The Conditional Spiral in Alain Badiou's philosophical system

Norman R. Madarasz

RESUMO

As propostas filosóficas de reformar a ontologia evoluíram de delimitar grandes substâncias universais ou totalidades para mapear modelos formais no tempo. A maioria dessas estabelece a diferença irreduzível como sua principal suposição. A proposta ontológica de Alain Badiou é, com pouca dúvida, uma das mais polêmicas. Conhecida por sua formulação inicial de que a ontologia é matemática, Badiou trouxe ajustes significativos para sua afirmação em 2018. Neste artigo, argumentamos que essa grande reestruturação foi possibilitada pela lógica condicional em múltiplas camadas pela qual se estrutura seu sistema filosófico. Sustentamos que, sem tal lógica, nenhuma proposta filosófica sobre a diferença radical e sua emergência material pode ser considerada uma possibilidade real. A ontologia mapeia uma teoria radicalmente formal, condicionada por eventos e distribuída sobre tipos de sujeitos. A teoria das condições fornece os parâmetros cruciais para validar esta afirmação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Lógica; Condições; Sujeito; Sistema; Multiplicidade.

ABSTRACT

Philosophical attempts at reforming ontology have moved from delimiting large universal substances or totalities toward mapping formal models through time. Most of these endeavors establish irreducible difference as their primary assumption. Alain Badiou's ontological proposal is doubtless one of the most polemical. Known for his initial formulation concerning ontology being mathematics, Badiou brought significant adjustments to his claim in 2018. In this paper, we argue that this sizeable overhauling was enabled by the multilayered conditional logic structuring his philosophical system. We contend that without such a logic, no philosophical proposal on radical difference and its material emergence can be taken as a real possibility. The ontology maps a radically formal, event-conditioned theory, distributed through subject-types. The theory of conditions provides the parameters by which to validate this claim.

KEYWORDS: Lógica; Condições; Sujeito; Sistema; Multiplicidade.

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* Professor do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Filosofia e do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras na Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul – PUCRS. Este trabalho foi financiado em parte pela CAPES (Bolsa Proex); norman.madarasz@pucrs.br. http://lattes.cnpq.br/1872154241367432. https://orcid.org/ 0000-0002-7574-3744

Philosophical projects toward reforming ontology have moved from delimiting large universal substances or totalities toward mapping formal models that oscillate through varying time scales. Among these projects, one may still encounter attempts to schematize a panpsychic space, although these have become increasingly rare. Instead, one finds a variety of proposals stemming from early twentieth-century gambits at reshaping the science of "being qua being" by means of the primary assumption of irreducible difference. The upshot of this move for foundational perspectives in the broader social sciences should not be underestimated. The science of being qua being arose through the fundamental postulate of the principle of identity as bound by non-contradiction, such as originally systematized by Aristotle in Book Gamma of the *Metaphysics*. Classical and modern logic, and a good part of science and theology, created since have followed suit. By contrast, what differential ontologies have introduced is an array of novel denotations and innovative theoretical instruments that have tested non-contradiction to its very core (for example, WITTGENSTEIN, 1922; HEIDEGGER, 1927; ADORNO, 1966, LEVINAS, 1974).

Among these, Alain Badiou's ontological proposal is doubtless one of the most polemical. Known for his initial formulation concerning ontology being mathematics, Badiou brought significant adjustments to this claim in his closing comments to the 2018 Prague Conference (BADIOU, 2022). Despite the need for adjustments, his system did not collapse. In that same year, Badiou published *L'Immanence des vérités,* the third volume of *Being and Event.* By then, the precise nature of ontology receded from the center of his system, as also did his theory of generic subject, diluted almost to the point of disappearing. By contrast, what has subsisted is the strict conditional criteria of the logic underlying his project.

In this paper, we argue that this sizeable overhauling of his system – call it System Ef-Б in honor of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet – was enabled by the multilayered conditional logic by which it is concatenated. Without such a logic, his philosophical proposal on radical difference and its event-triggered emergence seems to waver as to its chance of reaching material realization, even when considering historical precedence. Notwithstanding such meticulous indexing, many readers of System Ef-Б seem impatient with its results. Many wish for a resolution or revelation on the timescale of an average lifetime. These readers tend to breach the conditional logic to the point of reverting their overall philosophical commitment to a veiled variety of essentialism. That said, the significant adjustment Badiou first unfolded in Prague did not so much as question the immanent structure of ontology as the science of multiplicity, as it underscored how ontology may not be his main focus after all.

At least since the late 1970s, Badiou's quest has aimed at a radically formal, event-conditioned, theory of subject-types. Repeatedly, he has asserted his commitment to the theory of subject, indeed upholding it as the reason for his deviation from structuralist methodologies. Accordingly, and by definition, the events that shape subjects are rare. Rarer still are the materialized versions of the generic form of subject first espoused in *Being and Event*. It should follow that whether novel subject-types are capable of reorganizing the state of affairs becomes a question of scale, when not of chance alone. When considering how rigorously Badiou conditions his philosophy, it becomes easier to perceive how rarity in fact bares witness to the workings of the inferential process as it is mapped onto projections of material becoming.

The upshot of labelling the four truth procedures as, precisely, "conditions", is that beyond delimited the scope in which subject-types emerge, they expose the workings of the conditional logic. Without events emerging among the truth procedures, ontology falls short as the proof it

is meant to map. Stunted as a schema, its effect on philosophy as a whole would come down to raising a simple question: is philosophy up to the task of venturing into such truths that still appear as contradictions? We argue that the conditional logic is what allows such exploration. We stress how there is no compromise in Badiou's philosophy to the binding operation defining the conditions. In other words, the theory of conditions remains the crucial parameter by which the system he has constructed through the three perspectives of his *Being and Event* series is exposed to verification and validation. In this study, after some restatement, we show the logical cycles, spheres and derivational interrelatedness of the conditions for Badiou's system.

1. A new maxim: let us read in such a way so as not to forget the conditions.

Readers of Badiou's philosophy should recognize how as early as *Manifeste pour la Philosophie* (1989) and *Conditions* (1992) the theory of conditions has been a central framing factor to both his ontology and theory of subject. In those works, Badiou set out to filter the universe, understood as the set-theoretic general realm of multiplicity, by separating the processes wherein truth is produced from those estranged from its doings. The general theory of conditions was introduced to confirm the thesis according to which philosophy does not produce truths, but examines, evaluates, and establish them as prior to its interventions. As he recently put it in *Alain Badiou par Alain Badiou* (2021)*,* "truth is the set of productions in time and space of something that can, for solid reasons, profess to have universal value" (2021, p. 31). The conditions designate the field in which truths are produced. However, there are no truths without a subject-type triggered by the need to name an event, when and

if one arises locally in a specific condition. The field of conditions proves to be motivated by a conditional logic. Namely, if an event arises, what has the ability to recognize it, by definition, is a subject-type.

The reader is thus led to understand that the way in which truth is disposed to be thought and lived takes shape within the intrinsic emergence of a condition-indexed formal subject. Despite his use of the singular, the appearance of unicity prevails only at the formal level. Badiou does not seem to stress it enough that once a subject-type starts acquiring material value, it is defined by the specific condition in which it appears.

As readers also know, there are four subjects, each determined in their form by the way in which a truth unfolds. Since it is something on the edge of an experience, the condition for thinking such subjects identifies them according to the pattern of universal regularity regarding entities of interiority, or inner-space. The latter appears if and when triggered *in its process* by an event, *un événement*. Nonetheless, what matters when evaluating a truth is the subject, not the event. The subject and the truths it makes use of to name the event are part of the condition, whose normalized and legalized forms are designated by the term "state of the situation". Whereas the state of the situation is always bound and bordered, the situation itself suggests limitlessness. In turn, the event is "something that occurs to the situation, but is not in it" (BADIOU, 2019b, p. 56). The event is not counted as knowledge, nor is truth knowledge. Which explains why, prior to its being captured as knowledge, the event is held to merely *happen*. Insofar as it does, the event quite literally does not count.

In sum, variations on the formal concept of subject make up the general theory of the conditions. If and only if they admit processes that do not reduce to the possible forms of the *same,* according to the standards and norms represented from within the state of the situation, then the

subject may be shown to exist *generically,* meaning *differentially* and *irreducibly*. If a condition admits of something that immanently exceeds the state of the situation, it can be thought of *as if it were* a truth. This is the minimum condition for thinking about the conditions as a process of the evental subject conditioned, in turn, *at the meta-ontological level of theory* by the condition that there be an event. Sequentially, it at least partly conditions that there can be philosophy in and of itself. That is, philosophy is under condition *tout court*—or beneath conditions. At least, in this most complete and conditioned philosophical wager, Alain Badiou's.

Both *Conditions* and *Manifeste* belong to the first pillar of the Ef-Б system. "Mathematics is ontology" is the banner under which the project of providing a thought common to the conditions delimits ontology as a field of rational inquiry whose evolution occurs outside of philosophy per se (BADIOU, 2019b, p. 45). In this first phase, the mathematical ontology as theoretical corpus is articulated through the Zermelo and Fraenkel axiomatized set theory. The philosophical interest brought to set theory stems not only from its foundational ambitions, but how its axioms correlate almost identically with the program of first philosophy, as understood in its original Aristotelian configuration. Badiou's claim is trivially metaontological, inasmuch as it contemplates a space common to philosophy and mathematics alike. Its philosophical originality is how it locates ontology as emerging from outside of the boundaries of philosophy, indeed as the conditions as a whole are held to arise.

Badiou's claim does not rely on a Kantian form of transcendental deduction. It is historical and materialist in nature. Through induction, truth production recurs discontinuously through the specific time sequences that shape the condition spaces. The coexistence of the four conditions provides the grounds for validating the claim regarding ontology. Yet historical variations may prevent the relationship from being

self-evident. That said, ontological space is neither permanently given nor stable. Its function in philosophy is to account for subject-types. The ontological proposal in Ef-Б system forms into an intensional schema dependent on triggering the naming of an event. From this step onward, the form of subject abides by the ZFC axioms, whose function is to validate the coherence of the irreducible nature of subject. For its schema remains traceable only by irreducible multiplicity.

By concurring with these specific assumptions and analytical categories, it should be clearer how the conditional logic is the ingredient by which novelty it warranted when emerging into the material and historical sphere. Badiou's use of the term ontology rigorously subtracts it from material content, qualities and historical processes. No matter how similar universal history from a philosophical perspective can appear to ontology, Badiou maintains a strict separation between domains. What subsists through novel historical contextualizations is the basic framework of set theory with the axiom of choice. Such is the reason also for which the new theory of subject is neither essentialist nor dialectical, let alone substance-based.

To be fair, the question does arise as to whether a conditional logic, steeped in if-then clauses, particular cases of validation and specific forms of argumentative structure, pertains to ontology or to the conditions. Furthermore, given that it is a radically differential and trans-finite ontology, the attempt to stretch the limits of category is interesting to maintain by labelling the proposal as a queer ontology, as against the linguistic pressure to reify difference merely under the guise of abstract terms, such as plurality, neutrality, or negativity. Indeed, the practical and logical consequence of working through M=O is precisely that of affording a space of growth and accumulation not immediately captured by the linguistic hegemony dominating over the sphere of the conditions. It spares the reader the temptation of the transcendent or mystical. By

clearly separating ontological proposals from the theory of the conditions, philosophy may also preserve its radical rationalism. Yet the question of precedence does prevail.

According to the assumptions upholding the theory, a condition is bound to possibilities provided it does not stipulate *impossibility.* Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Manifeste for Philosophy* are respectively titled, possibility and conditions. In that work, Badiou referenced a situation haunting French philosophy into the 1980s, whereby a series of political commitments aligned the philosophical enterprise with an expeditious trial accusing it of complicity in crimes against humanity. The task of proving its current existence as against admissions as to how it had lost its way brought the conditional logic to the center of philosophic concerns. As he argues in the *Manifeste*, proving the existence of philosophy implies—under conditional form—that the four conditions operate simultaneously despite the compossible relationship among their respective historical and material components. For example, the speakers from within the subject of the "matheme"—be it ZFC axiomatized set theory—often misconstrue truth when produced by the poem, just as the radical Marxist political subject—the organization—may belittle the emerging subject of love, the Two, and so forth, under reservation, if not according to certain conditions. These conditions are in turn mediated by axiomatized regularities expressed in conditional form, in if… then… clauses.

In addition to presenting the condition by which philosophy proves its existence in the present and the future, the general theory of conditions doubles up to serve as a historical theory on the emergence of philosophy itself. In this case, it arches back toward Platonism. Such an origin arises as an option provided it set the collateral production of truths as prior to its structural articulation in the cosmological philosophy created by Plato. What existed for him to work upon, for instance, was the radical

political model of equality without private property, required as it well may be by the education of the guardians in an ethically constructed political order. In Plato, one also encounters a subject of love through the canto of prophetess, Diotima. Espoused by Badiou as triggering a historical sequence of novel subject-types occasioned by the idea of the Two of Love, the deepest of affects exalts the encounter between autonomous equals, albeit in a bond stripped of the pressures of unification or fusion.

Plato's use of arithmetic and geometry also point to how the scientific condition is historically prone to innovations. As a general rule, just as a novel subject-type in science makes explicit its particular logical form relative to its respective condition, the formal nature of its structure may justify its transposition from condition to ontology as a variant on the general model for the emergence of any novel subject-type. Such recursion provides the conditional logic one again with a more fundamental ground than the theory of multiplicities per se. Likewise, this constraint would seem to cast doubt on the conjecture according to which there would have been no other science or knowledge form save for mathematics that has not emerged from philosophy. Be that as it may, system Ef-Б can be held to be conditioned all the way down – and indeed all the way back to all the way up and around.

2. The cycles of the conditional

One can observe how there appears to be something quite Heideggerian in these conditional articulations advanced by Badiou, namely, that of an apparently hermeneutic gesture of retreat and recursion, the *vor-* and the *wieder-*. Upon scrutiny, this impression turns out to be misleading. Badiou's methodology is not hermeneutic but structuralist of

a certain type. To move away from hermeneutics, his philosophy had to part with the state of the situation. It did so by resorting to deductive logic and inference, and by integrating the *reductio ad absurdum*. This argumentative technique is crucial to internally driving the conditional to a controlled self-contradiction of the hypothetical counter-claim initially posited in the demonstration. It also had to give way to a model in category theory, the pullback, a spatial if not quite physical and bodily conditioning factor, which would be put to good effect only in *Logics of worlds,* the second pillar of the system, published in 2006.

Recall how in Meditation Twenty-Four of *L'Être et l'événement,* Badiou presents the following thesis: "deduction – the obligation of demonstration, the principle of coherency, the rule of interconnection—is the means via which, at each and every moment, ontological fidelity to the extrinsic eventness of ontology is realized." (BADIOU, 2013, p. 242). Among the deductive operators, Badiou highlights modus ponens (or separation) and restricted generalization. The work of this logical dimension evokes ontological fidelity as it breaks with bijections in order to draw the event into intelligibility. The move involves situating oneself in another order of the infinite to that achieved by counting arithmetically, the axioms of which were systematized by G. Peano. Indeed, there has always been more to deduction than proving existence, which explains the inscription into the metaontology of the act of launching hypotheses.

Making hypotheses for Badiou implies thinking in terms not merely of properties and apophantic propositions, but of dissecting cases of supplementation to his axioms. Since every coherent theory can be verified by its intrinsic deductive logic, the advantage of operating in terms of theories is to justify where we index a supplement, why and under what condition. Referring to his "deduction theorem," previously demonstrated in the book *Concept de Modèle* (2007), Badiou introduces

an argumentative micromodel in *Being and Event*, called the fictional situation, T + A (the axiomatic theory added to proposition A), namely:

> given T + A, such that A ➔ x;
> if B is deduced in T, then, A ➔ B can be deduced in T;
> if C is deduced in T, then B ➔ C can be deduced in T, and so can A ➔ C.

In short, proposition A becomes both a source and perspective, conditions that we consider as sufficient to considered a pullback.

In this theorem, two observations are worth making. First, Badiou rearticulates a logical micromodel that Aristotle had once called the "hypothetical syllogism." Second, the hypothetical character attributed to the fictional situation follows from Gödel's *completeness* theorem (Gödel, 1983). If *phi* is a formula for *gamma*, then there exists a syntactical proof of *phi*. In 1938, Gödel proved that the Continuum Hypothesis (CH), namely that "there is no set whose cardinality is strictly between that of the integers and the real numbers", cannot be disproved. By the same token, he shows there exists an inner model whose magnitude is greater than the set of countable elements, in this case, the rational numbers. Albeit he does stipulate there is but one such set, Aleph 1. It is defined as the Aleph-0 constructible set of ordered pairs, sequenced by ordinals to which a supplement is added, namely its cardinality, which we can also call its designator. As such, it is through self-reference that the operation by which different sizes of infinite sets can proceed, whether through a break or cut.

The uncountable infinite also solves Georg Cantor's so-called power set paradox. This observation recognized the strangeness of the property of subsets when the cardinality of a set is infinite. For within the boundary of countable integers, the set of all subsets of a set is larger than the set of its elements. Yet when the cardinality of a set is infinite, its ordinality appears to move up a rank in magnitude, thus triggering the

realization that ordinals follow a transfinite hierarchy. To ward off any suggestions of paradox or contradiction, coherence returned through its axiomatization as the power set axiom. Dealing with an infinite set becomes possible provided the set of subsets exceed the intrinsically countable. A well-defined infinite set can thus be looked upon as if from outside, although it is never complete. If the indiscernibility of the subject-type is such that its ordinality cannot be counted, then the power set axiom and continuum hypothesis become instructive tools by which to validate the truth of the conjecture.

By contrast, the pullback refers to Alexandre Grothendiek's theory of Topos. It geometrically performs what deduction accomplishes logically and algebraically. Badiou makes full use of this technique in *Being and Event 2*. In formal terms, a pullback is a limit of a diagram consisting at minimum of two head-arrow-tail combinations called "morphisms". As most theorems in category theory, pullback has a dual opposite, the pushout, whereby the head-tail direction is inverted. For the purposes of the present discussion, the pullback will be considered as a map of the conditional logic. It organizes proactive thought as always composed pre-actively, as if in a backward leaning gesture required to both predict and aim more accurately. It also provides a step outward toward examining the principle of non-contradiction. The contradictions arising therein are thus not destiny, much less a failure. However, its recurrence suggests that deductive logic is motivated by a structural flaw, namely, the immanent excess, indeed contradiction itself, the event. *Being and Event* seeks to stretch this implication to its conditional maximum, whereby a subject-type might overhaul a condition in the way it stands as a normalized stage in the state of the situation – recalling how the term "state of the situation" is defined as normalization in bijection with the countable, identifiable and representable.

As the system moves toward drafting a logic of appearing, an extensive general theory of relations arose as necessary to articulate. A general phase-space projecting possible multi-threaded pullbacks (and its own dual vector, the pushouts) is made possible through the notion of topos. The latter provides the logical framework to an intrinsic plane of *Being and Event 2*'s transcendental mediation, termed the scale of the intensity of appearances. It is true that whereof one cannot speak, i.e. "count", thereof one needs to remain silent. But, nobody said one could not write, create, compose, work, organize and act.

In the terminological assumptions grounding *Being and Event 2*, the hypothetical argument (whether modus ponens or hypothetical syllogism), that is, p → q; p; therefore, q; or p → q and q→ r, therefore, p → r, finds its diagram in category theory in the form of pullback and its dual pushout. Its writing in category theory employs an algebraic geometry whose formulas are sustained by geometrical proofs based on morphisms, and arrows, with target and source, stripped of presuppositions. In *Mathematics of the Transcendental,* the preparatory doctoral seminar notes to what would become *Logics of Worlds*, Badiou states how "the pullback is the limit of the diagram of two arrows which have the same target." (BADIOU, 2017, p. 101) Similarly, "If every pair of arrows with the same target has a limit, we say that the category admits pullbacks." (BADIOU, 2017, p. 34) Pullbacks/pushouts are essential attributes to the formal definition of a topos, which sustains the general model of worlds mapped in *Being and Event 2*. In terms of a workspace, the pullback literally creates a workshop in retreat from the relationship between different properties in which the conditional possibility of the embedding of a subject-type in body-form is made visible for the scrutiny of any reader.

The most appropriate implication stemming from this technique is the astonishing assertion made by French mathematician Alain Connes.

A self-avowed skeptic regarding philosophy and psychoanalytic theory, he has more recently been registered as stating "the unconscious is structured like a topos." (CONNES, 2022, p. 73). The implications of this hypothesis go well beyond updating Jacques Lacan's previous claim. Within topos theory, the concept of schema is that which, by means of categories such as pullback, allow topological variety to truly leave any fixed plane by which either geometry or algebra were considered. The flexibility of the pullback allow to be continually defined, as if backward, by a "classifying object". The latter in turn conveys via a recognizable categorical sub-object the criteria according to which truth-values are attributed to given equations, now mapped simultaneously in a proof by means of arrows commuting in different categories. In order words, a sub-object can be defined by morphisms, which extends the pullback's own retreat into ever deeper varieties of topological scale. Space itself can be reimagined as topos provided we possess this writing of morphisms.

The result of these conditioned findings is that, in *Being and Event 1*, the quality of indiscernible conferred to a subject-form can be seen to arise from its irreducibility to the state of the situation. Notwithstanding the clarity of the definition, its content partly leads Badiou to concede critically on how the first volume had only provided a negative theory of subject. In our opinion, by doing so, he hastily dumps a striking form of logical discipline.

Recall that the last thing the subject is is a person or individual. The assumption is not merely loaded, much less is it trivial. Seen from the level of presuppositions, nor can it infer without derivation that it would denote a collectivity or population. The subject is not even necessarily "human," if by "human" we mean a term outside of a theoretical context, namely one in which the human were somehow exempted from work in his definition. As in Marx's cartography of the general law of capitalist accumulation in the Labor Theory of Value, an unemployed worker

produces no value. In *Being and Event 2*, the subject is incorporated from an inexistent so that, *as a physicality*, the last thing the subject *is* is an individualized, sexuated body, trans-scribed as a living form prior to being worked out in act or text.

A subject appears and can do so maximally, provided it be conditioned, again, as a singularity. The relation between universality and singularity is what 2018's *L'Immanence des vérités* sets out to prove, and still from within the conditions. In *Being and Event 3, The Immanence of Truths,* the subject takes shape as a work, provided an *index of absoluteness* subtracted from the finitude of the former renders a condition whereby subject is validated as multiplicity. An index denotes the level of the ordinal hierarchy of large cardinals to which subtraction holds. The index is drawn from the cardinality of a "cofinality" (set-theoretically defined as a cardinality of *least uncountability*). The faithful, generic subject as a work no longer prevails on the ground of an aspired for existence. By contrast, it is warranted formally by absoluteness. Such an index *ensures* that what happens in the situation is lived under constraint as irreducible multiplicity albeit within the boundaries of the finite. Disciple and not hope is the affect with which the rigor of this assertion is invested.

After twenty years of tests, confrontations, circumstantiations and validations, *The Immanence of Truths* investigates differentially, through the ontology of multiplicity, a concept of absoluteness required to craft a complete theory of trans-finite truth. As such, Badiou defines absoluteness once again as conditional, now stretching the logic toward dialectical determination: as "something that goes from the finite to the finite [provided a mediation filter through it something that is infinite]" (BADIOU, 2019b, p. 147). Suddenly, the general theory of conditions gives way to a concept straddled between the wastefulness of opinion, or

as a work of truth. Waste represents a truth procedure that falters prior to failing. Work shines upon the truth procedure that unfurls and fosters.

That said, it is regrettable how many biased albeit skillful readers end up hastily exiting system Ef-Б with fallacious conclusions. Regarding the generic subject, *inbred* desire expressed from within the state of the situation strives to strip indiscernibility from its specter at any cost. Time and time again, the ecstatic repetition of fetishized social relations wipes out the recurrent truth produced at the level of material relations between producers. Regarding the body of truths, *embedded* hastiness, another figure of desire, insists on having it repeat sexuated identification. So it is worth taking seriously the general maxim for ethical commitment proposed by Badiou regarding the task of continuing, persevering. "Do all that you can to persevere in that which exceeds your perseverance. Persevere in the interruption." (BADIOU, 2001, p. 47). Or: Insist in the generic process that makes you a subject. That demands an extra step, one more, once more, *encore et encore, une fois, deux, voire plus*, within the body, *en corps*, for a faithful procedure to subsist, provided, again conditionally, the body be made into a work by an index of absoluteness. Neither pretending nor faking shall be tolerated. Ontological fidelity is steadfast, spontaneous and generic – although never rid of the temptation to go it alone, betray the process and start one's own private gang. Maintaining the process of maximal intensity behind the name, in the condition of its unlimited, multiple, unnameable opening where there is nothing that is counted. And if anything can keep from being counted, then subject-form can be understood as a process that is written, composed and entwined until the truth achieves materiality recursively as if by the anchor of absoluteness. That is when counting may begin again, this time with letters instead of numbers.

The conditional logic binding the three strands of *Being and Event* ought to preserve the reader from the temptation to extrapolate abstract

generalities about the Ef-Б system. The theory of conditions constrains the human animal to remain at the level of determined ontological form, that is, a determination that is itself conditioned. This is where Badiou orchestrates a pullback with respect to Hegel. A mapping of possible deviations from this logic provides the cases of distinct logical systems motivating possible worlds. In addition to faithful subjects, in them emerge reactive subjects, obscure subjects, as well as those denoted subjects of resurrection. The other comes as a prize—beyond any price.

To summarize, then, let:

System Ef-Б show three conditioning sequences:

(i)   If truth can be universal (from the perspective of *Being and Event*), it is generic.

(ii)   If truth can be a singularity (from the perspective of *Logics of Worlds*), it is a body (by becoming a world).

(iii)   If truth can be expressed absolutely (as in *The Immanence of Worlds*), it is as the index of an "in-existent" *embedded as a subtraction into a condition as subject*.

(iv)   The last sequence builds upon negative conditions to reach a positive end: if ontology is mathematics, the latter cannot be set theory.

(v)   If it is not set theory, it must be category theory.

(vi)   If it is category theory, then it must be the "formal theory of all forms of configurations of being" (BADIOU, 2019, p. 60-61) mapped by a theory of large cardinal sets.

(vii)   But, if not this, then nothing. Axiomatic collapse as the site of philosophy. No work, just waste.

By contrast, if the system preserves general ***conditionality***, then a shift appears to occur in the if-then transitions from four conditions to four infinities. By no means are they analogous, although they do raise the question of the *material incorporation* of truths. These forms are explored in *The Immanence of Truths*.

They are as follows (BADIOU, 2018, p. 254):

(1) infinities of inaccessibility or transcendence. This variety takes up one the oldest intuitions regarding the *other space* wherein infinity subsists, namely the transcendent, most often equated to the One;

(2) infinities that resist internal division. This variety evokes the transposition of the quase-organic totalized entity classically named "substance", as a limiting factor to the *other space*;

(3) infinities of immanent pressure or interior hugeness. This variety evokes the boundless projection of the other side of limit once the latter is no longer a parameter of distance or space; and,

(4) infinities of approximation to absoluteness. As suggested by *The Immanence of Truth,* varieties of infinity are subject to the specific nature afforded by approximation in a space wherein distance has no measure.

It is to Badiou's credit to admit (BADIOU, 2019b, p. 58) how *Being and Event* leaves the relationship between possibility and chance unclear. The event might be pure contingency, but like all things in a materialist view, it is also material. However, its contingency must be absolute and immanent rather than ideal and transcendent. *The Immanence of Truths* advances the thesis that if truth is infinite, then it is absolute in the precise sense that it needs to mark a dialectical progression within the finite in such a way as to leave another finite marked by the infinite. In other words, infinity is conditioned by distance or space. One cannot assume it corresponds to the sense of an outer limit.

Furthermore, Badiou stipulates how this view only leaves the hypothetical by becoming material and actual. Such a possibility is realized by experimentation with large cardinal sets. What these tend to share is the conviction that such sets are contained in a great void, indexed

by letter V. In the French language, V also conveniently denotes Truth, *Vérité.* Notwithstanding the linguistic coincidence, V denotes

> "*the place of everything that can validate propositions concerning multiplicities as such*. What is metaphorically "in *V*" is what can satisfy the axiomatic injunction of set theory … [But *V*], the place of all the possible forms of the multiple (what we call sets) cannot itself be a set, since the existence of a set of all sets is contradictory." (BADIOU 2018, p.43)

Ultimately, truth is conditioned by absoluteness.

The process by which characteristics of *V* are "transposed in a regulated way" into a model is called "elementary embedding". Given a subclass *M* of *V*, "there exists a relation *j*, called an elementary embedding of *V* into *M*, such that if *x* has such and such a property in *V*, *j(x)* has the same properties in *M*…" (BADIOU, 2018, p.363). How does one map this? Badiou abandons the primacy of a foundational theory, whose very concrete debate within mathematical research almost jettisoned his ambitious redrafting of ontology subsequent to *Being and Event 1*. It was written at a time when category theorists were already able to reduce its intrinsic orientation to the extrinsic perspective of the general geometry of functions, vectors, sheaves and schemes. In the early pages of *Logics of Worlds,* Badiou had already distanced himself from the renewal of the foundational enterprise as ushered in by *Being and Event.* Nonetheless, his retreat from set theory would only be completed a decade later.

Concluding Remarks

The conjecture I have laid claim to in this article is that Badiou's philosophical system, which I call System Ef-Б, is a function of a series of deductive conditional arguments. In a more radical sense, the process of laying foundations for the existence of philosophy would thus move

away from ontology and toward logic, namely the conditional logical. Given the conditional force of the conjecture, it might be more appropriate to speak in terms of a theorem. Consequently, philosophy would entirely be under its condition. To demonstrate this conjecture, I sought to draw out the conditioning layers intrinsic to the theory of conditions as such. I also showed how in *The Immanence of Truths*, absoluteness converges not with the One, but with a condition. In the end, absoluteness synthesizes the condition, thus proving to be both conditional and conditioned.

Moreover, the notion of condition appears as a legitimate social and empirical claim whereby the possibility of philosophy could be asserted provided it be reconstructed from its very parameters. This reconstruction succeeded in ascertaining the philosophical enterprise, mapped anew from the dispersion described by Badiou as occurring in the context of the 1980s neoliberal restoration that spread through the French domain. Many readers have chosen to disregard this path as a means to enter the system. After all, philosophy was reconstructed despite the persistence of the neoliberal capture.

What the field does gain by System Ef-Б arises from the conditioned embodiment of philosophical activity, which, one can argue, actually recovers lost territory to the fragmentation of university research into different disciplines and faculties. As if to reinforce these gains, *The Immanence of Truths* binds philosophy even more rigorously under condition. The shift occurs by means of a general theory of "works-in-truth". The theory of subject always aimed at stripping itself of value-generated shortcomings and illusions. Theories of consciousness stood as an impediment to such an analysis of the subject-form, as illusions of choice and freedom have turned into obsessions. This is not to say that everything occurs at the level of some speculative personal unconscious. Instead, the forms of the faithful subject tend to result from the variations created by working bodies. Nonetheless, within the system works-in-truth

surrender to conditions. Work organizes part of our being to the constraints of the latter, their discipline and their creativity – all of which are only retroactively conceded by the very subject-form determined by the process.

The theory of conditions, notwithstanding the encyclopedia range of matters discussed within them (as in Badiou, 1992; 1998; 2005; or 2006) are built by means of constructible sets – and not as totalities. Provided this option be taken seriously, the irreducible nature of event may fully be appreciated. Event is neither truth nor fiction, let alone any of the categories grounding orthodox realism within the philosophical tradition.

Investing in conditional proof as both a means to embolden deductive logic as well as override it is no invention of Badiou's. The keener the awareness has become over the role of assumptions and delimitations on theoretical inquiry, the broader have conditional utterances become in order to access the limiting factors of non-contradiction. However, a differential ontology that is also conditional had not been attempted prior to Badiou. In this article, we sought to unpack the depths to which conditional logic immanently structures an ontology that explicitly arises from the context of post-essentialism as well as post-humanism. By restating the objectives of universal history – the narrative framework to philosophy of science in general – , the differential ontology converges with the new rationalism. For instance, this contemporary framework brings aggregate statistical laws of motion and probability as a fundamental paradigm. Climate sciences – although not the discourse on anthropocene *per se* – is a major scientific development seen from this perspective. A broader ontology would be enabled once linear laws, based on causality, are lifted from its inner operational drive.

Several event-motivated ontologies have exploited the wealth of possibilities arising from the event concept especially insofar as they achieve greater syntactic density with both difference and discontinuity. It

is not clear however how much of the open space given to event-implications has been thought through systematically in this direction. This is where conditions matter. It is surely understandable how such a rigorously conditional ontology can lead some readers to impatience, if not frustration. To the sadness of the philosophical arts, often unbeknownst to themselves, readers in the neoliberal age have also ended up insisting on immediate results regarding prescriptions stemming from the real-world relations between producers.

Were this one of the reasons by which to explain the disappearance of powerful philosophical systems, it could end up explaining the shortcomings arising from hastily reading what is actually written by philosophers. Badiou has long insisted on how his ontological commitment does not partake of ontological realism. Given that the tools he deploys are indeed shared by this idiom, our perspective would be to insist on its heterodox quality. This is where the interplay between truth and fiction can work as a switch to plunge further into a philosophical density organized by the tradition in which the system has been written. Likewise, it can move laterally toward integrating fiction on par with other constructible components of truth. Fiction carries out its technical extension.

Such a position was brazenly defended by Badiou in his infamous "definition of philosophy", first published in 1992. From the perspective of conditional logic, fiction is the pivot required to prevent circularity, whether virtuous or vicious. In the 1991 definition, the apparent homogeneity of the conditions is filtered down to a truly Platonic description of the circulation of philosophy as pure process, attracted by the interaction between two fictions, that of science and that of art. In the sequence of the definition, Badiou moves toward including the intensity of an act, as in the act of love without an object. Recursively, the effacement of an object triggers the constraint according to which subject

is produced across the conditions from the site of an event. To complete his definition, the double fictional strand joined to the intensity of an act merges with the "strategy" of the political without any stake in power. Insofar as ontology is not reducible to philosophy, it is up to latter to breach the limit of non-contradiction. To restate the claim, philosophy is conditionally incomplete. It so only provided an adequate ontology be created to map the subject-type immanently exceeding its boundary.

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