

Event and Decision

Event and Decision:
Ontology and Politics in Badiou,
Deleuze, and Whitehead

Edited by

Roland Faber, Henry Krips and Daniel Pettus

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P U B L I S H I N G

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abbreviations	vii
---------------------	-----

Foreword

<i>Daniel Pettus</i>	xi
----------------------------	----

A Prologue on the Improper Placing of Thought

<i>Roland Faber</i>	1
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Part One: In the Event...

1. The Thought of Stupefaction; or, Event and Decision as Non-ontological and Pre-political Factors in the Work of Gilles Deleuze and Alain Badiou

<i>Justin Clemens and Oliver Feltham</i>	16
--	----

2. Absolute Beginnings...Almost: Badiou and Deleuze on the Event

<i>Hollis Phelps</i>	48
----------------------------	----

3. The Problem of Essence in Deleuze and Whitehead

<i>Jeremy Dunham</i>	65
----------------------------	----

4. The Triune Event: Event Ontology, Reason, and Love

<i>James Bradley</i>	97
----------------------------	----

5. Between the Individual, the Relative and the Void: Thinking the Event in Whitehead, Deleuze and Badiou

<i>Keith Robinson</i>	115
-----------------------------	-----

Part Two: The Event, Revolving...

6. Fear of Politics: Deleuze, Whitehead, and the Truth of Badiou

<i>Jeffrey Bell</i>	138
---------------------------	-----

7. Badiou, Whitehead, and the Politics of Metaphysics <i>Michael Halewood</i>	170
8. “Amid a Democracy of Fellow Creatures”— Onto/Politics and the Problem of Slavery in Whitehead and Deleuze (with an Intervention of Badiou) <i>Roland Faber</i>	192
9. Practical Philosophy in Badiou and Whitehead <i>Helmut Maaßen</i>	238
10. Sexuating the Political: From Badiou to Lacan <i>Henry Krips</i>	256
Part Three: Eventually...	
11. Novel Repetitions: The Fold-Event in Whitehead and Deleuze <i>Catherine Keller</i>	276
12. Encountering “The Event” as Event: Transforming Christian Theological Reflection about Religious Others <i>David R. Brockman</i>	295
13. On the Politics of Secular Forgiveness <i>Adrian Parr</i>	318
14. Event Theory and Creative Agency <i>Graham Livesey</i>	332
An Impolitic Epilogue <i>Henry Krips</i>	343

ABBREVIATIONS

Badiou

- AE “After the Event: Rationality and the Politics of Intervention: An Interview with Alain Badiou,” *Prelom* 8 (2007): 180-94
- AM *Abrege de metapolitique* (Paris: Seuil, 1998).
- BE *Being and Event*. translated by Oliver Feltham (London/ New York: Continuum, 2005).
- BLT “*Bodies, Languages Truths*” (was originally delivered at the Victoria College of Arts, University of Melbourne, on September 9th 2006): www.lacan.com/badbodies.htm (no pagination)
- BR *Briefings on Existence: A Short Treatise on Transitory Ontology*. translated and edited by Norman Madarasz (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006).
- C *Conditions* (Paris: Seuil, 1992).
- DCB *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being*. translated by Louise Burchill (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
- DI *De l’Idéologie*. (Paris: Maspéro, 1976).
- DO *D’un desastre obscur (Droit, Etat, Politique)*. (Paris: L’Aube, 1991)
- EE *L’Etre et l’évenement* (Paris: Seuil, 1988)
- ET *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*. translated by Peter Hallward (London/New York: Verso, 2001).
- GD “Gilles Deleuze, The Fold Leibniz and the Baroque,” in Constantin V. Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski, eds., *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy* (New York/London: Routledge, 1994).
- HI *Handbook of Inaesthetics*. translated by Alberto Toscano (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).
- IT *Infinite Thought*. translated by Justin Clemens and Oliver Feltham (London/ New York: Continuum, 2003).
- LG “L’intellectuel de gauche va disparaître, tant mieux,” in *Le Monde*, July 14, 2007.
- LM *Logiques des mondes* (Paris: Seuil, 2006).
- LDP *La Distance politique* (15.12.96).

- LW *Logics of Worlds. Being and Event 2.* translated by Alberto Toscano (London: Continuum, 2009).
- MAP “Mathematics and Philosophy,” in Simon Duffy, ed., *Virtual Mathematics: The Logic of Difference* (Bolton, UK: Clinamen, 2006)
- MP *Metapolitics.* translated by Jason Barker (London: Verso, 2005).
- O “On A Finally Objectless Subject,” in Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy, eds., *Who Comes After the Subject?* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
- OL “Of life as a Name of Being, or, Deleuze’s Vitalist Ontology,” *Pli* (Warwick Journal of Philosophy) 10 (2000): 191-99.
- OMM “One, Multiple, Multiplicité(s),” in TW.
- PCR “Philosophy as Creative Repetition,” *The Symptom* 8 (2007): <http://www.lacan.com/badrepeat.html>
- PM *Petit manuel d’inesthetique* (Paris Seuil, 1998).
- PP “Politics and Philosophy: Interview with Peter Hallward,” *Angelaki* 3/3 (1998): 113-33.
- RE “Réponses écrites d’ Alain Badiou: Interview with student group at the University of Paris VIII (Vincennes/Saint-Denis),” *Philosophie, philosophie* 4 (1992): 66-71.
- RLP Review of Gilles Deleuze, *Le Pli*, in *Annuaire philosophique 1988-1989* (Paris: Seuil, 1990), 161-84.
- SP *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism.* translated by Ray Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).
- TA *Théorie axiomatique du sujet. Notes du cours 1996-1998.* unpublished typescript (1998), 121 pgs.
- TC *Théorie de la contradiction* (Paris: Maspéro, 1975).
- TED “The Event in Deleuze.” translated by Jon Roffe, *Parrhesia* 2 (2007) 37-44
- TW *Theoretical Writings.* translated by Ray Brassier and Alberto Toscano (London: Continuum, 2006).

Deleuze

- AO *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press, 1983) (With F. Guattari).
- B *Bergsonism.* translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991).
- C I *Cinema 1: Movement-Image.* translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press, 1986).

- CII *Cinema 2: The Time Image*. translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press, 1989).
- D *Dialogues*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987) (with C. Parnet).
- DI *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953-1974*. translated by Michael Taormina (Cambridge: Semiotext(e), 2004).
- DR *Difference and Repetition*. translated by Paul Patton (New York: Colombia University Press, 1994).
- EE *Essays Critical and Clinical*. translated by Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).
- EP *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*. translated by Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1990).
- F *Foucault*. translated by Sean Hand (Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press, 1988).
- IM "Immanence—A Life," in G. Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*. translated by Ann Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2005).
- LS *Logic of Sense*. translated by Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia UP, 1990).
- M "Mediators," in Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter, eds, *Incorporations* (New York: Zone Books, 1992).
- N *Negotiations 1972-1990*. translated by Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).
- NP *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. translated by Hugh Tomlinson (Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press, 1983).
- NT "Nomad Thought" in David B. Allison, ed., *New Nietzsche*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977).
- P *Pourparles, 1972-1990* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1990).
- PC "A Philosophical Concept," in Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor and Jean-Luc Nancy, eds., *Who Comes after the Subject?* (Routledge: New York, 1991).
- PS *Proust and Signs*. translated by Richard Howard (London: Continuum, 2000).
- TF *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. translated by Tom Conley (Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press, 1992).
- TP *A Thousand Plateaus*. translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: Univ. Minn. Press, 1987) (with F. Guattari).
- WP *What is Philosophy?* translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia UP, 1994) (with F. Guattari).

Whitehead

- AI *Adventures of Ideas* (New York: Free Press, 1967).
- CN *The Concept of Nature*. The Turner Lectures Delivered in Trinity College November 1919 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964).
- Imm. "Immortality," in *Essays in Science and Philosophy* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 77-96.
- MG "Mathematics and the Good," in *Essays in Science and Philosophy* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), 97-113.
- MT *Modes of Thought* (New York: Free Press, 1968).
- PNK *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge* (New York: Dover, 1982).
- PR *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology*, corr. ed. by D. R. Griffin and D. W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1978).
- S *Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect* (New York: Fordham UP, 1985).
- SAP *Science and Philosophy* (Philosophical Library Inc: (New York, 1948).
- SMW *Science and the Modern World: Lowell Lectuers 1925* (New York: Free Press, 1967).
- ESP *Essays in Science and Philosophy* (New York: Philosophical Library Inc., 1947).

FOREWORD

This book, *Event and Decision: Ontology and Politics in Badiou, Deleuze, and Whitehead*, brings together a diverse group of scholars who address the philosophies of Alain Badiou, Gilles Deleuze, and Alfred North Whitehead as they relate to a concept of the event, ontology and politics.

In order to locate this book as an event, to describe its beginnings and now final formation requires first, a look back to the beginnings of the Whitehead Research Project. Roland Faber, founder of the Whitehead Research Project (WRP) in 2007, and Henry Krips, both of the Claremont Graduate University, initiated a conference on the concept of the event. Because part of the mission of WRP is to explore and analyze the relevance of Whitehead's thought in dialogue with contemporary philosophies, it made sense for the first international conference to be on the connections/disconnections of Whitehead with Deleuze and by extension of both from Badiou.

The conference as an event in its own right became a moment where each participant, from their own diverse background and interests, and in the forcefield of these three thinkers, addressed the question of the event. What arose was a rupture of evental theories coming from a multiplicity of different directions. Some authors were of the Badiouian persuasion, who in considering the Badiou and Deleuze split, naturally confronted Whitehead. Others, beginning with Whitehead/Deleuze encountered Badiou in what seems like an im-practical and impossible union. However, as the event itself unfolded, thought was pressed and stretched to consider the three together, influencing some authors to re-imagine the Badiou and Whitehead/Deleuze split as bridgeable. Yet, the conference and this book does not end in a simple joining of the three. If there is a word to describe this volume, it is tension. In-between these three thinkers of the event there is always a tension, an event in itself, that marks a difference and rupture that allows for novel approaches to philosophy, politics and life. *Event and Decision*, then can be described as the *in-between* of this tension.

"The cry of the event," so Deleuze writes, sounded three times in the history of philosophy: the Stoics, Leibniz, and Whitehead. It was a cry that exclaimed, "Everything is Event!" A radical stance, indeed! What about "things," "mind," "matter," "society," "culture," "art," "the cosmos," and our daily life? If all is event, what does it say? What is

important and what has value if there is nothing permanent, lasting, or stable? What is important and valuable besides the process through which reality is decided?

For Whitehead event is the realization of becoming, the actualization of the “groundless ontological ground” of creativity, the process of self-decision on possibilities yet undecided, the aesthetic and ethical impulse of existence; for Deleuze it is the expression of Life without possession, bodies without organs, the virtual or actual reality of singularity and novelty. For Badiou, on the other hand, the event breaks from the situation, in which we always count (reality) as one, multiplicity as united. Making a difference begins with a revolution; it erupts as decision. Consequently, for all three thinkers, the event necessitates a radical politics that critiques social bodies, cultures, and art.

The first section of the book includes essays from Justin Clemens, Oliver Feltham, Hollis Phelps, Jeremy Dunham, James Bradley and Keith Robinson. Clemens and Feltham demonstrate that “‘the event’ is not *simply* a *concept* for Deleuze and Badiou, but instead a name for that itch of unreason that stupefies thought, that forces thought to a standstill, demanding new forms of thinking which themselves cannot be resolved except at the cost of inconsistency (2).” Clemens and Feltham used the work of Deleuze and Badiou to highlight the nature of philosophy. They creatively play on the tension of proper names and proper philosophy to work out notions of what is philosophy while addressing the nature of the event.

Phelps in his essay “Absolute Beginnings...Almost: Badiou and Deleuze on the Event” meticulously elucidates the event in Badiou, offering also contrasts between Badiou and Deleuze. According to Phelps, “Badiou’s primary objection to Deleuze is not really the One as such, but the way in which the equation of the event with becoming in the latter’s thought tends to deny the possibility of a radical break with or reorientation of being. In short, Badiou sees Deleuze’s thought as limiting with respect to real change (39).” However, for Phelps the contrast between the thought of Badiou and Deleuze may not be as great as Badiou imagines. “The doctrines of intervention and evental recurrence and the subjective figure of the resurrection, it seems, imply a certain creative repetition of past events. If this is the case, then we can begin to see how the disjunction between Badiou and Deleuze might be lessened, since creative repetition is the way in which Badiou seems to define the Deleuzian event (48).” Considering creative repetition pushes us also to think about Whitehead’s place or non-place within this triad of evental theory.

Robinson brings the three together on this point in “Between the Individual, the Relative and the Void: Thinking the ‘Event’ in Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead.” He writes, “Thus for Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead there is then finally a difference in terms of how one describes the event of the new as process. For Badiou process is a subjective control of time, essentially atemporal from the perspective of Deleuze and Whitehead, an absolute beginning and incomparable singularity. For both Deleuze and Whitehead the process of the event of the new is the relentless advance, “to the crack of doom” as Whitehead says, of the creative and eternal repetition of time: the imperceptible limit or vanishing point between the past which is no longer and the future which is not yet, the presents that pass and the pasts that are preserved in a splitting endlessly repeated (113).” One could argue that Badiou, by defining the Deleuzian event as creative repetition, defines it in Whiteheadian terms. For all three the concern for the new is a political concern: without newness there will not be a break from the past (Badiou) or a place for creativity (Whitehead and Deleuze).

Dunham also highlights the importance of creativity and novelty in the work of Deleuze and Whitehead. While Robinson focuses on notions of repetition to elucidate the necessity of novelty in a politics of the event, Dunham approaches such a concept through the problem of essence in these two thinkers. “The Problem of Essence in Deleuze and Whitehead” focuses on the relation between Deleuze and Whitehead’s theory of essences and their theory of the event. “What Deleuze and Whitehead offer us is a critical theory of essences capable of avoiding falling into the traps of this fallacy [tracing the transcendental from the empirical] and at the same time escaping the problems of necessity, a theory in which essences become events (51).” In the end, Dunham concludes that the importance of both Deleuze and Whitehead is their contribution of a theory of novelty. “Both theorists rather provide a conception of the importance of “not-being” and of essences which are powerful, ontologically dynamic but productive of novelty rather than necessity (77).”

Bradley’s essay, “The Triune Event: Event Ontology, Reason, and Love” approaches the subject from a different angle. Attempting to move beyond the evental theories of Badiou, Deleuze, and Whitehead, he places Charles Sanders Peirce’s theory of the triune event into the equation. According to Bradley, Peirce’s theory of the triune event aligns itself with the evental theories of Badiou, Deleuze, and Whitehead on at least one common point of convergence: they all represent a speculative metaphysics.

The second section of the book considers the essays of Jeffrey Bell, Michael Halewood, Roland Faber, Helmut Maassen and Henry Krips. Halewood in his essay, “Badiou, Whitehead and the Politics of Metaphysics” considers the thought of Badiou and Whitehead as a way to think the political alongside of metaphysics. According to Halewood, “the importance of the ‘truth’ of their [Badiou and Whitehead’s] accounts is the extent to which it can shake us from the complacency or difficulty that the modern culture of thought has bequeathed us (175).” For Halewood, “In the accounts of Badiou and Whitehead, metaphysics, as a description of the general conditions of what comes to be, is a description of the field of forces and events which populate and constitute the present, and tend toward the future. This is the politics of metaphysics (176).”

Faber addresses politics from a slightly different angle. He develops an “onto/politics” in his essay “‘Amid a Democracy of Fellow Creatures’ – Onto-Politics and the Problem of Slavery in Whitehead and Deleuze (With an Intervention of Badiou)” that “can be considered as a place of indeterminacy *in between* the questions “What *is* (as ontological activity)?” and “How can we *act* (regarding human *polis*) (178)?” Faber “demonstrate[s] in which way[s] Whitehead and Deleuze in particular have engaged this “inter/face” of ontology and politics without falling into simple solutions of derivation or causation of one by the other but also without any simple negation of their inter/connection.” Faber’s explication of the Whiteheadian *khora* becomes the means by which onto/politics transforms and eradicates slavery. “It is the place of the transformation of multiplicity into minority and the becoming-minoritarian into becoming-democratic. The *khora* is the “place” of radical equality by *inclusion* releasing a *democracy of all fellow creatures*. It is the “placeless place” of *the transformation of onto/politics into eco/politics of the care for freedom and equality*. In this sense, its potency is that of becoming a root metaphor for the eradication of slavery.”

Jeffrey Bell and Helmut Maassen help the reader understand the public aspect of the event. Bell challenges Badiou’s critiques of Deleuze and argues that “Badiou’s critique of Deleuze relies both upon a misunderstanding of Deleuze’s theory of the virtual and, more significantly, upon a theory of multiplicities (or theory of the pure multiple for Badiou) that sets forth an understanding of ‘events’ that Deleuze rejects, and rejects precisely because it forecloses upon the possibility of a thought of singularities that moves beyond the actualities of ‘what is (124).” Bell thinks with Deleuze on ways in which to creatively overcome the injustices of capitalism: “...one thing is certain for Deleuze – the current economic and social system of capitalist control presupposes

the very conditions it seeks to avoid (i.e., schizophrenia), and it is precisely the reluctant, stuttering embrace of these conditions that will allow for the overcoming of the system (152)."

Maassen's essay "Practical Philosophy in Badiou and Whitehead" considers the ethical consequences of both respective philosophies. On some levels, he attempts a Whiteheadian reading of Badiou, especially Badiou's work on the French Revolution. Maassen produces a creative tension that can be seen when he writes the following: "Structure and a 'positive' universal outline of a community may be developed in a description of past events, as Badiou does himself, when referring to the French Revolution, the October Revolution, etc. In a truly Whiteheadian sense, this structure and universal outline should be described as the Adventures of Events (236)." Maassen by reading Badiou, via Whitehead, allows for a novel interpretation of Badiou that has not yet arrived within these fields of study. Usually, the readings are performed in the opposite direction, Whitehead read through the lens and Deleuze and Badiou's critique of him.

Krips, on the other hand, in his essay "The Politics of Badiou in Lacanian Register: From Absolute Singularity to Objet-a" approaches Badiou's theory of the event from a Lacanian perspective. Such a reading has severe consequences for Badiou's theory of the event. "My central contention will be that "Events" in Badiou's sense of the term involve close encounters with Lacanian "*objets a* (241)." Krips argues that such encounters create anxiety, which the subject then attempts to defend himself or herself from in a process Lacan calls "sexuation." After Krips elucidates his Lacanian claims, he proposes a double critique of Žižek's charges against Badiou's theory of the event. "My final diagnosis of Žižek's relation to Badiou: rather than merely misreading Badiou's politics, Žižek perverts it to the point that it loses touch with the domain of the political (255)."

Catherine Keller, David R. Brockman, Adrian Parr and Graham Livesey round out this volume with their own particular contributions to the themes of this book. Keller in her essay "Contracted Contemplation: Unfolding the Event in Whitehead and Deleuze" creatively addresses Deleuze's notion of the fold and its theological and political effectuations. For Keller, "the fold will appear as at once an enfolding and unfolding of a cosmos, by any element of a cosmos. I will begin to draw out not only the theological but the political energies implicit in that cosmology, that chaosmos. The relational multiplication of the folds and of the event, indeed of the event-fold, may implicate the present conversation in

transdisciplinary fidelities exceeding the modernist anti-theism that makes the conversation possible (263)."

Brockman provides a rare examination of the event. In his essay "Encountering 'the Event' as Event: Transforming Christian Theological Reflection about Religious Others." Brockman provocatively thinks about two different events, one being his event as a Christian encountering religious others, particularly Zen Buddhism and his encounter with the work of Badiou. For Brockman, the second event allows him to critique and understand the first event. Namely, Brockman elucidates the ways in which his encounter with Badiou, Deleuze, and Whitehead's notions of the event have aided him in making theological sense out of the first event.

Parr in her essay on the "Politics of Secular Forgiveness" explores the collective trauma of the event of 9/11. According to Parr, "the position I am taking is that any conceptual apparatus is doomed if it remains insulated within the hothouse of theory, it needs to as Deleuze once advised treat concepts as tools, and use these to engage with concrete historical circumstances. Hence, what I am offering the reader is just that: to use a combination of conceptual tools offered by Deleuze and Badiou in an effort to articulate a political and ethical distinction between two different kinds of remembrance (302)." In the end, Parr enables the reader to think anew about the way in which the process of forgiveness portrays a fidelity to the event itself.

Livesey, in his essay "Event Theory and Creative Agency," looks into the implications of Deleuze's theory of the event on "contemporary design agency or practice (316)." He creatively imagines the ways in which these theories influence architects and urbanists. "This is of particular interest to architects and urbanists who tend to understand a more oppositional relationship between structure and space, or material and function. This activates the concept that all structures continuously change, and that space, time, material, and force create an effective and affective condition. The unified theory of event attempts to overcome dualism, and encompasses space, time, material, properties of all events, along with the interrelation between events and those who experience them (325)." What Livesey provides the reader of this book, is a creative way to see these three thinker's theories of the event at work in the real world.

Humanity is surrounded, whether we admit it or not, by a multiplicitous event cycle. Each person and thing brings their own personal event into their experience of an event outside of themselves. The convergence of this multiplicity creates our complex world - a complexity not defined as *aporia* or impossibility, but rather infinity - that is always already still creating. *Event and Decision* offers the reader *live* evental theory, which

mirrors the event of three philosophers—a mirror that, it is hoped, will show you something foreign, something different from what you know as yourself. The glimpse of this “something different” makes reading this book easy. The only impossibility is to lose your way.

A PROLOGUE ON THE IMPROPER PLACING OF THOUGHT

ROLAND FABER

Where does (a) philosophy begin? Where does a book on a philosopher begin? Where does a book on *three* philosophers begin? As a book on philosophy presupposes a topography of “somewhere,” we must comply—whether we decide differently or hinder such an event (in not writing such a book or any book at all)—with Archytas of Tarentum’s axiom that *to be (at all) is to be in (some) place* (cf. PR 40).¹ This book, as it collects thoughts on philosophy, collects not only the subjects of its inquiry—Alain Badiou, Gilles Deleuze and Alfred N. Whitehead—and not only a group of philosophers thinking with these philosophers (individually or collectively)—as this book began with a “somewhere” that was a conference at Claremont, California (Whitehead Research Project: *Event and Decision: Ontology and Politics in Badiou, Deleuze, and Whitehead*, Claremont Graduate University, 2007). But in the very medium of their presentation to you, the reader, it places all of them (and us) “somewhere.” Does this very medium of presence in this book at the place of reading (or at least potential reading) not presuppose already an ontology of place, placing, emplacement? And is such a presupposition warranted by the very philosophy of these three philosophers or, at least, their placement in this same “somewhere”—be it the place of the conference, the book, or the very presumed thought-space in which they (against their will) are gathered for our pleasure or pain?

Is the very *event* of their togetherness not improper to either of their philosophies? And to us, the collectors and readers, who might care about not their togetherness, but their separation, or their hierarchy (established or to be established), or their mutual destruction (because of the relevance of other philosophies we care more about), or even because we do not care at all (because we think that philosophy is irrelevant or at least in the impersonation of these three, or their respective mutual irrelevance)? Maybe, we think, it is not that we *must* place all philosophy, but that we place *these* three together that is improper? Maybe this book is not only a

presupposition of “place” as improper but *makes* “placing” improper by the togetherness of precisely *these* three thinkers?

If it is an improper place, then, in which, and only in which, we can encounter their togetherness—maybe its “present” is like an advertisement that invites us to some immoral (by given standards) encounters with goods or people or ideas or objects of desires and aversion? But what, then, avoids in this seduction by, or aversion of, such a “place” makes us, the readers, a mere forced moment of the clash of the three—out of voyeurism, masochism, or sadism? And why should we care *in* this place (and as long as we are participating in it, we are situated in it by reading this book) to find ourselves in an *encounter*, an improper encounter by any given external measures or internal preferences? Maybe the seduction is, or could be, the *improper*, that which in their togetherness, and ours with them, is the *unthought* that we might (wish to) seek in *all* thought? Maybe it is, with Walter Benjamin, the *shock* of their constellation that, as the political texture of thought, liberates that which we might (want to) seek in all philosophy—the “non-philosophical” (cf. WP 218)? At least, once more, in the event of the happening of this improper place—in our patient or impatient plunge into its givenness—we have accepted a beginning: the beginning, once more, of philosophy.

Maybe it is only as such a placing that it is a book not *on* philosophy, or on a philosopher, or on the “interrelation” of three philosophers and their respective philosophies, but a book that invites us to *think* on our own. If thinking is always an act that constitutes thought, however, then it is a “thinking *with*” in which this book become a place *of* philosophy.

While this placing is an event that cannot be justified by a presupposed logic of necessity—being itself a decision by us to emplacement, to a topology of contours of never empty places of thought—it has, nevertheless, its beginnings. Every place, and in this place the togetherness of Badiou, Deleuze, and Whitehead, has its becoming. No place is just given, even if it is an event presupposing no logic of placement. In this place in which the three philosophies *come* together, they *become* because of this placement and they *have* become already—not from an ideal ontology of placement, but from the becoming of their very thought that allows (and cannot hinder) them to be placed with one another.

The “logic” of this placement is multiply engendered, but never by a mere possibility or the power of any controller of such a place to do whatever they want; rather by the actuality of their thought as they place themselves in a philosophical space that is virtually, and as a virtue, inescapable, as even mutual ignorance of the other’s philosophy is part of the philosophical landscape. But this is still an abstract space of

association: it is inescapable because of the problems, concepts, methods, professional associations, and even the directions these thinkers share. It is the inescapable acquaintance with one another that necessitates such a placement, even if it is avoided or refused or differently imagined by the thinkers of their thought. In many ways, our three philosophers are related by such complicated inescapability, although they might not be obvious and, hence, taste of deliberate or arbitrary constructivism of improper places.

Notwithstanding these accusations, which will be asked especially of the “threeness” of togetherness or better *this* “threeness” by making it an improper placement, it is the very becoming of their thought that necessitates a *real*, not an ideal, unavoidability. In an ideal world or manyness of worlds, all three philosophers exist in their own thought-universe, only connected by the political means of the murder of the tyrant or the ignorance of the irrelevant or the exclusion of other-thinking beings. And many of us, at any given time, might be tempted to follow these lines of displacement, to be sure. Resisting multiple reasons of isolation, diversion, and departure, and only then, we might be ready to set aside resentments and enter a placement that is not based on such presuppositions of power. Instead, it would vibrate within an eros of improper embrace of the ugly, the strange, the unexpected, the dirty, and the poisonous. In other words, *such* a placement would lift the measures of security we built around what we think is proper and important and that which otherwise is only derivative minor, midget, inferior, or, at best a rival that we have to get rid of in order to stay in the light of our own truths.

What then—in *such* an event of placement—is the logic of the togetherness of Badiou, Deleuze, and Whitehead? In short, it is *becoming*—in the multiple of its inappropriate meanings: the (repeated) beginnings of any philosophy *in* the realm of philosophy, for one; the enfoldings of thought in its own topological localities that (to the shock of the creative mind) are always already shared, for two; and the unavoidable, but always hidden (or hided), inconsistencies of its attempted autarchy, for three.

The most obvious of these becomings of philosophy—spacing the three in question—is that of *heritage* or *inheritance* or *contiguity*. Nothing is continuous between philosophies, except the unavoidability of becoming a member of a thought-place in which inheritance is not the relationship of the older to the younger (a discipleship) or of the younger to the older (an act of grace or forced immortality), but instead is a relationship of disgust by the “One” to not be the only thinker in this realm. One might see the becoming of a philosophy in the realm of philosophy as a continuous

striving to become the *only* thinker, appropriating the shared space as one's *own*. Others are only invited as inferior figures, material to which the original thinker is the origin as form is to matter, or as a target for annihilation, negated as if they never existed, or as gracefully kept alive with one's own thought-blood in order to avoid the fall into oblivion (illusion)—Heidegger's *lethe*, the truth of which (*aletheia*) must be held hovering over its own nothingness. In the mourning not to begin within oneself, in *this* becoming, a philosopher may overcome this disgust and may treat inheritance *as* placement—not as temporal survival or annihilation or grace of power, but as a shared place of thinking. In *this* placing, again, a philosopher might release, instead of admit, other thinking as placement of co-origination of thought before the autarchy of self-consistency.

Our three thinkers are not examples, but indicators of such a complex place of becoming. Forced to restate this hidden complexity of “place” as “relations,” we would say that two such relations between the three are self-inflicted and, hence, in their own logic, unavoidable works of placement. Deleuze, in placing himself in the heritage of philosophies, not only begins philosophy with his own emplacement with Kant, Hume, Bergson, Nietzsche, Leibniz, Spinoza, and Foucault—in the form of books *on* philosophers as places *of* philosophy; more secretly, he aligns himself with Whitehead at points of rupture (unexpectedly and, therefore, even more forcefully) as the subtext of his own thought. From all of them, Deleuze takes his bastard child into a foster care of thinking: transcendental empiricism, virtuality, univocity of being, becoming, and power; polyphonic foldings, (planes of) immanence, and living structures. What he finds in this orgy of co-origination of his own images of thought, he also finds in Whitehead. Or conversely, he finds a place for his thought *with* Whitehead no less than with the others on whom he has written books. And as such a place and child, parent and sibling, Whitehead stays with Deleuze in his later books—from *The Logic of Sense* to *What is Philosophy?*—as a recurrent *witness of the event* of thought and Deleuze's emergent thinking *on the event*.

The other rather obvious, but drastically different “relation” (if such exists) within the shared place of philosophy is that of the struggle for *autarchy* or, maybe, even more pointedly, *anarchy*: Badiou's denunciation of Deleuze as his opposite and the placing of his own thought in resistance to modes of thought that are subject to a history of philosophy that does not pertain to the event of his own philosophy. Again, it is the thinking of the event in the event of his thought that generates Deleuze's placement in Badiou. This placement, however, is a profound *rivalry*, a becoming of

annihilation. Deleuze, “in the place” of Badiou’s own thought, is precisely the *ever-as-old archenemy in the shared place of the thinking of the event*. Having finished with Deleuze in his *Gilles Deleuze*, Deleuze’s recurrence in Badiou’s later thought—especially his review of Deleuze’s *Le Pli* in *Annuaire philosophique*—is barely more than a remnant of a dead body in the process of decomposition.

In a classical posture we could say that these emplacements—of Deleuze in Badiou and of Whitehead in Deleuze—are like “internal relations” insofar as they constitute the place of *interference* where Whitehead in Deleuze and Deleuze in Badiou, respectively, become in their shared place *with* the excluded other either in bastard fostering or philosophical murder. In a striking resonance, although of course for different reasons, the *reverse* emplacements of Deleuze in Whitehead and Badiou in Deleuze would behave like “external relations.” We cannot expect Whitehead to share the same temporal space with Deleuze; but this “silence” of Deleuze in Whitehead is by no means not speaking to their shared place of thought. Moreover, Whitehead sheds light on Deleuze’s thought not only from beyond, but *from within* and, hence, begins to reveal *anew* his own thought-place by co-inhabiting expected and unexpected coagulations with Deleuze. At the same time, each thinker loses his own space as means of autarchy. Deleuze’s silence on Badiou, in its own turn, is a speaking fact that envelops the silence on his murder by Badiou. It is almost as if their shared place was already always *there*, unaffected, and could not be annihilated. Only in Deleuze’s *external*, inaccessible autarchy from Badiou, in which he disappears, he remains present, and painfully so.

The placement of Whitehead with Badiou (or Badiou with Whitehead) is the most obscure and, in a sense, the most obviously missing. The reason for this displacement can only partly be understood in terms of the external and internal lines of becoming of philosophy between the three thinkers—the *inheritance* between Whitehead-Deleuze and the *rivalry* between Deleuze-Badiou that puts Whitehead apart from Badiou by *both* inheritance and rivalry. Within the necessity of becoming placed within a shared philosophical space, Whitehead and Badiou are not poised to be named together either by themselves or by us; we might even feel that such togetherness is poisoned from the outset. Nevertheless, in today’s landscape of multiple philosophies neither decide they on their own terms nor we on basis of our feelings. Rather, being such an unexpected “complacent,” it might emerge as the most sparkling of the three relations, the most unthought, the one in which the unthought can be spaced anew: phenomenology versus metaphysics; the status of objects

and subjects; the crux of qualities, relations, and teleology; the place of mathematics and logic in relation to ontology and category theory.

Maybe improper placing (in thinking the unthought) must seek the *weakening of the directionality* in such hierarchical orderings of inclusive and exclusive, internal and external placements? Maybe the crack of novelty arises only in partly negating the actual “complacements” (if they happen at all) of the three through inheritance and rivalry, silence and murder, disgust and (anxiety of) oblivion? What is the *reflux* of the linear placements of Whitehead within Deleuze and of Deleuze within Badiou in the *backward* placement of Deleuze in Whitehead and Badiou in Deleuze? It is precisely the emphasis on these *reverse* but unexplored placements that might release, in a strange togetherness, the event of a novelty yet unthought in inheritance and rivalry, silence and murder, disgust and (anxiety of) oblivion. But this counter-flow of the place of the unthought will only speak if the *complications* of the linear placements are recognized, in the first place—and even this, in its necessity and its relevance, is in question and in this sense an issue of the becoming of a dimly contemporary consciousness. While this book intends to open the place for such a consciousness, it also wants to hint at that which already transcends it: the reverse placements of Deleuze in Whitehead, of Badiou in Deleuze, and of Badiou in Whitehead.

Today, linear placements are becoming anew, justifying a revision of given judgments by association and sedimentation. For instance, that Whitehead is an old-school rationalist, that Deleuze is a poststructuralist, that Badiou is a Maoist, and so on. It is always beyond their own statements and that of their followers in a displacement of linearity of inheritance and rivalry that such sedimentations are questioned and the clouds on top of the sedimented peaks begin to shift again. The Whitehead-Deleuze placement has become a shared place only recently: in the work of some of the participants of the Claremont Conference—Catherine Keller’s edition of *Process and Difference*,² Keith Robinson’s edition of *Deleuze, Whitehead, Bergson*,³ and my own edition of *Secrets of Becoming: Negotiating Whitehead, Deleuze, and Butler*⁴ as well as being part of investigations of Jeffrey Bell’s *Philosophy at the Edge of Chaos*⁵ and James William’s *Encounters and Influences*⁶—and beyond, for instance, in John Rajchman’s *The Deleuze Connections*,⁷ Isabel Stenger’s *Penser avec Whitehead*,⁸ and Steven Shaviro’s *Without Criteria*.⁹ The Deleuze-Badiou axis is, of course, a virulent one in circles of Continental philosophy and was present to the conference through translators of Badiou’s work into English, Oliver Feltham and Justin Clements—for instance, of *Badiou: Infinite Thought* (cf. IT) (with its Deleuze-

connections)—and beyond, as explored in the interrogations of Peter Hallward's *Badiou: A Subject to Truth*.¹⁰

By considering these directed placements of inheritance and rivalry, it has become obvious that both are deeply rooted in questions all three philosophers were asking or harbored in places of their philosophy in which they develop a shared space: their emphasis on novelty, event, multiplicity, and becoming as sites of thought that must interest current discourses in ontology and politics alike. Immediate questions arising from this flux are, for instance, these: What are the implications for an understanding of Deleuze's work (as a whole) if we take into account how deeply he was influenced by, or better, how thoroughly he recreated Whitehead? When in *Difference and Repetition* Whitehead's *Process and Reality* is valued as "one of the greatest books in modern philosophy" (DR 284-5) on the grounds that it develops empirical-ideal categories and notions not subject to the idealist/empiricist divide, Whitehead's avoidance of the repetition (or differentiation) of the Same directly relates to Deleuze's concept of difference (itself). When Whitehead in Deleuze's Preface to the American edition of *Dialogues* appears as the inspiration for Deleuze's empiricist-pluralist outlook, this shared anti-rationalism that claims that "abstraction does not explain but must be explained" initiates "search ... not for an eternal or universal, but for the conditions under which something new is created (*creativity*)" (TRM 304) that directly instigates Deleuze's concept of multiplicity. When in his discussion of Leibniz and Spinoza Deleuze links his own "transcendental empiricism" with Whitehead (in much the same way as Whitehead) to Kant, he claims Whitehead's (and Bergson's) quest for the conditions of the possibility of novelty his very achievement (cf. TF 81). When in *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze finds Spinoza's "affects" in Whitehead "prehension" (WP 154), it is through this mediation that he reconstructs concepts from feelings and feelings as events.

Instead of a space of coalition of Deleuze and Whitehead against the presumed and often repeated death of metaphysics or philosophy proper—which for Deleuze made Whitehead the last victim of the turn to language with followers of Wittgenstein—the rivalry of Badiou with Deleuze supposes such a death to be an illusion. Badiou is occupying the "same" place as Deleuze by differentiating himself within the same situation as an event that is indiscernible, except in the regrouping of the "same" generalities in which he would become *the* event of the situation, creating itself from its place as true novelty. Badiou questions the poststructuralist preferences of language over metaphysics (the generic), of interpretation over against truth, of difference over the Same, as that which Deleuze,

against his own grain of thought, had actually intended and negated at once. Too much and too little, too late! *Gilles Deleuze*, the book, is a place of ravaging Deleuze in his own preferences—a liberation from Badiou's place; a theft from Deleuze's place; a repetition at least, a novelty at best. Deleuze is not what it seems: on difference he stays within the realm of the same; on multiplicity he stays in the realm of the One; on the event he remains old-school precisely by invoking the "list of thinkers of the event ... (the Stoics, Leibniz, Whitehead...)" containing "only names that we could just as well cite in reason of their opposition to every concept of the event: the declared adversaries of the void, of the clinamen, of change, of disjunctive separation, of radical rupture, of the Idea" (RLP 173). In all of his novelties—difference, multiplicity, novelty, and creativeness—Deleuze (with his witnesses) remains bound, for Badiou, to the One, the Same, the "relational production" of only secondary novelty (a repetition of the past, the same, the one). Deleuze presupposes this "evil" of philosophy that—as Žižek muses—presumes "that nothing at all is possible, that we cannot really change anything, since we are basically condemned to the world the way it is."¹¹ This One remains "theological" since theology, for Badiou, is the sanctification of the One. This philosophy cannot think "the multiple without one"—as Badiou declares in "Un, Multiple, Multiplicité(s)"—and must fall back into a "*mystique naturell*" (OMM 14). Badiou's counter-thought of multiplicity, disjunctively, only *from* itself, without any One, before it is counted as one, leads him in *Being and Event* to mathematics, set theory, and its philosophical elevation to the status of ontology.

Open questions, open spaces, rather—the *reverse* placements, no less: inclusion and accusation become elevation and rebuttal. If Whitehead is consciously seeking *novelty*, is his metaphysics, as some of his followers (the so called "process philosophers") might think, really a classical metaphysics of meta-physical entities, as real as, even more real than, physical entities? Or does it exhibit a Kantian move, naming critical "objects" of conditions of possibility or virtuality? Is, then, Whitehead's "critique of pure feeling" (PR 113) a transcendental conceptuality of the event, of the very happening of novelty beyond and out of relationality (prehension)? Is he pushing thought back from *all* abstractions, all grounds as abstractions, all generalities, transforming necessities of the "eternal" (eternal objects) into instigations of the finite, the becoming, the growing together, the concrescence, of the actual happenings (actual entities)? If Deleuze is consciously drawing his imagery from "the *figural*"¹² (poetry) instead from the formal (mathematics)—the grand escape of Badiou from Heidegger (cf. BE 10)—can this "restriction" not

also be seen as the *opening* of another, rather than a repetition of the same place of thinking—a *virtual* instead of a possible place? Might Deleuze's experimental, experiential, but non-phenomenological, *cosmological* outlook, his "vitalism" of the kind that is non-biological (which appalled Badiou), not really *become* an alternative, saving the *virtual event of the chaosmos* in counter-rebuttal of *all possible worlds* that Badiou is refusing Deleuze by imagining ontology as mathematical set theory and category theory as its logic of many worlds—*Logiques des mondes*?

And in between: the undeclared inheritance and rivalry, elevation and rebuttal, or maybe even more, the virulent (not to say virtual) co-spatiality of Whitehead and Badiou. Where to begin? In what place? How do we place Whitehead's formalization of mathematics in logical symbolisms (with Whitehead's connotation to language and interpretation) in *Principia Mathematica* in relation to Badiou's *other* formalization of set theory in the Zermelo-Fraenkel system (without interpretation and before any language) as employed by *Being and Event*? How, in light of Whitehead's later work, does mathematics and logic relate, given Badiou's reversal of mathematical logics as local topology of mathematics? How do we understand Whitehead's deep mistrust of logics and mathematics in *Process and Reality* as a means of formulating axioms for ontology (and philosophy per se) that are of any general worth? How do we value Badiou's and Whitehead's striving for "the general" (generalities or the generic) in a way that formulates a logic of "all possible worlds" in Badiou's *Logiques des mondes* contrary to their restriction in, and differentiation from, philosophy in Whitehead's *Adventures of Ideas*, where they are *only serving* as rules of consistency of ever *new* generalities in a virtually *novel* (cf. AI 235)? How does Whitehead's basically inconsistent (ever disjunctive), creative universe account for mathematics that, as Whitehead declares in his last article "Mathematics and the Good," emphasizes the patterns of actuality "in abstraction from the particulars which are patterned" (MG 680¹³)? On which grounds and in what place can we evaluate Whitehead's preference for mereo-topology in his understanding of scalar and vector theory in Part IV of *Process and Reality* over against set-theory, and on the grounds of whose "Platonism" of multiplicity: Badiou's mathematical ontology of pure multiplicity and the void or Whitehead's of regionalization of mathematics as pattern of virtual extensionality of the Platonic *khora*?¹⁴

In the complacency of the three, the lines of division between them and the subtraction of the others from the purity of the one that occupies the place of philosophy become less clear. Maybe Deleuze is, as Badiou says or as he exists in Badiou's memory, the philosopher of the One,

“reflexive, negative, analogical and transcendent” (DCB 116), thereby following Descartes’ clarity, Hegel’s negation, theological analogy, and idealistic (Platonic) generality? Maybe Deleuze is a mystic—especially in his last piece “Immanence: A Life” (IM 35-3)—since he cannot escape the imaginary of the mystics of medieval thought (Nicolas of Cusa, Meister Eckhart) whom he studied and held high *as* invoking “zones of immanence” in the all-occupation of the One—as, for instance, in *Two Regimes of Madness* (cf. TRM 261-5) and *What is Philosophy?* (cf. WP 44-9). Maybe the “death of God” that both Deleuze and Badiou subscribe to is not what *disconnects* them from one another through the accusation that Deleuze is not firm in his destruction of the One while Badiou is the messiah of nihilism of the void of disjunctive, inconsistent multiplicity? Maybe it *connects* them both with Whitehead in unexpected ways as Whitehead was making virtually the same claim as Badiou, but precisely against Descartes’ clarity: that not only the One is what has to be attacked within the whole philosophical tradition, but that it was *identified* with the divine, generating a theology of the One?¹⁵ Maybe it is a question of *Stimmung*—in the sense of Heidegger—that in the face of nothingness we react differently in either identifying or dismissing the divine *with* the one when we identify or dismiss the one *as* ultimate—leaving us with (Epicurus’) void, (Plato’s) *khora*, or (Spinoza’s) all-chaos? It all might be a question of the status of subjectivity—on what basis it is objective as event, as actual entity, as decision, as innovation, as creation—always hovering over nothingness that defines it as a ruse of the void, *khora*, or chaos.

What to make of the adoption or accusation of “poststructuralism” if Deleuze’s philosophy is *cosmology*—as is Whitehead’s—and as is Badiou’s “logics of (all) worlds” (and why is it not still in the tradition of Hegel’s *Science of Logic*)? What to make of Whitehead’s striving for ultimate generalities in which only the event is ultimate, but omnipresent and housing all generic abstractions, over against Badiou’s “rationalism” in which the generic is indiscernible in any situation except for the event that cannot be caught in it, but is its own creation—in this situation being a God-like creation *ex nihilo* (Badiou’s “creationism”)? And what to make of Whitehead’s more time-like events (“epochally” distributing an irreversibility of time) over against Deleuze’s more space-like events as emplacing a “plane of consistency” through which they nomadically move, while Whitehead’s events (actual entities) are immovable because they are nothing but becoming and perishing? And how does this continuum of cosmological events relate to Badiou’s *rare* philosophical, *human*, events in love, science, art, and politics—as revolution, passion,

invention, and creation? How about the concept of truth *beyond* interpretation (as being) in Badiou over interpretation *without* truth (as being) in Deleuze and interpretation *tolerating* truth as a means of intensity (in becoming) in Whitehead? And, finally (for now, without any claim of completeness), how do we account—in the mutual encounter in the space of the three—*unequivocally* for their stance toward language as the place of philosophy: with Badiou being repelled by all-language and negating mathematics as language; with Whitehead, on the other hand, being a mathematician his whole professional life, thinking of mathematics (and its formalization) *as* language (although on a more general level as languages); and with Deleuze constructing philosophy as the event *of* conceptualization—by, at the same time, being in the “same” place of *exclusion* from the linguistic turn and not being identified with Derrida’s signification?

Another complication arises: all of these named placings are *political* (if not in nature so by relevance)—and in all three cases improperly so. What are we to think of Badiou’s Maoist inclinations, his refutation of liberal democracy, and his revolutionary outlook of society that philosophy is not but facilitates? What do we make of the fact that Deleuze never developed a political philosophy although the political by implication is what nomadism, becoming minor or minorities, becoming uncountable (especially in light of Badiou’s counting-as-one) is all about? What, by any measures, was Whitehead’s political theory, at least implicitly, if we see this self-identified “Victorian” Englishman make the *ontological* statement that the “pure conservative is fighting against the essence of the universe” (AI 274)? Was the vivacity of Deleuze’s and Whitehead’s embodiedness of “society” and “multiplicity”—the organic and the orgiastic—in cosmology hindering a distinct politics that Badiou’s fidelity to the revolutionary event was cutting loose? Or must the political become a cosmological event to avoid its pure creationism of anthropocentric superiority? Thinking of the ecological imperative: is it cosmological or political; is it ill-conceived (as an implication of liberalism) and rather necessitated by a commitment to multiplicities? Does Badiou avoid the tyranny of the event? Does Deleuze’s “nomadic war-machine” avoid anti-state terrorism? Does Whitehead’s “organism” avoid the misuse of fascist-infested “harmony” (that Nietzsche’s “life” was subjected to)? And do these dangers not enclose one another or circle back in an “ecological” reflux into the other ideologies anyway? How to differentiate—and why *should* we differentiate—ideology from philosophy, fanaticism from thought, powers of manipulatory illusions from ideas?

It is in this complex, improper place that at the Claremont Conference and in this book—with the invitation of thinkers and practitioners of thought who are their own places—that others *intervene*, stirring up the emplaced place (as if it was not yet unsettled and unsettling enough). Substreams of other philosophies appear, for instance, Hobbes, Nietzsche, Bergson, Peirce, Heidegger, Derrida, Lacan, and Žižek, contaminating any purity of the three (which was never pure to begin with); new themes burst forth: stupefaction, triadic logic, mysticism, foreign “uses” of the “event-theories” (if there is such a thing) within other fields: mourning, religion, architecture, undermining any suspicion of a closed place that the three would “represent”; unexpected conversions happen from all sides: revolution, love, society despite all rivalry and disjunction. That such improper placements are made will only harden the suspicion to any fraction of followers that it was all “true” that they thought about the others and that the presuppositions of “making place” for the superiority of the one or the other or of pairs of these three was really and actually warranted.

What makes this place, this emplacement, of the three thinkers even more “improper” can, maybe, most improperly be said by a philosophical witness who has nothing to do with any of these thinkers. A thinker, who is convinced of the integrity of the philosophical space despite all turns especially in poststructuralism, the linguistic turn, and the relativism of cultural studies. Maybe the place of the three is in the very situation of a place that Arthur C. Danto names the space of philosophy *proper* with its questions of the one and many, the real and the ideal, the concrete and the abstract, of truth and illusion? In his modulation of the place of philosophy, nothing is *divided*, but everything is in any philosophy *different* to such an extent that virtually the cosmos is newly created in any philosophy as a whole. In *Connections to the World*,¹⁶ Danto makes the outrageous claim that the difference *between* philosophies is irrelevant *within* the world, but also different from any difference *within* this world. On the one hand, it constitutes a difference that is *absolutely different* without any “relation” between any philosophies—because any philosophy *occupies the whole space of thought* to connect to the world *as a whole* (whatever that means besides that it cannot be part of itself or cannot be “represented” in itself). On the other hand, such absolute, unrelated, and exclusive differences *do not make any difference* to the (physical) world in which we live. These “differences of a different sort than those that divide pairs of things that happen to resemble one another a great deal such as identical twins” (CW 8-9) are “the philosophical way of dividing up the universe,” *very differently*—namely, “different in kind”—“from the way