

NOTES ON *BEING AND EVENT* (PART 7)

PART 7: THE GENERIC: INDISCERNIBLE AND TRUTH. THE EVENT – P. J. COHEN

[NOTE: I'm quite dissatisfied with this outline. I don't know if I completely understand the mathematics, and I don't know how much detail to present, nor whether or not to present "examples" from politics of a generic extension, that is, forcing a situation to recognize the common humanity of a previously degraded group. In any case, here is the outline, for better or worse.]

MEDITATION 31: THE THOUGHT OF THE GENERIC AND BEING IN TRUTH

- 1) Introduction
 - a) Distinction of "indiscernible" and "generic"
 - i) "Generic" is positive: truth of being of a situation as foundation of knowledge to come
 - ii) "Indiscernible" is negative: subtracted from knowledge; truth "makes a hole in knowledge"
 - b) Non-relation or "traversing" between post-evental fidelity and a fixed state of knowledge
 - c) Main stages (forecast of Med 31)
 - i) Study of local / finite forms of fidelity procedure (= "enquiries")
 - ii) Distinction between true and veridical; demonstration that truth is infinite
 - iii) Existence of the generic and truths
 - iv) How a truth procedure subtracts itself from knowledge (= "avoidance")
 - v) Definition of a generic procedure of fidelity
- 2) Knowledge revisited
 - a) Knowledge = capacity to discern multiples w/in situation via properties picked out by formulas
 - b) Two operations
 - i) Discernment
 - (1) = identifying multiples on basis of properties
 - (2) Connection btw language and presented realities
 - (3) Presentation
 - (4) Judgment
 - ii) Classification
 - (1) = grouping together multiples on basis of common properties
 - (2) Connection btw language and parts of a situation
 - (3) Representation
 - (4) Linking of judgments
 - c) The encyclopedia
 - i) Summation of judgments under a common determinant
 - ii) Assignment of multiples to sets of multiples, i.e., to parts
 - d) The name of event is supernumerary: encyclopedia does not classify it "as name of event"

- 3) Enquiries
 - a) A fidelity is not a matter of knowledge; not the work of an expert but of a militant
 - b) Must determine if a multiple belonging to a situation is connected to name of event or not
 - c) An "enquiry" is "finite set of such minimal reports"; enquiry is "finite state" of infinite process
- 4) Truth and veridicity
 - a) Results of enquiries coincide with an encyclopedic determinant bcs every presented multiple is nameable in the language of the situation
 - b) Veridical (relative to knowledge) vs true (relative to fidelity and truth procedure)
 - i) Truth can be distinguished from the veridical only with infinite truths
 - ii) What is the "being of truth" or ontological distinction of truth vs knowledge?
 - (1) Truth must be infinite
 - (2) But infinity is not sufficient
- 5) The generic procedure
 - a) Avoidance: a finite part avoids an encyclopedic determinant if it contains multiples w/in one determinant and w/in its contradictory determinant
 - b) A truth groups together the terms positively connected to the event
 - i) To be a novelty, part so gathered must not coincide w/ an encyclopedic determinant
 - ii) That is, there must be at least one enquiry w/in procedure that avoids that determinant
 - c) A truth is that "infinite positive total" of positive connections in which, for each determinant, at least one enquiry avoids it
- 6) The generic is the being-multiple of a truth
 - a) The "one-truth," the "multiple-referent" of a fidelity is an indiscernible part of the situation
 - b) It is counted as one by the state, but w/o a property other than reference to belonging
 - i) This "property" of simply being is "shared by all the terms of the situation"
 - ii) Indiscernible part has only "properties" of "any part whatsoever" [*n'importe quelle partie*]
 - iii) It is "generic"; all you can say is that its elements "are"
 - c) So indiscernible part is "truth of entire situation": it exhibits as one-multiple "the very being of what belongs insofar as it belongs"
 - d) Discernible is veridical; the indiscernible alone is true
- 7) Do truths exist?
 - a) De facto:
 - i) The four truth procedures
 - (1) Love
 - (2) Art
 - (3) Science
 - (4) Politics
 - ii) Philosophy is conditioned by these truth procedures
 - b) De jure: a question for math / ontology
 - i) Not the production of truths
 - ii) But deciding if truths are "compatible with ontology"; i.e., the being of truth
 - iii) Cohen and the matheme of the indiscernible (Meditation 33)
 - (1) Forecast of requirements
 - (2) Consequences:
 - (a) Reworking the situation
 - (b) Forcing the situation to accommodate the event / truth
 - (c) Fate of truths: anonymous excrescence becomes normalized as new rule

MEDITATION 32: ROUSSEAU

- 1) Rousseau wants to think the being of politics
 - a) That being is an “act by which a people is a people”
 - i) “politics is a procedure which originates in an event”
 - ii) “in the pact, we attain the eventness of the event” [cf. Mallarmé]
 - b) “politics is a *creation*, local and fragile, of collective humanity”
- 2) General will: “absolutely novel term” discerned by social pact
 - a) Torsion: general will is both presupposed and constituted
 - b) To shed light on this, consider body politic as supernumerary multiple: ultra-one of pact-event
 - c) That is, pact is self-belonging of body politic to the multiple that it is
 - d) And “general will”
 - i) Names the “durable truth of this self-belonging”
 - ii) It is an “operator of fidelity” directing a generic procedure
- 3) The *Social Contract* and equality
 - a) Establishes an intimate connection btw politics and equality
 - b) By recourse to eventual foundation and procedure of the indiscernible
- 4) General will
 - a) Cannot be represented: it is indivisible and infallible
 - b) Serves to evaluate proximity / conformity of statements to event-pact
 - i) Not “is this good policy”?
 - ii) But “is this political or not”?
- 5) Two remaining difficulties
 - a) Legislator as intervenor that names the event
 - b) Rousseau’s impasse: maintaining generic politics when unanimity fails
- 6) Badiou: the key is to join politics not to legitimacy, but to truth

MEDITATION 33: THE MATHEME OF THE INDISCERNIBLE: P J COHEN’S STRATEGY

- 1) Introduction
 - a) Although process of truth escapes ontology, we have concept of being of truth
 - b) Cohen thus shows “ontology is compatible w/ philosophy of truth”
 - c) Indiscernibility is relative to a situation and a language
 - d) Forecast of the meditation
 - i) The fundamental quasi-complete situation
 - ii) ♀ as symbol for inscription of supernumerary letter for the generic
 - iii) Procedure of constructing concept of generic / indiscernible as being of any truth
 - (1) Conditions as material and sense / information
 - (2) A certain grouping of conditions will be indiscernible
 - iv) We must see what happens when ♀ is added to the situation
 - (1) Formalization of the being of politics
 - (2) Reworking situation on basis of naming an unrepresented of the site on basis of event
 - v) Delicate operation
 - (1) Constructing w/in situation multiples functioning as names for every possible element of situation obtained by addition of the indiscernible ♀
 - (2) Manipulating these names allows thought of properties of generic extension $S(\text{♀})$

- (3) What is at stake is “trace” of indiscernible in form of incapacity to discern “an” extension based on a “distinct” indiscernible
- 2) Fundamental quasi-complete situation
 - a) 4 properties for a “quasi-complete” situation (that w/ which we can work toward generic)
 - i) Verifies single formula axioms of set theory (extensionality, union, parts, void, infinity, choice, foundation)
 - ii) Verifies finite number of instances of infinite series axioms (separation / replacement)
 - iii) Is transitive
 - iv) Is infinite but denumerable (cardinality is aleph-null)
 - b) Such situations can be demonstrated to exist
 - i) Absolute properties of quasi-complete situations
 - (1) To be an ordinal
 - (2) The first limit ordinal
 - (3) Set of finite parts of a multiple
 - ii) Non-absolute properties
 - (1) Power set
 - (2) Limit ordinals for sets larger than aleph-null
 - (3) Cardinality of those sets
 - c) Conclusion
 - i) Nature is absolute (ordinals)
 - ii) Infinite quantity is relative
 - 3) The conditions: material and sense
 - a) Conditions possibly belong to \mathcal{Q} and transmit some “information”
 - b) Three principles for information
 - i) Order: one condition dominates another if the second is included in the first
 - ii) Compatibility: two conditions dominated by the same third condition
 - iii) Choice: every condition is dominated by two conditions incompatible w/ each other
 - 4) Correct subset (or part) of the set of conditions
 - a) Rule 1: if a condition belongs to the correct subset, all conditions it dominates also belong
 - i) Empty set is dominated by every condition
 - ii) It is then the minimal condition, telling us nothing about the correct subset
 - b) Rule 2: given two conditions, there exists a condition that dominates both of them
 - 5) Indiscernible or generic subset
 - a) Discernibility of a set entails a language that can formulate a property that names it completely
 - b) If a correct part is discerned by a property
 - i) Every element of that part is dominated by a condition that is not named by that property
 - ii) Because every property has two incompatible dominations
 - c) Illustration of “domination”
 - i) via diagrams of relations of series of 1s and 0s
 - ii) showing definition of domination axiomatically w/o reference to language or properties
 - d) So every correct discernible set is totally disjoint from at least one domination, that which doesn’t possess the discerning property
 - e) And if a correct set intersects every domination it is because it is indiscernible
 - i) \mathcal{Q} must intersect every domination
 - ii) This is the concept, intelligible w/in fundamental situation, of an indiscernible
 - f) Illustrations involving the series of 1s and 0s

- g) Conclusion: "properties" of the generic set
 - i) It contains "a little bit of everything" of the situation
 - ii) It must be consistent
 - iii) It has only properties necessary to its pure existence as multiple (i.e., pure being)
 - (1) It is w/o a particular (discerning) property
 - (2) It is an "anonymous representative" of parts of sets of conditions

MEDITATION 34: THE EXISTENCE OF THE INDISCERNIBLE: THE POWER OF NAMES

- 1) In danger of inexistence
 - a) We have a concept of indiscernible; how do we make sure it exists = belongs to a situation?
 - b) An inhabitant of the situation can only *believe* in existence of an indiscernible
- 2) Ontological *coup de théâtre*: the indiscernible exists
 - a) The ontologist must break this impasse by acting from outside the situation
 - b) For general ontology, there is no doubt a generic subset exists, but is not an element
 - i) IOW, the state counts as one a part indiscernible in that situation
 - ii) But what we need though is an indiscernible that exists *where* it is indiscernible
 - c) Adding φ to fundamental situation $S =$ "generic extension" of S . Written as $S(\varphi)$
 - i) Modifying language to be able to name in S the hypothetical elements of $S(\varphi)$
 - ii) This is anticipating properties of the extension
 - iii) Logic will be same, but ontological status will be different for S and for ontologist
- 3) The nomination of the indiscernible
 - a) Paradox : naming what is impossible to discern ; we want a language for the unnameable
 - b) Names: combining a multiple of S with a condition, that is, combining a name w/ a condition
 - i) But this is circular; an example of the lack of a metalanguage
 - ii) It can be undone in ontology by stratification, as in series of ordinals
 - c) Procedure for defining elementary names
 - d) Is the concept of "name" absolute? That is, can an inhabitant of S have this concept? Yes.
 - e) So names in S will be used to create generic extension to which indiscernible will belong
- 4) φ -referent of a name and extension by the indiscernible
 - a) Assumption of existence of generic subset
 - i) Can be demonstrated by ontologist (for denumerables)
 - ii) Article of faith for inhabitant of S
 - b) Giving names referential value indicating multiples belonging to generic extension
 - c) Again we find a circular definition that is solved by hierarchization using nominal rank
 - d) So generic extension by indiscernible φ obtained by taking φ -referents of all names in S
 - e) Forecast of three remaining problems
 - i) Is this really an extension? Do the elements of S belong to $S(\varphi)$?
 - ii) Does the indiscernible φ also belong to the extension?
 - iii) Does the indiscernible φ remain so, that is, is it "intrinsically" indiscernible in $S(\varphi)$?
- 5) The fundamental situation is a part of any generic extension, and the indiscernible φ is an element of any generic extension
 - a) Canonical names of elements of S

- i) "nominalist singularity" of generic extension: elements are solely accessible via their names
 - ii) For every element in S the value in the extension of its name is just that element
 - (1) We want this to hold generally, that is, in any generic extension
 - (2) To do this we need an invariable, that is, the condition \emptyset
 - iii) We now have the "canonical name" but we face the same circularity (and same solution)
 - iv) Thus, insofar as it is the φ -referent of a name in any extension, every element of S belongs to the extension. That is, $S \subset S(\varphi)$, for any extension by an indiscernible.
- b) Canonical name of an indiscernible part
- i) Does the indiscernible belong to the extension?
 - (1) It seems odd to ask if φ belongs to $S(\varphi)$, since it is built by adding φ
 - (2) But we need to know if it exists for an inhabitant of $S(\varphi)$, not just for ontologist
 - ii) So we need to show that φ has a name in S
 - iii) We can come up with such a fixed name that will invariably designate φ in $S(\varphi)$
 - iv) Consequences
 - (1) Name for indiscernible which does not discern it; IOW, the name of indiscernibility
 - (2) In $S(\varphi)$, S is a part and φ is an element; IOW we have "added an indiscernible to the situation in which it is indiscernible"
- 6) Exploration of the generic extension
- a) $S(\varphi)$ is very close to S; it has the same natural multiples / ordinals
 - b) So the indiscernible is "ontological schema of artificial operator"
 - i) [recall the distinction btw natural and historical]
- 7) Intrinsic or in-situation indiscernibility
- a) Intrinsic indiscernibility = multiple presented in a situation but radically subtracted from language of that situation
 - b) This is what we have for φ for an inhabitant of $S(\varphi)$: no formula can separate φ from $S(\varphi)$
 - c) Demonstration via assuming discernibility
 - d) Results
 - i) φ exists in $S(\varphi)$ with no name
 - ii) Ontology calls this "generic," which is name young Marx gave for "an entirely subtractive humanity whose bearer was the proletariat"
 - iii) In S, φ is the "purely formal mark of the event whose being is w/o being"
 - iv) In $S(\varphi)$, φ is "blind recognition, by ontology, of a possible being of truth"