

# Preliminaries.

## Badiou, Hegel, Parmenides

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**Abstract:** The text explores the encounter of two programmatic statements of Badiou with the beginning of Hegel's *Science of Logic*. The mediator of the encounter is the poem of Parmenides. Badiou's statements are: 1) philosophy articulates three concepts, being, truth, and subject, and 2) mathematics is ontology. Both statements are examined in light of Badiou's use of set theory in *Being and Event* and *The Immanence of Truths*, as it unfolds from Parmenidean presuppositions. The beginning of Hegel's *Logic*, on the other hand, is approached by way of three recent interpretations, by Ruda, Rödl, and Hindrichs.

**Keywords:** philosophy, metaphysics, ontology, formalization, temporalization

In 1984, Derrida initiates a colloquium, in Paris, in order to assess the relations between philosophy in France and philosophy in Germany since 1945. Hamacher, one of the invited speakers, responds with a differential diagnosis: In order to repair its own past and “sustain” itself as “ontology and metaphysics”, philosophy in Germany, in “its western part”, pays reparations to the “*no-nonsense-rationalism*” predominant in Anglo-Saxon discourse.<sup>1</sup> Hence the complicated relations, in philosophy, between Germany and France, as the flip side of the German-American convergence. A few years later, in 1988, Badiou evokes the same triangle on the opening page of *Being and Event*, yet not in order to diagnose philosophy's end by reparation but in order to announce a new beginning. Heidegger, “the last universally recognizable philosopher”, the logico-mathematical “scientific rationality” conserved by American thought, and a “post-Cartesian doctrine of the subject” are gathered to recommence philosophy under the hypothesis that “mathematics is ontology”.<sup>2</sup> Acknowledging that this triangular frame of reference would need further clarification today, with regards to its political no less than its discursive determinants, acknowledging also that this frame of reference appears hopelessly narrow, anachronistic, even obsolete today, acknowledging moreover that any frame of reference specified by national determinants would inevitably end philosophy before it even has begun, assuming, therefore, that the localization of philosophy, its impossibility no less than its possibility, in the contemporary conjuncture is a necessary precondition for philosophizing but which exceeds what can be achieved here, the following preliminaries are gathered under a minimal hypothesis: that Heidegger is not the last universally recognizable philosopher. Heidegger is not, therefore, no universally recognizable philosopher. But in order to recommence the new beginning proposed by Badiou, other points of reference need to be assumed.

Hence, supposing that there is no philosophy of Heidegger, for the following preliminaries three assumptions are to be hold as true instead:

Badiou's philosophy-formula, Hegel's becoming-proposition, and the decision of Parmenides.

The philosophy-formula states that philosophy articulates three concepts: being, truth, and subject. Badiou pronounces it on two occasions in particular. Right after *Being and Event* in the *Manifesto for Philosophy*:

"I postulate not only that philosophy is possible today, but that this possibility does not take the form of a final stage. On the contrary, the crux of the matter is to know what it means to say: take *one more step*. A single step. A step within the modern configuration, the one that since Descartes has bound the three nodal concepts of being, truth, and the subject to the conditions of philosophy."<sup>3</sup>

And again in *The Immanence of Truths*, after a summary, in thirteen points, of the whole trajectory from *Being and Event* through *Logics of Worlds* to *The Immanence of Truths*, Badiou writes:

"That concludes the complete articulation of the three concepts constitutive of every philosophy: Being, Truth, and the Subject."<sup>4</sup>

Being–Truth–Subject, the philosophy-formula is formula, not a proposition, a bare concatenation of three terms leaving in suspense the form which their articulation may take.

The becoming-proposition is a proposition. It is the first proposition proper of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, which in its opening – "*Being, pure being, –*", "*Nothing, the pure nothing*" – follows a strict discipline with regards to form, which includes a clear cut distinction between what is *proper* articulation and what is not:

"*The pure being and the pure nothing is therefore the same.*"  
 "*Das reine Seyn und das reine Nichts ist also dasselbe.*"<sup>5</sup>

Not a proposition about becoming, the becoming-proposition is the articulation of the minimal stasis of the movement which is the concept becoming.

Parmenides:

"[...] the decision [...] depends on this:  
 [it] is or [it] is not, but it has been decided, as is necessary,  
 to let go the one as unthinkable, unnameable (for it is no true  
 Route), but allow the other, so that it is, and is true."<sup>6</sup>

The decision separates two paths – is, is not – and it binds thinking to the one, against the other. Hence, it renders the becoming-proposition unthinkable. Hegel, in turn, unconditionally affirms the Parmenidean decision, since in it thinking unconditionally affirms itself, for the first time, as “absolute abstraction”.<sup>7</sup> Yet as absolute abstraction the thought of pure being is as empty as the thought of pure nothing, and thinking this thought thinking comes to its initial concretion in the concept of becoming. Parmenides’s decision is the absolute contradiction to Hegel’s becoming-proposition, and yet it is absolutely indispensable for its proper articulation. Can both together, decision and proposition, articulate Badiou’s philosophy-formula? Being, truth, subject – truth and subject are post-evental, the event is what is prohibited from being, what is prohibited from the thinking of being is non-being, what is structured as a prohibition in Parmenides’ decision, for Badiou, is what is the absolute abstraction in this decision, for Hegel. Two questions naturally follow: 1. Is there a being, despite the prohibition of the event, of truth and subject? Can being, truth and subject, with all necessary distinctions being made, be said to be ‘the same’? 2. Does this sameness articulate a ‘becoming’? These are the questions that follow if the being at stake in the Parmenidean decision is taken to speak to the being in Hegel’s proposition and in Badiou’s formula, if, in other words, this formula is articulated through Hegel and Parmenides. A different question follows if it is not Badiou who is articulated through Hegel, but if it is inversely Hegel who is read through Badiou. Under this supposition, Badiou’s hypothesis that mathematics is ontology raises the following question: In what sense is Hegel’s proposition actually an ontological proposition, or not, when read in light of Badiou’s formula? Only a sufficient clarification of this question will yield clarification of the initial questions, since only then it is clear in what sense the being in Hegel’s proposition may or may not speak to the being in Badiou’s formula. The point of departure is therefore Hegel’s proposition. It begins Hegel’s logic of being. So it must be an ontological proposition. In what sense ontological? In what sense a proposition?

Badiou’s formula allows to situate Hegel’s proposition as an ontological proposition. Since this formula is initially postulated as post-Cartesian. Being, truth, subject: in different order the formula evokes the three Cartesian substances God, *substantia cogitans*, and *substantia corporea*.<sup>8</sup> But where does a science of being qua being find its place in the Cartesian division, given that it can obviously not be a science of corporeal substance? What is a question with regards to Badiou’s formula itself, as post-Cartesian, leads to the pre-Cartesian constellation in which ontology in fact comes to its *name* for the first time and which assigns it the systematic place from which it is to be taken up by Hegel. Ontology comes to its name only shortly before Descartes through a number of German Protestants deepening an otherwise unnoticed division, proposed by a Spanish Jesuit, of first philosophy – ambiguous since Aristotle

between the science of being qua being and theology – into a separation of general and special metaphysics. And as a matter of fact, it comes to its name, through the infamous Goclenius, as one of three modes of “abstractio materialis” side by side with *mathematics*: “*Mathematica haec est et οντολογικη [ontologikē], idest, Philosophiae de ente seu Transcendentibus*”.<sup>9</sup> The given pre-Cartesian separation paves the way for Wolff’s post-Cartesian compromise between the Aristotelian scholastic tradition and the Cartesian revolution, with the division between ontology, or, general metaphysics treating being qua being and special metaphysics treating the objects soul, world, and God. This division structures the transcendental analytic and dialectic of Kant’s first critique. No less does it structure the three positions of thought toward objectivity in the introduction of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* logic. But against and beyond Kant’s critical philosophy, which turns thought to itself in an examination and limitation of the legitimacy of objective cognition, Hegel seeks to regain the pre-critical claim to the objectivity of thought itself. And reclaiming within the modern, post-Cartesian configuration the “simple indivisibility of *thinking* and the *being* of thinking”, Hegel equally reclaims what is sustained in it of the pre-Cartesian science of being qua being.<sup>10</sup> Hegel’s becoming-proposition is thus a proposition of objective thought, and it is at once an ontological proposition, in that it pronounces what is to be said of pure being thought in its absolute abstraction: *nothing*.

The form which the Kantian critical examination of cognition reveals to be determinative for thought as such is the form of judgement. Those objects of reason which are formed in excess of the binding of thought, qua judgement, to intuition through syllogisms, soul, world, and God, do not grant objective cognition. But for Hegel, the form of judgement, the form of proposition itself is an obstacle for thought, it is “not adept to express speculative truths”.<sup>11</sup> This obstacle is articulated, in the *Phenomenology* preface, under the name of the “speculative proposition”, but which is there nothing more than the exposition of a problem, and moreover the exposition of this problem in the element of representation: “Representational thinking [...] suffers, to represent it this way, a counter-thrust.”<sup>12</sup> The problem raised in the representational exposition of the obstacle of representational thinking, namely, the problem of the form itself of proposition resurfaces, yet in the element of objective thought, that is, of pure presentation, in the becoming-proposition. As the first proposition proper of the *Logic*, the becoming-proposition does not (yet) thematize the form as such of proposition, of judgement, but it shows, *in actu*, what a speculative proposition in the element of pure thought is. Hence Hegel’s remarks on the accentuation of the becoming-proposition, echoing precisely the remarks on the rhythm, meter, and accent of the speculative proposition.<sup>13</sup> *Being and nothing is the same*. The proposition poses the *sameness*, the identity of being and nothing. Yet it equally supposes them as different, *being and nothing*. Posing being and nothing

as different yet equally the same, the proposition “contradicts” itself and shows “the movement to vanish through itself”.<sup>14</sup> Thus it “happens” in the proposition itself what is supposed to be its content: becoming. However, thus vanishing the proposition is deficient in that its vanishing is the result only of an external reflection on the proposition. Leveling out its deficiency, the proposition demands to pose the opposed proposition: *Being and nothing is not the same*. But what is thus posed is again only the “antinomy” of two propositions, *being and nothing is the same* and *not the same*, whereas their content is supposed to be “One and the Same”.<sup>15</sup> The becoming-proposition therefore demonstrates not only that as a single proposition it is an incomplete expression of becoming, but that the very form of the proposition itself is inept to express speculative truths, namely, becoming. And so with the concept of becoming, Hegel gains the elementary operator to *invert* the Kantian order of the determination of thought: It is not the form of judgement that yields the table of categories through which any given is thought. But it is the becoming, the processual transformation of categorical determinations, and moreover of the *form* of this transformation *itself* which generates the form, but which is no other than the content, of objective thought itself, which (eventually) also includes the form of judgement, yet as a form insufficient to express speculative truths. As an ontological proposition of objective thought, in exposing the formal obstacle of thought the becoming-proposition at once unrests its concrete over-coming, which says of being more, that is, less, that is, *not* what is said of it as thought in absolute abstraction: nothing.

*The pure being and the pure nothing is therefore (not) the same.*

Hegel’s becoming-proposition, so it seems, is an ontological proposition, of objective thought, posing a problem of formalization. But is it indeed to be taken as an ontological proposition when read with Badiou? Yet if not, how *do* other readings read it as an ontological proposition, in some qualified sense or other? And conversely what objections do those readings provoke from a reading with Badiou? These questions arise in view of three recent interpretations of the beginning of Hegel’s *Logic*. All three happen to have appeared in 2018.

The first, Ruda, reads Hegel with Badiou.<sup>16</sup> But with ontology being the matter of mathematics, and not philosophy, it consequently reads the *Logic* precisely not as an ontological proposition but as the conceptualization of a post-evental truth procedure.<sup>17</sup> Accordingly, the *Logic*’s beginning proper is not the thinking of *Being, pure being*, – but prior to it the “decision”, of the “will”, to “contemplate thought as such”, yet which is a decision only in an encounter with an event and as an affirmation of the event deciding nothing but that it will have had consequences as a decision imposed by the event.<sup>18</sup> But what is the event without its consequences? It “*is* something that *is not*”, strictly speaking not even yet *something* it simply *is not*.<sup>19</sup> With the event as bare disappearing, vanishing, indistinguishably being and nothing, the

becoming-proposition reads as the exact articulation of the “two that form an inseparable unity that is the event”.<sup>20</sup> Although the becoming-proposition is here not taken up as the speculative proposition that it is, the micrological reading of the *Logic*’s first non-proposition can easily be extended to it.<sup>21</sup> Since this reading scales the problem of formalization down below the level of propositions and words to that of speculative signs. The repetitive structure of the opening of the *Logic*, on the other hand, positions the dash in *Being, pure being*, – just where becoming is positioned in *being ... nothing ... becoming*, such that the problem of formalization posed in the becoming-proposition turns out to be no other than the one posed in the speculative reading of the dash.<sup>22</sup> What this reading suggests is that in interrupting the seriality of the preceding syntagma, the dash opens in thought “another form of temporality: the temporality of retroactivity”<sup>23</sup>, thus at once referring it back to the decision preceding the syntagma and projecting the consequences that the thought of the dash (Gedankenstrich) will have had for thought. With or without the dash, read as post-evental the becoming-proposition is not an ontological proposition but its unrest, its becoming is transposed into the articulation of a temporal dynamic.<sup>24</sup>

With the second, Rödl, the opening of Hegel’s *Logic* comes into view as an ontological proposition, yet under the primacy of thought, as it is read in light of a “unity” of logic, the science of thought, and metaphysics, the science of what is, a unity, however, which is itself “a consequence of the self-consciousness of thought”.<sup>25</sup> Accordingly the beginning proper of the *Logic* is not *being* but *becoming*, since it is only in the concrete unity of becoming that self-conscious thought comes into its element proper. The problem of formalization is exposed as a problematic of judgement itself, not, however, from within the becoming-proposition, nor from another passage of the text of the *Logic*, but in the superimposition of Hegel’s *being* with the pure force of assertion, isolated in the judgement-stroke (Urteilsstrich) of Frege’s Begriffsschrift, and of Hegel’s *nothing* with the same force re-conceived as pure denial, both prior to any determinate content of judgement. The sameness of *being* and *nothing*, on the other hand, is shown to be their concrete unity by virtue of the *thinking* of pure being being the same as the *thinking* of pure nothing.<sup>26</sup> Since the nothing into which the thought of pure being collapses is not mere emptiness but instead it is the power, thus at once the act of thought itself, as Rödl says with Aristotle and against Kant.<sup>27</sup> As this internal reflection of thought thinking itself in thinking nothing, the sameness of being and nothing is a concrete unity in the thought of becoming. And this concrete, determinate unity of thought in turn allows to overcome the absolute abstraction of indeterminate being, and nothing, and therefore the separation of the pure force of assertion, and denial, over and against the content of judgement, in the prospect of a “proper”, a “perfect Begriffsschrift” that would always already have inscribed the opposition of *is* and *is not* into any “sentence

letter“ *p*.<sup>28</sup> Read in light of the self-consciousness of objective thought, the opening of the *Logic* is thus a contemplation on the form of thought, as the form of judgement.<sup>29</sup>

It is with the third, Hindrichs, that the becoming-proposition shows its properly ontological momentum, but which becomes intelligible only from the perspective of Hegel’s overall venture of a “*sublation [Aufhebung]* of previous ontology into a logic of the concept”.<sup>30</sup> Ontology, prior to the Aristotelian division of four senses and ten categories of being, is here presupposed, by Hindrichs, to be the presentation of being as such in its veridical being as articulated through predicative and existential being.<sup>31</sup> The claim of previous, pre-critical ontology which Hegel’s sublation seeks to reclaim is the claim of the unity of thought and being. In previous ontology, this claim is grounded, in the last instance, in a special concept, a concept which again is claimed to be proven to include its own existence, the rational concept of God. Hegel’s sublation, on the other hand, is a reclaiming only on grounds of the critique of the claims of previous ontology. This critique proceeds by exhibiting the claims of ontology in their articulate presentation and showing the failure of this presentation to present the respective ontological claim. The opening of the *Logic* initiates this procedure and at once it opens the field in which it proceeds.<sup>32</sup> Since what *being, pure being* claims to present is nothing other than veridical being as such, prior to any articulation in existential and predicative being. Devoid of any determinate articulation, however, this presentation of veridical being in *pure being* fails, as it does not present anything, and the name of this failure is *nothing, the pure nothing*. But what is thus articulated is the explication of one determination through another, which explicative transitioning is nothing other than *becoming*. In this way the opening of the *Logic* not only opens the “field” of its procedure, veridical being, but it moreover yields the “operation” through which it critically reclaims the claims of previous ontology, “the operation of presentation, failure and transition”.<sup>33</sup> Now, given the previous claim of the unity of thought and being, Hegel’s *Logic* approaches the conclusion of its reclamation not in the critical presentation of being but in the self-explication of thought, that is, in the logic of the *concept*, and it is here that the corresponding special claim of a concept that involves its own existence is decided. Moreover, it is also here, in the logic of *judgement* and *syllogism*, that the presupposed articulation of veridical in predicative and existential being aligns with Hegel’s sublation of previous ontology into a logic of the concept. Since it is the fulfillment of the empty copula of judgment in the syllogism, and the completion of the syllogism in the disjunctive syllogism that achieves the conceptual self-mediation of thought that allows to reclaim what the previous ontological proof only claimed but failed to redeem: the grounding of the unity of thought and being in a concept that includes its own existence.<sup>34</sup> The self-realizing self-mediation

of thought, of the conceptual, thus proceeds “under the concept of God”, yet which is no longer the concept of a special object but the “operator of the self-determination of thought”.<sup>35</sup> The *absolute idea*, accordingly, concludes the operation of the critical presentation of veridical being in an “unconditioned operation”.<sup>36</sup> In this perspective, what initially appears as a problem of mere formalization exposed in the becoming-proposition is scaled up and post-poned to the logic of judgement and syllogism, to be resolved in its eventual ab-solution in the idea. Already in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel attempts to illustrate the problem of the speculative proposition with the “example”: “*God is being. / Gott ist das Seyn*”.<sup>37</sup> The *Logic*, read in light of Hegel’s venture of the sublation of previous ontology, shows this example to be the problem itself, rather than its illustration, and its solution to reside in the self-determination of thought under an unconditioned operation.<sup>38</sup>

All three readings bind the opening of the *Logic* to a question of truth, in a truth procedure, in the assertive force of judgement, in the presentation of veridical being. The first, however, renounces or at least it leaves open the ontological status of the becoming-proposition as a consequence of the expropriation, rather than the sublation, of ontology from philosophy and its entrustment to mathematics. In the second and third, by contrast, the becoming-proposition gains ontological significance in a qualified sense, as a consequence of self-consciousness or as bound under the rational concept of God. But from the position of the first, the restoration of ontology by virtue of self-consciousness no less than God is untenable. This becomes particularly evident in light of Badiou’s philosophy-formula and its post-Cartesian implications. Since it is precisely in being post-evental that truth and subject are unbound from any foundational function for a discourse on being qua being, be it in the transparency of self-consciousness or in the figure of God as a guarantee of truth. But how can truth and subject be said to be post-evental without anything being said about the event? And how can anything be said about the event without anything being said about being? The philosophy-formula makes an articulation of truth and subject impossible without an articulation of being. But then Hegel’s becoming-proposition must gain ontological significance also when read with Badiou. *Being and nothing is the same*. Instead of reading this sameness as the vanishing of the event, *being* is therefore to be considered as such, *qua being*, and *nothing* is to be considered as such, *qua event*. Now the ontological significance of the proposition is to be spelled out indeed under the supposition that mathematics is ontology, yet in light of its presuppositions not only outside but also *within* the philosophical field. These presuppositions stem not from the post-Cartesian configuration, nor do they stem from the post-Aristotelian filiation in which ontology comes to its name side by side with mathematics. But prior to it they reside in the Parmenidean decision in which thinking is initially bound to being against non-being. This decision

is to be examined under the conditions of formalization not according to a logic of judgement, nor of syllogism, but according to modern post-Fregean mathematics. The Parmenidean decision, in other words, is to be taken not, with Hegel, as an absolute abstraction, but, with Badiou, under the imposition and in the transgression of a prohibition.

In order to comprehend the Parmenidean decision by way of a prohibition and, moreover, to comprehend the particular form which this prohibition takes, two assumptions are to be accepted beforehand to then see if they can be justified with Parmenides or not.<sup>39</sup> Firstly, that mathematics is ontology. Secondly, that the presentation of being is the presentation of the pure multiple.<sup>40</sup> The poem of Parmenides binds thinking to being in the separation of being and non-being, *(it) is* and *(it) is not, estin ... ouk estin*. But the poem goes further, on the path of being, and shows its signs. The first sign shown is that it is ungenerated, *ageneton*. The last signs shown are that it is one and continuous, *hen, syneches*.<sup>41</sup> The poem again goes further, however, since not only does it show but it *proves* that being is ungenerated. Moreover, the proof proceeds as an indirect proof: supposing that being is generated and comes to be it demonstrates the contradiction of this supposition from the initial decision that separates being and non-being. Therefore, that mathematics is ontology is not a hypothesis *against* but it is a hypothesis *justified by* Parmenides. Since it is here, in the proof of the first sign of being, that the thinking of being is initially bound by a demonstrative procedure. The indirect proof in Parmenides's poem thus yields "deduction as the operator of ontological fidelity" and places the discourse on being qua being within mathematics no less than within philosophy from the outset.<sup>42</sup> But whereas it sets the thinking of being free in binding it by a deductive operator, the poem at once inevitably restrains it in prescribing the thought of being to be one. If, however, the presentation of being is to be the presentation of the pure multiple, the mathematical thinking of being must be differentiated, *against* Parmenides, into a logic and an ontology which is bound by but not reducible to logic. Put in modern terms, only first-order logic in conjunction with axiomatic set theory is able to present being as pure multiple. The axioms of set theory prescribe the use of the symbol  $\in$  of the two-place relation of belonging.<sup>43</sup> The relation of belonging itself,  $\in$ , is resembled by any relation satisfying the axioms of extensionality and of foundation in particular.<sup>44</sup> With the axiom of extensionality, what is the identity of  $a = a$  in logic is an identity of pure multiples in ontology, since two multiples, or sets,  $m' = m''$  are identical, according to the axiom, if and only if all multiples belonging to the one multiple also belong to the other multiple. The differentiation of logic and ontology therefore inscribes multiplicity into identity, which indicates a detachment of the thinking of being as multiple of multiples from the prescription of thinking it as one.<sup>45</sup> The axiom of foundation, on the other hand, re-inscribes within

the ontology of the pure multiple the prohibition that binds thinking to being in the Parmenidean decision. But the prohibition, which in its purely Parmenidean form imposes onto thought the bare unthinkability of non-being, now takes a particular form in the thinking of the pure multiple. Since what the axiom of foundation effectively prohibits is any set  $a$  that would belong to  $a$ , that is, to itself as one of its members. However, what the formal structure of the *event* boils down to is nothing other than to be a multiple that belongs to itself.<sup>46</sup> In place of Parmenides's non-being, the axiom of foundation therefore prohibits the event as "what-is-not-being-qua-being".<sup>47</sup> Within the ontology of the pure multiple as "*the thinking of well-founded extensional relations*", bound by deductive logic but detached from the One, the Parmenidean decision, *estin ... ouk estin*, is therefore re-inscribed as the strict division of *being* and what is prohibited from being, the *event*.<sup>48</sup>

Given the exclusive disjunction of either being or event, it is possible to determine how truth and subject can be said to *be post-evental*, and moreover why in the last instance also the discourse on being qua being *itself* must be said to be post-evental. To be post-evental amounts to being temporal. But instead of unfolding after the event, *post-evental* temporality is rather purely *evental* temporality as it springs from the identification of the event itself qua self-belonging multiple. Since what allows for the identification of an event, qua multiple, are solely the multiples that belong to it qua multiple. Yet if it belongs to itself, the identification of the event must precede the identification of the event, and this "self-antecedence in identification" implies the equally retroactive and anticipatory temporality expressed in saying that the event "is solely identical to itself inasmuch as it *will have been* identical to itself".<sup>49</sup> Ontology, on the other hand, not only prohibits self-belonging but it also operates "[i]n the absence of any temporality, thus of any future anterior".<sup>50</sup> And nevertheless it is only from within the field of ontology that a *being* of truth and of the subject becomes thinkable that implies their post-evental *temporality*. Since not only for Parmenides but also for the ontology of the pure multiple, being is continuous. The continuity of the pure multiple, however, convokes the demonstration of the undecidability of the pivotal proposition regarding its size, Cantor's Continuum Hypothesis.<sup>51</sup> Both its affirmation and its negation are demonstrated, by Gödel and Cohen, in models of the universe of sets. The inner model of constructible sets restricts the power-set operation to definable subsets, the method of generic extensions proceeds by way of the addition, to a ground model, of a generic set that avoids any specification by definable subsets of the model. Informally, Cohen recounts the challenge of proceeding from the model to its extension by way of a generic set  $a$  as follows: "How could one decide whether a statement about  $a$  is true, before we have  $a$ ?"<sup>52</sup> The challenge is resolved by defining a relation between elements of the generic set and

statements in the model such that the same statements are true in its extension. Informally, the definition amounts to saying that an element of the generic set, a forcing condition, forces a statement (in the model) *if and only if* the statement is true (in the extension). Leaving technicalities aside, the upshot of Cohen's achievement for the ontology of the multiple is twofold. Firstly, Badiou pushes his achievements further by reducing what is already a new approach to truth for Cohen to the *veracity* of statements and distinguishing it from the being of *truth*. The being of truth, for Badiou, is the generic multiple. Uncoupled from being a value of statements, or propositions, truth is thus a form of being itself. Secondly, the subject is re-conceived, by Badiou, from a link, according to the changed terminology, between the being of truth and the veracity of statements. This link is the relation of forcing, between an element of a truth and a statement, that is defined as equivalent to the veracity of that statement. The subject is thus re-conceived, from the relation of forcing, at a point of undecidability, since it is ultimately in the forcing not of any statements but of the undecidability of the Continuum Hypothesis that Cohen's result is achieved. From within the field of ontology, therefore, a being of truth and of the subject becomes thinkable in the generic multiple and the relation of forcing. Notwithstanding the supposed absence of any temporality from ontology, however, the being of truth and subject implies the anticipatory temporality of the future anterior. Since as a formed multiple the generic truth only belongs to the resulting extension, whereas it is to be presupposed already within the initial model, yet to which it does not (yet) belong, in order for its elements to force statements. This hiatus, between model and extension or between situation and new situation, is bridged over in the atemporal *bi-conditional* of the formal definition of forcing. It is indicated as temporal in Cohen's informal question regarding statements about *a before having a*. It is reformulated, by Badiou, as the anticipatory temporality of "statement[s] of the subject-language" that "*will have been veridical for a situation in which a truth has occurred*".<sup>53</sup> The atemporal bi-conditional of pure formalization is thus transposed into a dynamic procedure of the subject as the anticipation-retroaction of a truth. The being of truth and subject therefore implies a temporality which is the *same* as that implicit in the identification of the event, in a transgression of its prohibition which nevertheless does *not* legalize self-belonging within the discourse on being qua being. From within itself, ontology captures the being of what originates outside itself. But in a hyperbolic reflexive turn, therein ontology ultimately yields the schema also of its *own* historicity. Capturing the post-evental being of truth and subject, ontology *itself* becomes thinkable as post-evental, as a situation in which truths occur, as a truth procedure. In the last instance, Cantor then figures as if inhabiting a situation, that is, a model, that is, a set to which set theory does not (yet) belong, but in the extension of which by set theory it will have been veridical as set theory.<sup>54</sup> In less exaggerated

terms, this amounts to clarifying the initial assumption presupposed by the ontology of the pure multiple: It is not that mathematics is ontology, but that “mathematics is the historicity of the discourse on being qua being”.<sup>55</sup> The latter is not a relativization of the former. On the contrary, as a “meta-ontological thesis”, that is, as a proposition of a philosophy that is irreducible to a discourse neither on being nor of the event but that is nothing unless it institutes the articulation of both, the thesis opens ontology toward what its prohibition excludes outside itself and what its deductively bound transgression unfolds from within itself, toward its being a subjectivized-subjectivizing truth procedure.<sup>56</sup>

Parmenides’ poem proves being to be ungenerated. The mathematical ontology unfolding therefrom unfolds into the thought of its own genericity as genesis and becoming. It seems as if in the *procedure* of truths no less than in the presentation of the *multiple* Badiou’s decision shows itself to be taken against the very Parmenidean signs the proof of which sets a mathematical thinking of being free in the first place. But this perspective, opened up in *Being and Event*, towards “an evental occurrence of being” shifts in view of its *absoluteness* in *The Immanence of Truths* in at least two regards.<sup>57</sup> Firstly, the possibility of a reflexive historicization of mathematical ontology by philosophy is blocked through the special status of mathematical works with respect to their absolutization. A “work of truth” is now introduced and defined as a “finite fragment of an (infinite) truth procedure”.<sup>58</sup> Despite its finite and static being, the work bears a mark of its “becoming” in its index, which links the work at once to the truth procedure of which it is a fragment and to the event from which this procedure unfolds.<sup>59</sup> The index of the work allows its dynamic to gain the absoluteness of the work. Leaving aside the technicalities of this absolutization, what matters for the present context is only that it is with mathematical works alone “that the absolutization of these works does not require them to have an index”.<sup>60</sup> They don’t require it because mathematical works themselves define and examine the absolute place, or referent, which non-mathematical works of truth are indexed to in their absolutization. But with the index being superfluous for mathematical works themselves, it is no longer their own dynamic and becoming which is conceived by way of the forms and formalizations they generate.<sup>61</sup> Secondly, what comes into view instead is a properly Parmenidean ultimate horizon of mathematical ontology.<sup>62</sup> Again this Parmenidean dimension is articulated, by Badiou, in terms of a “prohibition”.<sup>63</sup> But rather than concerning being and the event as prohibited from being, the prohibition now concerns a relation between the absolute and being. And rather than taking the form of an axiom, the prohibition results from the proof of a theorem (Kunen). With the absolute as  $V$ , the universe of sets, its approximation in the ascending hierarchy of the infinities of large cardinals reaches a limit in Kunen’s theorem. Since this theorem shows that there is no relation of  $V$  to itself other than the

relation of identity, or that there is no non-trivial elementary embedding of  $V$  into  $V$ . This “prohibition imposed by the pure identity of the absolute” has two aspects.<sup>64</sup> On the one hand, it prohibits the existence, within the ascent of infinities, of a highest being, or infinite set, that would be the witness of the non-trivial relation of the absolute to itself ruled out by the prohibition. But therefore it also confirms, on the other hand, “that the absolute [itself] does not exist insofar as existing would mean that the absolute is thinkable *in the form of a set*”.<sup>65</sup> As a consequence, the signs which Parmenides’s poem shows of being are reclaimed, through Kunen’s theorem, not as signs of being but as signs of the inexistent absolute. Identity being the sole relation of the absolute to itself, it is “one and rigid”, or immobile, since any mobility within it would require a kind of permutation, thus a non-trivial embedding of  $V$  into  $V$ , but which is prohibited by the theorem.<sup>66</sup> Finally, being proven by way of an indirect proof, the theorem shows the immobility of the absolute by way of the same deductive procedure in which the poem shows being to be ungenerated.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, although mathematical ontology necessarily inverts the signs of its Parmenidean presupposition in the procedural thinking of the pure multiple, they revert in the one immobility of the inexistent absolute.

With Badiou, the non-being of the Parmenidean decision is the event as self-belonging multiple. It comes to be thought in the dynamic of a truth-procedure, yet without thought therefore unbinding itself from an absolute ontological referent. – Given this knot of thinking, being and non-being, can Hegel’s becoming-proposition gain ontological significance also when read with Badiou?

With Hegel, the non-being of the Parmenidean decision gains a Spinozian signification. Superimposed with the formula “*omnis determinatio est negatio*”, it unfolds a dynamic of negativity.<sup>68</sup> But conversely Hegel’s Parmenidean *being, pure being, – sine omne determinatione* is at once to be thought as Spinoza’s substance, or God, and thus re-inscribed in the modern, post-Cartesian configuration. – Given this Spinozian undercurrent of Hegel’s *Logic*, and the equally Spinozian backbone of *The Immanence of Truths*, how does the operation of becoming proceed in view of the ascent of large cardinals that unbinds Spinoza’s infinity of infinite attributes from the One of monotheism?<sup>69</sup>

Returning to the question of the status of Hegel’s becoming-proposition allows to disclose what this question and the preceding considerations altogether can be taken to be preliminaries for. Toward the end of *The Immanence of Truths*, before spelling out the conceptual function of the index of a work of truth for its absolutization in Plato, Badiou remarks that the same could be done for the case of Hegel and alluding to the “‘work’ of the negative” he suggests: “For Hegel, it is the capacity of creative negativity that constitutes the index of every dialectical work geared toward the absolute.”<sup>70</sup> Spelling out this

suggestion is what the preceding considerations can be taken to be preliminaries for.<sup>71</sup>

Given the Spinozian corollary proposed above, the following can be remarked in brief as a preliminary point of departure. A work of truth is defined, by Badiou, as a finite fragment of a truth procedure, that is, of a becoming. A truth procedure is a becoming in the un-separation of being and the event. The opening of Hegel's *Logic* in being, nothing, and becoming yields determinate being or being-there (Dasein). If being is a stand-in for Spinoza's substance, being-there is its finite mode.<sup>72</sup> Hegel's being-there is the first finite fragment of becoming, it is therefore the finite fragment of a truth procedure that is a work for Badiou. The operation of being-nothing-becoming is put to work in being-there such that being-there contains "the first negation of negation".<sup>73</sup> As a finite fragment of becoming, Hegel's being-there is therefore a work of truth by virtue of the work of the negative.

The question regarding the ontological status of Hegel's becoming-proposition is the question of the ontological status of the operation (being-nothing-becoming) prior to there being a work of truth and a work of the negative. The question has two sides. Firstly, if the initial operation is itself eventually bound by an unconditioned operation, and if thereby a work of truth is 'geared toward the absolute', is the operation therefore bound by a concept of God? Can the operation be unbound from the concept of God and nevertheless be unconditioned and absolute? Secondly, is the initial operation (being-nothing-becoming) an ontological operation, or not? Or, conversely, is the initial operation a temporal operation, or not? In Badiou's case, the ontological procedure yields a temporal schema, of future anterior, yet at the same time it operates deductively and in the absence of any temporality, be it in the indirect proof of Parmenides or in the complex machinery of forcing when abstracted from its implicit temporality. With regards to Hegel, the question then is whether also the initial operation is two-sided, in other words, if it can be said to operate in the absence of any temporality. Localized in the becoming-proposition, this question crystallizes in a problem of formalization, and accordingly it amounts to the question of the relation between temporalization and formalization which, after all, is a question in Badiou no less than it is in Hegel.

Hegel's *Logic* does not begin unless from a decision, the decision to think thought as such. In Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, the "decision of freedom of the will to think" is "contained" in a need, the "need to philosophize".<sup>74</sup> The encyclopedic need to philosophize is articulated in yet another philosophy-formula, pronounced within the post-Cartesian configuration in yet another, post-Kantian, variation. Since in accord with the tripartite system of spirit, nature, and logic, it is the need to philosophize "about the objects which the instinct of reason has indicated to representation as absolutely essential; namely, about the human and the human

determination, the external world, and God”.<sup>75</sup> In Jena, Hegel articulates the need of philosophy prior to its encyclopedic configuration. This articulation allows to conclude, preliminarily, yet not in indecision: “only in a restricted sense it can be my opinion to clarify the need of philosophy, to clarify it entirely would amount to produce the whole of philosophy.”<sup>76</sup>

- 1 Hamacher, 2013, pp. 24, 14, translation forthcoming.
- 2 Badiou, 2013, p. 1 ff.
- 3 Badiou, 1999, p. 32, trans. mod.
- 4 Badiou, 2022, p. 449.
- 5 Hegel, 1984, p. 69. – *In other words, what is taken to be proper articulation in the opening of the logic is what is marked, by Hegel, in italics.* – All quotations from Hegel are translation of the author from the German text.
- 6 Parmenides, DK 8, 15–18, after Gallop, 2013, transl. mod.
- 7 Hegel, 1984, p. 70.
- 8 Descartes, 2005, §§51-52. That ‘subject’ takes the position of *res cogitans* should be clear from the final meditation of *Being and Event*, “Descartes/Lacan”. Regarding ‘truth’, see for example *The Immanence of Truths*: “The reality of what presented itself as “God”, and must today take the name “truths”, lies on a different subjective plane from the one to which Descartes confined it, i.e., the explicit representation of ideas.” (Badiou, 2022, p. 167)
- 9 Goclenius, *Lexicon Philosophicum* (1613), lemma *abstractio*, quoted after Vollrath, 1962, 266. Goclenius’ three modes of abstraction mirror the Aristotelian division of theoretical sciences, physics, mathematics, and theology (*Metaphysics E.1*), but with the name of ontology ‘landing’ in mathematics, that is, on second place, the internal ambiguity of what it names, Aristotelian first philosophy, becomes all the more apparent. This ambiguity is inscribed in Protestant scholasticism, grappling with Lutheran anti-philosophy, as a kind of alienation between the science of being qua being and theology, brought to a compromise in the division of general and special metaphysics. – See also Hindrichs, 2021.
- 10 “Die einfache Untrennbarkeit des Denkens und des Seyns des Denkenden”, Hegel, 1992, §76.
- 11 Hegel, 1984, p. 78.
- 12 Hegel, 1980, p. 43.
- 13 See Hegel, 1984, p. 77, and 1980, p. 43 f. – It is one thing to state the obvious convergence of speculative and becoming-proposition in the remarks on rhythm, meter, and accent. Another thing is to expound what those rather obscure remarks actually say. *What is in question here is nothing less than an immanent rhythm of speculative, objective thought itself. And this question amounts to the more general question of the relation of poetry, Dichtung, and philosophy. One possible way to pose this question, following Schestag, would be to read Hegel’s counter-thrust, Gegenstoß, as an echo of Hölderlin’s caesura, which is a counter-rhythmic interruption, gegenrhythmische Unterbrechung.*
- 14 Hegel, 1984, p. 77.
- 15 Hegel, 1984, p. 78.
- 16 See Comay and Ruda, 2018, and Ruda, 2019.
- 17 “For Hegel, as for Badiou, philosophy only thinks events”, Ruda, 2019, p. 64.
- 18 Hegel, 1984, p. 56.
- 19 Ruda, 2019, p. 63.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 See Ruda, “Hegel’s First Words”, in Comay and Ruda, 2018.
- 22 The repetitive structure of the opening of the *Logic* is also analyzed by Dolar, 2017.
- 23 Comay and Ruda, 2018, p. 103.
- 24 It should be added, however, that the ontological problematic, which for Badiou concerns untying the grip of the One, is not absent from *The Dash* when Ruda concludes: “It [being, pure being, A.S.] will have been Un–Eins as the real (being of the) beginning, the (real) real of and in the beginning of being and of nothing.” (Ibid., 105) This can be read in at least two ways, either as opening a new possibility within the ontological problematic or as transposing it into a problematic of truth procedures (one of them being ontology).
- 25 Rödl, 2018, pp. 102, 99.
- 26 See Ibid., pp. 112 f.
- 27 See Ibid., pp. 113, 100.
- 28 See Rödl, 2018, pp. 110, 116.
- 29 Ironically, although Rödl boldly claims becoming to be the beginning of the *Logic*, and although the form of judgement is the central concern of his reading, the becoming-proposition itself is not quoted by Rödl, whereas the immediately preceding and succeeding propositions are. In fact, one could take the becoming-proposition – carefully avoided by Rödl – to be the symptomatic point, or the navel of his entire reading, the point where external tilts into internal reflection, where the separation of force and content begins to dissolve.
- 30 Hindrichs, 2018, p. 148, emphasis A.S., see also p. 124 ff. “Previous” refers here to the pre-critical, post-Cartesian ontology, as it is discussed, by Hegel, in particular in the three positions of thought to objectivity of the *Encyclopedia logic* (see above) and in the preface and introduction of the *Science of Logic*. – Hindrichs reconstructs Hegel’s ontological program against the backdrop of both previous ontology and its Kantian critique: *Hegel’s inversion of the Kantian order of the determination of thought was briefly alluded to above. For the present context, only the background of pre-critical ontology is relevant.*
- 31 Ibid., p. 120 ff. A provisional schema for the presentation to be expounded by ontology is provided in the “articulation-formula of being qua being”: “It is true (veridical being), that there is something (existential being), that is such and such (predicative being).” This schema is provisional in as much as Hegel’s *Logic* obviously does not proceed from the supposition of something as that which primarily exists. The primacy of veridical being over its differentiation into existential and predicative being is analyzed for ancient Greek philosophy in Kahn, 2009a.
- 32 Ibid., p. 128 ff.
- 33 Ibid., p. 131.
- 34 Ibid., p. 147 f. – Following Sandkaulen, Hindrichs mediates the gulf between the opening of the *Logic* (being, nothing, becoming) and the

*conclusion of the disjunctive syllogism in the critical re-claiming of the ontological proof, the gulf, that is, between the unity of thinking and being in being, on the one hand, and in thinking, on the other, by taking into view Hegel's Kantianizing working through of Spinoza's definition of substance (see p. 141 ff.). According to Spinoza, substance is that which is in itself and can be conceived through itself. It is thus defined with respect to two sides, being and thinking. The first is the subject matter at the end of the logic of essence, but where the concept of substance is at once examined along the Kantian categories of substance–accident, cause–effect, and reciprocity. The same trajectory is taken again, but now along the forms of thinking, in the logic of the concept in the three forms of the syllogism of necessity as categorical, hypothetical and disjunctive syllogism. This entire constellation is summarized, by Hindrichs, again in terms of Hegel's critical presentation of the claims of previous ontology: "Instead of illuminating the asserted unity of thinking and being, [Spinoza's concept of substance] merely posits it per definitionem. [...] The concept of substance claims the unity of conceptual relation and mode of being, but it does not articulate it. For the articulation of its claim it therefore needs other concepts. [...] And since the category of substance, besides being-in-itself, only asserts being-conceived-through-itself, the path to its further articulation has to depart from the latter." (p. 143) "[Hegel's logic of the concept] spells out the claim of the category of substance in categories that exceed/transcend the categories of being and its essence and which present the conceptual in as much as it relates to itself." (p. 144)*

35 *Ibid.*, p.149.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 150.

37 Hegel, 1980, p. 44.

38 It should be added that in unveiling the rational-theological problematic in Hegel's *Logic*, Hindrichs effectively inverts the reading-protocol of Lenin during his Swiss exile in the winter of 1914/15. Beginning with the presupposition that he will read the *Logic* without God, the chapter on the absolute idea lets Lenin remark the surprise that barely any of its words actually speak of God. See Arndt, 2023, pp. 226-230. Hindrichs's reconstruction thus allows to be read in at least two ways, either as restoring rational theology or as meticulously showing how Hegel dismantles it.

39 See Badiou, 2013, "Introduction" and Meditation 1–3. Although the Parmenidean "knot" of "being/non-being/thought", extensively investigated before as a prohibition in the 1985-86 seminar, is evoked right at the beginning of *Being and Event* (p. 2), the opening meditations appear to justify its initial assumptions primarily vis-a-vis Plato's Parmenides. For the present context, all Platonic references are left aside.

40 One way to formulate the second assumption is to formulate it as a consequence of a prior

assumption, the assumption that the One is not. One way to motivate this prior assumption is to view it as a consequence of the critique of onto-theology. One way to display the problematic of onto-theology is to read Hegel's *Logic* as an ontology bound by an unconditioned operator. One way to understand the problematic of onto-theology in Hegel's *Logic* is to understand it as a consequence of the ambiguity of Aristotelian first philosophy between a science of being qua being and theology.

41 Parmenides, DK 8, 2-6.

42 See meditation 24 of Badiou, 2013, as well as sessions 7-11, particularly session 9, of Badiou, 2025 (see also the introduction to the Parmenides seminar by Reinhard). – The full force of Badiou's mathematico-philosophical interpretation of Parmenides in fact only comes to the fore in contrast with its main polemical addressee: Heidegger. Furthermore, Badiou's interpretation then also requires a corollary in order to unfold its force. Since also Heidegger, in his 1932 course on Anaximander and Parmenides (published 2012), principally underscores the apagogic reasoning in the respective passage of the poem and even emends the Greek text (DK 8, 12) in order to render this line of reasoning more comprehensive (Heidegger, 2012, pp. 153 ff.). (Unfortunately the Parmenides translation by Graham used in the English edition of Badiou's seminar obscures the structure of the indirect proof again as it translates the ambiguous line (DK 8, 12) in the opposite way as Beaufrét's translation in Badiou's French text: "Nor ever from what-is-not..." instead of "... de ce qui est ..." (Badiou, 2025, p. 168). But with Graham's translation, the examination of possible sources of generation under the hypothesis, for *reductio*, that being is generated is incomplete, because with the line considering what-is-not the proof as a whole (DK 8, 6-18) would only consider non-being, but not also being, as a source of becoming.) In any case, however the ambiguous passage is construed, that the proof of the first sign is an indirect proof is not too controversial, neither between Badiou and Heidegger, nor in scholarship on Parmenides (see for example Kahn, 2009b, p. 158, Mourelatos, 2008, p. 99, or Rapp, 2007, pp. 117 ff.; as a counter-example see McKirahan, 2010, pp. 159-160). Given that Parmenides's indirect reasoning is not controversial, the corollary needed for the force of Badiou's interpretation to unfold is that Parmenides's indirect proof and the respective procedures of Eleatic reasoning more generally are the necessary condition for Euclidean demonstrative mathematics to emerge. This thesis, which makes Parmenides's poem a birth place of Greek mathematics, is developed in Szabo, 1978. And it is with this thesis, which interrupts its solely poetic origin by supplementing philosophy with its mathematical condition, that Badiou seeks to go against Heidegger (*denken: dichten...*). – Ironically, Badiou's 1985-86 Parmenides seminar, in its

regressive strategy proceeding from Aristotle (on Parmenides), via Plato (on Parmenides), to Parmenides, follows the exact same trajectory, on a smaller scale, as Heidegger's lecture courses do in the early 1930s: from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in 1931, to Plato's *Republic* in 1931/32, to Anaximander and Parmenides in 1932, to other things in 1933...

43 The symbol  $\in$  for the relation of belonging is often paraphrased by 'element of'. The association of the Latin *element* with the Greek *epsilon*, however, is an anachronism. Contrary to this anachronistic association, the symbol  $\in$  can be traced back to the Greek *esti* (see for example Enderton, 1977, p. 16, who attributes the initial use of  $\in$  *qua esti* for the membership relation to Peano). With  $\in$  abbreviating *esti*, set theory as the theory of the pure multiple can immediately be inscribed into the decision for *estin* of Parmenides's poem. However, *qua esti*,  $\in$  runs the risk of being re-associated with the predicative being of the copula again –  $x \in \text{red}$ ,  $x$  is red – and the formalization of set theory could again be intermingled with the linguistic form of judgement. But for Badiou, the power of set theory lies precisely in its liberation of thought from the form of judgement and of predication.

44 C.f. Mostowski's Lemma.

45 "And then [if the axiom of extensionality regulates the relation of identity by way of the relation of belonging] you have something that leads into ontology and that is not, as Parmenides thought, logical self-identity (being is what is absolutely the same as itself, and therefore the One) but the non-logical symbol of belonging,  $\in$  (a form of being is invariably a multiplicity of multiplicities). The ontology of the One, in assuming that identity is the sole relation, introduces a conflation between logic and ontology, which the true ontology of the multiple keeps separate." (Badiou, 2022, p. 331)

46 See Badiou, 2013, "Meditation 18. Being's Prohibition of the Event".

47 *Ibid.* p. 181. For the explicitly Parmenidean undercurrent of the prohibition, see *ibid.*, p. 254.

48 Badiou, 2022, p. 333. The alternative reformulation of the ontology of the multiple as a thinking of relations allows to point out its Parmenidean underpinning more economically than its initial presentation in *Being and Event*, which hinges on the interpretation of the axiom of the empty set as the only axiom with an existential statement (besides infinity). *The empty set as the single guarantee for the existential being of any multiple underscores the subtractive dimension of the ontology of the multiple. – In this regard, of the ontological status of set theory, it is remarkable that Gödel insists on "a close relationship between the concept of set [...] and the categories of pure understanding in Kant's sense. Namely, the function of both is 'synthesis', i.e., the generating of unities out of manifolds (e.g., in Kant, of the idea of one object out of its various aspects)." (Gödel, 1990, p. 268) The parallel that Gödel draws is*

*remarkable, and in fact puzzling, because the Kantian categories are constitutive for objectivity only on condition of a given sensible. But it is rather questionable as to what, if anything, should be an equivalent of the given sensible in the theory of pure sets, beyond the unsensible, ungiven, but axiomatically decided existence of the empty set. Which could be one reason to draw a parallel with Hegel's concept, rather than Kant's categories, since the former does not depend on a given sensible for the objectivity of thought. This constellation is further complicated if one takes into account that Hegel's word and concept of becoming explicitly displaces and re-conceives the Kantian notion of synthesis: "Werden ist diese immanente Synthesis des Seyns und Nichts; aber weil der Synthesis der Sinn von einem äusserlichen Zusammenbringen äusserlich gegeneinander Vorhandener am nächsten liegt, ist mit Recht der Nahme Synthesis, synthetische Einheit ausser Gebrauch gesetzt worden." (Hegel, 1984, p. 83)*

49 Badiou, 2013, p. 199.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 431.

51 To the knowledge of the author, Badiou himself does not explicitly draw the distant yet obvious connection between Parmenides's *syneches* and Cantor's Continuum Hypothesis, although the centrality of the question of the continuum for the transition from the implicitly "logician thesis" of *Theory of the Subject to the ontological presuppositions of Being and Event* is remarked in the introduction of the latter (*ibid.*, p. 5).

52 Cohen, 2002, p. 1092.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 422, emphasis A.S.

54 See *ibid.*, p. 418.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

56 The reflexive historicization of ontology by philosophy could be called recursive, or iterated forcing, if this were not already a technical term for set theory itself (c.f. the chapter "Iterated Forcing", in Kunen, 2013). *It could thus be called iterated meta-ontological forcing, indicative of the iteration 'passing through' philosophy. In Being and Event, Badiou suggests not only an iterated but also a transversal reflexivity of ontology and the other conditions of philosophy. In this perspective, ontology, that is, set theory is a text, or a discourse, with a symptom, the "Cantor-Gödel-Cohen-Easton-symptom" (Badiou, 2013, p. 295). For the symptom in Marx and Freud/Lacan, see for example Tomšič, 2015, "The Fetish and the Symptom", or Žižek, 2008, "How did Marx invent the symptom?". – Two further remarks: 1. In mathematical formalization, Cohen's forcing relation, between condition and statement, is conventionally written with a double judgement-stroke:  $\Vdash$ . 2. Badiou's philosophical appropriation of forcing and the generic set could be taken as the key to uncovering a respective configuration of predicative and veridical being. The question of existential being, on the other hand, would require considering the status of the empty set (see above). In the opening meditations of *Being and Event*, the*

empty set  $\emptyset$  is introduced as the empty mark, within consistent presentation, of unrepresented inconsistent multiplicity. The reference to inconsistent multiplicity is taken up from Cantor, who in his letters to Dedekind interchangeably refers to “absolutely infinite or inconsistent multiplicities” (letter from 28. July 1899). In other words, Being and Event displaces Cantor’s absolute, or God, into the subtractive mark of the empty set. Not inconsistently then, The Immanence of Truths reverses the displacement again and glosses the absolute referent of mathematical ontology, V, as “the great void / le grand vide” (Badiou, 2022, p. 43).

57 Badiou, 2013, p. 14.

58 Badiou, 2022., p. 452.

59 Ibid., p. 456.

60 Ibid., p. 512.

61 It could be asked if the subtle shift in perspective regarding the status of forcing and the generic is the indication of a more fundamental tension in Badiou’s overall use of set theory. Since after all it is Cohen who ended up in a formalist stance with regards to mathematical truth, as has been pointed out by Woodin on several occasions (see also Kanamori, 2009, p. 115). Despite his partisanship for Cohen, however, Badiou enthusiastically refers to Woodin and the Inner Model Program (see Badiou, 2022, p. 67), but which after all is the attempt to approximate V with a refined version of Gödel’s L that incorporates large cardinal axioms. If they are indeed two, then how are those two tendencies – Gödel and Cohen, absoluteness and procedure – reconciled, in the field of set theory and in Badiou’s conceptual apparatus?

62 See “Section VI. Parmenides’ Revenge” of *Immanence of Truths*.

63 Badiou, 2022, pp. 433 ff.

64 Ibid., p. 437.

65 Ibid., p. 434.

66 Ibid., p. 432.

67 Ibid., p. 441.

68 Hegel, 1971, p. 288.

69 See Badiou, 2022, pp. 40 ff. and 323 ff.

70 Badiou, 2022, p. 461.

71 To start from the beginning, one would return again to Badiou’s own reading of the beginning of Hegel’s *Logic from the 1970es*, in his commentary on Zhang Shiyong’s *The Rational Kernel of the Hegelian Dialectic*. See also Ruda, 2015, ch. 6, “Working Through Working Through: The Immanence of Thought, or Returning to Hegel?”.

72 The reformulation of Spinoza’s substance and mode as being and being-there is taken up, by Hegel, from Jacobi (see Hegel, 1984, p. 100, and Jacobi, 1998, p. 247).

73 Hegel, 1984, p. 103.

74 Hegel, 2000, p. 581.

75 Ibid.

76 Hegel, 1998, p. 260. – The work leading to the preceding preliminaries includes an interview with Hugh Woodin, conducted in December 2025 in Providence, RI, and Cambridge, MA, to review

recent developments in set theory, the Inner Model Program, and the Ultimate-L conjecture. For technical reasons, the interview could not be included in the publication. – Some of the questions which the preceding preliminaries examine date back to a workshop with Ray Brassier and Frank Ruda on Badiou and Hegel, organized at Humboldt-University Berlin in 2019.

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