

# Alain Badiou and the 'Platonism of the multiple' - or on what the gesture of the re-entanglement of mathematics and philosophy implies

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## Introduction

In this paper I attempt to unravel the complex discursive threads intertwined in Alain Badiou's philosophy. I proceed by displaying the main concepts that this author formulates (event, intervention, subject, truth) and their multiple articulations. I also bring forward accounts and debates with the readings that other authors, close to Badiou's thinking, do of these concepts: Žižek, Laclau, Milner. In doing so I place special emphasis on the radical difference established by Badiou's mathematic device/mechanism –whether it is taken into consideration or not and how- in the conceptual formulations of the other authors, their homologies, convergences and divergences. It is obvious that, however diffused, certain misunderstandings with regard to the status of mathematics in Badiou's approach cannot be underscored all too simply. The difficult challenge of understanding the technical mathematical concepts articulated by Badiou and widely commented upon must be confronted. More specifically, the hypothesis I advance is that the different discursive orders that Badiou applies can be redefined by looking at the modality of their intersections. These intersections, I claim, could be understood by using the idea of knots as a useful analogy: the implicit nodal logic in Badiou's work is key to clarifying (and eradicating) these misunderstandings.

## Ontology *is* mathematics

Badiou links the raise of a rational ontology to mathematics. This allows thinking of being *qua* being as pure multiplicity and thus avoids any possibility of return to metaphysics and the subsequent identification of being with One or the totality. This resource is precise and *delimited* in its scope. It is restrained to Zermelo and Fraenkel's formalized axiomatic system of the set theory, and to Conway's theory of numbers together with his latest elaborations on the theory of categories. However, Badiou does not rely on these mathematical developments to give his thoughts an appearance of objectivity (as naïf or bad intentioned approaches *à la* Sokal *affaire* could imply). Instead he tries to circumscribe the problematic points and the moments of impasse present in mathematical theory (i.e. the incommensurability between the cardinality of a set and the set of its parts) and thus give the possible answers. Badiou does so without shutting down in any way the essential property opened up of/by the problematic issue.

In this sense, Badiou seeks to delimit the status of the "thought decision" process involved in inventive mathematics, and tries to displace mathematics from the traditional domain within which it is usually contained, and reduced to. Though they may appear complicated at first, Badiou also shows with very simple mathematical problems how to dispense with very deep-rooted imaginative intuitions – specially those leading to political and philosophical thinking. This allows him to subvert and radically question concepts and classic categories such as being, nature, infinity, void, subject, truth, etc. For Badiou it is not so much a question of mathematics offering a logical language for thinking (or modeling) another situation, but of re-inscribing the instance itself of invention (linked to letter) as separate from the (pre)dominant language in any situation.

I argue that many authors have not properly apprehended Badiou's fundamental "ontology is mathematics" thesis. These inadequacies have also led to a certain imprecision when evaluating the central concepts Badiou brings forward. For instance, in "The Ticklish Subject" (1999, *El Espinoso Sujeto*, 2001) Žižek affirms that "'Being' stands for the positive ontological order accessible to Knowledge" (p. 128/139). This statement is already inconsistent with Badiou's central idea according to which Being is eminently subtractive and, therefore, only mathematical discourse can formulate it consistently by naming Being as an empty set. Then we see how this "slip" has an effect on Žižek's explanation of such key concepts as structure and meta-structure that Badiou develops. According to Žižek:

Here, however, the first cracks in the ontological edifice of Being already appear; for us to 'count [the situation] as One', the 'reduplication' proper to the symbolization (symbolic inscription) of a situation must be at work; that is, in order for a situation to be 'counted as One', its structure must always-already be a meta-structure that designates as one (i.e. the signified structure of a situation must be redoubled in the symbolic network of signifiers) (ibid: 129/139).

However, stating that "for a situation to be 'counted as One', its structure must always-

already be ... " is inaccurate since the term "situation" is already a "structure" (Badiou claims that all situation is structured) and therefore the multiple (already) counts-for-One. Badiou clearly underlines this equivalence between "situation", "structure", "presentation" and the "law", the difference of which is first established as related to the "state of a situation", "meta-structure", "representation" and, secondly, to the "law of counting the parts". Much the same as in the lacanian difference between the symbolic and the imaginary, Badiou does so in order to rigorously situate the excess generated by the void foreclosed between both counts. This void opens the gap for a paradoxical multiple to take place: the Event. The first series of operators inscribe the significant order (symbolic) by transforming pure multiplicity into One. The second series describe the imaginary order of the representations by re-inscribing the first count. The Event, in turn, belongs to the order of the *real*.

This distinction is fundamental in Badiou because ontology *is* a situation, albeit with the particularity presented in the presentation itself so as to eliminate the meta-structure (the imaginary order). As a consequence, the very same axioms regulate the multiplicities-without-One and the pure multiples. There is neither positive order of Being (that would not be the imaginary) nor ontological crack or breach. In the case of mathematical ontology this is a very consistent discourse since Being is sutured to the empty set. For this reason, any idea of 'crack', "breach" or "rupture" takes place outside the ontological order itself (mathematics forbids multiple paradoxes) in situations Badiou links to the generic names related to art, politics, science and love.

What is lost in Žižek's conceptual articulation is this specificity and differentiation of the situations and the discursive orders that Badiou articulates rigorously using the lacanian resource of the *matema*. This is why a precise explanation is really necessary of how the mathematic device/mechanism works in Badiou's thinking and his account on the meta-ontological status of philosophy. By doing so, concepts such as event, intervention, truth, etc. are (re)situated in their radical originality. By being modulated around the points of impossibility (or impasses) closely delimited by mathematical discourse (from ontological correlates -axiom of choice / intervention, axiom of foundation / evental site- or more specifically of its Being *qua* Being -forcing / subject, multiple generic / generic-), the scope in meaning of these concepts is narrowed down to its maximum/limit in order to avoid any possible interpretive (hermeneutic) shift.

Yet Žižek fails to capture these concepts in their ontological (inter)connection and understands them rather as a whole without properly differentiate them. Therefore, Žižek names as Truth-Event two conceptual instances which Badiou's system certainly places in continuity but are nevertheless separated: one shows the undecidability of belonging of a multiple paradoxical and the other shows the indiscernability of a multiple *represented* but not *presented* in the situation (I will develop these concepts later). In other words, Žižek does not take notice of the logical process and the singular temporality in which the subject is constituted and hence assimilates the concept of Event with the process of Althusser's ideological interpellation. As Žižek put it:

What if what Badiou calls the Truth-Event *is*, at its more radical, a purely formal act of decision, not only not based on an actual truth, but ultimately *indifferent* to the precise status (actual or fictitious) of the Truth-Event it refers to? What if we are dealing here with an inherent key component of the Truth-Event- what if the true fidelity to the Event is 'dogmatic' in the precise sense of unconditional Faith, of an attitude which does not ask for good reasons and which, for that very reason, cannot be refuted by any 'argumentation'? (ibid 144/155)

Understanding Truth, however, is a process of interrogation accomplished in the event of a contingent encounter. It is not an act of faith whereby the subject is already convinced of the truth and accepts the totality of the system (moral, theoretical, etc.). What must be understood is the mathematical process of forcing statements into naming the indiscernible as well as the analysis that Badiou carries out of the other generic procedures: art, science, politics and love. There is a plurality of logics and a diversity of procedures. It is not just about simple irrational questions. It is rather about the previous acceptance of Truth as already given, about a process initiated by a contingent Event that has vanished but has also been named by an intervention that partially fixed it. There is no passage from one totality to another through an act of faith, since truth cuts across and continually empties knowledge out.

In order to situate the *real* difference between interpellation and the Event an operation of balancing and contrasting out must be performed between ontology, meta-ontology, and both philosophical and political concepts (or between truths, philosophical concepts and mathematical axioms). This allows finding the points of nodal convergence within which the properly *real* of conceptual modulations are circumscribed. This kind of balancing act requires following complex movements of discursive stratification and destratification (more on these concepts later) leading to the stitches, or knots, where the threads alternate in an orderly way (over-crossing, under-crossing...). In addition to following the thread, therefore, what remains key is also finding the stitching (i.e.: nodal) points.

On the other hand, Ernesto Laclau (2005) formulates a critique related to the formal differentiation between situation and Event – as he understands it in Badiou's work. Since this differentiation is not able to clearly separate the simulacrum from the truth, Laclau also claims that establishing a difference between situation and Event is impossible within the theoretical framework of Badiou's philosophy.

Laclau's analysis lacks of a more attentive reading regarding Badiou's work. In reading *L'être et l'événement* (*El ser y el acontecimiento* 1999, *Being and Event*, 2005), if we look beyond the title and its binary organisation, we find a multiplicity of relations between what corresponds to the order of the Event (evental site, intervention, fidelity, truth) and what corresponds to the order of Being (axioms, numbers, nature and infinity). These are relations of complementarity, undecidability, breaches and faults, choices and nominations; that is to say, an entire series of subject matters and operations that call for a more complex conceptual analysis. By no means is this a question of deploying simple formal and/or binary oppositions. Laclau writes:

If we tried to define its relation [of the event] with the situation, we could only say that it is a *subtraction* from it (ibid:121)

Is an event, which defines itself exclusively through ability to subtract itself from a situation, enough to ground an ethical alternative? Is the distinction void/fullness a solid enough criterion for discriminating between event and simulacrum? Is the opposition situation/event sufficiently clear-cut as to ascribe to the eventual camp everything needed to formulate an ethical principle? My answer to these three questions will be negative (ibid:122).

The fact that Laclau carries out his analysis following the logic of binary oppositions impoverishes and reduces the conceptual relations opened by Badiou. This is also the case, for instance, in the following opposition between "formal" and "actual/[concrete]":

In that case, however, the only possible content of the event as pure subtraction is the presentation or declaration of the unrepresentable. In other words, the event also can only have a purely *formal* content. As a result, the fidelity to the event (the exclusive content of the ethical act) has to be, as well, an entirely formal ethical injunction. How, in that case, to differentiate the ethical from the simulacrum? As Badiou himself makes clear, the simulacrum - as one of the figures of evil - can only emerge in the terrain of truth. So if Badiou is going to be faithful to his theoretical premises, the distinction between event and simulacrum has also to be a formal one – i.e. it has to emerge from the form of the event as such independently of its actual content. (Laclau, 2005: unpaginated)

But what is the actual, and by extension the concrete? To say the least, it seems odd that after his lucid critique of reification in Marxist discursive formations Laclau should fall into the illusion of the actuality/concreteness of things. Would there be then concepts more concrete than others? Would it depend, perhaps, on the training of the thinker? Or on taste: "I prefer *tropes*", "I, on the other hand, *matemas*"?

The simple distinction between formal/concrete does not know of Badiou's Being of the multiple and the threefold typology that accompanies it: the normal (maximum coincidence between the presentation and representation of the multiplicities), the singular (presented but not represented multiplicities), and excrescence (represented but not presented multiplicities). It therefore appears that the dislocation/*differential* between what appears and what is represented in a given discursive order presents diverse and complex shades. In other words, "concrete" or "actual" ontic situations can be of a different type, but only in a singular historical situation can an event take place, while situations, properly speaking, give shape to the event. Nevertheless, the event itself, which has no form and does not even follow any norm, is a supplement or random excess of the situation. Then, Laclau adds:

The distinction truth/simulacrum cannot ultimately be formulated because it does not have any viable place of enunciation within Badiou's theoretical edifice (at this stage of its elaboration, at least). There are only two places of enunciation within Badiou's system: the situation and the event. (ibid: 123)

Laclau ignores, or leaves out, the notion of "interpretative intervention" which links the event - so far undecidable- to the situation by using the technique of forcing. This would constitute the proper place of enunciation that, supposedly, is absent in Badiou. Truth, while a generic procedure, remains indiscernible in the situation, but it is possible to circumscribe its condition[s]; a temporary push takes place between the local [fore]closing of the connections (interrogations) and the opening towards the infinity of the process (fidelity). This is the fundamental difference with totalitarian positions in which an absolute and [fore]closed truth is secured in a complete(d) situation, disallowing the possibility of any singular temporality in a normative chronogram.

In the strict binary reading that Laclau proposes of Badiou's thought, he overlooks precisely the entire series of singular nominations that constitute a faithful post-event generic procedure. And yet this is the only original element in Badiou's theorization: to think the philosophical consequences deduced from Paul Cohen's mathematical elaborations developed in his set theory approach. The ideas of rupture or discontinuity or subtraction of the Event with regard to the situation can be found in many other authors. Badiou's singular contribution is that the operations of nomination of the indiscernible, and the modalities of articulation of the multiple are external and unnamable by what the language of the situation alone authorises. The last chapters of *Being and Event* ('Meditations' 31-36, pp.327-430) where he develops these topics/issues are usually ignored by the majority of the commentators, but are precisely those which retroactively give weight to the previous concepts.

Therefore, the reformulation of the proper names by means of the technique of forcing is the principal characteristic of a generic procedure and the investigations that constitute it. In this respect, it can be said that there is a mutual contamination between situation and event, unlike what affirms Laclau, who supposes a kind of transcendental external appearance of the event:

'Events' in Badiou's sense are moments in which the state of the situation is *radically* put into question; but it is wrong to think that we have purely situational periods interrupted by purely eventual interventions: the contamination between the eventual and the situational is the very fabric of social life. (ibid: 134)

As Laclau continues:

The subject is only partially the subject inspired by the event; the naming of the unrepresentable in which an event consists involves reference to an unrepresented within a situation and can only proceed through the displacement of elements already present in that situation. This is what we have called the mutual contamination between situation and event. Without it any winning over by the event of elements of the situation would be impossible, except through a totally irrational act of conversion (ibid:134).

Certainly the naming of the indiscernible (incommensurate) needs mobilizing the terms of the situation: multiple and names, but these are reorganized and re-formulated in such a way that avoid any encyclopaedic determinant of knowledge. This is the originality of a generic process

indeed. As Badiou (1999, 2005) writes: "*truth is the infinite positive total - the gathering together of the x (+)'s - of a procedure of fidelity which, for each and every determinant of the encyclopaedia, contains at least an enquiry which avoids it*". (ibid: 375/338 )

In any case the affinity between Laclau and Badiou's thought is much more structural than the former admits. If we were to appeal to the (real) logic of psychoanalytical discourse, the key question would be knowing whether or not the concepts Laclau uses to describe the social processes can be articulated in a wider and more complex way than in Badiou's theoretical device. From my perspective, a priori discussions on what kind of ontology would be more convenient, linguistic or mathematic, are irrelevant. What is important is knowing what conceptual universe/logic/apparatus can describe the complexity inherent to our times in a rigorous and, simultaneously, flexible way.

It is true that thinking about the constitution of objects in linguistic terms allows us working with an entire series of rhetorical nominations/resources (synecdoques, metaphors, metonymies) that are instrumental to displace the common/naturalized use of language. However, the problem with this approach is that *the Real* is always located within the realm of the symbolic, with which it tends to assimilate far too easily in the description of so-called "language-games ". Instead, the idea of the knot or the nodal logic that Badiou proposes takes us closer to Lacan's idea of mathematics being the "science of *the real* ", and we also find a great variety of modalities to elaborate such impasse further.

On the other hand, reducing philosophy to mathematical operations or demonstrations, as Scavino (1999) seems to suggest, is not less problematic:

Having identified mathematics with ontology, Badiou proposes a way out to the Heideggerian impasse: numbers are the language of Being [Scavino is referring here to the Heideggerian inability to speak of Being as object]. Being is thus a non-object, a nothing. Therefore mathematics speaks of Being. Although this dialectics may seem excessive, the arguments will always be reinforced by a rigorous mathematical demonstration (ibid: 83).

Elevating the status of mathematics within philosophy in such a way would be a terrible mistake. Instead we should take into consideration what Jean Diudonné, a great French mathematician Badiou often mentions, has to say. Namely, that should this be the case, then philosophers should be prevented from directly intervening within the realms/domains of thought, and therefore we should all become mathematicians. As Badiou points out, however, the philosophical problem is quite different; it does not reside so much in thinking Being *qua* Being but of thinking what belongs to the order of what-is-not-being-*qua*-being, i.e.: the Event and the processes of fidelity that give the Event continuity. Mathematics forbids itself thinking in order to guarantee/secure its discursive consistency. It is precisely because of the nature of this prohibition that the consistency of philosophical discourse belongs to another order, namely supporting/backing up thought by means of the literal resource of the *matema*.

For this reason, in order to affirm that mathematics is ontology (whilst Wittgenstein's option is to remain silent and Heidegger's invoking poetic utterance) the dark violence of the matema must be pacified and the opinion inherent to the meta-ontological commentary of the philosopher must be broken. This requires, as Badiou would say "a re-entanglement of mathematics and philosophy". Badiou writes:

Mathematics is mentioned here so its ontological essence is revealed. In the same way as the ontologies of Presence are mentioned and commented upon great poems by Hölderlin, Trakl or Celan (and nobody finds censurable that the poetic text should turn out to be both shown and influenced by it) so do I deem it necessary to be granted, without overturning this attempt of the side of the epistemology (as neither that of Heidegger of the side of the simple aesthetics), the right to mention and influence the mathematical text. Since what is expected of this operation is not so much mathematical knowledge but rather the determination of the point in which the saying of the being arrives, in temporary excess regarding to itself, as a truth, always artistic, scientific, political or loving. " (Badiou 1999: 27)

Thus Badiou clarifies that he summons the mathematical text in order to think the truth and being of the subject as properly philosophical categories and to think a subtractive ontology in opposition to an ontology of Presence. His aim is not to reduce the discussion to a subfield of philosophy: "it will then be understood that my intention is never epistemological or related to the philosophy of mathematics. Should this be the case, I would have discussed the great modern trends of that epistemology (formalism, intuitionism, finitism, etc.) " (Badiou 1999: 27)

What Badiou finds appealing in mathematics is not so much its claim to accuracy or objectivity (the main feature of logical positivism), but the rigor of thought that mathematicians show on confronting *the Real* of the impasse, the undecidable and the indemonstrable; and to show how these moments are solved by means of a "decision of thought", that is to say, an axiom (or an axiomatic system). Unlike what we are often led to believe, this does not entail any absolutization of truth, but shows instead how, when confronted with *the Real*, thought must decide the consequences of such a decision without any guarantees.

Thought, in this way, is devoid of any (pre-)given knowledge. Instead of submitting mathematics to philosophical scrutiny, or to an epistemological interpretation of its object, philosophy, on the contrary, must surrender to the condition imposed by the existence of mathematics (as well as the existence of art, politics and love). Understanding this is paramount to then think about what mathematics forbids to itself, namely, the excess(es), lack of moderation and the various modalities of nomination found in other discourses/discursive formations. Nevertheless, it is clear likewise that this radical "decision of thought" assumed by Badiou also carries with it a strong/clear-cut philosophical positioning with regard to the status of mathematics. For moving away from the exclusively epistemological dimension, he also enters into the equally arduous domain of philosophical - political and ontological- discussion. This, in turn, carries with it a certain subversion of the epistemological dimension.



## The position of philosophy

At this point, it is possible to say that a complex movement of discursive stratifications and destratifications takes place in Badiou's work. This movement can be appreciated by looking at the different positions that the heterogeneous discourses of his theoretical system occupy. On the one hand, this movement encompasses (i) the mathematical-ontological device that produces Ideas (axioms) and (ii) the conceptual- philosophical devices that constantly measure the suitability of, and differentiate from the former. On the other hand, we find (iii) the conceptual historical modulations by means of which Badiou permanently enters into discussion with other great philosophers, and, finally, (iv) we have the generic processes of art, science, politics and love. In this movement, however, there is no fix or hierarchic order. There are no *determinants in the last instance*, since the thesis on the ontological status of mathematics is philosophical, or meta-ontological, and nevertheless, this discipline does not regulate anything in the field of pure mathematics. Moreover, though philosophy thinks of Truth and the Event, it does not produce them. Truth and the Event take place in other discursive domains. Moreover, mathematics does not say anything about Truth and the Event since the main concern of mathematics is the order of what-is-not-the-being-qua-being. Having said this, mathematics do offer the resources to think the ontological correlates of the intervention: forcing (subject) or the generic being of truth.

We notice that philosophical thinking is not a rigid or stereotyped operation (not even regulative). However, this does not mean that philosophy is absolutely disorderly and chaotic. What Badiou wants is to insure that the difference and specificity of the different discursive domains remain, which, in turn, makes possible the exchange and transfer of concepts and modalities of intervention. Ideas (mathematics) remain separated from concepts (philosophical) and both ideas and concepts are different from the interventions or the singular nominations (science, art, politics and love). This radical operation of thought allows Badiou to displace and to overturn the common order of priorities that usually support mainstream conceptual-philosophical schemes. The majority of thinkers begin by elaborating and analyzing the structure of the situation whilst leaving the Event, and the need of intervention, to the vicissitudes of empirical or normative becoming. On the contrary, Badiou claims that the structure, or count-for-One, in any situation always operates without a subject. This does not imply that the subject is ahistoric or transcendental. What becomes relevant instead is the question of thinking how the subject is constituted (with)in the dislocation/displacement of the structural dimension.

In short, the meanings (i.e.: the modalities) of representation can vary and can be modulated infinitely. What remains worth thinking about is both the One that arrives/appears as something supplementary to the situation, or count-for-One, and the supernumerary, which on having been named produces a local break in regards of a given structural consistency. This is the Event, fundamentally the nomination without significance that marks its trace after its faint[ing]/disappearance, in an act of intervention.

## The subject

Finally, if "a spectre is haunting Western academia " as Žižek says, this is because, beyond all the impasses that modernity has left us with, (re)thinking the Subject has become unavoidable in our times. With Badiou we state that the Subject is axiomatic and is constituted by an intervention: the subject decides the undecidable on the existence of the indiscernible in a situation. Both these terms are negative and are defined rigorously by Badiou in *Condition(e)s* (2002). While the undecidable refers to a proposition that avoids a norm of language, the indiscernible avoids the positional (significant/signifying) demarcation of the terms. Badiou attempts to formulate a post-Cartesian articulation of the Subject beyond the opposition between phenomenology and structuralism.

The subject is neither the outcome of a previous information or a transcendental entity, nor is the effect/outcome of a structure *a posteriori*, as if it were modulated by instances that would determine it necessarily. On having carried out a supernumerary nomination, the subject emerges from circumscribing the point limit of the effect of structure, (i.e. the subject has no correspondence with the stabilized relations of the signifier). The novelty, with this approach, lies in the affirmation that only a "qualified subject" exists and is constituted in diverse generic procedures: art, science, politics and love. Therefore, a valid, universal subject for all cases as traditionally sought in philosophy since its origins does not exist. Philosophical categories are only useful to think together the singular modalities of the subjective constitution carried out in the different generic procedures. Attention must be paid thus to the fact that in Badiou's system these generic procedures amount to four. The influence of Lacan's thought here is clear.

In this respect, the development that Milner elaborates with regard to Lacan's work is quite different. Having postulated/posited the existence of an axiom, the "axiom of the subject" (1996), Milner uses this axiom to connect it with Descartes and Freud *via* Saussure. Simultaneously he establishes an explicit equation which would operate in Lacan with regard to his "*Doctrinal de science*" (set of relative propositions to the subject and to science). This equation affirms the equivalence between the subject of the cogito, the subject of science, the subject of the unconscious and the subject of the signifier. Milner will argue in favor of postulating a disqualified thought, separated from all the properties that are deduced from classic-logical principles: identity, non-contradiction, third excluded, etc. In other words, a thought is affirmed in the precise existence of the signifier, separated from all previous knowledge, of any representation.

The problem generated by such conceptualization as "the axiom of the subject" stems from the fact that it (pre-)supposes a transcendental empty subject to be deduced in every particular case. This, however, does not allow to situate the Real of the subject, the singular impasse, the impossibility of deduction and, in consequence, the need of subsequent in(ter)vention; that is to say, the need to take a "decision of thought" (as in the reversal Zermelo carried out with regard to existence by using the axiom of separation). This is "the axiomatic subject". Referring to the approaches of the

*differential* in Lacan and Badiou's mathematics, Milner affirms that such differential resides in the use or not of the deductive procedure and *apagoge*. Nevertheless, Badiou clearly indicates that the operator of fidelity in mathematics is "deductive invention", which cannot be equated to a simple reasoning sequence as understood in classic logics (the syllogisms). A simple deductive logic cannot account for all the generic procedures let alone Badiou's philosophy as such, which combines the resources of both poetry and the matema (together). In this respect, Badiou's thought is close to the function of the *letter* Milner analyzes in Lacan's work. Instead of self-evident deductive principles, what takes center-stage here is the very instance of decision of thought (Mallarmé's *Un coup de dés*). Deductive principles, on the other hand, are such only from the point of view of the language of a situation and not from the perspective of a generic procedure that is intrinsically indiscernible by language.

Crucial here is to establish a clear difference between such an axiomatic system as the set theory, on the one hand, and an inventive procedure, on the other, which takes decisions/issue on undecidable points at a structural level. In set theory axioms are postulated/posited against the need to decide on impasses presented by formalized languages (Hilbert's project). Axioms in set theory do not comprise a system that begins by pre-supposing self-evident principles, valid for all and forever. What is questioned/pre-empted thus is the possibility of establishing a kind of capricious/fanciful and even authoritarian procedure that designates principles without reasons, and which carried over to the political fields lead to disaster. An inventive procedure takes decisions on undecidable points at a structural level. This requires a certain "consequence" with decision taken, as well as showing that the rules of the game do not change by fancy or interest but for a structural need to the moment of facing the real of the impasse. This, as Lacan says with regard to the act, divides/splits the subject, that is to say, does not offer room for any full or self-centered identity.

Therefore mathematics allows a reduction of sense that Badiou incorporates to think categories and philosophical concepts. Badiou states that philosophy begins: "When it is not already a question of interpreting the real procedures where the truth lies, but of founding a special place, under the contemporary conditions of such procedures, to enunciate how and why the truth it not a sense but rather a hole/void in the sense " (Badiou, 2002: 91). In order to do so, it will be necessary to "depose, with the sense, which is determined in it by *jouissance*". These statements imply that there can be a bow externally of the sense, if the specificity and differentiation of the discursive devices is supported where they are produced. Here the function of philosophy is fundamental:

Philosophy is never an interpretation of experience. It is the act of the Truth in regards of the truths. And such an act, which according to the law of the world is unproductive (it does not even produce a truth) arranges a subject without object only opened for the truths that travel in its captation "(Badiou 2002: 72)

While leaving the question open for future elaborations I conclude by offering a summary/succinct

account of the four subtractive operations that allow apprehending truths as external to senses/sensory perception. This requires identifying the undecidable, the indiscernible, the multiple generic, and the unnamable in a given situation.

The undecidable refers to the first logical moment of truth, when a multiple  $x$  cannot be evaluated as true or false according to a norm/rule of classification of the language of the situation: "Gödel's theorem establishes that in the situation of language named formalized arithmetic of the first order, where the norm of evaluation is demonstrable, a statement of reference exists at least undecidable in a precise sense: neither it nor its denial are demonstrable "(Badiou, 2002: 172). The indiscernible refers to the impossibility that a norm of evaluation is to discriminate the permutation of two terms that avoid the differential mark. The generic refers to this part that is no part, that is to say, that is not included in the situation but that avoids any preaching through excess having brought together the absolutely anyone. (!!!)

The unnamable is the most interesting and newest presentation in this elaboration. The unnamable is the last figure of the subtraction which makes the entire series of veritable nominations possible, but in which forcing can not, at the time, be forced without falling into *disaster*. Badiou says that what he, paradoxically, calls the unnamable is what in psychoanalysis is named *jouissance*. In the last instance this shows the intrinsic limit of every discursive economy and orientates nominations. This is why the event cannot be prescribed for any situation; it is in the singularity of each of the situations that the process of Truth will be displayed in a series of new nominations. Neither act of faith nor outcome of a rational decision, every act of invention creates instead its own logic, which does not exempt it from presenting an internal consistency.

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