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**Between the Individual, the Relative and the Void: Thinking the ‘Event’ in Badiou,
Deleuze and Whitehead**

**I.
Introduction**

A few readers have pointed out the remarkable convergence, overlaps and tensions between the thought of Badiou and Deleuze and between Deleuze and Whitehead. In the former case Badiou himself points out these overlaps and tensions and, in the latter, Deleuze points out the convergences and overlaps. Rarely, if at all, have all three together been studied. Yet, one central concept around which their thought coalesces is the ‘event’. This is perhaps not surprising since the event is an important concept in 20th century philosophy (in both analytic and continental traditions) as well as numerous other disciplines in the humanities and the sciences.

In very general terms we can say that for Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead ‘events’ are the principal constituents of their ontology, replacing any primary appeal to ‘substances’. ‘Substance’ has played a central role in western metaphysics as the fundamental reality qualified by predicates. Substance ontologies underpin the ‘common sense’ view of the world as made up of individual material objects that endure in space and time. If events are allowed in this view they are occurrences that happen to things or that things undergo or experience. In event ontologies by contrast events are fundamental and things or

substances can be variously viewed as ‘effects’, ‘products’ or temporary ‘structures’ of events, simply sets of properties or patterns recognizable in events. In the event ontology of Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead each will claim that their ‘event’ is the immanent movement of creativity itself, a self-realizing ‘moment’ of activity out of which the actual makes itself. In this sense events don’t ‘exist’ as such and are never ‘present’, although each will offer differing accounts of this as their thought develops. In Whitehead’s *Concept of Nature*, for example, the immanence of events is given by extension. Events are immanent in that they relationally extend over each other in a continuous becoming. Later Whitehead realized that extension was derivative from ‘process’ and that process comes in ‘drops’ or ‘occasions’ of experience. In Deleuze the activity of the event is described as dynamic and intensive. Events have no plenitude, are ‘incorporeal’ and are said to ‘insist’ or ‘subsist’. All events ‘communicate’ virtually and acquire determinate qualities actually. Deleuze marks this in language by appealing to the infinitive verb, rather than nouns, in describing events, e.g, ‘the tree greens’, rather than the ‘the tree is green’. There is a ‘double’ structure of the event in Deleuze which remains in place, although described differently, in much of his work. For Badiou any thought of the double would eliminate immanence and return the multiple to the yoke of the one. For the Badiou of *Being and Event* the event is ‘subtracted’ from being without marking a ‘double’, difference or heterogeneity as such. In its subtraction the immanence of the event for Badiou is inscribed by the “empty point in which nothing is presented”, a multiple that cannot enter into the count as one. The event in Badiou is an incomprehensible ‘rupture’ in continuity and a separation from being, an unfounded multiple out of which the creation of the new emerges.

Thus, one could begin to develop an account of the event in Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead based on the apparent similarities in the basic elements of their ontologies, especially around the idea of the event as an immanent groundless ‘edge’ of being and the creativity of the new. Indeed, Deleuze does just this in his own account of Whitehead’s metaphysics in his *Leibniz and the Baroque* just as Badiou, in his reading of this same book, also finds proximities with Deleuze in terms of the event as an immanent ‘border’ or creative excess that conditions the production of the new. However, in what follows I would like to focus on the basic contrasts between their conceptions of the event. These contrasts will help us to clarify the differences in their understanding of the event and the role it plays in their political ontologies. I will argue that what ultimately separates their approaches to the event and decision is, to adapt a phrase from Whitehead, how the balance between the individuality of existence, the relativity of existence and the void of existence (Whitehead’s phrase is “the balance between the individuality of existence and the relativity of existence” Whitehead 1947, 111) is achieved in their thought.

Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead develop their views of the event in relation to the broader problems that their works seeks to engage. For all three the problem of thinking understood as the problem of ‘bifurcation’ in Whitehead or ‘transcendence’ (in Deleuze and Badiou) is one of the motivating problems of their work and all three look to the empiricist and rationalist traditions as resources for their own ontological accounts of thought and the event. For all three the fundamental political problem is the problem of

why we are not thinking, of how thought remains tied to certain dogmatic images, and how thinking can be liberated from these images that imprison it, but their diagnoses of the images and ontological conditions of the event of thought and of how to achieve its political liberation are radically different, in each case opposed.

For all three thinking is essentially creation, the event of the new but their views on how the novelty of the event is produced are quite different. For a start it seems that both Whitehead and Deleuze, but not Badiou, share a commitment to an understanding of the event in which experience directly conditions, prehends or communicates with the reality of appearances themselves. This more fundamental form of the event of experience is a dynamic and constitutive relation between ‘prehensions’, a temporal and affective relation of occasions, differences, becomings or ‘images’ where one flow or series intersects with another, affects it and/or is affected by it. To reach this idea of the event Whitehead generalizes from a human subjective point of view yet reaches beyond any individual consciousness. However, in Whitehead’s metaphysical works the subject-object structure of this process is increasingly atomized, perhaps most especially in *Process and Reality*, at the expense of continuity or the ‘relativity of existence’: the poverty of ‘mere’ potential to be measured against the ontological richness of the atomic real. Deleuze, in contrast, appeals to the continuity of a non-human ‘pure perception’, an ‘originary nowhere’ or virtual plenitude and sees an atomized or individual ‘point of view’, however extended, as a limitation of the virtual field of differences, a canalization of the becomings that traverse the non-organic flow of life. Thus, for Deleuze continuity is retained but within the context of a radically impersonalized notion of ‘experience’.

For Badiou, however, both the concept of ‘experience’ and the notion of continuity are subtracted from ‘being qua being’ emptying out the individuality of existence as specific or singular from any relational structure so that the very condition of being is to be, paradoxically, in relation to nothing or the void. Being for Badiou has no ‘unicity’, as it does for the later Whitehead, nor is it expressed through virtual actualization or rhizomatic becomings as it is in Deleuze. Rather being, for Badiou, is immediately articulated mathematically as the pure presentation of the multiple, the ‘multiple of nothing’, the ‘void’ or, in the set-theoretic terms that Badiou prefers, the ‘empty set’ (\emptyset). ‘Existence’, in contrast, for Badiou, is not ‘actualized’ as it is in Deleuze and Whitehead but always structured in a ‘situation’ as the ontological presentation of what exists, the existence and conjuncture of *these* elements and not some other. This is what Badiou calls the “mechanism of the ‘count as one’”. For Badiou the ‘event’ is precisely the opening onto the void in a situated existence, the uncountable and unaccountable pure cut into being without ground, support or relation. Thus, if Whitehead’s event moves increasingly towards an atomicity of the real and Deleuze’s towards its continuity in the form of an impersonal relation, Badiou’s event is located in an absolute discontinuity without plentiude.

In order to focus some of the differences here more precisely between Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead on the event I will organize my remarks by looking at two sets of connected issues.

II.

Analogy or Univocity?

For Badiou any retention of 'experience' in thinking being – either as creativity or difference - will inevitably return being to univocity and the one. Thus, in order to think 'being qua being' independent of any unitary thing being must be thought as pure multiplicity where multiplicity is understood as withdrawn from any reference to the one and subtracted from any predication, concept, or discrete element that might enable its recognition as an object of representation, intuition or experience. It is of course, as we have seen, to set theory that Badiou turns in order to delineate the rigorous axiomatic argument structure that underpins the being of the multiple.

For Deleuze also multiplicity, as 'virtual', must also be thought outside of its determination through predicates, concepts or sensible form but not through any turn to axiomatic set theory since, in Deleuze, multiplicity cannot be reduced to or thought as a 'set'. Rather, for Deleuze, thinking the being of the multiple refers to an essential 'problematizing' activity or genesis of being out of which extensional sets are actualized. To think the being of the multiple without transcendence thus requires two multiplicities for Deleuze that together constitute the univocity or immanence of being (is this so different from Badiou's own doubling of the concept of 'structure' to accommodate the two levels of the multiplicity as both presentation and representation?). For Badiou doubling the multiple introduces equivocity and transcendence and ultimately continues to subordinate being to the thought of the One and so must be abandoned in favor of a thinking grounded strictly in the 'void' of being as the 'multiple of nothing'.

Despite Badiou's insistence in his *Clamor of Being* on portraying Deleuze's philosophy as based on "an ontological precomprehension of being as One" various commentators have attempted to show how Deleuze's univocal conception of being as difference cannot be captured by the Badiouian formula of the one that he ascribes to Deleuze. Equally, others have tried to show that Badiou's claim indeed has some merit. Without entering into the details of this debate it will suffice to say that for Deleuze unity is said *of* the multiple so that the one says nothing but the multiple. Univocity would then be a synthesis without remainder, the synthesis and affirmation of the immanent multiple. It is here that one finds Deleuze's little critique of Spinoza (Substance must be made to turn around the modes, this is also Whitehead's critique of Spinoza in PR) and his critique of Heidegger. It is also the basis for a Deleuzian critique of Badiou's thought as analogical. In fact Badiou has himself remarked that Deleuze constantly maintained that Badiou's own axiomatic procedures themselves fall back into transcendence and the equivocality of analogy. Indeed, for Deleuze Badiou's new role for philosophy in which it 'circulates' between ontology, the event and its conditions providing a conceptual space in which these conditions might be seized as 'compossible', floats around in an 'empty transcendence' (WIP:52), a return to an old conception of a 'higher philosopher' (WIP:52). For Deleuze that one of philosophy's main tasks for Badiou is merely to announce that mathematics is ontology is already an abdication of thinking, a giving over of philosophical thought to an axiomatizing function. That philosophy would then take its measure from this mathematics (as set theory) and derive a conceptual framework for its own conditions from events in heterogeneous domains is, for Deleuze, the very procedure

of analogy. For Badiou philosophy must grasp that which subtracts itself from being as the event but the very site of the event in Badiou as an absolute discontinuity or ontological supplement that ruptures being is sufficient for a Deleuzian ascription of transcendence and, yet, for Badiou the event remains tied to multiplicity even as it breaks with the axiom of foundation.

Unlike Badiou for Whitehead being is itself event but it seems that to think this event for Whitehead also requires analogical structures. Whitehead's later texts begin with human subjective experience and generalize to all of experience deriving the idea of metaphysical individual actualities, prehensions or actual occasions as the base of experience. Experience is process and process is its individualization. Individual actualities can only be understood in terms of the process and the process derives its character from the individuals involved. Each requires the other in a relation of reciprocal dependence. The development of Whitehead's thought can be understood as a series of shifts in the balance of the relative form of process and its individualization so that the 'idea' or generality of process is individual or unique, undermining the basis of their distinction. This is the problem of the one and the multiple in Whitehead -essentially *the* problem of thinking the event – and Whitehead resolves it by appealing to analogy. Between different processes, Whitehead says 'faint analogies do occur'. Indeed the "differences arising from diversities are not absolute. Analogies survive amid diversity" (Whitehead 1938/1966, 98). Whitehead relates the 'whole understanding of the world' as an analysis of processual identities and diversities with the discussion of analogy and the search for resemblances, the search for the 'Same' within difference. Our experience of

causal efficacy, for example, is in faint analogy or resemblance with perception in the rest of nature. In other words, Whitehead's scheme of categories is derived from the analogies that survive amid diversity. The scheme demands the possibility of an identical concept or category for two things which differ on condition that they are alike. The analogies coordinate the relations of similitude between each thing and the concept or, in Whitehead's terms, "the peculiarities of the individuals are reflected in the peculiarities of the common process which is their interconnection" (Whitehead 1938/1966, 98). The question here is whether the 'peculiarities of the common process' ultimately suppress the differences involved.

This would be the basis for an irreducible break with Deleuze since Deleuze's project is based upon an 'absolute' or 'generalizing' difference that must immediately relate the differing terms to one another. The 'form' of process for Deleuze is difference and differential form as such must be translated or 'expressed' in difference without remainder. The 'procedure of rationalism', to use Whitehead's phrase, must be made to 'speak difference' in Deleuze's sense. In thinking the event we must think difference in itself. As Deleuze says "difference must be articulation and connection in itself; it must relate different to different without any mediation whatsoever by the identical, the similar, the analogous or the opposed" (Deleuze 1994, 117).

The persistence of the assumption of an analogical structure for thinking the event in both Badiou and Whitehead separate them from Deleuze for whom the relation between

condition and conditioned cannot be modeled on such structures. The transcendental condition of the event for Deleuze is difference and dissimilarity – the interval.

For Badiou differences are, but they are not assimilable to the same; for Whitehead only that which is the same or alike differs; for Deleuze only differences are the same or alike. To adapt a phrase from Deleuze “the question is whether these ...formulae are simply .[different] manners of speaking which do not change things very much, or whether they apply to completely different systems; or indeed whether, while applying to the same systems (and ultimately to the world system), they do not signify...incompatible interpretations of unequal value, one of which is capable of changing everything” (Deleuze 1994, 117). The formulas apply to the same systems but that which is alike differs only through its instances of analogy and resemblance and so becomes an effect, for Deleuze, of a more primordial difference, a difference that “hides itself by giving rise to that which covers it” (Deleuze 1994, 117). At one level Deleuze’s work aims to make differential events ‘visible’ as a system of differences that are alike in that they are different, their ‘aliqueness’ is their difference. In this sense for Deleuze there has only ever been one ontological proposition: “being is univocal” (Deleuze 1994, 35). Deleuze invents a tradition of univocity and opposes this to the analogical tradition. The final move in this tradition for Deleuze is to effect a transformation in the concept of univocity by defining it in terms of difference. Insofar as the univocity of being is immediately related to difference without mediation by the concept, analogy, etc, univocity demands that difference be shown preceding generic and specific difference; it demands we show how a prior field of individuation within being conditions the determination of forms, parts and their variations as a system of individuals that are alike. Between Badiou’s

'Being and Event', Whitehead's *'Process and Reality'* and Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* there are striking contrasts in thinking the event such that the whole problem of Being is brought into play, the problem of the manner in which being is distributed among beings: "is it in the last instance by analogy or univocality?" (Deleuze 1994, 285).

III

Subjectivity and the (In)Human

In responding to the problem of bifurcation Whitehead posits the point of view as subject. One question here is the extent to which the analogical structure of thought and event in Whitehead is carried through in his generalization of the subject and so is fundamentally different from Deleuze's 'generalization' and univocity of difference or Badiou's generic conditions of the multiple. Whitehead's subject, although divested of cognition, is a generalization and expansion from human experience and thereby risks the accusative claim of anthropomorphism, of swallowing up non-human difference by finding analogies with human perception throughout nature. For example, Whitehead will tell us that all individuals are occasions of experience. On this basis our (human) perception that our present occasion is connected to an earlier occasion can be generalized to all of nature. (See Whitehead 1933/1961, 221).

By contrast, in responding to the problem of transcendence Deleuze's 'any view whatever' assumes or 'dramatizes' a 'contraction' of the subject, a 'reduction' or 'evanescence' to a nonhuman perspective (either cosmic or molecular) and risks ignoring the specificity of actualized perceptual difference – the difference of the human, of

women, of the animal, etc, all 'external' differences for Deleuze, effects of the more obscure processes of 'internal' difference, a difference that differs from itself.

For Badiou, equally the response to transcendence, the subject is posited as void, irreflexive and objectless, subject only of the event. In opening the situation to the void the event produces the subject as a local configuration of a generic truth procedure. As such the subject is co-present with the event through a process of subjectification (fidelity, forcing) that emerges with the event. Thus, subjects are in Badiou's words actors of the event but also targeted by the event, carried along with it and by it. In this being carried along Badiou claims that because we are immanent to the situation and not external observers we are incapable of distinguishing between what is counted and an intrinsic uncounted identity. It is only retroactively that the evental discovery uncovers the breakdown in the count, an intrinsic identity that did belong to the situation. Yet, Badiou's subject of the event risks anthropocentrism here since 'natural' events cannot be nominated, some elements do not count and necessarily cannot count. Only 'Man' thinks and any equation of man with the reality of his 'living being' is disastrous since, beyond subjectivation as 'immortal', beyond man as a thinking being, there is as Badiou says only biology, 'a biped without feathers, whose charms are not obvious'(E:12). Thus thought, and specifically mathematical thought, appears as the boundary line for Badiou's subject of an event (See John Mullarkey's *Post-Continental Philosophy*, (London: Continuum, 2006) pp.120-124, for the development of this argument)

Deleuze theorizes an evanescent subject that disappears behind the vanishing point of human experience; Whitehead constructs an expanded or extended subject that enlarges human experience beyond itself. Badiou posits the human subject as a finite state of a generic procedure that opens on to the universal. Deleuze seeks the non-human becomings in the human whereas Whitehead looks for humanlike becomings in the non-human and Badiou a human fidelity to the immortal. Whereas Badiou sacrifices the 'organic' for the mathematic Deleuze finds the non-organic in the organic and Whitehead looks for traces of the organic in the inorganic. Whitehead strives for a reciprocal determination between the 'microscopic' event and the 'macroscopic' and leans increasingly toward the macroscopic and the atomicity of the actual. For Deleuze's scheme reciprocal determination tends to favor the microscopic or virtually real since only the continuity of the microscopic will reveal "the powerful non-organic life that grips the world". In Badiou the macroscopic as excess of the pure multiple is given a microscopic (empirical) determination only as 'stellar separation' without reciprocity. Just as Badiou comes to favor the name of the 'void' for what can be presented of being's excess so Whitehead's thought seems increasingly to favor individual existence over the relativity of existence whereas Deleuze's thought aims to 'destratify' the individual in favor of the 'pre-individual', of nomadic singularities and "the truth of the relative".

Indeed, Deleuze pursues the 'turn' beyond individual human experience into an 'inhuman' world, an 'any-point-of-view-whatever' teeming with 'pre-individual singularities' and 'non-personal individuations' at that point in their genesis when these

elements are not yet captured in the form of the self or the person, the universal 'I' and the individual 'me'. As a finished, extended and actualized product of genesis the self and the person are completed expressions of the two functions of the 'subject': both to universalize and to individuate. Deleuze will refuse the abstract universalizing function of the subject and any simple appeal to the personal in favor of a new distribution of singularities that "constitute a transcendental field without subject" (Deleuze 1991, 95). Released from its dependence on the *hypokeimenon* philosophy becomes a "*theory of multiplicities* that refers to no subject as preliminary unity" (Deleuze 1991, 95). The individual for Deleuze becomes contemporaneous with its individuation.

If Deleuze appears, at one level at least, to abandon the subject for Badiou the task is, as with Whitehead, to find a notion of the subject that *succeeds* that trajectory of the subject that can be traced from Descartes to Husserl and which fell into ruin, Badiou says, with Nietzsche and Heidegger. Badiou's subject cannot be thought as substance, empty point, transcendental, result or origin. Thus, Badiou's wants an 'objectless' subject, no longer that for which there is a truth, but a vehicle for the passage of a truth that neither precedes it or awaits it. The subject emerges with the event in its revelation of the void. Thus, from 'nothing' the subject is constituted, Badiou says, as a 'truth process', woven out of truth from which it is separated by a series of chance encounters.

Whitehead 'reforms' the subject, the subject becomes 'subject-superject', removes it from any exclusive attachment to the realm of human cognition and generalizes its form across beings but retains its function of (metaphysical) individuality: "apart from the

experience of subjects there is nothing, nothing , nothing, bare nothingness” (Whitehead 1929/1978, 167). For Whitehead events and prehensions are subjective appropriations of objects: objects are appropriated in concrescence with ‘subjective form’, a ‘subjective aim’, etc. Whitehead’s theory of prehension attempts to present a scheme that balances the demands of both physical and conceptual prehensions making up the individual unity of the occasion. Actual occasions are the subjects of these prehensions, they are subjects of process, basic atomic units of feeling and perception that constitute a specific point of view.

Now, although Whiteheadian prehensions may play a role similar to Deleuzian singularities one question here is whether Deleuzian preindividual singularities, non-personal individuations and haecceities, etc, are subjects in this Whiteheadian sense. Although Deleuze does refer to ‘larval subjects’ any individual unity is subtracted from the multiplicity leaving a field of dimensions that increase with each new connection, synthesis or point of view. The vector or direction of growth of the multiplicity is defined by lines of escape, flight or variation as the multiplicity changes in nature or shifts dimensions. This appears quite different from the Whiteheadian ‘initial aim’ given by God and the ‘subjective aim’ developed in concrescence. Indeed, with his ‘pre-individual singularities’ and ‘non-personal individuations’ Deleuze tends to refuse the language of subject and object altogether (without jettisoning such language completely) since for Deleuze differential processes are subjectless. Processes may form subjects as their products for Deleuze but these are effects of more fundamental subjectless processes of

difference. The three characteristics of such processes for Deleuze are “imperceptibility, indiscernibility, and impersonality – the three virtues” (Deleuze/Guattari 1988, 280).

IV

Conclusion

The primary differences between Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead on the event revolve, then, around the status of the concepts of analogy, univocity, subjectivity and humanity in their works. All three respond to the problem of bifurcation/ transcendence in their works by reconsidering the event in the context of the balance between the void of existence, the relativity of existence and the individuality of existence. But the tendency in each in this balance is the inverse of the other. If at one end Deleuze favors the appeal to the continuity of the relative and, at the other, Badiou favors the cut that distills the axiom of the void Whitehead, we might say, inhabits a middle position initially preferring the relative continuum of extension but ending up affirming the atomic cut but always as a transition within the continuum.

Methodologically, both Deleuze and Whitehead are committed to a ‘radical empiricism’ in the sense that the abstract does not explain but must itself be explained and both search for the conditions under which something new comes into the world. For both philosophy must be the critic of abstractions. For Badiou, however, in thinking about how the process of the new comes into the world, empiricism of any kind must be eliminated in favor of a pure mathematical analysis. Ontology is given over to mathematics and abstraction, or rather subtraction, begins with the process of voiding and the failure of the one. Yet both Badiou and Whitehead appear to favor analogical access to the real whereas for Deleuze being can only be expressed univocally. Whitehead’s access to the

real is constructed upon an analogy of proportionality (as *a* is to *b*, so *c* is to *d*) so that the relation between ‘scheme’ and ‘content’ is mediated in the last instance by resemblance whereas for Deleuze being is univocal and immediately related to individuating factors of difference.

However, perhaps the most telling contrast between Badiou (of *Being and Event*), Whitehead (of *Process and Reality*) and Deleuze (of *Difference and Repetition*) on these points suggesting that their respective understandings of the event approximate to inversions of each other is that while Badiou is committed to a discontinuity of being Deleuze is committed to a continuity of becoming and Whitehead is committed to the idea of a becoming of continuity¹. Thus the role of time in relation to the event and the subject is a key difference. Whitehead’s ‘becoming of continuity’ here is his response to Zeno such that “the ultimate metaphysical truth is atomism” (Whitehead 1929/1978, 35) and the atomic is the ‘subject’ of experience as actual occasion. For Whitehead the creative passage of the real is a process of incremental growth through individual ‘drops of perception’. For Deleuze there is a rhizomatic continuity of becoming (a ‘plane of consistency’) which forms blocks of becoming but with no subject or term, only “relations composing, decomposing or modifying an individual” (Deleuze/Guattari 1988, 256). Each individual is an infinite multiplicity and it is the multiplicity of differential relations as a becoming that Deleuze tends to emphasize. We can say that this amounts to the displacement of the ‘subject’ of the philosophical tradition and perhaps a displacement of even the generalized subject of process in Whitehead in favor of an assemblage of the haecceity type (Deleuze/Guattari 1988, 265), a mode of individuation

that consists entirely of relations of speed and slowness, of movement and rest between molecules, particles, affects. Rather than the Jamesian model of formed buds or drops as the basis of experience Deleuze's plane of perception is made from unformed elements and materials distinguished from one another only by their speed, their connections and their relations of movement. As Deleuze says, "A plane of consistency peopled by anonymous matter, by impalpable bits of matter entering into varying connections" (Deleuze/Guattari 1988, 255). A "dance of the disparate things" in which becomings do not imitate, correspond to or represent anything but communicate transversally across heterogeneous populations.

And yet, Deleuze does have a place for the 'subject' in his work, albeit tentative and provisional. It is a subject that is never ours and never atomic but only ever time (*aion*), a 'floating' time that is not internal to us but forms "the interiority in which we are, in which we move, live and change" (Deleuze 1986, 82). This is the 'absolute interiority' or 'pure inside' that we find throughout Deleuze's books. Rather than the idea that the world is enfolded within an occasion or a point of view of an atomic subject of actuality, Deleuze's thought returns to the idea that the actual is internal to the 'point of view' of the cosmos and time, an interiority subordinated to "an inside that lies deeper than any internal world" (Deleuze 1988a, 96). If the actual is always only 'objective' for Deleuze then "the virtual is subjective" (Deleuze 1989, 83), a pure virtual time that divides itself, an affect of the virtual cosmic subject upon itself. It is only from this point of view that "time becomes a subject" for Deleuze (Deleuze 1988a, 108).

For Badiou's philosophy of the event in relation to subjectivity and time the inversion of Deleuze is the case: as actualities sets are multiples that do not open onto to any virtual that 'divides itself' into temporal jets. As atemporal structures sets issue from the void immanent to every situation. Although the 'presentation' of the void is described as a 'process' the process of voiding is 'undecidable', neither temporal or spatial, neither inside or outside, nor local or global but, Badiou says, "scattered nowhere and everywhere" (BE:55). Thus Badiou refuses the language of spatiality that permeates Deleuze's accounts of the event, just as any appeal to the ontological temporality of 'memory' and 'forgetting' is eliminated because "truth is the end of memory, the unfolding of a commencement" (D64). Indeed, time for Badiou is 'contradictory and empirical' (D:59). As contemporaries of 'Achilles and Newton' Badiou says that we have no need of any temporal synthesis since we already think in them and so time must be 'suppressed' in favor of truth. Truths are actual multiplicities that rupture or interrupt time. The subject lives out this moment as if time did not exist, abolishing time in favor of eternal truth. For Badiou there is a time of the event but it is marked only by a temporality of retrospection and 'future anteriority', such that the abrupt discontinuity or commencement of the event will reveal itself 'to have been' significant to a subject who is able to show fidelity to that event *après coup*.

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 atemporal, 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.

Between the individual, the relative and the void – between Whitehead, Deleuze and Badiou there appears then to be something of a ‘differend’ in terms of thinking the event. For Badiou we must just decide, but decide in accordance with the ‘diagonal operators’ that a metaphysical apparatus proposes and how such operators sustain a development of the concept in a movement that comes from elsewhere. By posing the question of, for example, ‘analogy or univocity?’ Deleuze also seems to suggest that we are faced with a ‘choice’, a choice that Deleuze claimed comes down to a matter of ‘taste’. Nearly 80 years ago John Dewey had already asked Whitehead to decide between the ‘genetic-functional’ interpretation of first principles and the ‘mathematical-formal’. Whitehead declined to make the decision. “Our present problem”, he said, “is the fusion of two interpretations” (ESP: AM, 123). Although Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead each differ in their ‘fusion’ of these two interpretations each affirms the centrality and importance of the event as the self actualizing structure of the new.
