

*Events are named after the prominent objects situated in them, and thus both in language and in thought the event sinks behind the object, and becomes the mere play of its relations. The theory of space is then converted into a theory of the relations of objects instead of a theory of events... If you admit the relativity of space, you must also admit that points are complex entities, logical constructs involving other entities and their relations.*

Alfred North Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature*

Immanence is, upon its surface, just a word which indicates that amongst the present relationships we observe, we perceive them as interlocking — that reality is ‘inner space.’ Another way of saying this would be to say that we do not believe there to exist a deepest space. Thus when we make a claim of ‘pure’ immanence, we assert that there are no ‘extra’ layers of being above or beyond the situation, and that nothing spontaneously intervenes from another order of time. Immanence implies something special about the initial conditions of any space it is applied to: namely, that they open onto multiplicity, and fold in upon themselves without reference to an exterior. That there is no ‘outside’ of Being: this is pure immanence.

Nothing encapsulates an anti-immanent perspective more closely than the delicate epistemological framework inaugurated by Plato (but exemplified best, perhaps, by the cogito) which asserts that knowing and experiencing are but modalities of a fundamental distinction. Life is essentially separate: both within and without, split between thinking and acting.

In fact, a closer look reveals a complex topology of theoretical spaces. We find sense separated from truth, yet mysteriously contained within it. We ask: if reality is *just* what is contained in our modes of experience, how can we account for the existence of undistinguished situations (out of which our ‘distinctive containers’ evolved)? The answer is — we cannot! Because of the ‘implicit transcendence’ in a distinctive geometry of experience, we literally cannot speak them — because we “aren’t them.”

Is it really so clear and distinct that such separated spaces would not communicate? Whatever the case may be, in every theory advancing a transcendent distinction as primary, there emerges the necessity for an enduring interface produced by a geometric projection between the distinguished spaces. In the ontology of Alain Badiou, ‘fidelity’ names the connective operation between elements of an enumerated network of forces. In the clarity of this fidelity, the distinctions between subject and event, process and underlying ‘reality’ become critically blurred and radically ambiguous. The void can no longer be absolutely distinguished from the situation. That radical reflection which discerns the indiscernible becomes autonomous by this same maneuver — in his somewhat classical conception, the subject-space is divided between art, science, politics and love. But we should not judge from this that these spaces are indeed so indubitably separated (in reality or in Badiou’s ontology,) nor should we conclude from his idiosyncratic treatment of the ontological question that his project is without precedent.

For example, when Deleuze and Guattari say that “Love is an index of the reactionary or revolutionary investments of the libido in the socius,” they are indicating a requirement not only for political thought, but for creative activity in general: when we participate in sociality, if we do not do ‘it’ with love, the engagement becomes reactive, anachronistic, even “passive-

aggressive.” Badiou’s sort of fidelity has a similar requirement: you belong to the event only when *you* have made it what it is—and by this process, we become what we are. You either enter with love in your heart and hands open in passivity — or you do not really enter at all, or only to critically misjudge the nature of your relationship to the event. For without love there is no revolutionary necessity.

Love is most important when it is immediately political, when it is immediately *ethical*. When love is so intense that it resonates, when it is totally without jealousy, this is when love unfolds its mysterious potential: its capacity to inspire, to dominate, to *intensify* a flow of desire. Love is *reality*: it’s affect is most closely claimed by the word ‘infusion.’ An unmasked-for love is indiscernible, if only in its inclusivity — which is why love is an ethical intercourse, or else a tragic ignorance: “If you do works of faith and you have not love, you do not know me.” I think it has been forgotten that Nietzsche descries not only pity, but also philanthropy, for within he could smell the vulgar desire to be praised. There is a kind of giving which is a selfishness posited for a love of mankind, and there is a kind of “love” founded upon God looking upon us and thinking of us as blessed. But love without jealousy is love without guilt, and a self-praising lifestyle is unfit for the faithful. Love is first giving *in*, not giving out.

We say love is perhaps *the* revolutionary impulse, for it is that emotion which first reminds us, with piercing clarity, of our real condition. Suffering is not guilt; pain relates to situations which are not eternal, to arrangements which evolve and change by their nature. To love means we could not stand the shame of another’s degradation; to love is to know the shame of the situation and to not accept it. Hope is only for a truth which is wagered upon, but love engages our responsibility to create new spaces for living-together. Thus to wager on an event is to become an intense potential for difference. We wager our singularities, and we have faith; only then can we create a new kind of situation. Faith has to be propelled; it doesn’t exist in rest. Ontology is the science of rest, the psychology of sleep: it provokes the deepest revelations, but not the deepest joy. That there is still a non-ontological space for thought today we perhaps owe to the endurance of joy. Our experience of political reality is intimately shaped by an careful community ‘surgery’ which conditions potential expressions of value. In practice, only a delicate subdivision accomplishes the total vision of faith, or ontology. A numerical theory of the event aims at continuity through becoming, where a genetic theory of society aims at becoming through intensity. The political is the abstract: the question of politics is that of clarity, and the truly political desire is a progression: from the will to transparency, to the will to distinction, and finally, the will to loyalty — or the will to power.

*Thus the rise in vivid experience of the Good and the Bad depends on the intuition of exact forms of limitation. Among such forms Number has a chief place.*

Alfred North Whitehead, *Modes of Thought* (107)

(c) Fractal Ontology, 2007