

Practical Rhythm and Time Projection

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ABSTRACT:

In his article “Practical Rhythm and Time Projection”, István Berszán presents first a poetic experiment of Wordsworth in order to answer the question how to enter the rhythm of a happening. The argumentation is based on the assumption that Plato’s “allegory” of the cave is an experiment rather than a rhetorical construction and invokes contemporary string theory to show that everything that happens has its kinetic space as a special complementary rhythmic dimension. A second example reveals how Alain Badiou projects Saint Paul’s teaching and practice to the kinetic space of militant leftist struggle. The article concludes that instead of understanding allegory as a replacement based on similarity in the same rhetoric space, we have to take into consideration – or learn how to take into consideration – the multiple rhythmic dimensions of compared happenings.

Keywords: string theory, rhythmic dimensions, kinetic space, time projection, Plato, Wordsworth, Alain Badiou.

Remember Plato’s “allegory” of the cave: just as chained prisoners facing the blank wall of a cave see nothing but the projected shadows of things moving behind them in the light of fire, our empirical experiences provide us, similarly, with distorted pictures about the truth of ideas (*Republic* 514a–520a). The point of this paper is that this is not an allegory but an experiment. What is the difference? If we consider it as an allegory, we are inside the cave (or space) of rhetoric, where there are signifiers alone (similarly to the cave with tied up prisoners where there are shadows alone). All signifiers are in the same rhetorical space, this is why they can be lined up or replaced by each other, just as the shadows appear and cover each other on the space of the blank wall. The allegory as a rhetorical figure projects everything into the kinetic space of signifiers – this is why postmodern deconstruction could claim that “there is nothing outside of the text [there is no outside-text; *il n’y a pas de hors-texte*].” (Derrida, *Of Grammatology* 158). Before claiming this,

deconstructionist scholars projected everything to the kinetic space of textual activity.

The paradigm has been changed, but contexts (our newly preferred spaces in literary criticism) are yet complex concatenations; in other words, we continue to place and grasp everything in the same space – in a network space, for instance. But even the complex network is too narrow for the spaciousness of happenings and practices we enter by our gestures. This is what Plato's experiment discovered: one needs to get out of the space of a practice in order to enter another one, there is no other way to get acquainted with different happenings. Turning his allegory (or image) into an experiment by realizing its relevance regarding the problems of projections and dimensions, it is not only working, that is, executable, but it also leads to conclusions compatible with contemporary string theory. Plato proved with his cave experiment that creating a projection having fewer or other dimensions than the projected event means serious loss of happening. In other words, if we follow everything in the rhetorical space of the text, in fact we follow only projections of those occurrences on a specific kinetic space: that of signifiers.

I invoke contemporary string theory (Greene, *The Elegant Universe*) to show that everything that happens has its kinetic space as a special complementary rhythmic dimension. String theory presupposes that the ultimate level of reality are not the elementary particles (there are too many kinds of them to be elementary enough, and we discover new ones almost every day), but tiny strings below Planck length (10^{-33} cm) with special vibration patterns. It depends on these rhythms what kind of "elementary" particle we measure (i.e. its mass and charge). The number of dimensions depends on the possible directions of movement. According to the M theory version there are 10 space dimensions in which the strings can move. We cannot imagine, but we can calculate them. These complementary space dimensions are curled up, not extended as the traditional geometrical dimensions. If we calculate the location of a running ant on an extended cable and we consider that space one dimensional, there will be slight differences between the running ant at a given moment and the calculated location of it, because the ant can run not only ahead on the cable but it can run around the cable as well (in fact the cable is a two dimensional space for the ant, because it can run ahead and back or left and right). But the second dimension of the cable is curled up and very tiny related to the extended dimension of the cable which can be prolonged infinitely in principle. There are 7 such complementary dimensions for the string vibrations (beyond the extended ones) having multiple so called Calabi-Yau shapes.

How many possible directions are there for our attention to move? We have to consider that it is always *directed* to something. String theory assumes many complementary curled up space dimensions beyond the three extended ones, but preserves the only and one-directional time dimension. Taking into consideration that time is not only measurable duration but rhythm as well, besides its passing we have to deal

with different rhythmic directions, too. But *this time* direction ceases to stretch along a straight line, it becomes the rhythm of a movement and, consequently, changing the direction is equal to changing the rhythm. This allows us to assume many or, in principle, an unlimited number of rhythmic dimensions as the every-day extensions of the four-dimensional space-time of physics. I propose to research these complementary time dimensions (Berszan, “Empirical Research”) and I consider different approaches “from different disciplinary directions” to a happening as different time projections of that happening according to the complementary rhythmical dimensions of those approaches (i.e. those research practices). Any research practice has its special complementary rhythmic dimension. Deconstruction is happening in the rhythmic dimension of rhetorical change, we enter its kinetic space by our attentive gestures tuned to the rhetorical movement of signifiers. Reducing Plato’s cave experiment to the rhetorical analogy is a time projection of an experiment to a different rhythmic dimension. In order to orient ourselves in between occurrences and/or their time projections we have to deal with practical rhythms by which we enter different kinetic spaces and find passages between them. Artistic practices, for instance literary reading and writing are cleverly designed experiments of this type. Let us examine a literary and a philosophical example in order to investigate the nature of time projection.

How can we get in the rhythm of a happening? Let us follow a poetic experiment:

It was our occupation to observe
 Such objects as the waves had toss’d ashore,
 Feather, or leaf, or weed, or wither’d bough,
 Each on the other heap’d along the line
 Of the dry wreck. And in our vacant mood,
 Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft
 Of dandelion seed or thistle’s beard,
 Which, seeming lifeless half, and half impell’d
 By some internal feeling, skimm’d along
 Close to the surface of the lake that lay
 Asleep in a dead calm, ran closely on
 Along the dead calm lake, now here, now there,
 In all its sportive wanderings all the while
 Making report of an invisible breeze
 That was its wings, its chariot, and its horse,
 Its very playmate, and its moving soul.
 (Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads* 215)

This poem enters a refined rhythm on the surface of the lake following how some tuft and an “invisible breeze” resonate here with each other. Verses as attentive gestures are not a rhetorical projection, but a very sensitive tracking of an occurrence in a special complementary rhythmic

dimension. One can say that wing, chariot, horse, playmate and soul are allegories or special (time) projections of the lake event. Rhetorically speaking they are. But in this poetic experiment the sportive wandering of the tuft on the surface of the smooth, calm lake remains the relevant rhythm. All gestures entering its happening resonate with it. This time we do not lose a specific movement by reducing its rhythmic dimensions, but entering those dimensions by our attentive gestures we make them a common kinetic space where all enumerated participants meet each other as “playmates”. Not only in a metaphorical sense, because the poetic experiment is designed just as much by the moving tuft and its playmates including the meniscus and maybe the molecular jittery of the lake-water as by the poet himself. The poetic gesture does not use them as materials for its own construction, but accept them as fellow experimenters. What is at stake here is the rhythm of an event we are interested in. This is why we accept its gestural invitation: an urging triggered by impulsive motions mobilizing our attention just as the invisible breeze mobilizes the tuft on the surface of the calm lake. Is this another analogy or a new resonance with the poetic experiment? Brownian motion concerning molecular jitter was discovered officially 26 years later on the microscopic level. We could call its anticipated macroscopic description “the Wordsworth-experiment”. When writing this essay my attention was moved by a lecture on Brownian motion.¹ It was a crucial moment in my reading of Wordsworth because I realized a very possible explanation regarding the mysterious “invisible breeze”.

Nevertheless, here we have more than a mere physical phenomenon. Entering the rhythm of the poetic experiment we discover that attention itself is such a refined movement as the invisible breeze. Similarly to the visible tuft making report of an invisible breeze, a partly visible event makes report of our invisible attention. This time similarity turns into resonance, because we need something very sensitive to be affected by such happening. It isn't by chance that the “dandelion seed or thistle's beard” is so sensitive to the “breeze”; they are cleverly designed structures in order to take their chances by the movement of the air or any other jittery. Similarly, it is not by chance that our attention is or can be so refined, because we are permanently interested in the ways we can enter the rhythms of our world. Art – whether romantic or not – is a practice so cleverly designed as the dandelion tuft or the thistle's beard in order to enter the rhythmic breeze of different movements. Moreover, attention is designed not only genetically, but by its practicing as well. If we learn how to attend the Wordsworthian poetic experiment by following its gestures, we can become its playmates in many ways according to the kinetic space it offers us: we can turn into “its wings, its chariot, and its horse,/ Its very playmate, and its moving soul”.

1 Bálint Tóth: “Brownian motion and <<Brownian motion>>”. Days of Hungarian Science, MTA Kolozsvári Akadémiai Bizottság, Babes-Bolyai University, Sapientia University, Cluj-Napoca, 2–4 November 2017.

Attentive orientation is, in fact, a modulated version of the Brownian motion because this time there is, on the one hand, a physical correlation between the impulsions transmitted by our senses and the invisible attention which, on the other hand, answers by its reaction “seeming lifeless half, and half impell’d/ By some internal feeling”. We are not only producing several rhetoric allegories of Brownian motion, but we add a complementary rhythmic dimension to it in order to study what happens when the jitter of impulsions meets the orientating attention. In other words, what happens when impulsions and reacting gestures hit against each other. We are speaking about random impulsions because there are too many of them and of too many kinds to be controlled or calculated, but in fact all of them are physically, chemically, biologically, psychically or socially determined. The real randomness of the Wordsworthian motion stems from the orientating attention half impelled by outer impulsions and half by its own behaving “soul”. The poem is a refined jittery between objective impulsions and the gesture-quanta of attentive movements. It is problematic to orientate ourselves in this increased randomness by the aid of pure physical, chemical, psychical and social models because the ongoing behavior of our attention makes part of the modeled jittery. Physics reduces attention to observation but this attempt is only one way of attentive orientation on which social physics projects any other way of paying attention. A poetic experiment, in contrast, accepts different kinds of attentive gestures and different rhythms of orientation.

Once able to change rhythms, we are not bound to one kinetic space or to necessary projections. It depends also on our practical orientation if we enter the rhythm of an occurrence or we follow a certain time projection of it. But even in the second case we make practical decisions by our gestures entering particular kinetic spaces. If we enter the rhythm of their writing, Wordsworth’s poems become attentive wanderings in the landscape of the Lake District: *Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the banks of the Wye during a tour, July 13, 1798.* (110) This is not only a record of space-time coordinates of a place. During the time of writing and reading, our gestures of attention are wandering there. “Once again/ Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs” (110) – (re) starts the experiment. Not only the recurrent wanderings, but also the verse exercises make it possible to get back into the rhythm of a happening place.

Is this a romantic feature? If we take into consideration Wordsworth’s romanticism, it probably is. But before accepting such a claim, it would be useful to investigate the rhythmic dimensions of those stylistic or ideological spaces in which we follow the history of art when we identify its Romantic “period”. What kind of time projections turned the Wordsworthian poetic experiments into “romantic features”? Are we sure that entering a refined rhythm or wandering between kinetic spaces of happenings can be reduced to romanticism?

In order to elaborate such questions, I am going to investigate a second example about events and shadows. Alain Badiou dedicates an entire book to Saint Paul, revealing the acute topicality of his apostolic subjectivity. To rethink his “unprecedented gesture”, “to unravel its twists and turns, to enliven its singularity, its instituting force, is without doubt a contemporary necessity” (Badiou, *Saint Paul* 5–6). How could it happen that after the secular exhaustion of Reformation an atheist philosopher became the most radical contemporary disciple of the Apostle Paul? Can we celebrate this as a contemporary wave of reformation? Does Badiou succeed to grasp what is the most singularly universal in Paul’s teaching and life? Does he really uncover the Real of the apostolic subjectivity – shrouded by fables from the first century on – as the key effect of the gospel Paul was preaching? Can we say that Paul’s unique historical relevance has been proved by an atheist instead of believers? Can believers be proud, however, that the main apostle of Christianity is distinguished even by an atheist philosopher? Should we regard this as the result of consequent investigation and/or the token of honesty in research?

Badiou proposes mathematics as the prototype of universality: “The claim <<there is a limitless succession of prime numbers>> possesses an indubitable universality. The claim <<Christ is resurrected>> is as though subtracted from the opposition between the universal and the particular, because it is a narrative statement that we cannot assume to be historical.” (107) But how far the infinity of prime numbers is universal? Infinity is, in fact, a quite limited concept being a strictly inner principle of the mathematical progression interpreted on the axis of numbers. Inasmuch as there are no physically distinguishable prime numbers of stars, calculating sticks or people, the validity of “indubitable universality” is reduced to the realm of natural numbers. In fact, by universality Badiou means that anybody can declare this truth about prime numbers to anybody else, anywhere and anytime, it remains invariably valid. But if we contest the historicity of Christ’s resurrection declared in a narrative sentence, we can also contest the “physicality” of the infinity of prime numbers. Their infinity is an abstraction projected arbitrarily on the in principle infinitely extensible dimensions of physical space. Or vice-versa: we project the dimensions of physical space tailored for the propagation of light on the infinite axis of numbers in order to provide an absolute line and, based on it, the particular Newtonian idea of infinite physical space that has been indubitably questioned by the theory of relativity (Einstein: *The Special and General Theory of Relativity*) and quantum mechanics (Zajonc: *The New Physics*).

It seems that by taking projections into consideration one can turn the indubitable universality of numbers into its indubitable questioning. Let us apply this investigation now to the “indubitable universalism” of Badiou’s radical thinking and his leftist political struggle. How is it possible that such a meticulous reading of Paul’s teachings (there are so many pertinent correspondences) concludes with an athe-

ist truth of universalism? Can we put the resurrection of Christ into brackets or reduce it to a fable when speaking about Paul's teaching and apostleship? Is it sure that we grasp the Real of his preaching by proceeding in this way? Must we really accept that his self-definition as "the slave of Christ" in fact refers to a political subjectivity beyond the master-slave relation?

Based on the previously outlined theory of time projection – and with the deliberate purpose of testing it – I will show how Badiou projects Paul's teaching and practice to the kinetic space of a militant leftist struggle and how he identifies what he is able to apply there with Paul's own preaching activity. Yet, there is an irreducible practical difference between movements of disparate rhythmic dimensions: the happening of a practice should not be confused with its time projection in another rhythmic dimension. The synchronicity between the two may be proved, since we witness a projection of Paul's own gestures (and Badiou is quite consistent in following them), yet apostolic practice has a considerably different rhythm from leftist struggle. Complementary, curled up rhythmic dimensions cannot be interchanged as their extended (equally straight) counterparts, because similarly to the Calabi-Yau spaces of string theory, their independent kinetic spaces are diverging from each other. If we project the pictures of an expedition to the internal wall of our house, nobody thinks that this practice is equal to what is happening in such an expedition. In the same way, there is a rhythmic difference between Paul's practice and the truth-process proposed by Badiou in a different kinetic space, even though the former may be projected on the latter. I accept that Badiou elaborates an accurate time projection, but his proficiency does not change, but proves the fact that our attention is drawn from the kinetic space of Paul's apostolic preaching and struggle to that of the speech and revolutionary struggle of a militant politician; or more exactly: by being tuned to the rhythm of a political movement one falls out of the rhythm of the apostolic practice. As certain positions of one's hands and fingers may appear as the shadows of animals cast on the wall, or as the Great Bear is a projected constellation of stars in a more complex spatial configuration, gesture projections are also cast to another kinetic space producing "appearances" (visually graspable forms) instead of tuning us to the gestures we should follow. It seems like one would be making the same movements he/she projects onto his/her different kinetic space, whereas in fact, he/she is doing something totally different. We could term this kind of appearance as rhythm simulation because, for an observer, it seems to be like the simulated gesture, but it occurs in a different way.

Rhythmical simulation as time projection has a double effect here: it makes possible to follow Paul's teaching and practice as a truth-process and, at the same time, an atheist conception and practice of the truth-process assumes apostolic dignity. While Badiou applies the theory of truth-process to Paul (in fact, he projects Paul's whole activity on the rhythm of a political movement), he also projects sanctity and the

“Gospel” onto militant, revolutionary affirmations (and onto its prototype: radical thinking). Consider that the ground for a truth-process is nothing else but subjective “faithfulness” (notified by Badiou, too, in the meaning of the Greek *πίστις* [155]), subject is the “Immortal” of an animal “some-one” transcending oneself and the radical break with the reigning situation is “truth”. In contrast with postmodernism proclaiming the relativity of all values, Badiou seems to restore the undoubted universality of truth, and in a certain sense even transcendence echoes in his “Event” which belongs to the situation, but it is not part of it. One could argue that the Event, the key notion of Badiou’s philosophy centered around truth-process is tailored after Christ’s resurrection or, more precisely, on a “leftward” projection of it. It is enough to think about how the Event transcends the objective state of the situation and knowledge bringing into play what is impossible there, in order to recognize in it the encounter of Saul with the resurrected Christ, an event which transformed Saul into Paul: “We must suppose, then, that whatever convokes someone to the composition of a subject is something extra, something that happens in situations as something that they and the usual way of behaving in them cannot account for. Let us say that a *subject*, which goes beyond the animal (although the animal remains its sole foundation [*support*]) needs something to have happened, something that cannot be reduced to its ordinary inscription in <<what there is>>. Let us call this *supplement* an *event*, and let us distinguish multiple-being, where it is not a matter of truth (but only of opinions), from the event, which compels us to decide a *new way of being* [my italics, B.I.]”. (*Ethics* 41) The listed examples are the French Revolution of 1792, the meeting of Héloïse and Abélard, the foundation of physics by Galileo Galilei, the invention of classical music by Haydn, the Cultural Revolution in China (1965–67) etc., but it is quite obvious that its prototype is Paul’s turnaround. This is why a whole book is dedicated to Saint Paul. But if, according to Badiou’s conception, any radical break is considered as being a ‘Paul’s turnaround’, even Paul’s turnaround itself can be turned into its impossibilities.

To what extent does the revolutionary allegory follow the truth preached by Paul and to what extent does it diverge from it? Badiou tries to make us see Paul’s ministry as militant affirmation camouflaged by fables. As if Paul would simulate (probably in an unconscious way) to be the slave of Christ in order to validate his radical universalism. It is clear that there is such an attempt, but the question is to what extent it is Paul’s or Badiou’s. The most bewildering facts are the “accurate” references here. It is very important for Badiou to reveal the meaning of the original Greek words in Paul’s text, but many times it is not important at all what Paul says. Take this passage, for instance: “But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More

than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.” (*Holy Bible*, I Cor 15:12—19)

Isn't it exactly Alain Badiou to whom Paul had addressed this passage, Badiou and all those who reject resurrection and consequently the demand of a truth test for a statement based on pure affirmation? Without any doubt, the apostle claims that if Christ has not resurrected, there is no Gospel and no “Paul’s turnaround”, but everything remains in its pre-Christ stage. The only way Badiou can change this truth is by claiming that he knows better what Paul’s teaching means in fact, than Paul himself. For this purpose, Badiou proposes a selection by distinguishing between the real and the fabular elements of the Event. He is very consistent regarding what is considered real: everything that matches the truth-process he actually follows. He is not necessarily biased but rather interested in facticity of what is going on. This time “real” means what is happening in the militant affirmation, in the radical break with the actual situation and in the subjective fidelity to this “evental supplement” (*Ethics* 41), because Badiou’s philosophy and political struggle takes place in this kinetic space. Everything outside of them must be a fairy tale or a fable, because here it cannot be considered real.

Such a firm distinction between real and fabular elements makes it clear what the dimensions of the time projection are. In the kinetic space of a practice only what is happening in its rhythmic dimensions can be considered a fact or an “evental” reality. If we project Saint Paul’s teaching and apostolic work onto the kinetic space of truth-process as proposed by Badiou, only the radical break, the universality of addressing everybody and militant affirmation can be facts or realities actually happening, because we are in their rhythmic dimensions and we can follow nothing else but a time projection of Paul’s practices cast on these dimensions. Only what is really moving in the space of shadows (projections) is considered Real, that is, the shadow (projection) itself. Exactly like in Plato’s cave. If we are closed or we close ourselves in a kinetic space, only what we learned to follow there is considered an evidence. Since this space becomes “here”, nothing outside of it is real. Such a thing can be eventually a certain form or elusive pattern of the real shadow, because on the plane of the wall everything is and must be of shadows. Similarly, in a time projection, shadows are those gestures we actually practice in a given kinetic space. This is why the resurrection of Christ cannot become a fact in the truth-process of a revolutionary political struggle, but a shadow-fable of the militant affirmation we are following there. Badiou speaks and acts in a coherent way; the question is whether Paul’s living by faith, his discipleship and apostolic obedience

to Christ is really the same practice Badiou is doing in his *Saint Paul*, or Paul's gestures are happening in a totally different kinetic space, and Badiou is receptive to his practice to the extent that it is cast to the kinetic space of his paradigm, namely militant affirmation (similarly to the model of socio-physics which follows the pilgrimage in Mekka as the movement of physical bodies characterized by their mass and extension in space [Berszán, "Empirical Research"]). Let us examine several examples in order to draw conclusions.

According to Badiou, Paul keeps himself out of the logic of master and slave, even though he usually introduces himself in his epistles as a slave of Christ: "If one demands signs, he who performs them in abundance becomes a master for him who demands them. If one questions philosophically, he who can reply becomes a master for the perplexed subject. But he who declares without prophetic or miraculous guarantees, without arguments or proofs, does not enter into the logic of the master. (...) This is why it is possible for him to occupy the place of the son. To declare an event is to become the son of that event. That Christ is Son is emblematic of the way in which the eventual declaration filiates the declarant." (*Saint Paul* 59)

According to Badiou, the Jews' looking for heavenly signs, the Greeks' demand for wisdom and Paul's preaching of the Crucified are three types of discourse. Does Paul distinguish between them as modes of speaking or as ways of orientation, such as orientation according to miracles and signs, orientation according to arguments and proofs and orientation according to faith? Inasmuch as the Real of Paul's Gospel in the space of our orientation practice is militant affirmation, of course we adjust it to discourses, but doing this we ignore the great loss resulting from the fact that we reduce the practical orientation of 1st-century Jews, Greek philosophers and Christians (we should not forget that antique philosophy itself was life-practice) to the rhetoric dimension of discourse and we reduce the privilege of being God's sons Paul is speaking about to the subject supporting a militant affirmation.

The time projection thus created entails further distortions:

The event is not a teaching; Christ is not a master; disciples are out of the question. Jesus is certainly <<lord>> (*kurios*), and Paul his <<servant>> (*doulos*). But the Christ-event establishes the authority of a new subjective path over future eras. The fact that we must serve a truth procedure is not to be confused with slavery, *which is* precisely that from which we are forever released insofar as we all become sons of what has happened to us. [According to Badiou we are sons of our becoming future subject.] (...) It is a community of destiny in that moment in which we have to become a <<new creature.>> That *is* why we need retain of Christ only what ordains this *destiny*, which is

indifferent to the particularities of the living person:
 Jesus is resurrected; nothing else matters, so that Jesus
 becomes like an anonymous variable, a <<someone>>
 devoid of predicative traits, entirely absorbed by *his*
 resurrection. (*Saint Paul* 63)

If we know much better what Paul is speaking about than Paul himself, we have to pretend that we discovered a deeper or elementary truth in his writings. For instance, we declare as already cited: “That Christ is Son is emblematic of the way in which the eventual declaration filiates the declarant.” But the deeper background is, in fact, a kinetic space chosen absolutely independently from Paul, onto which we project everything else as well, in order to avoid getting out of it in our orientation attempts. Thus, reducing Paul’s teaching to the background of its Real as a (deeper) truth means that we reduce every rhythmic dimension that is missing in our current kinetic space, and from now on we regard all their happenings as inexistent, because they cannot actually be perceived here. The “truth” we discover in this way not only adds something to the phenomena in which we discovered it, but it strips the happening a lot. Fidelity to an event practically means not to mutilate its happening by stripping it of certain rhythmic dimensions. Paul teaches to Corinthians that such a reduction is unacceptable: if they reduce Christ to the phenomena of his life, they will lose the very surplus He added to the mundane manifestations of life. Since his resurrection places our mundane life in a much larger space, having hope in Him is equal to orientate ourselves in this much larger space: “in Christ”. If His sacrifice and resurrection become plain and flattened as “an anonymous variable” in a kinetic space limited to revolutionary struggle, it in turn betokens a highly reductive projection. In his book, Badiou reveals the resurrection of Christ as the Event of the truth Paul affirms – of course, a Revolutionary Event on which Badiou has founded (his own) philosophy. But this philosophy founded on the Event drastically limits the kinetic space of events: what we can call event here must be a radical break with the extant circumstances in a leftist political sense. Nevertheless, we can radically break with Badiou’s philosophy by following Paul’s Gospel, for instance. This turn is not political resistance, but increasing spaciousness, an event that, literally speaking, is not from Badiou’s space of happening, since it takes place in different rhythmic dimensions, those of Paul’s faith tuned to the resurrection of Christ due to the every-day walking with the resurrected One. Badiou claims that Paul reduces Christ by omitting his biographical facts and entirely dissolving him in his crucifixion and resurrection. However, in contrast with him, Paul preaches Christ’s deeds, life, death, resurrection and revelations as the “evental extension” of our world. The fact that he does not try to document or attest the existence of the historical Jesus, is due not only to the already existing Gospels, but because he does not preach about a deceased Master, but about Christ who fulfills his promise given to Paul and to all of

his faithful disciples: "I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (*Holy Bible*, Mt 28: 20) It is not Paul, but Badiou who makes a drastic reduction when speaking about Jesus thus: "so far as miraculous cures, multiplication of loaves, walking on water, and other amazing feats are concerned, he was the equal of any of the charlatans that abounded in the empire's eastern provinces." (*Saint Paul* 60)

This high-handedness is false, first of all because it appears in a much plainer and narrower space than the space rendered to Christ's deeds in Paul's teachings. By this "high-handedness" we enter the space of the "Event" where, according to the rules of projection, Christ is shrunk to an emblem or demoted to a mere signifier of a leftist revolutionary idea: "He simply reminds us, even if only by deliberately neglecting to mention these extraneous virtuositities, that none of this is enough to found a new era of Truth. What the particular individual named Jesus said and did is only the contingent material seized upon by the event in view of an entirely different destiny. In this sense, Jesus is neither a master nor an example. He is the name for what happens to us universally." (60)

The philosopher of the revolutionary Event is consistent in his teaching (staying in the same kinetic space all the time); the surprise comes when it seems that Paul himself professes the same philosophy as soon as we project his apostolic practice to the kinetic space of militant affirmation: "The most powerful expression of this equality, necessary correlate of this universality, can be found in Corinthians I. 3. 9. We are all *theou sunergoi*, God's coworkers. This is a magnificent maxim. Where the figure of the master breaks down come those of the worker and of equality, conjoined. All equality is that of belonging together to a work. Indubitably, those participating in a truth procedure are coworkers in its becoming. This is what the metaphor of the son designates: a son is he whom an event relieves of the law and everything related to it for the benefit of a shared egalitarian endeavor." (60)

The "egalitarian endeavor" suggests that leftist political struggle is so universal that even the Jewish-Christian tradition invoked by Paul should be regarded as a subcase of it. Nevertheless, taking into consideration their rhythmic differences, it is evident that leftist political struggle does not encompass Jewish-Christian religious practices, but it is a possible time projection of them. Badiou claims to speak about the former, while practicing the latter. This is why we cannot share his conception of truth emphasizing the importance of affirmation alone. If we accept the truth test of the affirmation as an unavoidable demand, Badiou's interests are revealed: when trying to appropriate the work of Apostle Paul for the purposes of a philosophy of revolution, he creates, in fact, a time projection of it, entailing distortions and a considerable loss.

One could ask me: What is Paul's teaching then in its proper sense? This is a difficult question if we insist on knowing the answer more clearly than Paul himself. Otherwise the answer is very simple: it is exactly what he teaches. When he speaks about Christ he does not refer to "what happens to us universally", but to the historical Jesus who

was crucified and resurrected. Or if he speaks about the coworkers of God he doesn't mean proletarian egalitarianism, but indeed, a privileged community of the creatures with their Creator.

The truth of event is not only an affirmation but rhythm as well. Ignoring the Real of rhythms, except the rhythm of radical thinking as a philosophical paradigm of revolutionary action, Badiou falls out of those rhythms: rejecting the spaciousness of Paul's truth he is imprisoned in the narrowness of his own kinetic space. The "materiality" in relation to which Paul's faith in the resurrection of Christ is considered a fairy tale, is nothing else than a tangible happening in that particular kinetic space, which can be all-encompassing only in the sense that in this space every other happening must be followed in it, i.e. to the extent and in a way this kinetic space makes it possible. This is how Paul becomes similar to Bolshevik revolutionaries. Using Badiou's terms we could describe this as the appropriation of universal by its projection to a particular kinetic space. When the radical philosopher speaks about "materiality" as "the militant dimension of every truth" (92) he offers us, in fact, the time projection of every truth cast on the dimension of militant affirmation: the apostleship of Paul projected on "the mass line" of Chinese Communists (99), and Christ projected on the narrowness of leftist subjectivity. What we can follow quite well in this projection cast to a limited space is the indifference to the differences of those addressed and the addressing of truth to everybody. But are these still part of the encounter with Christ and of the continuous following of Him? Inasmuch as we render resurrection and the faithfulness of the Resurrected towards us as secondary or, in fact, an arbitrary issue in contrast to militant affirmation, it means that we are interested in them only as fables, that is, possible shadows of the militant affirmation.

At this point Badiou himself seems to intend to show that the resurrection of Christ is a shadow or projection of the real truth-process. Theoretically, it seems undecidable what is the shadow (projection) and what is the real event. But only if we regard their flipping around as a rhetoric inversion, an approach Badiou himself transcends, too, when using this militant affirmation in the actual kinetic space of his leftist endeavor. From then on, we have to deal not only with rhetorical assumptions but with historical events. The problem is that, when reading Badiou, it seems like only a militant affirmation can be a historical truth-process. Nevertheless, Paul's faith in Christ is just as real as the revolutionists' struggle, but it happens in another kinetic space (just like in the practice of contemporary disciples who are faithful to the event of their "metanoia" by following Christ). If we do not want to attribute the same universality to a militant affirmation as to truth, then we have to accept the physically real multiplicity of rhythmic dimensions opened up by different practices. Particularity may be not only a situational given constituting an impediment to universal truth, but it could be rhythmic singularity as well. I wonder whether it is acceptable to totally discredit the particular as an antipode of the universal, suggest-

ing that it is no more than a case or camouflage of (Marxist) property relations. It may be irreducible otherness as well, in the sense Lévinas uses this term (*Otherwise than being*), and this is not a privilege of singular truths militantly affirmed by their subjects, but a feature “they share” with any of their alternative subjectivity. Practically, we become receptive to the universal beyond our own kinetic space only if we do not deny the particularity or rhythmic singularity of any happenings. At this point orientation becomes unavoidable: it is decided by every gesture we make where, in which kinetic space the things happening to us are going on. We do not decide which practices may be regarded as real, but we decide which of them we practice. While we read Paul’s teaching, for instance.

After a textualist and contextualist adventure of interpretation, it is time to reaffirm – militantly or not – the rights of our responsiveness to the *scriptures* (with and without a Capital letter) as gesture resonances: the embodying events by the reader’s discipleship (Pleşu, *Parabolele* 182). Poetry helps us to avoid confusing the rhythm of an occurrence with its projection to a different kinetic space. And it also helps in understanding allegory not as a replacing similarity in the same rhetorical space, but taking into consideration – or learning how to take into consideration – the multiple rhythmic dimensions of compared happenings.

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