, the difficulty is to exercise fidelity
 - i) The rules are few and simple (“tactics”): “monotony”
 - ii) The difficulty lies in demonstrative organization (“strategy”)
 - d) Hypotheses and reduction as 2 procedures to test the gap is between
 - i) Uniformity of equivalences
 - ii) Audacity of inferences
- 3) Reasoning via hypotheses
 - a) $A \rightarrow B$ doesn’t rely on truth of A or B
 - b) So what does it mean when you demonstrate “ $A \rightarrow B$ ” by concluding to B after supposing A?
 - c) The “fictive situation” and the “theorem of deduction”
 - i) Take the axioms of a theory (= T), plus the proposition A, as T + A
 - ii) An “axiomatic supplement”: A is treated as an “axiom” in an “adjacent fictive situation”
 - iii) Then, if you can deduce B in situation T + A, you can deduce $A \rightarrow B$
 - d) Consequences
 - i) Mathematicians are always haunting “fallacious or incoherent universes”
 - ii) A possible identification of an eventual site in mathematics
 - (1) Proposition A might imply other propositions but not be deduced from axioms
 - (2) One can then decide that A belongs to math / ontological situation
 - (3) We then get a “brutal outpouring of results” / an “evental reworking” of situation
- 4) Reasoning via the absurd (the *reductio ad absurdum*)
 - a) Such “apogogic” reasoning seems similar to hypothetical reasoning
 - i) You assume $T + \sim A$ and then deduce propositions
 - ii) But the intuitionists resisted this, bcs they denied that $\sim \sim A = A$
 - b) Now, $\sim \sim A = A$ is crucial for Badiou
 - i) It’s directly linked to math / ontology
 - ii) And it’s so far removed from our “dialectical experience” of history and life that ontology is vulnerable to both empiricist and speculative critique
 - c) The refusal by the intuitionists to accept $\sim \sim A = A$ marks a bifurcation of “regimes of fidelity”
 - i) Intuitionists apply criteria of connection coming from elsewhere onto ontology
 - (1) They are caught in empiricist illusion of math objects
 - (2) But all math “objects” are just species of multiples
 - (3) Thus, if you deny the non-existence of a multiple you affirm its existence
 - (a) For ontology attributes nothing to multiples other than existence
 - (b) No “intermediate property” between existence and non-existence of multiples
 - ii) So Badiou maintains equivalence of affirmation and double negation and so the *reductio*
 - (1) *reductio* is “originary belonging of math deductive fidelity to ontological concerns”
 - (2) Badiou likes the “adventurous” character of reasoning by the absurd

- (a) In simple hypothetical reasoning your goal is fixed in advance
 - (b) But in apogogic reasoning
 - (i) Your goal is indistinct and you may have to wander
 - (ii) You start out by positing an incoherent situation that is only confirmed by “random occurrence” of a contradiction
 - (iii) You have to combine
 1. Zeal of fidelity
 2. With chance of encounter
 - (iv) Thus apogogic reasoning is the “most militant” procedure of math
- 5) Triple determination of deductive fidelity
- a) Ontological fidelity concerns events of the discourse on being qua being, in 3 forms
 - i) Dogmatic: new propositions must connect to all math propositions
 - ii) Spontaneist: but great events are sui generis, connecting only to themselves
 - iii) Generic: great events are diagonal to established fields and show “mathematicity” itself
 - b) Deductive fidelity is “equivocal paradigm” of all fidelity
 - i) But of course you can’t deduce connections in love, art, politics
 - ii) But you can be adventurous, as are mathematicians in use of the *reductio*

MEDITATION 25: HÖLDERLIN

As with the Mallarmé, I’m going to defer commenting on this until a later date.