

“Amid a Democracy of Fellow Creatures”—

Onto/Politics and the Problem of Slavery in Whitehead and Deleuze

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I define “onto/politics” as the interface between ontological and political agency. It 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*)?” It is a *problem* insofar as it connects the *All* of the universe and the *Here* of human existence by cutting through their unavoidable divergence in terms of a common set of concepts.¹ And it might be an *impossible* problem (to solve) because it seems to mix the status of nature and human society, of being and human existence, of the scale of the whole cosmos and that of one species of animals on a decentred planet somewhere out there, of *an sich* (objective functioning) and *für mich* (subjective functioning), and of metaphysics and social anthropology.² Nevertheless, this “inter/face” or “place” is present in the philosophical considerations of the three philosophers of interest to this conference: Whitehead, Deleuze and Badiou.

In this paper, I want to demonstrate in which way 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. While the argument against any “naturalistic shortcut” seems to shatter any viable connection of ontology and politics—so that no political theory can be based on a metaphysical theory without being doomed to fail from the outset³—I tend to think that in the work of Whitehead, Deleuze and Badiou we find viable hints for a reconsideration of such an impossibility. It will be based on the presupposition that the relation between “to be” and “ought to be” cannot be resolved by foundational considerations of derivation or causation but

¹ This approach follows not only Deleuze’s method of the rhizomatic interconnection of divergent series of events/concepts (cf. LS 39-41) thereby forming a plane of consistency (cf. TP 9) on which, besides all other divergences, they “go together” but also Whitehead’s continuity of conceptuality which cuts through any essentialist dualism between any “kinds” of existence (be it nature and mind or cosmos and humanity) by creating a univocal set of concepts establishing grades of application. Cf. E. Kraus, *The Metaphysics of Experience: A Companion to Whitehead’s “Process and Reality”* (N.Y: Fordham UP, 1997), 7-8.

² For Deleuze, however, this is not a lack. On the contrary, precisely the *problematic* and *problematizing* character initiates the series to become one of events/concepts (cf. WP 16). For Whitehead, any solution to a problem, which is an occasion in becoming, only aims at a difference it makes for future life in constituting a new problem (cf. PR 26). As occasions are “production of novelty” (PR 21), solutions produce new problems.

³ For the ethical discussion on the impossibility of referring from IS to OUGHT, from description to prescription, cf. H. Rolston, “Können und sollen wir der Natur folgen,” in D. Birnbacher, ed., *Ökophilosophie* (Frankfurt: Recla, 1997), 257-273.

only by a mutual resonance.⁴ Epistemologically, Whitehead has called such a relationship “coherence.” It indicates a relationship of *mutual in/determinacy* by which the terms resonating “presuppose each other so that in isolation they are meaningless.” *However*, for Whitehead this “does not mean that they are definable in terms of each other” (PR 3), i.e., that they can be analytically deduced. Rather they are “incoherent” in their mutual independence, i.e., only *experiential* and *experimental* ways of (be)coming together (cf. PR 21-2).⁵ Ontologically, Whitehead terms this vibratory relationship the “mutual immanence” of their insoluble diversity (cf. AI 167). I will seek this mutual in/coherence of ontology and politics here named “onto/politics.”

I will develop this thought mostly by referring to Whitehead's and Deleuze's considerations and by some explorations in the land of Badiou. My general intention to find the *onto/political interface of in/determinacy* will not attempt to develop a political theory either of the three philosophers nor for them in acknowledging the lack of such a theory.⁶ On the contrary, I will concentrate on the problem of the potency of political *activity, agency and action* by “experimenting” (cf. PR 5) with a singular (or universal) problem that is *pervading* the political realm, vital to any political *thought*, namely that of *ontological activity and political action* related to, allowing for, or raging against, the outrageous conundrum of *slavery* (in its crude and more sublimated forms of oppression).⁷ I will, with Deleuze and Whitehead, generalize its (physical and symbolic) existence to the level of a resonating ontology and, at the same time, ask in what way a changed ontology vibrates with a changed perception of a society condemning slavery.⁸ Thereby, I will neither derive slavery from a

⁴ The mediating factor between IS and OUGHT is crucial here: In Deleuze there is a feeling of “sense” in any event prior to identifications of either IS or OUGHT (cf. LS 116-17) as there is the conviction of the intrinsic value of every being in Whitehead because of its becoming actual (cf. SMW 105). This value (or actual valuation) is self-creative, that is, it is neither an IS nor an OUGHT to be. We can recognize such valuable reality without being forced to follow it as prescription. Cf. W. Frankena, *Analytische Ethik* (München:Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag, 1972), 27.

⁵ This (radically transformed transcendental) empiricist confession of forming concepts as singularities by experience and experiment is very much true for Whitehead and Deleuze. Cf. J. Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000), 17.

⁶ Although Deleuze was always interested in “collective creations instead of representation” (N 169) and Whitehead developed a special interest in addressing political implications of societies (cf. S, part III) so that their philosophy can be read partly as political philosophy (especially AO and TP for Deleuze and AI and MT for Whitehead), they never developed a political theory as such (as a theory of political institutions). For Badiou, insofar as philosophy *thinks* politics (cf. AM 56), more than institutions, principles of revolutionary politics prevail (cf. AM 49-51). But the principles are not interested in the State (of things) and are “free of any program” (C 248).

⁷ I will not be interested in a specific form of slavery, e.g., that of the Americas (either of the colonialism of Spain and Portugal or the new colonies founding themselves as U.S. on their practice), but I will follow the use of the term in Whitehead and Deleuze as related to the Ancient Greek society in developing democracy and Europe in the 17th century, the times of Spinoza's political thought.

⁸ Such a “generalization” (or “symbolization”) has to remain conscious of the fact that we cannot abstract from its concrete locality in order to find a general “colonialism” or “imperialism.” On the contrary, we have to state

certain ontology nor force political action against it to be based on a certain ontology but intend to show how—in the “languages” of our philosophers—a certain view of ontological activity will paradoxically allow for both the existence (and tolerance) of slavery and a liberating agency of resistance energizing its abolition by overthrowing its political basis in thought and practice.

This is an exercise in applicability of a theoretically proposed resonance between ontology and political agency where it really matters.⁹ I am aware that the fact of slavery in its historical, social, and cultural complexity is far beyond any neat theory of “understanding” or “use” of it for any interest because we remain in the “vicious regress” of understanding to only produce universals and generalities never reaching experience (cf. PR 153).¹⁰ But I also am aware of the fact that Deleuze can be considered an important influence on a movement for which the complex of racism, patriarchalism, and classism, which is the basis for the existence of slavery in all of its physical and symbolic forms, is not only understood but is actively deconstructed.¹¹ With Deleuze, I claim Whitehead to be a surprising forbearer of such a movement. Badiou’s role, on the other hand, will be that an *advocatus diaboli*.¹² Hence, I will develop their interaction in three parts beginning with Whitehead’s onto/political inter/face, relating it to Deleuze’s onto/political interference and questioning both with some of Badiou’s convictions in order to vivify onto/political transformation.

I. The Onto/Political Interface (Whitehead’s Intuition)

In Whitehead’s *Adventures of Ideas* we find abundant discussion of the

with Whitehead that we are talking in the aftermath of an European institution. “Indeed, whenever the European races came into contact with non-Christian foreign races, they seem to have had no compunction about slavery. We read of Saracen slaves, of the enslavement of the indigenous American tribes, and, above all, of negro slavery. (AI 28). This fact has to be read as concrete implication of all of the statements on slavery to come.

⁹ Applicability of thought is one of Whitehead’s criteria of philosophical thought. It does not mean to make something relevant that is *per se* not but to be truthful to the experiential and experimental basis of thought. Whitehead’s “conditions for the success of imaginative construction must be rigidly adhered to. In the first place, this construction must have its origin in the generalization of particular factors discerned in particular topics of human interest; for example, in physics, or in physiology, or in psychology, or in aesthetics, or in ethical beliefs, or in sociology, or in languages conceived as storehouses of human experience. In this way the prime requisite, that there shall be some important application, is secured. The success of the imaginative experiment is always to be tested by the applicability of its results beyond the restricted locus from which it originated” (PR 5).

¹⁰ It is one the most basic contentions of Whitehead’s empiricism that actuality can in “no way” “be built up out of universals” (PR 20). Based on Whitehead; This is all the more true of Deleuze’s concepts as “disjunctive syntheses” (LS 57-9; cf. Raichman, *op. cit.*, 53-55).

¹¹ Cf. I. Buchanan and C. Colebrook, eds., *Deleuze and Feminist Theory* (Edinburgh, EUP: 2000).

¹² Badiou’s reflections on politics are more direct and concentrated an area of his thought than is true for Whitehead and Deleuze; cf. P. Hallward, *Badiou: A Subject to Truth* (Minneapolis: UMP: 2003), 223-42. I, however, will concentrate on the more disperse thought in Whitehead and Deleuze which are, strangely, converging around slavery.

presuppositions of political theory, ranging from cultural determinations by the thrust of the past for repetition to the ontological freedom of making a difference.¹³ For Whitehead, *the* fundamental difference, *the* shift in the presuppositions of political organization (as *res publica*), political thought and political agency is described as one from the self-evidence of slavery as the basis for a functioning society to that of freedom and equality.¹⁴ This is the

...vast difference between ancient and modern political theories. For we differ from the ancients on the one premise on which they were all agreed. Slavery was the presupposition of political theorists then; Freedom is the presupposition of political theorists now. In those days the penetrating minds found a difficulty in reconciling their doctrine of slavery to certain plain facts of moral feeling and of sociological practice; and in these days our sociological speculations find a difficulty in reconciling our doctrine of freedom to another group of plain facts, perplexing, irreconcilable, only to be conceived as a hateful brute necessity. Yet, when all such qualifications have been made, Freedom and Equality constitute an inevitable presupposition for modern political thought... (AI 13)

In both cultural settings the presuppositions were not undisputed, yet *practiced as justified despite* their ethical or philosophical inconsistencies. The question is whether certain ontological considerations played a role in this process of justification. Obviously this is not just a question of conscious processes but of deeper layers of cultural communalities or modes of thought of which ontology is no exception.¹⁵ But Whitehead never jumps to the naïve conclusion that a certain ontology (or metaphysics) is forcing us to think in a certain way about society and political action, or that this is not a multilayered process of massive changes of all of these levels—from the ideological seduction of thought-schemes to the altered perception of social facts, from economic changes to religious implications—never understood in its “total variety” (AI 3).¹⁶

¹³ Especially part I “Sociological”—similar to part II of *Symbolism*—is meant to be a location of his “imaginative experiment” in singular/universal concepts in the wake of cosmological explications in *Process and Reality*. But it would be wrongly understood as sociological analysis; rather, Whitehead already sees his undertaking situated in the widest context of the experience of humanity as it gives rise to *thought*. It is as in Badiou *philosophy* of political action and organization. And, as in Badiou, we could understand Whitehead’s interest of relating politics and thought not as just an analysis, certainly not as a representation of fact, but as a process of *active*, even violent inter/action, as a revolutionary reversal of acceptance of these presuppositions (cf. AM 22).

¹⁴ Although we might not be so sure that this aim of “freedom and equality” can be translated in Deleuzian terms of multiplicity, as we will see later, it is precisely the same aim as in Badiou’s political thought (cf. EE 447).

¹⁵ If we accept Deleuze’s rhizomatic formation of thought not only as a critique of arboreal stratification but also as an expression of “cutting and cross-cutting” (WP 16) procedures, ontological and political synergy is not arbitrary or ideological, but what we can *expect* to happen.

¹⁶ As in Badiou, there is no direct way from ontological description to political prescription; rather, with the intrinsic value of actuality in itself, description and prescription somehow remain divided. But Whitehead would contest that political thought is *only* prescriptive (cf. C 247). It is related by *value*, although indirectly. “When we examine the general world of occurrent fact, we find that its general character, practically inescapable, is neutral in respect to the realization of intrinsic value. The electromagnetic occasions and the electromagnetic

Many factors contributed to the final inversion of sociological theory, from the presupposition of slavery to the presupposition of freedom. The chief factor has already been mentioned, namely, the sceptical, humanitarian movement of the eighteenth century, of which Voltaire and Rousseau were among the chief exponents, and the French Revolution the culmination. (AI 22)

Whitehead, like Badiou, expects the change to be issued not by analysis of preconditions but by a *revolutionary* process (cf. AM 114), perusing the idea of a universal brotherhood of human beings, the scepticism regarding natural givenness of social structures. None of these factors of political thought and action, however, *exclude* in their midst differences of the ontological understanding of the world we inhabit. While Whitehead holds to be true that the “revolutionary ideas” of a “brotherhood of man” had “produced the final effective force which hereafter made slavery impossible among progressive races” (AI 23) so that “finally it was Democracy that freed the slaves” (AI 20), he also insists that the “metaphysical discussion” is relevant. It “is relevant to point out, how superficial...our controversies on sociological theory [are] apart from some more fundamental determination of what we are talking about” (AI 39).¹⁷

This “more fundamental determination,” however, is not the search for a metaphysical foundation but for a *resonance* of all levels of discussion with the urge to *deconstruct the implicit abstractions* of all of these levels in order to uncover “the limitations within which our intuitions are hedged.”¹⁸ *This*, for Whitehead, is the topic of the “philosophical research”—pursuing “the undiscovered limitations” (AI 144) of our generalizations by situating them in the *event of real agency* (cf. PR 19). In this “metaphysical” endeavor, the

laws, the molecular occasions and the molecular laws, are all alike neutral. They condition the sort of values which are possible, but they do not determine the specialties of value. When we examine the specializations of societies which determine values with some particularity, such specializations as societies of men, forests, deserts, prairies, icefields, we find, within limits, plasticity. The story of Plato’s idea is the story of its energizing within a local plastic environment. It has a creative power, making possible its own approach to realization” (AI 42).

¹⁷ In light of the phallogocentric critique of Butler, Kristeva, Irigaray, and Derrida, this, of course, includes to read the “brotherhood of man” and the “democracy” based on it as another exclusive movement inherent in its misogynist “neutrality.” Whitehead is well aware that this exclusion is a barbaric imitation of the excluding movement of colonization through conquest. “These civilizations never eradicated a large reliance upon the sway of conquerors over conquered populations, and upon the rule of individual masters over slaves. This habit of dominance spread its infection beyond these limits. A rule of men over women remained an established feature of highly civilized societies. It survived as a hang-over from barbarism. But its demoralizing effects increased with civilization” (AI 83).

¹⁸ Whitehead, early on, realizes that it is precisely the bifurcation into foundations and consequences that is inherent to the substantialism he is fighting throughout his whole work (cf. CN, ch. 1-2). His endeavor is not fulfilled by finding any foundation for a situation, but as in Deleuze, is actualized only *in the midst* of all factors (cf. TP 24-5). “In this way the ‘ontological principle’ is maintained—since there can be no determinate truth, correlating impartially the partial experiences of many actual entities, apart from one actual entity to which it can be referred” (PR 13).

deconstruction of such presuppositions is the question of *ontology*.¹⁹ Hence for Whitehead, as is true for Deleuze (cf. LS 8), ontology is not the question of the Being of beings and the interrelation of beings insofar as they are²⁰ but the critical question of their *becoming*—not of “givenness” but of “decision” (PR 43-4).²¹ Insofar as everything “is,” it is a state of things, exhibiting *characteristics* of stabilization or change, it exhibits correspondences of patterns being the resources *only* for their “interpretation.”²² But in an ontology of “*synthetic* ‘givenness’” (PR 44), deconstructing limitations of being by uncovering its becoming, ontological/political “resonance” becomes the expression of *revolution beyond mere interpretation* because now analysis is only a retrospective understanding of a *creative synthesis of novelty beyond any given State* (cf. PR 28).²³ In this “metaphysical” account, *ontological analysis deconstructs and, at the same time, energizes revolutionary agency*²⁴

Of course, for Whitehead this *activating* resonance is not a solution to onto/politics, it is just the beginning of all complications. Here are three of these metaphysical complications. First, Whitehead notes the *metaphysical arbitrariness of political agency*. If, e.g., in considering “the effect on social life,” we accept “Individual Absoluteness and Individual Relativity” among the “most general philosophic notions to be used in the analysis of civilized activities,” we will not only realize this description to indicate an agency (instead of an interpretation) but also the inability of “explaining” this agency in terms of an ontological

¹⁹ Many interpretations of Whitehead prior to Deleuze’s vivification of Whitehead as a thinker of the event (cf. TF 76-84) have misunderstood Whitehead’s “rationalistic” account of “understanding” as “rationalism” and continue to do so; cf. D. R. Griffin, *Whitehead’s Radically Different Postmodern Philosophy* (Albany: SUNY, 2007). But, in revolving Kant, for Whitehead “understanding” (of abstractions) is based on “feeling” (of concrete actuality) not being analyzed yet or ever (cf. PR 230) because its concreteness is its becoming, it’s the creative advance beyond any given state of things (cf. PR 21). Whitehead’s metaphysical account, therefore, is that of the event of experience and its “systematic” expression conditions of becoming (cf. DR 285). Cf. J. Bradley “Transcendentalism and Speculative Realism in Whitehead,” *Process Studies* 23/3 (1994): 155-191.

²⁰ Besides Heidegger’s devastating criticism of this endeavor of equating metaphysics and ontology—cf. M. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics* (Yale UP, 2000)—it is still a common way to define the metaphysical endeavor to ask what is “real” and to define the “real” by what “is”; cf. J. Post, *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction* (New York: Paragon, 1991), 1-15.

²¹ Here, both Deleuze and Whitehead must be seen in the tradition of Nietzsche’s *genealogy* of becoming as deconstruction of the life-denying naturalizations of being (cf. NP 1). Cf. J. Th. Howe, *Faithful to the Earth: Nietzsche and Whitehead on God and the Meaning of Human Life* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).

²² This might be the reason that we cannot find a developed political theory in either Deleuze or Whitehead. As in Badiou, it would be mere interpretation of the *state of things*, thereby undermining the revolutionary aspect of political agency (cf. DO 15).

²³ That for Whitehead analysis and synthesis condition one another (cf. S 26) is not only an expression of the mutual immanence of every term in the other but of their *genuine activity of becoming itself*. This movement of in/coherence precise moves from the agenda of mere “interpretation (cf. PR 3) to that of *the issuing of novelty* basic for the *revolutionary* “resonance” of ontology and political agency.

²⁴ It is in this sense that Judith Butler, based on Foucault, understands Nietzsche’s *genealogy* not only as an ontological “interpretation” but as a criticism of ontological “substantialism” that *per se* becomes the political agency of the deconstruction of “regulatory practices of...coherence”; J. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999), 33. Whitehead’s notion of “coherence”—as is noted—is, of course, different from this excluding movement of logocentric reduction; it is a movement of insoluble in/coherence (cf. PR 3-4).

foundation. If, in other words, we *describe* the “release from essential dependence on other members of the community in respect to modes of activity” and “the converse fact of essential relatedness,” we will be puzzled by the *inability to analyse* them in terms of metaphysical *grounds* because the “[d]istribution of emphasis between absoluteness and relativity is seemingly arbitrary” (AI 43). Hence, for Whitehead, we never (can) find an ontological *reason* based in the *state* of things why things just must be in their way because of their Being; we only “always [find] a *historical* reason for the pattern” (AI 43-4; italics added) *arbitrary* to any ontological determination (cf. PR 46).²⁵ The sedimentation of States of affairs is only a creature of society’s self-creativity (cf. PR 111). For Whitehead it is this *ontological arbitrariness* that becomes the very basis for a politics of “Freedom and Equality” (AI 13) paradoxically also generating the *ontological possibility* of Slavery. This account of the function of ontology as *activation of ontological arbitrariness* Whitehead calls his “ontological principle,” which states “that actual entities are the only *reasons*; so that to search for a *reason* is to search for one or more actual entities” (PR 43; CatExpl xviii). It demands that political agency is always only *historically* determined, i.e., *not* ontologically fixated. Ontology only reflects us back onto cultural “necessities” the analysis of which has no *ontological* foundation just waiting to be to be “interpreted.”²⁶ In other words, its “interpretation” always already is an *activity*—either the repetition of a character (State of things) or its revolutionary transformation into the event of novelty.²⁷

Second, *ontological thought and political activity must be neither passively interpretive nor mutually exclusive*. Political theories, e.g., enveloped “in the statement of the Utilitarian Principle” (“The Greatest Happiness of The Greatest Number”), seemingly “at least sufficient for us to take it as a rough guide to action,” cannot be *thought* without *ontological* questions, e.g., of “endurances” in contrast to “occurrences” (AI 40).²⁸ Whitehead, therefore, “conclude[s] that before we can profitably proceed with this discussion [of political practices], it is necessary to attain some clarity in our metaphysical notions”

²⁵ “The peculiarity of the course of history illustrates the joint relevance of the ‘ontological principle’ and of this categorial obligation. The evolution of history can be rationalized by the consideration of the determination of successors by antecedents. But, on the other hand, the evolution of history is incapable of rationalization because it exhibits a selected flux of participating forms. No reason, internal to history, can be assigned why that flux of forms, rather than another flux, should have been illustrated. It is true that any flux must exhibit the character of internal determination. So much follows from the ontological principle” (PR 46).

²⁶ “Neither fact is capable of rationalization, in the sense of tracing the antecedents which determine it” (PR 48)

²⁷ Why in a certain State things should go either way cannot be regulated ontologically, but only creatively, that is, by concrete decision. Although repetition of the same is also a creative decision, presumably it is not as intense and therefore is less desirable ontologically so that, “in the temporal world for occasions of relatively slight experient intensity, their decisions of creative emphasis are individually negligible compared to the determined components which they receive and transmit” (PR 47).

²⁸ “[C]an we really correlate the happiness of three shortlived men with that of one longlived man? Then again” what “are the qualitative differences between different types of happiness?” (AI 40)?

involved, e.g., “respecting endurances, occurrences, and things that recur” (AI 40-1). But ontological thought should *never* be used either to ask for an appropriation of practice to theory or to deny a practice because our thought cannot account for it. On the contrary, if for Whitehead—with Hume—“empiricism” means that “ultimate justification is ‘practice’” (PR 133), the appeal to practice that does not fit into the metaphysical account never should include an ontology that denies in thought the possibility for a political practice to happen that, in fact, happens.²⁹ Rather, in light of the practice metaphysics must change.

Whatever is found in ‘practice’ must lie within the scope of the metaphysical description. When the description fails to include the ‘practice,’ the metaphysics is inadequate and requires revision. There can be no appeal to practice to supplement metaphysics, so long as we remain contented with our metaphysical doctrines. Metaphysics is nothing but the description of the generalities which apply to all the details of practice. (PR 13)

This implies that the revolutionary practice might be understood as precisely the practice that *cannot be based on any ontology* but that *each revolution creates its own ontology*—exerting not only a political but an ontological activity. It is in this sense that Whitehead takes Hume to be “one of the greatest of philosophers,” namely on the “hypothesis, [that] his final appeal to ‘practice’ is an appeal against the adequacy of the then current metaphysical categories as interpretive of obvious experience” (S 52). *Ontological thought, therefore, must not interpret practices but think the revolution.*³⁰ Consequentially, in thinking the revolution, political action *demand*s the analysis of the ontology that, with its “interpretation” of the praxis (of Slavery), reiterates the activation of this politics. With Butler, therefore, Whitehead's *radical critique of substantialism*, is a deconstruction of the interpretative reinforcement of a praxis by an ontology “presenting” its justification.³¹

Third, ontology is *untimely*, that is—with Deleuze (cf. DR 130)—neither eternal (fixating) not passing (establishing only a fad) in *tolerating contradictory political practices*; political practice, however, is untimely by being always *either in the past or the future of any*

²⁹ Here, Whitehead contests Hume’s own pragmatism as bypassing his metaphysical account that cannot fit by asking for the change of metaphysics in order to become “adequate.” This also will be Deleuze’s consequence of his reading of Hume into his “transcendental empiricism” and Whitehead’s metaphysics as expression of such pragmatism. Cf. Rajchman, *op. cit.*, 19.

³⁰ Here the truth-creating procedures, like love, art and politics, need indeed, as Badiou forces us to see, not to be based on ontology. They are creating their truth philosophy is just stating (cf. HI 1-15). But other than Badiou, for Whitehead Hume’s rule encourages to restate what “ontology” means. After all, the creative truth procedures could be restated in a way so that they can be seen as part of an *unspoken* ontology that allows for such a truth-creation process. Even then, *how* ontology is understood will tell us *what* it can say for political action (cf. PR 23; CatExpl IX). And Whiteheads and Deleuze’s ontology activate, not do they passively interpret a (pre)given reality. Part II will develop this thought as AND-Ontology.

³¹ Butler exercises this critique of an underlying ontology reiterating gender politics as “regulatory praxis” by deconstructing the substantialism of the “humanist” understanding of personal persistence. Cf. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, *op. cit.*, 14.

given ontology.³² The “political, liberal faith of the nineteenth century” with its “individualistic, competitive doctrine of strife and the optimistic doctrine of harmony,” e.g., “believed that the laws of the Universe were such that the strife of individuals issued in the progressive realization of a harmonious society.” But, while “it seemed possible to conciliate the belief with the practice without the intrusion of contradiction” by “winning triumph after triumph as a political force in Europe and America, the foundations of its doctrine were receiving shock after shock” (AI 33). Hence, the ontological foundation of the “early liberal faith that by the decree of benevolent Providence, individualistic competition and industrial activity, would necessarily work together for human happiness had broken down as soon as it was tried” (AI 35). Because ontology and political practice remain *mutually untimely*, ontology never can generate a justified practice and a practice never can justify an ontology. But, because of this mutual denial of “presence” they always will mutually *tolerate* being used to justify ideological interests.³³ Because there is neither *an ontology nor a politics of presence*, the (ontologically or politically) unfounded might have a powerful life after death in the social formation, and the energy of either is activating by being always both—mutually constructive and destructive.³⁴

These three complications of the *mutually activating, i.e., mutually deconstructive, creative/destructive, resonance* of ontology and political theory renders feasible the paradoxical fact that the emergence of Democracy was, at the same time, the seed that will defeat slavery *and* the force that, for a long time, not only lived comfortably with slavery side by side but *was possible only on its basis*.³⁵ Everyone (in Athens) “accepted it as a matter of course. It was presupposed in the very structure of society; and *such necessity limits the scope of all generalities*. Distinctions were introduced, the sort of distinctions which are conclusive so long as you know that in practice you have got to accept them” (AI 14-5; italics added).³⁶

³² For Deleuze, the event is always either-or and both (past and future) but never “present” (the presence of itself): it is—in the language of LS—aionic, not temporal (cf. LS 77).

³³ Here Derrida’s deconstruction of a “metaphysics of presence” has to be widened to a deconstruction of a “politics of presence” for which ontology seems to be the last resort of the justification its existence, although, in fact, it is only the imagination of its ideological motives.

³⁴ In the same sense as the past can be re-activated for any new given future that never becomes present, that is, always stays utopian, political theories can be awakened any time to guide a future of a desired alteration of the present. This is the reason that, e.g., Nazism ever newly fascinates new generations after its death.

³⁵ This is obvious not only for the democracy of Athens but also for the formation of the constitution of the United States of America. Its proposed “freedom” is *consciously* built on the exclusion of the slaves. On this basis, we also can understand how it is possible that the post-revolutionary France implemented the principles of liberty and equality in the mainland and, at the same time, furthered slavery in its colonies. Cf. C. A. Reinhardt, *Claims to Memory: Beyond Slavery and Emancipation in the French Caribbean* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006).

³⁶ Although Whitehead mentions such differentiations like the “fixed order of society in a well-managed feudal system” that “must not be confused with slavery, even in its application to the agricultural labourers at the base

Any naïve appellation to the universal value of democracy with its inherent demand of “freedom and equality” has to take into account this “limits of all generalities” initiated by this presupposition of slavery.³⁷ While only “modern Democrats, in the nineteenth century, nerved themselves to face the question of Slavery, explicitly and with thoroughness” (AI 20), they generated, at the same time, “industrial slavery at the base of society” (AI 34).

Nevertheless, in the midst of a society based on slavery, it was an *impulse of novelty*, an *untimely political action*, that created a new space for a *practice* of freedom undermining the “onto/politics of presence” of slavery by activating revolution—“the first explicit defence of social tolerance...found in the speech of Pericles...puts forth the conception of the organized society successfully preserving freedom of behaviour for its individual members.” And it was an *untimely ontological move* that initiated a revolution of thought, when “[f]ifty years later, in the same social group, Plato introduced deeper notions from which all claims for freedom must spring. His general concept of the *psychic factors in the Universe stressed them as the source of all spontaneity, and ultimately as the ground of all life and motion.*” (AI 33; italics added). In this genuine *onto/political* move, not only did freedom become a political category but the category of the political was defined by freedom. It *imprinted spontaneity into ontology* and indicated *inner* humanity as a *political* category.³⁸ It, thereby, revolutionized ontology *itself* to become the “place” of the political and created the public space *as* the realm of freedom.³⁹ Although restricted in (seemingly neutral) generality by the practices of slavery, the *democratic practice* of freedom through political action/speech in contrast with a politics of the hierarchical household (of the kingdom), continuing on the basis

of the whole structure,” he recognizes that this “system was very liable to degenerate into practical slavery, and often did so. (AI 27).

³⁷ As a consequence, the criticism of countries not following a “democratic path” must, therefore, never forget the restriction under which these claims can, if at all, be valuable for societies with other structures of integration, if they exactly refuse to become based on slavery.

³⁸ Plato’s recourse to the “soul” was not intended to create privacy from the public sphere, but it initiated the mutual creation of both in the realm of ethics. The individual *qua* individual its ethical and social. Cf. K. M. Sayre, *Plato’s Late Ontology: A Riddle Resolved* (Princeton U Press, 1983). “The human psychic activity thus contains the origins of precious harmonies within the transient world. The end of human society is to elicit such psychic energies. But spontaneity is of the essence of soul. Such in outline is the argument from Platonic modes of thought to the importance of social freedom” (AI 51).

³⁹ This onto/political “place” is the *khora* discussed in part III. With Badiou, we can deny the division of the sphere of the private and the political as “originally” divided. For Hanna Arendt, Athens gained democracy by the division of household from public speech. But this does not amount to the division between the political and the private because the political space *is* one of individual freedom, or freedom as political practice, allowing for what she meant with political action in the democratic arena of speech. Her “household,” against which she differentiates the political sphere of democracy in Athens, was, on the other hand, not private *per se*, but a realm of the *political without freedom* as instantiated in the imperial kingdom. Cf. H. Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: CUP, 1998), 28-37.

slavery, and the *ontology of spontaneity* with its exclusion of slavery,⁴⁰ were mutually activating a political difference beyond repetition of the same.

It is this *ontology of spontaneity as the “ultimate”⁴¹ of all life and motion* that will become the cornerstone of Whitehead's own *untimely ontology* of the event, creativity and the *khora* by which he then imprints *political* freedom upon the “essence” of the Universe as such: the creative flux of events, self-creating themselves out of their vast past (the World) in a moment of creative decision in a cloud out of unrealized potential (cf. PR 43), functions as the ontological formulation of the Universe as *activating* freedom and equality at all layers of its composition and evolution *as a political practice* of always inclusively reversing the excluding sedimentations of any State of things (cf. PR 289).⁴²

This untimely conspiracy of ontological and political agency, again, allows Whitehead to formulate *an onto/politics of freedom over against slavery* by referring to this “essential element of civilization” that “alone can maintain a free society,” namely the “*sense of the variousness of the Universe*, not to be fathomed by our intellects” (AI 51-2). This ontological texture of multiplicity, in an already *political* universe, demands to be politically *acted* out. Hence, the “duty of tolerance is our finite homage to the abundance of inexhaustible novelty which is awaiting the future, and to the complexity of accomplished fact which exceeds our stretch of insight” (AI 51-52). Thereby revolution to activate Freedom and Equality and to abolish Slavery becomes a *universal* political potency for *any* society to evolve out of this seed of *ontological* tolerance. This untimely seed becomes Whitehead’s expression of civilization *per se*: the potency to chose between two forms of political activity “force or persuasion” (AI 83)—one of which is ontologically tolerating its opposite while the other forces to surrender its opposite. Persuasion and its activating power of a politics of freedom and equality is yielding to coercion: it champions equality but it tolerates slavery—because it can only be overcome by ontological tolerance over against the force that just repeats what it denies.⁴³

The creation of the world—says Plato—is the victory of persuasion over force.

⁴⁰ “Exclusion is meant here in the double sense of an (ontological) suppression of its existence and a demand that it disappears.

⁴¹ It must be remembered that this “ultimacy” of Whitehead's “creativity” is precisely the *refusal* to name a foundation (cf. PR 20-1).

⁴² Whitehead's notion of the “public” is not opposed to a private sphere but the *transition* of freedom on *every* level of activation, human or non-human. “An actual entity considered in reference to the publicity of things is a ‘superject’; namely, it arises from the publicity which it finds, and it adds itself to the publicity which it transmits. It is a moment of passage from decided public facts to a novel public fact. Public facts are, in their nature, coordinate” (PR 289).

⁴³ The tolerance of persuasion, on which Whitehead understands civilization to be able to evolve, is not denying that its activation is that of the reception of *violence* that has to be *overcome*.

The worth of men consists in their liability to persuasion. They can persuade and can be persuaded by the disclosure of alternatives, the better and the worse. Civilization is the maintenance of social order, by its own inherent persuasiveness as embodying the nobler alternative. The recourse to force, however, unavoidable, is a disclosure of the failure of civilization, either in the general society or in a remnant of individuals. (AI 83)

This “victory of persuasion” is *never* final; it is always a *struggle* of tolerance, untimely always in danger of its own suspension. Its creature—“the word of civilized order” (AI 25)—is always endangered by its excluded (and exclusive) violence, the *illusion* of unconditioned self-creation. Persuasion is creation as overcoming the illusion of unconditioned self-creation, the overcoming of the untimely by the eternal.⁴⁴ In order to *stay* persuasive, it has to repeat only difference (cf. DR 15); in order to *stay* untimely, it never can become “present.” Persuasion is not an agency of “presence” but of “unrest,” “curiosity, adventure, change,” always “transformed by its power of recognizing its imperfections (AI 83). The tragic of its ontological tolerance of its own subjection to force and its outcome—Slavery—Whitehead's calls the *u-topos* of “peace” (AI 284-96).⁴⁵

Always being an *event*, being in the future and the past (cf. LS 164-8) but never in the presence of perfection, persuasion activates the unfathomable “plasticity of nature” (AI 78) of which any *law of “presence”* is only a *transient constant*. Paradoxically, by tolerating violence, persuasive agency accepts its own denial by generating Law to deny *and* sustain its freedom.⁴⁶ Whitehead's consequence is radical: Freedom and Equality demand the Law to be *immanent*—based on persuasive agency but tolerating oppressive imposition.⁴⁷

The laws are the outcome of the character of the behaving things: they are... ‘communal customs’... This conception should replace the older idea of given things with mutual behaviour conditioned by imposed laws. What we know of external nature is wholly in terms of how the various occasions in nature *contribute to each other's natures*. The whole environment participates in the nature of each of its occasions. Thus each occasion takes its initial form from the character of its environment. Also the laws which condition each environment *merely express the general character* of the occasions composing

⁴⁴ This is the reason that force cannot tolerate to be created out of a precedent. Force is always *ex nihilo*. It needs, as in Afghanistan, to destroy the Buddhas in order to generate the origin of self-creation as eternal.

⁴⁵ “Peace is then the intuition of permanence. It keeps vivid the sensitiveness to the tragedy; and it sees the tragedy as a living agent persuading the world to aim at fineness beyond the faded level of surrounding fact. Each tragedy is the disclosure of an ideal: —What might have been, and was not: What can be. The tragedy was not in vain. This survival power in motive force, by reason of appeal to reserves of Beauty, marks the difference between the tragic evil and the gross evil. The inner feeling belonging to this grasp of the service of tragedy is Peace—the purification of the emotions” (AI 286).

⁴⁶ More than Whitehead's “plasticity,” which includes human agency, which always creates a “new Law” (AI 78) in order to exist, I want to emphasize the violence of the Law to be generated out of and to be generative of freedom as remaining tolerant.

⁴⁷ Besides the condition of democracy as slavery, as mentioned before, the untimely co-existence of democracy and slavery could be understood as exertion of the tolerance of violence as basis for the sustenance of freedom.

that environment. (AI 41-2; italics added)

On the basis of divergent series of events, Law is a custom, a repetition, a character; it is *performative*. But more than being *imitative* (as in Butler⁴⁸) it is *parodic* (as in Bataille⁴⁹): it *distorts* the pattern of any Law in any other in such a way that the event *cracks open* the hidden multiplicities, a disturbance and turbulence making interstitial space for Life (cf. PR 106).⁵⁰ In this event-ontology of freedom and equality the power of oppression is possible, but *only* as invasion of a general character (of a State of things) sustained and denied by the nexus of events, which always actually acts as *creative distortion*, always already being beyond any State of affairs (cf. PR 27-28, CatOblg ix).⁵¹ The event over-creates the law *as parody* that never can be understood as the *natural* State of things (cf. PR 34).⁵² Slavery, therefore, happens as sedimentation of the parodic nature of a society *not* in negating its performative strategies but—more like Zizek—as one of its ideological articulations.⁵³ Like Butler’s deconstruction of the naturalizing effect of regulative, logocentric mechanisms in its *performative* character, however, Whitehead’s event-ontology does not just “interpret” slavery, but—as an already politically activating, revolutionary thought—*asks for the event*.⁵⁴

The second, the more hidden consequence of this mutual immanence of sedimented Law and the event-nexus of freedom on the basis of a persuasive agency is *the mutual connection and influence of environments*. “The human being is inseparable from its environment in each occasion of its existence. *The environment which the occasion inherits is immanent in it, and, conversely, it is immanent in the environment which it helps to transmit*”

⁴⁸ Cf. J. Butler, “Afterword,” in E. T. Armour, J. Butler, and S. M. St. Ville, eds., *Bodily Citations: Religion, Gender, Theory, and Religion* (Columbia University Press, 2006), 276-291.

⁴⁹ Cf. G. Bataille, *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1938* (Minneapolis: UMP, 1985).

⁵⁰ Whitehead’s “system” is meant to allow for Life, that is, it only makes *sense* as such a “logic of multiplicities” (N 147) that deconstructs Laws as simplifications and exclusions of the ontological constitution of the event, I but on the basis of a living nexus (cf. PR 103). Cf. R. Faber, “‘O Bitches of Impossibility!’—Programmatic Dysfunction in the Chaosmos of Deleuze and Whitehead,” in: A. Cloots and K. Robinson, eds., *Deleuze, Whitehead and the Transformation of Metaphysics* (Brussels: Contactforum, 2005), pp. 117-128.

⁵¹ Cf. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, *op. cit.*, 171-179.

⁵² “The favourite doctrine of the shift from a customary basis for society to a contractual basis, is founded on shallow sociology. There is no escape from customary status. This status is merely another name for the inheritance immanent in each occasion. Inevitably customary status is there, an inescapable condition. On the other hand, the inherited status is never a full determination. There is always the freedom for the determination of individual emphasis. In terms of high-grade human society, there is always the customary fact as an essential element in the meaning of every contractual obligation. There can be no contract which does not presuppose custom, and no custom leaving no loophole for spontaneous contract” (AI 63).

⁵³ This silent contract conspiring to maintain the ideological order is also already a consequence of the ontological tolerance of persuasive energy in its imperfection to overcome violence, which it paradoxically consciously tolerates.

⁵⁴ Here, Whitehead’s event-ontology functions more like Zizek’s *consciously* excluded underside—with its consciously but never talked about ideological agreements— than Butler’s *unconscious* exclusion of ideological motives. Cf. J. Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On The Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993) with S. Zizek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*. 2nd. ed (New York: Verso, 2002).

(AI 63; italics added). To “understand” human politics, social structures and political action, it must be related to *all* societies of the Universe, be they animals, plants, the electromagnetic or geometric societies (cf. PR 110-29). Whitehead's notion of a society, indeed, connects all of these levels of interagency by a common notion of “society,” which takes any nexus of events in its *immanent* Law of grounding but only as performative (repetitive/creative) *self*-grounding, as reason for change and novelty.⁵⁵ As Deleuze has demonstrated, Whitehead's onto/politics is one of the “chaosmos” (F 81) in which *all* societies will, to their own unique extent and with greatly variable intensity, exhibit an in/determinacy of freedom and order, chaos and cosmos, relativity and absoluteness, eternity and time (cf. PR 131).

In its ontological formulation, this amounts to Whitehead's most radical inter/face of ontology and politics in its anti-substantial, anti-essential, and anti individualistic form of the *universal communication of events in a universal process of becoming* (cf. SMW 91).⁵⁶ This postulate on the “nature of things” is not essentializing any content (or harmony of contents) but allows for the *formless* presupposition of an *in/determinacy in process* that always asks for the event of Freedom, Equality, and Persuasive Agency, but must ontologically tolerate the powers of slavery, hierarchy and coercion.⁵⁷

The foundation of all understanding of sociological theory—that is to say, of all understanding of human life—is that no static maintenance of perfection is possible. *This axiom is rooted in the nature of things.* Advance or Decadence are the only choices offered to mankind. The pure conservative is fighting against the essence of the universe. This doctrine requires justification. It is implicitly denied in the learned tradition derived from ancient thought. The doctrine is founded upon three metaphysical principles. One principle is that the very essence of real actuality—that is, of the completely real—is *process*. Thus each actual thing is only to be understood in terms of its becoming and perishing. There is no halt in which the actuality is just its static self, accidentally played upon by qualifications derived from the shift of circumstances. The converse is the truth. (AI 274-5; italics added)⁵⁸

It is this chaotic picture of the untimely conspiracy of ontological and political agency that led to Whitehead's *ontological deconstruction of slavery as performing the*

⁵⁵ Cf. A. Plamondon, *Whitehead's Organic Philosophy of Science* (Albany: SUNY, 1979), part II.

⁵⁶ “I will not repeat myself now, except to remind you that my theory involves the entire abandonment of the notion that simple location is the primary way in which things are involved in space-time. In a certain sense, everything is everywhere at all times” (SMW 91).

⁵⁷ Since this communication always is based on imperfection and novelty, sedimentation and revolt, it does not exclude violence but needs the discord that tolerates violence in order to generate this novelty.

⁵⁸ Because of the mutual immanence of law and event in the Chaosmos, this process is not necessarily only revolutionary but also allows for persuasive agency to perform novelty in the mutual *evolution* of mind and body, individual and society, ideas and the vast layered and varied community of the cosmos. Hence, the “gradual development of Persuasive Agencies in the communal life of mankind was not wholly due to the energizing of ideas. Indeed the very habit of intellectual activity was promoted by the slow natural development of persuasive intercourse within the social life of each community and between different communities” (AI 69).

*illusion of a subjection to a transcendent Law politically utilized to create privileges.*⁵⁹

In the region of political theory, consider the divergence of outlook in the classical Mediterranean civilization. Think of the differences between Pericles and Cleon, Plato and Alexander the Great, Marius and Sulla, Cicero and Caesar. Yet they all agreed in one fundamental notion which lies at the base of all political theory. Throughout the Hellenic and Hellenistic Roman civilizations—those civilizations which we term ‘classical’—it was universally assumed that a large slave population was required to perform services which were unworthy to engage the activities of a fully civilized man. In other words in that epoch a civilized community could not be self-sustaining. *A comparatively barbarous substratum had to be interwoven in the social structure, so as to sustain the civilized apex.* (AI 12-3)

In Whitehead's eyes, it is the same *deception* to favor permanence as eternal essence over events of becoming and perishing (cf. PR 167) with their repetitive performances of patterns that *ontologically* led to Descartes “arbitrary disconnection of ...two kinds of substance, corporeal and mental” (PR 6), of *res cogitans* and *res extensa*, thereby not only reducing mentality to reflection and body to empty space of extension but privileging or justifying the privilege of the mind over the body, man over woman, substance over attribute (cf. AI 83-4). This critique of substantialist disconnection is Whitehead's deconstruction of the binary structure of a State of affairs as phallogocentric privileging. *Epistemologically*, it leads the scientific “bifurcation of nature” by isolation of entities from the web of interrelations of nature and transmuting a form of perception into a “fundamental character of nature” reducing matter to be “the metaphysical substratum of its properties” (CN 16). *Politically*, it leads to slavery, the installation of a “barbarous substratum...interwoven in the social structure, so as to sustain the civilized apex” (AI 13).

With his *onto/political* diagnosis, Whitehead proposes (quite untimely!) that the “whole concept of absolute individuals with absolute rights, and with a contractual power of forming fully defined external relations, has broken down” (AI 63).⁶⁰ Its political activation only plays out persuasive agency as the abolition of the privileging, isolating, and power-sustaining substantialism. Its radical implication is that it has to give up on the notion of

⁵⁹ Like Deleuze (cf. TP 154-5), Whitehead understands *religion* to perform precisely this *transcendent violence* (cf. PR 342-3) that, in consequence, leads to slavery.

⁶⁰ If there are no absolute “rights” for any individual or class *per se*, because they are always multiplicities of occasions in environments, this works in two directions: first, it abandons essential differences between individuals and classes; but, secondly, it abolishes absolute rights—like human rights—in isolation from the environment in which they are proposed. A politics of human rights will have to take this into account when transferring the concept to, e.g., tribal societies, or non-democratic ruled societies. Deleuze's pre-individual singularities only repeat this position (cf. LS 175). It might be the case that those claiming human rights actually manipulate and exploit by doing so; cf. J. Marks, *Gilles Deleuze: Vitalism and Multiplicity* (London: Pluto Press, 1998), 28.

“property”(cf. PR 157-8).⁶¹ While Aristotle as “the apostle of ‘substance and attribute’” leads to “the classificatory logic” (PR 209) of hierarchies of privileging binaries, it led also to the justification of slavery on the basis of understanding *slaves as property of substances* (free citizens).⁶² For Whitehead, however, where “the ‘substance-quality’ concept is avoided and that morphological description [of a static universe of hierarchies] is replaced by description of dynamic process” (PR 7), we cannot hold any conviction regarding “extremes as to the nature of property” (AI 63)—first and foremost that of the human property of a slave, which would only be an extreme “exaggeration” of *ontological* isolation and disconnection justifying subjection and appropriation.

Slavery, the reduction of human beings to private property and economic asset, the reduction of self-creative agencies to passive particles of matter without activity and interrelations, is the utmost political expression of this *substantialist disconnection* with its class theory of natural hierarchies. It is not just a bad habit of a blind society; its installation and sustenance is a political act (or will) *promoting* this disconnecting substantialism with its binary structure and its need for lack to be filled by a transcendent, coercive law. Thereby, as Deleuze and Derrida will say after Whitehead, it follows, demands, expects, instantiates, and wishes for a “metaphysics of presence” instead of difference, multiplicity, variety, diversity, discord, complexity (cf. PR 136).⁶³

Against this “politics of presence” (in which ontology and ideology coincide), slavery really is abolished only if we not only disconnect its practice but *untimely* eradicate its root in *thought*, which for Whitehead equals a process of *revolutionizing our perception*. The disconnecting substantialism to which we conspire in society, culture, economics, philosophy and religion exhibits the signs of the *substantialist modes of perception* of the world.⁶⁴ Ultimately, we must *renew the way we experience the world*—and Whitehead's experiential and experimental philosophy invites us to do so (cf. PR 3-4). In this sense, Whitehead is an

⁶¹ Here Whitehead's epistemological reconsideration of the subject-predicate scheme or its ontological counterpart, the substance attribute scheme is—as his Chaosmos—*immediately political*: where substance is gone, property is gone.

⁶² Cf. Aristotle, *Politics I*, 1259b10-20.

⁶³ Cf. C. Keller and A. Daniell, eds., *Process and Difference: Between Cosmological and Poststructuralist Postmodernism* (Albany: SUNY, 2002).

⁶⁴ In Whitehead, “metaphysics of presence” is ultimately an expression of the perceptive modes of chaotic societies when they begin to evolve into more conscious reactions to their environment. The perception in the mode of “presentational immediacy” thereby degrades, simplifies and substantializes the deeper connectivity of all nexus of events in the mode of “causal efficacy” (cf. cf. S, part I). Cf. P. Schmidt, *Perception and Cosmology in Whitehead's Philosophy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1967). The complication that such a process of simplification is, at the same time, creating the binaries that will lead to slavery and being an evolutionary advance that allows, e.g., for consciousness reflects the problem of the immanent Law and is another way to state the ontological tolerance of persuasive agency for violence.

ally of Deleuze's empiricism and the experiment of experiencing the world differently.⁶⁵ This is Whitehead's post-modern, post-structuralist, non-binary, and anti-slavery testament *par excellence*:

All modern philosophy hinges round the difficulty of describing the world in terms of subject and predicate, substance and quality, particular and universal. The result always does violence to that immediate experience which we express in our actions, our hopes, our sympathies, our purposes, and which we enjoy in spite of our lack of phrases for its verbal... We find ourselves in a buzzing world, *amid a democracy of fellow creatures*; whereas, under some disguise or other, orthodox philosophy can only introduce us to solitary substances, each enjoying an illusory experience: "O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee? (PR 49-50; italic added)

Political action begins with the experiment of experience, of sympathy with the world, of creative decision amidst the *equality of becoming* (cf. PR 162). In this democracy of all fellow beings and beyond the binaries of substance and attribute, everything becomes different(ly). It becomes the story of the active deconstruction of privileging binaries, hierarchies of Logocentrism, and the transcendent Law of the One. In the next section, I will further follow this story of difference with Deleuze in his approximation of slavery.

II. Onto/Political Interference (Deleuze's Problem)

In his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, Baruch Spinoza contests that God can be understood as the eminent One with which not only the true religion can be snatched out of the multiplicity of religions (as the only permanent Real within the flux of the multitude of changing reality) but with which a politics of favoritism can be justified.⁶⁶ His alternative suggestion, a *politics of equality* (of every religion *coram Deo*), mirrors the fundamental assumption of his *Ethics* that the infinite attributes of the "one substance" of God are *natura naturans* not by being unified in a transcendent "One" but precisely by being *infinitely multiple* (cf. EP 41-52). Instead of the *theology* of the One (God), he imagined an *ontology* of multiplicity underpinning a *politics* of equality. Instead of *theo/politics*, he imagined *onto/politics*.

Although this interpretation of Spinoza is not uncontested, it is at the heart of Deleuze's Spinoza—laying out an *ontology of immanence* (cf. WP 35-60).⁶⁷ And it is

⁶⁵ Cf. Rajchman, *op. cit.*, 19-27.

⁶⁶ Cf. M Yaffe, ed., *Spinoza's Theologico: Political Treatise*. The Focus Philosophical Library (Focus Publishing, 2004).

⁶⁷ Cf. P. Machery, "The Encounter with Spinoza," in P. Patton, ed., *Deleuze: A Critical Reader* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1996), 139-161.

precisely what Whitehead wants to save of Spinoza: the deconstruction of his theo/politics whereby it becomes part of Whitehead's own onto/politics (cf. PR 8-9). In fact both Whitehead and Deleuze can be understood (although differently) to create a basis for their politics of Freedom and Equality by investing into such an ontology of multiplicity. In the wake of Spinoza, Whitehead's and Deleuze's paradigmatic shift from the One to the multiple and from theology to ontology in its intricate relation to the formulation of a politics of equality contains a twofold movement: from *theo/politics* to *onto/politics* and from *onto/theology* to *onto/politics*.⁶⁸ It is the dethroning of the Divine as *transcendent* justification of politics—with “God as the supreme agency of compulsion” (AI 167)—and the transfer from a *description* of this Divine for prescribing political *structures* into the quest for *immanent conditions of ontological activation* for political *activity* with which both philosophers are concerned ontologically (cf. AI 169).⁶⁹

Deleuze's famous but cryptic reference to Whitehead's *Process and Reality* as being “one of the greatest books in modern philosophy” (DR 284-5) was precisely meant to indicate the philosophical scheme of Whitehead's categories not to talk of a *transcendent* reality (as classical metaphysics would do) but of the *transcendental* conditions of the possibility of *activity*—ontological and political; but differing from Kant by indicating the transcendental condition of actuality insofar as it is *actual* not insofar as it is *possible*.⁷⁰ In naming this quest “transcendental empiricism” (IM 25), Deleuze situates himself in a theoretical perspective with Whitehead's “principle of empiricism” (SMW 178), namely that ontology is about activity, actuality and agency, resting on and actually being *experience* (cf. PR 3).⁷¹ Both

⁶⁸ While we could entertain the notion that Heidegger, at the same time as Whitehead, made this onto/political move and even made it the center of his critique of the history of metaphysics—cf. M. Heidegger, “What is Metaphysics?” in: *Basic Writings* (San Francisco: Harper, 1993), 89-110—with his *Kehre* he made Being an agent again, while Whitehead and Deleuze insist on the immanence of this agency to events. The political problem is obvious: any agency of Being (besides God) makes onto/politics vulnerable to fascism. Cf. J. Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question* (Chicago: UCP, 1991):

⁶⁹ Cf. M. Bryden, ed., *Deleuze and Religion* (London: Routledge, 2001). Whitehead points to the mutual immanence implicated in the original development of the doctrine of the Trinity. But he also points out that “theologians never made this advance into general metaphysics. The reason for this check was another unfortunate presupposition. The nature of God was exempted from all the metaphysical categories which applied to the individual things in this temporal world. The concept of him was a sublimation from its barbaric origin. He stood in the same relation to the whole World as early Egyptian or Mesopotamian kings stood to their subject populations. Also the moral characters were very analogous. In the final metaphysical sublimation, he became the one absolute, omnipotent, omniscient source of all being, for his own existence requiring no relations to anything beyond himself. He was internally complete” (AI 169).

⁷⁰ Cf. J. Williams, “Deleuze and Whitehead: The Concept of Reciprocal Determination” in Cloots and Robinson, eds., *op. cit.*, 89-106; but also S. Shaviro, “Deleuze's Encounter with Whitehead” @ www.shaviro.com.

⁷¹ Cf. F. Balke, *Gilles Deleuze. Einführungen*, vol. 1090 (Frankfurt: Campus, 1998), 29-50. Whitehead reformulates his “ontological principle” as an *empiricist* principle in saying that “[y]ou cannot know what is red by merely thinking of redness. You can only find red things by adventuring amid physical experiences in *this* actual world. This doctrine is the ultimate ground of empiricism; namely, that eternal objects tell no tales as to their ingressions” (PR 256).

philosophers, therefore, indicate that *political action begins with the experiment of experience and to experience differently.*

Indeed, this empiricism changes the whole ontological question for both philosophers and, consequently, the kind of untimely resonance between ontological and political agency. For Deleuze, “there is something very strange [in Hume] which completely displaces empiricism, giving it a new power, a theory and practice of relations, of the AND” (D 15). His experiential and experimental ontology “[s]ubstitute[s] the AND for IS”—as does Whitehead’s shift from being to becoming. With Deleuze, ontology again becomes event-ontology, becomes the “[t]hinking *with* AND, instead of thinking IS, instead of thinking *for* IS”—and it is with this AND that “empiricism” reveals its secret, and it “has never had another secret” (D 57). Instead of being concerned with the IS of being and its implicit substantialism, the AND asks for the *activity of becoming*. It seeks the event, the novelty of the unexpected and unrespectable. Instead of Reality we seek process; instead of given structures of Being we seek the becoming of novelty.⁷² It is with Whitehead that Deleuze asks the question of how genuine novelty is possible (TF 79); and it answers with the experiment of experience, its never ending becoming, the AND of creativity and novelty. Here, “to think” with the AND becomes “to follow the witch’s flight” (TP 41), the magic of the unpredictable, the unexpressed novelty of becoming.⁷³

Furthermore, as in Whitehead, the IS-ontology is nothing but onto/theology and theo/politics both philosophers seek to deconstruct through their AND-“ontology” of multiplicity precisely by attacking the superiority of Being over becoming, the binary privilege of the One over the many, the justification of political organization by a *transcendent* foundation of the (eternal) Law over against an *immanent* performance of “meta-stable” characters of repetition (cf. AI ch. 7).⁷⁴ And it is precisely with the question of slavery that Deleuze, in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, draws the consequences of the basic difference between an ontology of Being and becoming, and of the respective ontological presupposition for political action that leads either to slavery or freedom.⁷⁵

This is why Nietzsche presents the dialectic [of slave and master] as a speculation of the pleb, as the way of thinking of the slave: the abstract through

⁷² This implies a genealogical explanation of Whitehead’s title *Process and Reality*.

⁷³ Badiou has taken up this thinking of the unprecedented in philosophy and poetry (cf. HI, ch. 2) as did Whitehead (MT 174).

⁷⁴ In physics, “metastability” is said of structures that are labile under all conditions breaking the symmetry that holds them in place but can be interrupted when you know the point where the balance breaks; cf. L. Sussking, *The Cosmic Landscape: String Theory and the Illusion of Intelligent Design* (New York: Black Bay Books, 2006), 294-97. Gilbert Simondon calls them “meta-stable systems”; cf. Rajchman, *op. cit.*, 58.

⁷⁵ Cf. M. Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (Minneapolis: UMP, 1995), 32-7.

the contradiction then prevails over the concrete feeling of positive difference, reaction over action, revenge and *ressentiment* take the place aggression...Moreover, the relation of the master and the slave is not, in itself dialectical...It is the slave, the slave's perspective, the way of thinking belonging to the slave's perspective. The famous dialectical aspect of the mater-slave relationship depends on the fact that power is conceived not as will to power but as representation of power, representation of superiority, recognition of "the one" of the superiority "of "the other"...The slave only conceives of power as the object of a recognition, the content of representation...and therefore makes it depend...on a simple attribution of established value. (NP 10).

In being reactive, instead of active, in being deprived of the immanent activity of political agency, the slave's view is to be only the *negative folio* of a superior reality or transcendent Law of established values. To follow or to break it is always a question of a pre-given measure—the pre-given possibility to instantiate (cf. B 43).⁷⁶ *Representation* is, like Whitehead's *fallacy of misplaced concreteness* (SMW 51), the division from, and even replacement of, the immanent activity (immanent power) by a subjection to a general Law of power of which the slave *is a mere instance* (following or rebelling against her own pre-established "essence").⁷⁷

The mania for representing, for being represented, for getting oneself represented; for having representatives and represented: that is the mania that is common to all slaves, the only relation between themselves they can conceive of, the relation that they impose with their triumph. The notion of representation poisons philosophy: it is the direct product of the slave, and the relation between slaves, it constitutes the worst, the most mediocre and most base interpretation of power...When we make power an object of representation we necessarily make it dependent upon the factor according to which a thing is represented or not, recognized or not. Now, only values which are already current, only accepted values, give criteria of recognition in this way...What seems symptomatic in this philosophy of the will is conformism, absolute misunderstanding of the will to power as *creation* of new values. (NP 81-2)

As in Whitehead, Deleuze's political activity of the "will to power" is finding the universal validity of the *singularity* of the political act in the struggle against any *generality* said to be the Law, i.e., the *form* of realization, of any ontological activity. Regaining the *self-power of activity*, the *self-creativity* of any act of becoming, not guided by any transcendent

⁷⁶ As Deleuze shows with Bergson, this is the precise place where Deleuze's virtuality brakes away from possibility which can change only its own existence, actually adding nothing to the perpetuation of the performed structure (cf. B, ch. 2).

⁷⁷ Therefore, for Deleuze the *power of the singularity*, which cannot become subsumed under a law of generality (cf. DR 1-2, 37-8), is never granted, but originally active, the "will to power" which was also the basis for Whitehead's power of self-creativity (cf. PR 56). Becoming a "subject," an "individual," therefore, is always also a subjection under the Law of generality; cf. J. Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford UP, 1997), 3.

Law but by the *immanent play of relativity of singular events*, initiates ontology as activation of becoming and genuine novelty over against an onto/theology of eternal Being and an onto/politics of multiplicity over against a theo/politics of a general Law over all its “subjects” (cf. AI 236).⁷⁸ In its untimely manner, this onto/politics *calls for the event of freedom and equality over against the dictatorship of slavery*.

In this sense, the AND-ontology of Whitehead and Deleuze *calls forth the event of a revolutionary action that is mediated by the experience of one’s multiplicity that cannot be captured by any general Law of which we only would become represented instances* (cf. PR 29-30).⁷⁹ Slavery can be abolished only by this new experience of one’s *ontological self-creativity* which activates that we *become singularities by the unrepresented difference of the event repeating only its difference*, not establishing its sameness or identity (cf. DR 57). Whiteheads and Deleuze’s reformulation of ontological agency as *immanent* is directed to allow for political action as freeing activity from the mindset of hierarchical transcendence that establishes slavery in all of its forms. The whole deconstruction of the canon of philosophical texts by Whitehead and Deleuze can be read as an attack against the pre-ontological One, the transcendent Being, of which multiplicity flows and which conceals novelty, spent only as transcendent distribution of representative power. Whitehead’s preference for *immanent creativity* or *self-creativity* over against a transcendent creator (AI 236) and Deleuze’s *univocity of being* (cf. DR 35-42) or the “Ommitudo” (WP 35) as rhizomatic interplay of plains of immanence of uncontrolled multitudes over “expressive units” (TF 81) of the One—both revolutionize ontology announcing a *public Chaosmos* that calls for political action as setting free “discord” (AI 257)⁸⁰ and the “discordant accord” (TF 131) of polyphony as basis of freedom and equality.⁸¹

It is precisely with Spinoza and his own onto/politics that both philosophers reach such a conclusion. Whitehead, who transforms Spinoza’s divine “one substance” into a

⁷⁸ In its most radical form, Whitehead expresses this move as avoiding “the external Creator, eliciting this final togetherness out of nothing” and adopting “a metaphysical principle belonging to the nature of things, that there is nothing in the Universe other than instances of this passage and components of these instances.” This enables him to say that “the word Creativity expresses the notion that each event is a process issuing in novelty. Also if guarded in the phrases Immanent Creativity, or Self-Creativity, it avoids the implication of a transcendent Creator” (AI 236).

⁷⁹ In the reception of Whitehead’s philosophy “multiplicity,” the seventh category of existence (cf. PR 22) is still awaiting a thorough understanding, especially as related to the multiplicity of eternal objects (which has a strange connection to Deleuze’s virtuality) precisely by not being a class of universals (cf. PR 46).

⁸⁰ “The social value of liberty lies in its production of discords” (AI 257).

⁸¹ In their thought, Deleuze and Whitehead might differ in how they approach multiplicity, as “harmony of harmony” (AI 296) or as “polyphony of polyphony” (TF 82), but both strongly thereby critique Leibniz’s pre-established harmony as still seeking an overarching unity or One, they discordantly despise; cf. Faber; *Bitches*, *op. cit.*, 123-8.

“substantial activity” (SMW 107), which is not Divine, deconstructs it as “the one underlying activity of realisation individualising itself in an interlocked plurality of modes” aiming at disjunctive multiplicity for which “concrete fact is process” (SMW 70). By taking any pre-ontological (transcendent) Oneness away from his ontological activity, Spinoza’s “arbitrary introduction of the ‘modes’” (PR 7) is also gone. This, for Whitehead abolishes the last resort of the creation of substantial binaries in the form of

the abandonment of the subject-predicate forms of thought, so far as concerns the presupposition that this form is a direct embodiment of the most ultimate characterization of fact. The result is that the ‘substance-quality’ concept is avoided; and that morphological description is replaced by description of dynamic process. Also Spinoza’s ‘modes’ now become the sheer actualities; so that, though analysis of them increases our understanding, it does not lead us to the discovery of any higher grade of reality (PR 7)

Whitehead's “ultimate,” therefore, “is actual in virtue of its accidents. It is only then capable of characterization through its accidental embodiments, and apart from these accidents is devoid of actuality.” Instead of Spinoza’s One, where “this ultimate is God, who is also equivalently termed ‘The Absolute’,” his “ultimate,” “termed ‘creativity’,” does not “illegitimately allow..[for] a final, ‘eminent’ reality, beyond that ascribed to any of its accidents” but “makes process ultimate” (PR 7).⁸² This is the reason that freedom and equality arise from his *ontology*. There is an ontological *freedom* of the event in its self-creative decision-process (cf. PR 26-7). And there is an *equality* of all events because, although they “differ among themselves” in intensity, it is not possible to find “behind actual entities...anything more real” (PR 18).⁸³ It is latest form, Whitehead's radical abolishment of binary privileges subscribes only to an ultimate equality of irreplaceably multiple events of freedom. While

. . . Spinoza emphasized the fundamental infinitude and introduced a subordinate differentiation by finite modes. . . . Leibniz emphasized the necessity of finite monads and based them on a substratum of Deistic infinitude. Neither of them adequately emphasized the fact that *infinitude is mere vacancy apart from its embodiment of finite values*, and. . . finite entities are *meaningless apart from their relationship beyond themselves* (MG 106;

⁸² Developed from Descartes to Spinoza (cf. PR 6-7), Whitehead, now, can understand his own development as “closely allied to Spinoza’s scheme of thought” (PR 7), but in making his radical de-substantializing move away from any ultimate One, he has pre-envisioned Deleuze’s logic of multiplicities.

⁸³ This means that if we want to continue to talk about the Divine at all—and Whitehead is inclined to do so—this cannot happen in a language that establishes the privilege of being to it again; in other words “God is an actual entity”(PR 18) and not at all an exception to this univocity of Being (cf. SMW 179). Cf. R. Faber, “De-Ontologizing God: Levinas, Deleuze, and Whitehead,” in Keller and Daniell, eds., *op. cit.*, 209-234.

italics added).⁸⁴

In naming these actual singularities *self-creativity values*, he invokes Nietzsche's and Deleuze's "creation of new values" (NP 82) and poses this process as "essence" of ontological and political activity.⁸⁵ If events are active becomings of new values, i.e., self-creative activities of decision, which "constitutes the very meaning of actuality" (PR 43), ontological and political activity frees itself from general representation, that is, *reactivity*, and demands *activity* as immanent potential for the creation of political structures. Other than in Badiou, political axioms are not prescriptions *ex nihilo* created "under the fire of the event" (IT 54) that has nothing to do with ontology—attaching values to the pure political will, so to say⁸⁶—but express the becoming of values in the self-creative processes.⁸⁷ Because events/values cannot be *described*, as in the IS-ontology, but *must be acted out*, as in the AND-ontology, values do not "exist," but—as Deleuze would say—"insist" (LS 34) as *activities*—un-preformatted by ontological structures (only to be instantiated) or ideas of transcendent origin (cf. SMW 93).⁸⁸

Like Whitehead, Deleuze also mediates his resonance of AND-ontology and politics of multiplicities through Spinoza.⁸⁹ In his *Lecture on Spinoza in Vincennes of December 12, 1980* (= LV), Deleuze asks "in what sense can Ontology entail or must it entail a political philosophy?"⁹⁰ And he found the issue of this connection to be Spinoza's urge to "understand

⁸⁴ For this radical, latest phase in Whitehead's thought cf. R. Faber, "'The Infinite Movement of Evanescence'—The Pythagorean Puzzle in Plato, Deleuze, and Whitehead," *American Journal of Theology and Philosophy* 21 (2000): 171-199.

⁸⁵ Cf. R. Sayer, *Wert und Wirklichkeit: Zum Verständnis des metaphysischen Wertbegriffs im Spätdenken Alfred North Whiteheads und dessen Bedeutung für den Menschen in seiner kulturellen Kreativität* (Würzburg: Ergon, 1999).

⁸⁶ If *value* is not seen as a *mediating* term between description and prescription, ontology and politics remain radically unrelated. Furthermore, value seems to come in only in a capitalist sense of communal worth attached by the market.

⁸⁷ Although this might sound quite similar since Badiou also understands "political sequences" as "*singularities*" (IT 53), the difference arises out of the division of ontology (as multiplicity in itself) and politics (as counting multiplicity as one) is in peril to reinstate an essential divide between human beings and all other beings (as in Heidegger). This becomes obvious when Badiou reduces the "capacity which is specifically human"—I line with Aristotle's *logos*—to be "that of thought" and not of "interest" (IT 53). Together with this renewed Cartesian reduction of human existence to *res cogitans*, political axioms like justice appear as Platonic ideas which either move into actuality (totally) or fade out, but are eternally beyond their actualization (cf. IT 54). Here the event that is divided from ontology reinstates precisely the a form of substantialism, Whitehead and Deleuze were trying to break down because it initiates the coherence of slavery.

⁸⁸ "Remembering the poetic rendering of our concrete experience, we see at once that the element of value, of being valuable, of having value, of being an end in itself, of being something which is for its own sake, must not be omitted in any account of an event as the most concrete actual something. 'Value' is the word I use for the intrinsic reality of an event. Value is an element which permeates through and through the poetic view of nature" (SMW 93).

⁸⁹ Cf. Hardt, *op. cit.*, ch. 4.

⁹⁰ In his lecture, Deleuze situates the development of Spinoza's political treaties (from the Theologico-Political Treaties to the Political Treaties) in his political experience in the Netherlands (assassination of the DeWitt Brothers) through which he abandoned any justification of liberal monarchy.

why people fight for their slavery (cf. AO 29).⁹¹ They seem to be so content to be slaves that they will do anything to remain slaves. How to explain such a thing? It fascinates him. Literally, how to explain that people don't revolt" (LV)?⁹² Indeed, following Spinoza, Deleuze in the *Anti-Oedipus* postulates this to be *the* question of political philosophy: "Why do people fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?" (AO 29). Why do we subject ourselves to a social structure that oppresses us? In his Vincennes-Lecture he answers with "a fundamental relation between ontology and a certain style of politics." And if "political philosophy...is placed in an ontological perspective," we are confronted with precisely the problem of the difference "between pure ontologies and philosophies of the One" (LV).

Philosophies of the One are philosophies that fundamentally imply a hierarchy of existing things, hence the principle of consequence, hence the principle of emanation: from the One emanates Being, from Being emanates other things, etc. the hierarchies of the Neo-Platonists.⁹³ Therefore, the problem of the state, they will encounter...: the institution of a political hierarchy...

What appears to me striking in a *pure ontology* is the point at which it repudiates the hierarchies. In effect, if there is no One superior to being, if being is said of everything that is and is said of everything that is in one and the same sense, this is what appeared to me to be the key ontological proposition: there is no unity superior to being and, consequently, being is said of everything that of which it is said, i.e. is said of everything that is, is said of all being [étant], in one and the same sense. It is the world of immanence. *This world of ontological immanence is an essentially anti-hierarchical world...It is anti-hierarchical thought. It is almost a kind of anarchy. There is an anarchy of beings in being.*⁹⁴ (LV; italics added)

Precisely as in Whitehead, Deleuze's transformation of an theo/political and onto/theological "ontology of the One" into a "pure ontology" is what onto/politics is about: to activate the denial of any ontological hierarchy; to discover *ontological anarchy*; to liberate *ontological freedom and equality* from the *ontological slavery of subjection under the "One*

⁹¹ W. Smith, "Deleuze and the Question of Desire: Towards an Immanent Theory of Ethics," in: *Parrhesia* 2 (2007): 66–78.

⁹² Deleuze explains the fact that Spinoza does not speak of revolution with the fact that "[t]he whole of the seventeenth century is full of reflections on how a revolution can not be betrayed. Revolution was always thought by revolutionaries in terms of how it is that such things are always betrayed. Now, the recent example for Spinoza, s contemporaries is the revolution of Cromwell, who was the most fantastic traitor to the revolution that Cromwell himself had imposed" (LV).

⁹³ "Among Neo-Platonists, there are hierarchies everywhere, there is a celestial hierarchy, a terrestrial hierarchy, and what the Neo-Platonists call hypostases are precisely the terms in the institution of a hierarchy" (LV).

⁹⁴ As in Whitehead's ontology, for Deleuze: "It is the basic intuition of ontology: all beings are the same [se valent]. The stone, the insane, the reasonable, the animal, from a certain point of view, from the point of view of Being [être], they are the same. Each is as much as there is in it, and being is said in one and the same sense of the stone, of the man, of the insane, of the reasonable. It is a very beautiful idea. It is a very savage kind of world" (LV).

beyond Being.” Thereby, pure ontology *places* an politics of freedom and equality.

[T]he political domain depends precisely on this kind of intuition of *equal being, of anti-hierarchical being*. And the way in which they think the state is no longer the relation of somebody who commands and others who obey. In Hobbes, the political relation is the relation of somebody who commands and of somebody who obeys. This is the pure political relation. From the point of view of an ontology, it is not that. There, Spinoza did not go along with Hobbes at all. The problem of an ontology is, consequently, according to this: *being is said of everything that is, this is how to be free.* (LV; italic added)

Indeed, if the paradigm of ontology is that of obedience to a transcendent One, which exerts alien power over being, then “the political relation is the relation of obedience”; “it is not the relation of the exercise of power” (LV) but the exercise of subjection. This ontology of the One establishes political slavery!⁹⁵ “In a pure ontology, where there is no One superior to being” with its radical equality of being, however, “whatever it is, in every way exercises all that it can of its power” (LV).⁹⁶ This ontology of self-creative power demands political activity for freedom and equality.⁹⁷

As is true for Whitehead’s “equality” of becoming, Deleuze’s ontology of equality cannot be understood as a *foundation* for a politics of equality—thereby only repeating the (t)error of obedience.⁹⁸ The ontology of univocity connects ontology and politics only untimely (cf. DR 242) that is, it *allows for* a political activation of freedom and equality but also *tolerates* the possibility of differences in the quality and intensity of power activated.⁹⁹ Ontologically everything is equal and free in the exertion of self-creative power, “[b]ut the powers are not equal” (LV).

Being is...said of everything that is, but everything that is is not equal, i.e. does not have the same power. ...From the point of view of the difference between beings a whole idea of aristocracy can be established, namely there are the better ones. (LV)¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Cf. AI 169. The parallel with Whitehead’s claim is striking: “By a metaphysical sublimation of this doctrine of God as the supreme agency of compulsion, he is transformed into the one supreme reality, omnipotently disposing a wholly derivative world”(AI 166).

⁹⁶ If we understand the *exercise* of the power of what one *can* be as the process of the event to activate, this is what the AND-ontology is about.

⁹⁷ Other than in Badiou, for Deleuze “analysis and politics” (?) *have* a relation, although not one of causation or instantiation, but an *untimely* one. *Value* mediates this untimely resonance in Whitehead, the *Virtual* in Deleuze.

⁹⁸ We cannot *obey* equality; it only insists as activation, as alteration, as multiplication. If it becomes obedience, it becomes the generality under which States take their right to terrorize people in the name of equality.

⁹⁹ In this sense, Deleuze’s multiplicities cannot be said to be violent but to tolerate violence as expression of a transformation of self-creative power into general power of subjection, whenever unities experience their singularity as a lack that has to desire unity (cf. AO 8-13).

¹⁰⁰ Here, Deleuze coalesces with Whitehead’s univocity in allowing for the whole range of intensities to establish hierarchies, which, for Whitehead, become the evolving structures of the universe. “‘Order’ is a mere generic term: there can only be some definite specific ‘order,’ not merely ‘order’ in the vague. Thus every definite total

In order to “establish” a politics of freedom and equality, Deleuze’s free play of powers would have to be transformed into a *structure* that does not erase a difference of quality and intensity. However, as we have seen in Whitehead, such a “civilization”—with all of its experience of sympathy—would create hierarchies of order that will hinder these structures to become perfectly civilized. As with Whitehead’s “persuasive power,” Deleuze’s world of Nietzschean “will to power” out of ontological equality is, as he says, just “a very beautiful idea” that remains “a very savage kind of world” (LV). But how, we may ask, would such an “civil state...[as] the ensemble of conditions under which humanity can exercise its power in the best way” (LV) prevent slavery? While I do not see any constructive moves of Deleuze toward the considerations of Laclau and Mouffe will become important.¹⁰¹

III. Onto/Political Transference (Badiou’s Intervention)

For Badiou, the basic question of political theory is to address matters of justice and a politics of freedom and equality (IT 52-3). Obviously all three philosophers, Whitehead, Deleuze and Badiou, are “lovers” of a politics of equality but they are also “rivals” in their love. For Deleuze, it is of the essence of the philosophical activity in its creation of concepts to be rivalling in their common love (cf. WP 4). I will address their rivalry through *three interventions*¹⁰² staged with Badiou in order to use these tensions to further explore three implications of Whitehead’s and Deleuze’s onto/politics of equality regarding its ability to further *political agency that abolishes slavery*: becoming-multiple, becoming-democratic, becoming-minor.

Badiou’s philosophy is constructive insofar as it is about *salvation*. He attempts no less than to “salvage reason from positivism, the subject from deconstruction, being from Heidegger, the infinite from theology, the event from Deleuze, revolution from Stalin, a critique of the state from Foucault...and the affirmation of love from American popular

phase of ‘givenness’ involves a reference to that specific ‘order’ which is its dominant ideal, and involves the specific ‘disorder’ due to its inclusion of ‘given’ components which exclude the attainment of the full ideal. The attainment is partial, and thus there is ‘disorder’; but there is some attainment, and thus there is some ‘order.’ There is not just one ideal ‘order’ which all actual entities should attain and fail to attain. In each case there is an ideal peculiar to each particular actual entity, and arising from the dominant components in its phase of ‘givenness.’ This notion of ‘dominance’ will have to be discussed later in connection with the notion of the systematic character of a ‘cosmic epoch’ and of the subordinate systematic characters of ‘societies’ included in a cosmic epoch” (PR 83-4).

¹⁰¹ E. Laclau and C. Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (Verso: 2001). In their view, similar to Whitehead, radical democracy must include *hegemonic* agents (cf. PR 109).

¹⁰² For Badiou’s notion of intervention that names the event cf. Hallward, *op. cit.*, 125. I only differ here in that I think that Badiou, in fact, names the event in Whitehead and Deleuze that he tries to “situate” in them, i.e., away from them as “situation” of *his* event.

culture. He asserts a philosophy of the subject without recourse to phenomenology, a philosophy of truth without recourse to adequation, a philosophy of the event without recourse to historicism.”¹⁰³ In a sense, like Whitehead’s move to “pre-Kantian phraseologies” (PR 51),¹⁰⁴ Badiou wants to save what has been lost in the formation of the tradition of philosophical texts by recurring to the pre-Heideggerian, pre-Deleuzian, and pre-Foucaultian modes of thought, thereby actually *aiming at becoming* post-Heideggerian, post-Deleuzian, and post-Foucaultian guided by an ontology of multiplicity (AE 23-31), the quest for the event (cf. IT 2-10) and a “logic of possible worlds.”¹⁰⁵ In the course of this enterprise, Badiou asks important questions which I take to be interventions to Whiteheadian and Deleuzian onto/politics.¹⁰⁶

First intervention: In his critique of Deleuze’s philosophy of multiplicity and univocity, Badiou claims that Deleuze never has abandoned a philosophy of the One but rather was its latest expression (CB 9-10).¹⁰⁷ If this was true, the hierarchical binaries would be in place again and—as a political consequence—slavery was the unavoidable consequence.¹⁰⁸ If we, however, want to believe with Whitehead that “Freedom and Equality constitute an inevitable presupposition for modern political thought” (AI 13), multiplicity *is* the radical place of onto/politics.¹⁰⁹ We can counter Badiou’s accusation with Deleuze’s rhizomatic acclamation in *A Thousand Plateaus*—to “be multiplicities” (TP 24), to *become multiple!* “Becoming-multiple” is the expression of an ontology that *insists* in political activity. Conversely, *whenever our activity, agency and action is that of becoming multiple it is a political act!*

¹⁰³ Hallward, *op. cit.*, xxviii-xxix.

¹⁰⁴ For the intense revision of the meaning of Whitehead’s “pre-Kantian modes of thought” (PR ix) as actually post-Kantian, cf. Cf. Keith Robinson, “The New Whitehead? An Ontology of the Virtual in Whitehead’s Metaphysics,” in *Symposion* 10, vol.1 (2006), pp. 69-80.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. J. Clemens, “Had we but worlds enough, and time, this absolute, philosopher...” in *Cosmos and History* 2 no. 1-2 (2006): 277-310. For my arguments on Whitehead’s “multiple worlds” cf. R. Faber, “On In/Finite Becoming: Philosophical Considerations on Whitehead’s Many Multiple Worlds” in *Claremont, Cosmology Conference, October 2006* (CPS-files).

¹⁰⁶ Contrary to Deleuze, Whitehead does not appear in Badiou’s “regrouping of the philosophy of the last thirty years” (cf. Hallward, *op. cit.*, xxviii) but only surfaces as rudimentary in Deleuze’s list of “unexpected philosophers” (CB 10). And if he does, he sweepingly falls under Badiou’s extended verdict against Deleuze to be a thinker of the event at all; cf. Hallward, *op. cit.*, 283n77.

¹⁰⁷ I cannot follow the Badiou’s meticulous analysis of Deleuze’s alleged philosophy of the One in CB but I will *counter* it on the basis of the developed contentions of part 2 of this paper, which I take to be able to annul the criticism if there would be time to do so.

¹⁰⁸ In fact, the accusation would equal Derrida’s criticism of Heidegger as implying a fascist necessity, which I have already countered with Whitehead’s and Deleuze’s radical de-substantialization of Being. When, from the textual basis presented here, this can be shown to be indeed Whitehead’s and Deleuze’s approach, then any accusation of the contrary (of a remainder of an ontology of the One) must be deconstructed for its own ideological interests. To “save the event from Deleuze” might then be analyzed more in terms of the implication of such a salvation.

¹⁰⁹ Anything less would open the possibility of Being as agent again and, hence, the peril of fascism; cf. TP 462-63).

In becoming-multiple, any reference to the One either has to be *decomposed* in the process of becoming (so as to not remain a binary superior to multiplicity) or—on a global level—can only be invoked as *limit* of multiplicity, not as its master.¹¹⁰ Whitehead answers the first challenge with his actual entities to “become one” (concrecence, synthesis) as *becoming one among many* (transition) (cf. PR 21-2)—a process of unification and multiplication at the same time.¹¹¹ He answers the second, the global challenge with this composing/decomposing *activity* of becoming-one-among-many being *immanent* “creativity” (PR 21), which is, in fact, a *limit of this non-preference* of unification over multiplication and a *limit of the non-transcendence* of creativity. Both indicate a radical emptying of the notion of the One. Ontological activity is “one” for all actual becoming in becoming-multiple, but *only* as indication of a *pure difference/multiplicity* of “Immanent Creativity, or Self-Creativity” (AI 236).¹¹²

Deleuze, from his early investigation of Bergson’s “duration” on, follows a path similar to Whitehead, by defining the event as “*synthesis* of this unity and multiplicity” (B 45). Deleuze’s pre-individual singularities (cf. LS 107-11) are *movements of togetherness* as one and many, inseparable and yet heterogeneous, traversed only by the “infinite speed” (WP 21) of the ever-moving event. His events are, like Whitehead’s actual occasions, disjunctive syntheses (cf. LS 174-77), vagabonds, never *comprised* by oneness, only *processes of becoming-multiple*. In the global level, Deleuze’s indications of Oneness—like “univocity of Being” (DR 303-4), “plane of consistency” (TP 70-73), “plane of immanence” (WP 37) or “One-All” (*Omnitudo*) (WP 35)¹¹³—can only be understood as articulations of a *limit of pure*

¹¹⁰ The necessity of such a limit may seem to proceed with a language it has actually abandoned, but this is only a consequence of the void its abandonment has necessitated.

¹¹¹ Whitehead answers the problem how to avoid the constitution of binaries with three strategies, all involved in the concrecence/transition, one/many rhythm: Firstly, everything dual is mutually conditioning; secondly, synthesis (becoming-one) is not a countable process; thirdly, Oneness can be achieved only locally and must decompose in an ever renewed disjunctive multiplicity.

¹¹² Insofar as Badiou criticizes Spinoza (in Deleuze) that he still unites all attributes, although infinitely, into the oneness of the Divine nature, Whitehead follows this criticism (cf. PR 6-7). Like Badiou (cf. BE 10), the cosmos or the world or any unification of an event is *never* the unity of a whole cosmos or world, but a synthesis here and now, in the event, for this event, coming out of, and leaving an infinite world of disjunctive multiplicity behind (cf. PR 22, CatExpl v). Insofar as Badiou names this infinite excess of pre-consistent multiplicity the void, Whitehead is a philosopher of the event insofar as he has captured this activity of negativity, of *exclusion of the incoherent* with his notion of “negative prehension” (cf. PR 23) and the thereby unaccounted for *khora* (place) or *kenon* (void) (cf. AI 134).

¹¹³ Although Deleuze, other than Whitehead (with Badiou), does not believe in the power of negativity and hence does not have a notion of the “void”—as both Badiou and Whitehead do—he still invokes the inconsistent multiplicity that can never be united with his notion of the Chaos of all planes of immanence, which he in *What is Philosophy?* relates to Spinoza, thereby disvaluing Badiou’s criticism of Spinoza and Deleuze at the same time (cf. WP 59-60).

difference.¹¹⁴ As in Whitehead (and in criticism of Spinoza) they despise any underlying (Divine) substrate and indicate with Nietzsche the *pure multiplicity of self-creative power*.¹¹⁵ For Deleuze—as is true for Whitehead—the power of the event is the only power that is not obedient to external powers or laws but exercises the power of self-creation and, hence, the *radical and total abolishment of the potentiality and legitimacy of slavery*—untimely evoking the revolutionary activation of its abolishment for freedom and equality.

Probably the most direct indication of the transference of the *ontological power* of self-creativity into the *political activity* of becoming-multiple can be found in Deleuze's concept of the “body without organs” (= BwO)—a persistent notion throughout his work. Not only does it deconstruct the binaries of one/multiple, mind/body, and individual/society; it really is the *activity* of this deconstruction, the *political act* of becoming-multiple *itself*.¹¹⁶ Especially in its incarnation in *A Thousand Plateaus* (cf. TP 149-66), the BwO appears as a *limit* of philosophy, psychoanalysis and society, indicating the experiment of the *liberating activity of becoming-multiple*. It is not a unified concept. Precisely because it allows for *multiple* ways of constitution, it does not take away the AND, the difference and addition of the hypochondric body, the paranoid body, the schizo body, the drugged body, the masochist body (cf. PT 150). It is multiple by being “empty” (TP 152), populated only by “intensities,” being “*spatium* that is itself intensive, lacking extension”(TP 153), allowing for all intensities freely to arise. The only thing it is not is “*the judgment of God*” (TP 150), that is, the transcendent Law that takes the intensities in their self-creative power away, that produces *lack* and *unfulfilling* desire the ultimate product of which is—the slave agent, slave activity, and structures of slavery.¹¹⁷

Liberated from the obedient powers of the priest and the psychoanalyst, both of which always “found new ways of inscribing in desire the negative law of lack, the external rule of

¹¹⁴ Like Whitehead's “creativity” “THE plane of immanence” (WP 59) cannot be thought, but is the limit of thought.

¹¹⁵ As for Badiou (cf. IT 11), ontology can neither unite all being into one Being that expresses itself as the one Cosmos; rather it is Chaosmos, multiplicity always beyond any unification. With Michel Serres, the One for Whitehead and Deleuze is never more but always less than the multiplicity it unites. This is the true meaning of the univocity of Being, and of Whitehead's movement of Creativity as being the process of multiplicity. Cf. R. Faber, *Gott als Poet der Welt*. 2nd ed. (Darmstadt: WBG, 2004).

¹¹⁶ What sometimes seems to appear as a psychological entity of deconstructing suppressed multiplicities in one individual, freeing it of the Laws that hinder its singularities to freely flow (again), is, in fact, as in Plato's idea of the Soul, a *political* activity of crossing all borders of inside and outside. The same is true for his image of the “fold” (cf. TF 137). In Whitehead the same *political* imperative of “becoming multiplicities!” appears with his fight against the fallacy of simple location (cf. SMW 58) by which there is an absolute division between the private and the public.

¹¹⁷ It is worth noting that Whitehead also relocates the judgment of God in the “now” of the event and not in any pre-given (Divine) Law. “The Day of Judgment is an important notion: but that Day is always with us. Thus Art takes care of the immediate fruition, here and now; and in so doing is apt to lose some depth by reason of the immediate fruition at which it is aiming. Its business is to render the Day of Judgment a success, now” (AI 269).

pleasure, and the transcendent ideal of phantasy” (TP 155), the BwO is the *political experiment* of becoming-multiple without lack, transcendent Law and external aim (cf. TP 153). The political “structure” of freedom and equality it demands, is a rhizomatic “map” (TP 24)—developing and changing as it is sketched—the immanent play of all of its singularities as Life of their self-creative powers to become whatever their potential is. It is a dangerous experiment—it may be Life or/and Death (cf. TP 150). Other than Badiou’s “multiple of multiples” (BE 29), which must always be *excluded* as void in a process of consistency (BE 54-5),¹¹⁸ Deleuze’s experiment of *becoming-inconsistent/multiple* really *risks the total abandonment of the preconditions of slavery*; it is therefore the experiment in liberation from slavery.¹¹⁹

Second intervention: Badiou claims that the poststructuralist notion of the “subject”—“void, cleaved, a-substantial, and ir-reflexive” (BE 3) as it is—is *continuous* with their ontology, that is, that “there are no self-identical substances, there are no stable products of reflection” so that “there is no distinction between the general field of ontology and a theory of the subject” (IT 3). Consequently, there can be no theory of *genuine* subjective agency and, in consequence, of ethics and political agency (cf. PM 88). If this was true, no political agency would be *able* (or *potent*) ultimately to be *differentiated* from one that instantiates slavery.¹²⁰ If we want to believe with Deleuze, however, that any political organization of freedom and equality must allow for a “civil state, i.e. the entire society...[to become] the ensemble of conditions under which [human beings] can exercise [their] power in the best way” (LV), political agency must not only exist but must have the inherent potency to *become-democratic*,¹²¹ that is, to be able to be differentiated from one that leads to fascist States of affairs.¹²²

¹¹⁸ The void does not exist. Only what can be “worsened” exists. It is that what has always, with all approximation to nothingness, has to be subtracted from this activity of diminishing (cf. HI 108-10). In Whitehead this kind of relationship of subtraction which only “appears” as gap appears more as the creative novelty, as an affirmation, as the nothingness of creativity.

¹¹⁹ Like the BwO, however, this *remains* a risk, i.e., it cannot be attained without dying. It is never a perfect attainment, but a *becoming-multiple* (cf. TP 150).

¹²⁰ For Badiou, it is precisely to reclaim subjectivity as genuine over against the *ontological situation* that allows it to become political, that is, prescriptive and revolutionary without having an ontological, i.e., descriptive basis (cf. IT 5).

¹²¹ Although Deleuze is not interested in institutions so much as in agency, this agency must allow not only for a change of the situation (the state of things)—being revolutionary—but also for a mode of impulses for political structures. I am not concerned with these structures but only with their disposition in agency, how becoming-multiple can be *lived*. That is what I mean with *becoming-democratic*.

¹²² The opposite of “democratic,” here, is not aristocratic, monarchic or revolutionary, for that matter, but fascist. Cf. WP 108: “This feeling of shame is one of philosophy’s most powerful motifs. We are not responsible for the victims but responsible before them. And there is no way to escape the ignoble but to play the part of the animal (to growl, burrow, snigger, distort ourselves): thought itself is sometimes closer to an animal that dies than to a living, even democratic, human being.”

Indeed, not only poststructuralist accounts of the *indifference* of a theory of subjectivity and of ontology, but also Whitehead's indifference toward ontological and political, social and individual, human and non-human accounts of agency and organization indicate that Badiou is right.¹²³ Whitehead shamelessly uses not only “subjectivity” in an ontological, general cosmological, and anthropological sense interchangeably. Moreover, he uses his concept of “society” in this indifferent way.¹²⁴ This is to say that Whitehead radically exercises the univocity of becoming *regardless* of the height of intensity or the state of organization of events into societies of events.¹²⁵ Because the “texture of observed experience...is such that all related experience must exhibit the same texture (PR 4), “the principles which actuality exemplifies all are on the same level” (PR 18). But this univocity does not hinder different organizations of intensities, different “gradations of importance, and diversities of function” (PR 18).¹²⁶ The same is, of course, true for Deleuze/Guattari’s “rhizome,” which is a biological (or a musical?) structure (cf. TP 3-25); their use of “chaos (theory)” being developed between biology, mathematics and physics (cf. TP 474-500); and their deliberately non-human signification of the intensities of the BwO as “machines” (cf. AO 1-8).¹²⁷

Nevertheless, this *continuity* of ontology and anthropology and the *indifference* of regions of cosmic organization do *not* imply the disappearance of political agency.¹²⁸ As has been analysed with Whitehead's and Deleuze's *univocal, onto/political activity*, it is precisely *subversive* in undermining any form of obedience or coercive power instantiating slavery.¹²⁹

¹²³ Cf. J. Heartfield, *The 'Death of the Subject' Explained* (Sheffield: Hallam UP, 2002).

¹²⁴ Not only are all actual occasions, regardless their natural state as atomic events or events of a living, human person in themselves self-creative powers, called “subjects,” but certain societies in nature, like plants, can be named “democratic” and others, as animal organisms “hierarchical” (cf. PR 108-9). Cf. Th. Hosinki, *Stubborn Fact and Creative Advance: An Introduction to the Metaphysics of Alfred North Whitehead* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1993), 128-154.

¹²⁵ Cf. W. H. Leue, *Metaphysical Foundations for a Theory of Value in the Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead* (Ashfield, Down-to-Earth-Books, 2005).

¹²⁶ Hierarchies, in Whitehead, are a matter not of ontology but of cosmology; there, however, they are necessary expressions of high organization that, again, allows for more intense life. Cf. M. Hampe, *Die Wahrnehmungen der Organismen: Über die Voraussetzung einer naturalistischen Theorie der Erfahrung in der Metaphysik Whiteheads* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990).

¹²⁷ Like Whitehead's “*organic mechanism*” (SMW 80), Deleuze's and Guattari's “desiring-machines” fulfill a twofold sense: firstly, they de-humanize the language and make them univocally cut through any substantial division in their cosmology; secondly, they actualize the post-modern critique of the humanism that has led to slavery and fascism. Deleuze mentions this “certain shame at being human” felt by Primo Levi when he describes Nazi camps (N 172). Cf. Hsing-hao Chao, “Deleuze's Concept of Subjectivity and Multiculturalism” *NTU Studies in Language and Literature* 79,no. 12 (2003), 79-97.

¹²⁸ It is precisely the thesis that *only* its non-human realization really allows it to overcome the substantial, binary structures that implicitly always create slavery.

¹²⁹ And isn't it the case that Badiou with Zizek exactly understands slavery always to come back when subjectivity becomes indifferent from subjection? Cf. G. Keeney, “Zizek / Badiou: The Neo-Marxist Sublime” (November 2003): “In fact, both Badiou and Zizek confer on the subject (the late-modern self) the role of self-destroying angel, a figure that actually rescues the subject from its dependence on mutually 'filiated' forms of

On the other hand, Badiou's *duality* of ontology and theory of subjectivity is in peril to relaps in the hierarchical disconnection of cosmos and human beings, mind and body, and ontology and politics. It precisely *creates the conditions* of the prevalence of slavery out of the "barbarous substratum [that] had to be interwoven in the social structure, so as to sustain the civilized apex" (AI 13). In Whitehead's and Deleuze's view, Badiou's disconnection of ontology *as* mathematics (cf. BE 4)¹³⁰—as presentation of nothing—from ethics and politics does not *save* the subject from passivity and slavery. On the contrary, it is precisely the *incoherence* of the "arbitrary disconnection of first principles...[i]n Descartes' two kinds of substance, corporeal and mental" (PR 6) that inherits the substantialist dualisms that allowed Aristotle to claim the *unbridgeable hierarchy* of free citizen and slave, which made it "proper for the one to rule and the other to be ruled unconditionally."¹³¹

The problem for Whitehead and Deleuze is not the disconnection of ontology and theory of subjectivity but the *plasticity* of their ontology of becoming to *tolerate* structures of slavery and still to *demand* a democratic process. How would such an onto/political agency *not further* slavery? How, in other words, does such an ontology not just neutrally *explain* slavery, but *urge* political agency to *become-democratic*? Indeed, Whitehead's ontological view of societies (as series of events with performative characters) not only allows for hierarchical structures to form oppressive States of Being but to be engaged in a paradoxical furthering more complex forms of life (cf. PR 108). And while Deleuze's univocal ontology allows for the establishment of structures of aristocratic difference,¹³² it even more urges for rhizomatic and nomadic movements, which always already cut through any hierarchical stratification.¹³³ However, where is *the radical democratic move* that *hinders* and effectively *abolishes* these concrete hierarchies—since they emerge out of an anarchic ontology of "aboriginal disorder" (PR 95)—to become or relapse into the imperial States of slavery?

Whitehead and Deleuze each hold a clue for their unique contribution to this discussion: in their way of widening the individual/social distinction in social theory to a

subjection (slavery) and repression structurally imposed by the abstract principles operating within dematerialized and de-territorialized capital."

¹³⁰ I doubt the claim that mathematics can think inconsistent multiplicities because it already universally claims to count it as one. This might be the reason that Whitehead, although a professional mathematician, *never* understood mathematics as a model for ontology (cf. PR 8) but claimed the unconquered refuge of poetry (MT 173)—again against Badiou's reversal of matters, his overcoming of poetry by mathematics (BE 10).

¹³¹ Aristotle, *Politics I*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard U. P., 1944), 1259b10-20.

¹³² A difference between Whitehead's and Deleuze's approach might be that for Deleuze the degrees of intensity create aristocracies without any right of being "the better ones, while "Whitehead envisions the evolutionary value of such hierarchies in furthering intensity and Life (cf. PR 108-9).

¹³³ A Deleuzian "society" "reinforces neither vertical hierarchies of command nor conventional horizontal distributions of roles but establishes unorthodox, transverse relations between various levels of a group or institution"; R. Bogue, *Deleuze and Guattari* (London: Routledge, 1989), 86.

subversive continuity of human and non-human individuality/society. In Deleuze, the chaotic fluidity of the BwO with its com-*pli*-cated exteriority of interiority creates the subversive many-*fold*-ness of all individuals/societies.¹³⁴ Even more so does Whitehead's subversive reconstruction of all societies and individuals *as* societies restate political agency as *ecological ex-pli*-cation of the infinite multiplicity of societies in societies (cf. S, part III). Instead of *multiplicities of multiplicities* in Badiou's mathematical ontology, which has nothing to say for the event of political action and therefore enslaves human action again into a dangerous humanism,¹³⁵ Whitehead's *societies of societies* (all the way up and down)—even actual occasions can be understood as societies (cf. PR 286-7)—relocate the political act im-*pli*-cating freedom and equality on the *ecological* level (cf. S 80). Instead of the isolation of democracy from cosmology, here, *onto/politics becomes eco/politics* as the true horizon for becoming-democratic. Only if *all binaries*, especially that between ontology and human subjectivity and agency, are deconstructed, we revoke the “*violence* to that immediate experience which we express in our actions, our hopes, our sympathies, our purposes” (PR 49; italics added) and *as experiment* “find ourselves in a buzzing world, amid a *democracy of fellow creatures*” (PR 50; italic added). It is the *inclusion* of all creatures as societies of societies on the basis of univocity—the speaking with *one, equal voice of difference*—that undermines any Establishment of a State of slavery, imperial oppression and exclusion. In subversively acting on the eco/political premise that the “whole environment participates in the nature of each of its occasions” (AI 41) becomes the event of a *radical democratic cosmo/politics*.¹³⁶ Here, more than most Critical Theory with its remaining humanism or binary division between nature and humanity, Bruno Latour's *Politics of Nature*, builds on, and congenially develops, Whitehead's cosmo/politics of becoming-democratic.¹³⁷

Third intervention: Badiou claims that while the “State solely aims at fulfilling certain functions or at crafting a consensus of opinion,” “justice is a name of an axiom of equality”

¹³⁴ Because of this *com-pli*-cation of inside and outside in Deleuze, he finds the cosmological tradition of Nicolas of Cusa and Giordano Bruno with their univocal ontology valuable. The same is true for his pairs of *aion/chronos* in LS and *spatium/extensio* in DR. The resonate with Whitehead's multiple-one duality of concrescence and transition in PR. Cf. Faber, “De-Ontologizing” in *op. cit.*, 209-234.

¹³⁵ It is precisely this isolated political humanism which is “deeply complicit with the violent negativity of colonialism”; cf. Young, Robert. *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 1990), 121.

¹³⁶ Because of the mutual influence of all environments, the univocity must tolerate hierarchical differences in the organization of the societies. “This is the doctrine of the definition of things in terms of their modes of functioning” (AI 42).

¹³⁷ Cf. B. Latour, *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2004).

(IT 55).¹³⁸ But, while in a State’s definition, “justice becomes the harmonization of interests,” philosophically it refers to the “entirely *disinterested* subjectivity” (IT 55) of truth. Equality is nothing objective, nothing given, but subjective; it is *prescriptive*, declared under the “fire of events,” a political will that becomes with the “egalitarian axiom” (IT 54). If this is true, an *ontology* of equality—as proposed by Whitehead and Deleuze—seems to be impossible.¹³⁹ If we, however, want to believe with Whitehead and Deleuze that the truly egalitarian *activity* is that of a radical, anti-hierarchical becoming-multiple and becoming-democratic, we must ask: How *beyond* the play of powers with its *violence* and the structures of harmonization with their *compromise* can Freedom and Equality *subsist* in resistance to subjective interests although they will never form an objective State of things?¹⁴⁰

Deleuze’s answer is as simple as it is difficult: univocal becoming neither implies the necessity of an ontological *violence* of clashing powers of self-expression nor a *compromise* with a partial abolition of immanent power for a partial obedience to an external Law in order to allow for harmonization. In never being either violent or obedient, it is the activity of *becoming-minor, becoming-minoritarian* (cf. TP 469-71).¹⁴¹ Becoming-minoritarian is precisely becoming-multiple *in* becoming-democratic. Minorities are not “defined by the smallness of their numbers but rather by becoming a line of fluctuation” (TP 469). While the majority is a redundant number, a minority is *innumerable* for a majority. It is not a mathematical number and it is certainly not One. It is precisely its *denumerability* that is the “formula for multiplicities” (TP 470).¹⁴² Because “it is a connection, the ‘and’ produced between elements” (TP 470), its becoming-minor is not based on an (descriptive) ontology of the IS, which is the ontology of the majority, but insists on an ontology of the AND, of inclusion and novelty, of “multiplicities of escape and flux” (TP 470).¹⁴³ To become-minor,

¹³⁸ There can only be justice or not. It either is or not. It cannot be organized (cf. IT 54). This, strangely, resembles Whitehead’s ingression of eternal objects. Neither are eternal objects Platonic ideas, nor is their ingression something that *should* be. It always happens under the *decision* of an event that an eternal object, e.g., justice or equality, ingresses, I.e. *is*. Cf. Leue, *op. cit.*, ch. 3.

¹³⁹ I have already argued that in Whitehead and Deleuze there is no direct connection between both. On the contrary, there is a mediation of untimely activation they conceptualize as value or virtuality. Still, even given this complication: Can we speak of an *ontology* of equality, then, without re-inscribing political terms directly into ontological terms? This is, of course, impossible in an ontology that is mathematics, as in Badiou, but it would be impossible also in Whitehead and Deleuze if we remember that value and virtuality are not about “description” but about *activation*.

¹⁴⁰ On this Badiou, Deleuze and Whitehead agree. Becoming is never an objective State. And in this sense, equality remains subjective. But this subjectivity is—for Deleuze and Whitehead—a matter of *becoming-multiple* and *becoming-democratic*, i.e., a matter of ontological activity in which all is univocally *called*.

¹⁴¹ In becoming both, neither is this becoming about individual power “over against” nor of servitude but of radical movement, of nomadic and vagabond non-locality or multi-locality.

¹⁴² Here is a vital connection to the uncountable multiplicity in Badiou. Except that for Deleuze it becomes a powerful political notion, while in Badiou it remains voiceless in the void of mathematics.

¹⁴³ This AND-ontology is the reason that Deleuze does not need mathematics to avoid any short-cut of political action and ontology. Only from a standpoint of an IS-ontology, this might be necessary.

then, means to *create uncontrollable fluctuations of non-unified multiplicities* thereby “becoming-everybody/everything” (TP 470). Becoming-minor is the political release of the equality of self-creative multiplicities as *inclusion* of everybody and everything.¹⁴⁴

This corresponds with Whitehead's *persuasive agency* which is based on the same ontological assumption of the AND instead of the IS: becoming-one-among-a-new-multitude begins with the Eros of creative novelty—the AND of the new event, non-reducible to its process of *concrecence* of the given—and it ends in the *transition* to a one-among-a-new-many—initiating the AND of a new, heterogeneous multiplicity, non-reducible to any unity (cf. PR 21). While for Whitehead the first aspect—the “initial Eros” (AI 295)—seduces onto/political agency to irreducible novelty, the second aspect—“tragic Beauty” (AI 295)—decomposes *everything* into a discordant multiplicity. Both aspects insist on the irreducibility of the Imperfection of the chaomic process over against any State of Perfection (cf. AI 257). While the first aspect introduces persuasion as agency of novelty and novelty as act of pure *potentiality* that does not coerce but *seduces* by appealing to *decision* (PR 43),¹⁴⁵ the second aspect limits *any Oneness of unification as always less than the multiplicity it unites and enriches*.¹⁴⁶ Both sides of Whitehead's persuasive agency appeal to the AND of becoming-minor: it is not neither violence nor obedience but receptivity and decision.

Becoming-minor is not a multiplication of isolation of groups or individuals. This would be just a new substantialism, a new “reign of force” (AI 83), and would lead to nothing but “mere doctrines of freedom, individualism, and competition, [which] had produced a resurgence of something very like industrial slavery at the base of society” (AI 34).¹⁴⁷ Rather, it draws on the concrecing interrelation of events, a sympathy, initiating “the urge to cooperate, to help, to feed, to cherish, to play together, to express affection” (AI 37). Becoming-minor, therefore, is not a separatist activity of a group, a minority, over against a majority; it is the expression of *the univocity of the ontological activity of all societies of societies*, i.e., an activity by which *all societies become ecological*, everything “contribute[s] to each other's natures” (AI 42).¹⁴⁸ It is a *becoming non-local*. In leaving (always already

¹⁴⁴ This equals Whitehead's overcoming of any “simple location”—to be everywhere without hindering others to be the same way.

¹⁴⁵ “‘Actuality’ is the decision amid ‘potentiality’” (PR 43) in which “the ingression of an eternal object [appears] in the role of a conceptual lure for feeling” (PR 86).

¹⁴⁶ Cf. M. Serres, *Genesis* (An Arbor: UMP, 1999).

¹⁴⁷ We can differentiate two “relativistic” pluralisms one of which is a substantialism of isolated opinions—criticized by Badiou in HI as “democracy”—while the other is a “relational” (non-substantial) pluralism of interrelatedness. Cf. R. Faber, *Prozeßtheologie: Zu ihrer Würdigung und kritischen Erneuerung* (Mainz: Grünewald, 2000), 167-69.

¹⁴⁸ Other than in Nietzsche's account of the “tameless” of democracy, of the smallest common denominator of compromise, and other than in Badiou's critique of democracy as an anything-goes, opinion driven plurality (cf.

having left) the IS, the State of Oneness, and becoming AND, the flux of multi-*pli*-city, minorities become *always and everywhere, non-locally and untimely*. This is their equality, the freedom and equality of the AND. This non-locality is the retraction of what Whitehead saw as the basic substantialist error, the fallacy of *simple location* (cf. SMW 58). In becoming-minor, the multiple/other is neither dispensable by the One or derived from the One but it is complexly de-located while mutually immanent.

In becoming-minor, therefore, nothing is just *in a place (topos)*. The place of becoming-minor *has* no place; it is always a placeless *u-topos*, a nomadic place that escapes the State of the *polis* (cf. TP 353) precisely because “the place of all places” *has* no place. The problem of onto/politics is the *non-local, non-simply located relationship* between ontology and politics. The name of their multiple intersections is *khora* or *kenon*. It is an interesting fact that both Whitehead and Deleuze adopted Plato’s *khora* as the initial, non-local place of the processes of becoming-multiple and becoming-minor, while Badiou appropriated it to the void (*kenon*) of Epicurus (cf. AI 134). While Badiou seems to interpret this place as the *nothingness of exclusion* in the process of counting-as-one (cf. BE 31-60)—thereby favoring *negation* as genuine relation between *polis* and *khora*—Whitehead and Deleuze experiment with an *affirmation of non-local placing* that enable free political acts over against domestic hierarchies.¹⁴⁹ While the first movement of the “void” indicates the *activity of the (self-) exclusion* of incoherent multiplicities, the second movement of the “place” insists on the inclusiveness of the place as “medium of intercommunication” (AI 134) or the “sieve” (WP 42) or membrane of chaos and cosmos. For Whitehead it describes (in Plato’s own words) the

invisible, formless, and all-receptive...locus which persists, and provides an emplacement for all the occasions of experience. That which happens in it is conditioned by the compulsion of its own past, and by the persuasion of its immanent ideals. (AI 187)¹⁵⁰

This Whiteheadian *khora* is the ontological “place” of *the inclusion of what Never can be united or counted*—virtually creating *and* disturbing the *agora* as *in/determinacy* of the

HI 1-15), Whitehead understands human democracy based on univocity, i.e., the “equalizer” of “dignity” or self-value of all voices. Hence, in a radical democracy of all creatures this self-creative value of all voices is the basis for the abandonment “war, slavery and governmental compulsion” as exemplifying the “reign of force.” It is not taming, but creating the *manifoldness of voices* that constitute “persuasive intercourse” (AI 83) in which everything becomes part of the other as expression of the mutual immanence of their “nature.”

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Arendt, *op. cit.*, 50-67. The political space differed from the domestic hierarchies precisely by being the place of non-imposed, free-formed speech as political act.

¹⁵⁰ While Whitehead and Deleuze reinterpret the *void* with the Plato’s place as “plane of immanence” (WP 36) or as “medium of intercommunication” (AI 134), the difference is actually unbridgeable: *kenon* is void because of simple location; it is a substantialist notion of void; Plato’s *khora* however, is rich in relationality without any imposition of form. This is what Whitehead in AI and Deleuze in WP follow. Badiou, however, stays with the emptiness of subtraction and loss of multiplicity, the invisibility that connects the void more with the atomists. Cf. E. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley, UCP, 2003), part I.

polis.¹⁵¹ 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.

¹⁵¹ Laclau’s *hegemonic strategies* are not excluded here, because compulsion and persuasion meet in this “place.”