By: Christopher Satoor

York University

2015

**The Advent of Contingency, An Ethics of the Fourth World; and the Divine Inexistence: A Meillassouxian ‘Spectral Dilemma’**

**Introduction**

Quentin Meillassoux’s ‘Spectral Dilemma offers philosophy an answer to an age old problem, one that Pascal had intimated on in the wager. Is it better to believe in God for life or abstain from belief and declare atheism? The paradox of theism and atheism has separated philosophy for centuries by limiting the possibilities for real thought. For Meillassoux, there is more at stake than just the limitations of thought. Both atheism and theism have exhausted all the conditions of human life. In order to answer this paradox Meillassoux must combine religious insight that the dead must be resurrected with the atheist conviction that God does not exist. (Harman, Quentin Meillassoux, Philosophy in the Making p.87). The aforementioned insight, grounds Meillassoux’s position in what he calls a *Divine Ethics*. The concept of the *Divine* carries both atheism and theism to their ultimate consequences to unveil the truth that … “God does not exist, and also that it is quite *necessary* to believe in God (Harman p.236). The *Divine* links both assertions in an absolute ethics which Meillassoux calls *Divinology*. This leads us to our next question what is the Spectral Dilemma? In order to answer this question, we cannot rely solely on what the dilemma is, for it is not, a sufficient account of what Meillassoux is trying to solve. We must proceed to understand the conditions of what Divine Ethics are, and how the Divinology can best represent life for both the living and the dead.

What is a spectre? According to Meillassoux it is a dead person who has not been properly mourned (Meillassoux, Spectral Dilemma p.261). This person’s death haunts us. This haunting is the mere fact that we cannot mourn their loss, for as time passes by, our bond with the dead, or dearly departed, proves to be inadequate for our own lives. This haunting leads us to utter despair. The sheer horror of their death is a burden that lays heavy on our backs; and not just our own backs, or our families backs, but for all those people who have crossed their paths in history (Meillassoux p. 262). These terrible deaths are called *Essential Spectres* and they include all deaths, such as, odious, premature, the death of children, the death of parents; and all of those poor individuals who know that their own destiny will at some point in time, be the same as these poor individuals (Meillassoux p.262). But it is precisely all death in its inconclusive finality that haunts us all, not just natural deaths or even violent grueling death and causalities of war.

These *essential spectres*, are the dead who refuse to Passover, even though they are gone. This concept must seem absurd to any reader to believe in them, but still, Meillassoux makes his point that these *essential spectres* still cry out to us all, that they still exist with us (Meillassoux p.262). Meillassoux claims that the completion of mourning must occur and Essential Mourning, which is described as an accomplishment of a living relationship with the dead, as opposed to maintaining a morbid bond with those who have survived after their deaths (Meillassoux p.263). According to Meillassoux, *essential mourning* grants us the possibility, of forming a bond again with the dearly departed (Meillassoux p.263). This bond actively animates their memory into our lives again, but the concept of accomplishment means, that *to* live again with those essential spectres … “[R]ather than relating to them with the memory of their morbid death” (Meillassoux p.263).

In order to fully understand this possibility, we must ask the question does God exist. Is there a merciful spirit, which transcends all of humanity? Is this God working in the world? If so, then why do essential spectres exist? How is it possible that these terrible deaths occur in the world and are allowed by such a God? If this is so, that God allows these deaths to occur then perhaps God is not all powerful? Perhaps this so called transcendent principle is absent in the world (Meillassoux p.263).Meillassoux states that both the religious and atheist options do not allow for essential mourning to take place. Both these positions lead to disappear when confronting death. What is needed is what will follow in the rest of this paper … *a Divine Inexistence*. We need to assert the existence of a *Virtual-God* that is both inexistent and possible, but also contingent and unmasterable (Harman p.89). The Divine Inexistence is the main concept of Meillassoux’s Divinology but also the answer to the spectral dilemma, that a new ethics is both possible and needed. This Divine Ethics will both save Essential Spectres and Philosophy. My essential claim is that the actual article ‘Spectral Dilemma’ published in collapse Journal, is insufficient in fully answering the problem of essential spectres. The juxtaposition of atheism and theism is not enough to philosophically explain the significance of the Divine Inexistence. The article is not lengthy enough to explain how ontology, contingent-metaphysics and ethics relate to the fundamental problem. The Divine Inexistence must be fully articulated with the entirety of Meillassoux’s Divinology. I will attempt to fully express the entirety of Meillassoux for my reader, while at the same time, offering a comprehensive answer to the spectral dilemma.

**Cantor, Set Theory, Multiplicity and the Non-Whole**

Georg Cantor has left a profound mark on both the philosophies of Alain Badiou and Quentin Meillassoux. It is necessary for me to briefly explain the main concepts of Cantorian mathematics. Now, this is just a brief summary of Cantor on how he is appropriated by both Badiou and Meillassoux; and I am in no way a mathematician. And I also realize that how Cantor is appropriated by both philosophers maybe problematic for those who are mathematically inclined. Georg Cantor is known for the creation of set theory. Cantor’s set theory stresses the importance on the correspondence between the member of sets that are directly related to one another in a one to one relational function (Cantor p.116). These sets can be defined as infinite. Cantor was essentially looking for well-ordered sets that produced real numbers more so then natural numbers. What interests both Badiou and Meillassoux is that Cantor’s method allows for the possibility of an ‘infinity of infinities. This led Cantor to the discovery of transfinite numbers. What Cantor’s mathematics proposes is a challenge to the absolute infinity in the nature of God. This means prior to Cantor’s discovery there were only finite sets and one infinite set which was allocated to God. Badiou’s love for Cantor is directed at the fact that Set theory as a rarity in Mathematics, becomes an event that ruptures the tradition. The ability to count to infinity; and the magnitude of an impossibility that creates possibilities, is a truth for Badiou. What Cantor proved was that there are many sizes for infinite sets, this means that the subject can harness the ability to count algebraic numbers in any sequence such as B1, B2, B3 onward to infinity (Cantor, On a Property of the Collection of All Algebraic Numbers, p.238). This is the aspect that interests Meillassoux that … “Cantor’s theory relies on a possible connection between cardinal and ordinal numbers and demonstrates that unlike finite numbers the cardinality and ordinality of transfinite sets can differ. The set of all reveals and the set of all primes might be equally to one another but clearly their ordinality is different because both are potential infinites, yet the former must be larger than the latter”(McManus, Becoming to Belong: An Essay on Democratic Egalitarianism and the Impact of Law p 97).

What the aforementioned has to do with Meillassoux is that, we have the potentiality to hold onto the contingency of absolute possibilities and this is what interests Meillassoux’s contingent metaphysics; that an infinity of infinities can exist; and that we can hold onto the mere possibility of the set of all sets, where any number or multiple can appear out of nowhere and for no reason. As student of Badiou, Meillassoux must first accept the mere fact that the principle of sufficient reason, which, states that all causes have a necessary origin and must relate back to a specific effect is erroneous. Necessity cannot harness the power of possibilities, what necessity adheres to, is the brute fact of causation; and since no human was around at the beginning of time, philosophy inaccurately correlates this relation with causation. This is the reason why correlation is problematic for Meillassoux. The correlate of being and thought cannot reasonably come to a necessary argument of the first cause of the universe which no human has experienced. All of this reasoning leads to mere conjecture that we can *necessarily* form thoughtful arguments by transcending our own experience. For Meillassoux this means that we cannot assume that there is a first original cause; and secondly that necessity and transcendence are a part of philosophies metaphysical baggage (Meillassoux, After Finitude p.23)

A contingent metaphysics must first circumvent that since there is no necessary origin, and likewise, there is no transcendent God, we must start from *an effect out of nowhere for no reason* at all. This indicates the point that “God is not” and thus we must posit a non-whole or an empty set, by replacing the absence of the one with a series of multiples (Badiou, Being and Event p.27). This series allows the infinity of infinities to be interwoven with the complete series allowing a real notion of immanence. Meaning, contingency or more appropriately stated, radical contingency starts from an *inconsistent multiple* (empty set)that is both *not* an origin and not a *cause* of the following consistent multiples that have arisen out of nowhere. This is Badiou’s own appropriation of set theory, which the fallacy of the one or God has limited by its necessity. By denying this premise of the one, contingent multiples can spontaneously arise out of nothing for no reason; and contingency grounds the possibility that there are an infinite amount of multiples.

By accepting this Badiouean foundation, Meillassoux believes, that like Spinoza, and Hegel, true immanence is formed by the contingency of the inconsistent multiple or negative. Meillassoux calls this the non-whole. (Harman p.117). This non-whole is the advent of contingency. The term advent is used to describe two things. **1)** The Meillassouxian event, and **2)** the concept that something has arisen from nowhere. Meillassoux stresses that such an advent suddenly appears. This advent arises from nowhere; and at the same time, it is completely novel. This means its becoming is both creative and new; and that it arises as a *consistent* multiple that is radically different than any other previous multiple. This is why necessity must be thrown out for Meillassoux, there is no thing-in-itself; and nothing is hiding outside the world of appearances. There is no beyond, but only the “*advent ex nihilo* out of nowhere” (Harman p.175). Pure immanence and radical contingency invokes a world where nothing stands outside of it, and nothing could possibly constrain its power of novelty (Harman p. 175). As Meillassoux states … “ if anything existed other than the world and had the power of novelty and creation, time would be be poor, since what follows from its birth would be the power of diminishing its existence” (Harman p.177). This Means that all that is novel, occurs spontaneously, and out of nowhere, for no apparent reason. If events where necessary then their origins could be predicted and this would completely restrict their creative becoming. This means there is no secret principle in reality, and no demiurge with puppet strings. Nothing is hidden in the world of contingency. “If we truly think of the advent of contingency and the truth of the advent, it must be an *advent ex nihilo* and without any reason at all” (Harman 179). As Graham Harman states philosophy searches for an excess of effects, over the origin of causes, Meillassoux, by accepting this advent and this *inconsistent* multiple has created a universe where there is no necessary link between cause and effect (Harman p.93). This is why necessity and transcendence must be evacuated from thought. If we place the power of creation and innovation in a transcendent God or first principle, we essentially deprive the absolute power of novelty. Philosophical sense always searches for an originary real or given that is always more purer then our current reality.

**A Critique of Materialism and Deleuze.**

The Inexistence of God, allows us to harness the sheer power of secular forces which can create the proper room for novelty. The world is not the aggregate of power that arises in it, this is a notion of transcendence. The world is the advent that concerns the sum total of what belongs to it, for every element of the multiple is a part of its sheer totality (Harman p.93). According to Harman, Meillassoux depicts a world without reserve, there are no restrictions, or constraints, and the world adheres to the condition of all possibilities. The aim of Meillassoux’s Divine Inexistence, is to advance a theory of an immanent God, one that does not yet exist, or might never exist, but allows us to uphold the possibility, thus creating the room for its possibility. This is Meillassoux appropriation of Cantor, which states, that probability must collapse on itself, and provides us the contingent fact that all change is possible; and also, that it does not need to occur. The world has the capabilities to produce or to not produce new laws, but the real point is to cut away at necessity and the constancy of laws (p.178). Meillassoux maintains that the belief in the constancy of laws is absolutely irrational, since, reason follows the law of contradiction and there is nothing contradictory about the laws of nature changing (Harman p.178). What is interesting is that Meillassoux doesn’t think there is some hidden secret in the sudden appearance of life. Material reality appeared as an advent out of nowhere *and for no reason at all*, there was no providence, or a mechanistic answer for such origins. This concept of the advent of life and thought allows Meillassoux to de-suture life and thought away from the reductive material sciences (p.180). Sciences’ materialism reduces all life to material processes. If we take Meillassoux’s position seriously, radical contingency allows us to posit, that life and thought emerged for no reason, just as the universe of universes emerged spontaneously. The emergence of these universes or multiple of multiples, is this advent out of nothing. Each universe is not the same potentially pre-existent universe in some universe whole, but an endless variety of infinite universes immanently being created and surging forth. According to Meillassoux, the only way to have a true immanent and novel philosophy, is to view life and matter as this advent. Meillassoux’s usage of immanence and creation gets him unusually close to Deleuze and his differential ontology. But Meillassoux, resists the idea of a series of chaotic forces, just as he refuses the idea of a philosophy being centered on a *vital* principle or creative materialism. Consistent materialisms often turn into hylozoism. This gets to the heart of Deleuze’s ontology which stresses the idea of dormant virtual matter being actualized into *fully* blown intensive difference or extensities. All intensive differences are then measured by the repetition or degrees of intensity that are attracted together, thus blurring the line of real becoming or creative novelty. Deleuze’s ontology needs this discontinuity of continuity, to contrive differences in the dramatization of their structure and genesis. This all depends on a theocentric model; a monism, where difference, is measured by its power to be individuated within an ultimate one, that’s sole purposes is to express the power of the one … “[A] single clamour of being for all beings” (Deleuze, Difference and Repetition p.304). When the condition of the Meillassouxian advent is realized, as a novelty out of nothing, it runs counter to Deleuze’s own philosophy of events by exemplifying that each event is not co-dependent on what preceded it or dependent on a radical procedure of repetition that amounts to a real animation of creation. According to Meillassoux, radical novelty as the advent of life, is simultaneously, a material configuration, which causes a rupture with physical laws in the midst of where they emerge. The universe is no longer a mystery in the face of the constancy of laws, it is a sudden burst of life, an advent, which, explodes out of the non-whole. Meillassoux is not looking for an immanence that grounds the plane of all knowledge, but a wholly contingent immanence. If rationalism is to be identified with eternity, and it is pulled towards determinate laws, or the frequency to actualize virtual intensities in the Deleuzian method, then essentially we have killed thought and left it powerless. What this procedure discloses is the pure flux of a series of phenomena which, usually is grounded in a transcendent foundation.

**Worlds, Hope, Justice and Immortality**

Meillassoux states that there are no such transcendent foundations, but only several stages of the advent divided into three orders. These three orders mark the essential rupture of pure becoming and in due time will become worlds in themselves. These worlds are *matter*, *life* and *thought* (p.190). This division among the advent is what Meillassoux coins as a divine mathematics, because the three worlds rupture the foundation of how the world is perceived. The fourth order or world, will be the answer to the spectral dilemma; and that world is the world of justice. (p.97). All of these orders refer back to Meillassoux’s immanent theory of new realities *ex nihilo*.

The fourth order as justice will be the sole purpose of Meillassoux’s immanent ethics. Such an immanent ethics posits that this emergent life is the *only* life, and the *only* desirable life we have. This means that in order to maintain the conditions of contingency in our immanent ethics, the desire of our present life must continue forever. This is a point that will shake the reader, by upholding this form of immortality in the face of the material status quo of our current society, is to rid ourselves of the shackles of our mortality.

Real philosophical ethics must uphold this cut with reality, which states all ethics must be an ethics of immortality. A life with no beyond or after world, this point is pivotal, as it stresses more importance to the here and now. The true concept of immortality is philosophical and not religious. This leads to one of our own questions, Meillassoux uses the term Divine Ethics to describe an immanent ethics that seeks immortality for all present life. This is the first part in answering the spectral dilemma, the divine inexistence and the immortality of humanity, is not just ascribed to the present living but also to the dead. Meillassoux is invoking the concept of the resurrection of the dead as an ultimate ethical condition. This seems like an absurd claim but the foundation of the Divine must ground justice for all and not just the living. As nonsensical as this sounds Meillassoux has an answer … “everything logically possible is really possible, and since the rebirth of bodies is not illogical it must be possible” (Harman p.98). Meillassoux claims that the concept of the rebirth of the living is no different than our spontaneous existence out of nowhere. If the advent of life, matter and thought in its astonishing manner, has taken place as an explosion out of nothingness, then the same rupture of the dead rising, is also an advent within immanence (p.98).

Meillassoux has three real advents that are named as worlds or orders, which I have stated earlier and these three orders make up the essential categories of advents. Yet, what are these orders? Meillassoux has two terms for these so called orders or worlds. The first is intra-worldly advents, these are ruptures that occur in a *determinate* world, such as the creation of a new species of animals entering the advent of matter, or creative ideas being formulated out of nothing in thought. Worlds arise as a surging out of the determinate world, but there is more within the worlds of thought, matter and life then in the present world.

The rebirth of the dead, and the immortality of life is not an intra-worldly advent, rebirth and resurrection are part of what Meillassoux calls ‘extreme-world-changing events.’ The rebirth of the human, according to Meillassoux, is distinguished from previous worlds, and this world arises beyond matter, life, and thought, it becomes the *fourth world*. The fourth world is the world of justice, where we can attain, immortality against premature deaths, odious deaths; and where we are capable of the absolute immanent knowledge of the cosmos (p.99). Meillassoux knows that the fourth world has not arrived yet, but it still exists in everyone, as an object of *hope* and as the desire of every rational human being (p.189). This fourth world implies that all individual humans have access to it by their diligent act of hope. Meillassoux states that all humans should embrace this act of hope for a world of justice, for it implies the possibility of a God to come. And this God to come, directly opens thought to the infinite plane of absolute contingency. The spectral dilemma is answered by this great leap, that the one thing that is ultimately higher than the human is their recommencement in the world and having immortality again in the same world. The fourth world is recognized as a world of justice, for it is a world were all humanity is reborn, and this makes the fourth order an eternal truth. It becomes a universal form of justice, as a possible event which reaches inside of history erasing the shattered lives of all those essential spectres crying out. Injustice is thus thwarted.

The human is the most important facet in Meillassoux’s philosophy, everything is centered on the concept of the human. Even the notion of Worlds are known as the advents out of nothing that carry a special element of creation for the human as beings of reason. These worlds are properties for humanity. Each world, must cross one another to connect novelty with pure becoming. Matter must cross all life, in order for the advent to represent the up surging of creation; and life must cross the boundaries of thought, in order to tie all three worlds together. What remains as an enigma to all of us, is our eternal relation to the fourth world. What fills in the three orders is the hope of justice which, blends all the worlds together. Hope must cross into thought for our desire for life is caught between pure contingency and the knowledge of the eternal, which, must reach the world of justice.

 This is exactly counter to Deleuze’s ontology, for Deleuze, eternal truths must be indifferent to differences. This is why Meillassoux rejects differential ontologies, for they can never create eternal truths, but only create the tension between isolation and individuation. Humans must not think pure difference for as long as we are guided by the sheer potential of differences, we are instantly affected by injustices. For humanity to escape the indifference of injustice, we must be able to accomplish the rebirth of all essential spectres. Humanity must be reborn under the very conditions of justice, and reach all of our fellow defiled brethren. This concern must be accepted in our own world, for justice does not only refer to the living but it also means calling out to all who can and can’t hear the call. For the refusal of injustice for the dead and for everyone must be a *universal vocation*. And a universal is only universal when it makes no exception (Harman p.191). This means that Meillassoux’s philosophy is grounded on the concept of radical novelty, and a true idea of becoming-novel which, is only followed by the recommencement of all humans (Harman p.100). Thus, a real ethics demands the conjunction of wonder found in the Greek world and also the infinite hope of justice found in Jewish Messianism. Yet, instead of juxtaposing the two positions together, their immanent bond must be upheld together and be conjoined for our present world. This immanent bond must refer to no other world. It cannot be identified with the Greek concepts of Chronos or Eros or the Judaic Heaven. No other world can be present, except our own world. Our hope of rebirth is bound to this *astonishing* perception of the Divine Inexistence (p.192). Meillassoux states that there is no real guarantee of raising this world of hope up from the ashes of necessity and transcendence. This fourth world can be both perfectly possible and impossible; and this is precisely why, radical contingency gives us this exceptional moment of an astonishing gaze into a world, where the death of God can be replaced by a purely contingent advent of justice.

**Symbolization, Philosophy and the Ethical Scission**

In order to maintain our hope of justice, and our radical contingency, we must oppose the foundation which spawns necessity and transcendence. In order to replace necessity with the advent of contingency, justice must be ascribed as a *symbol*. The Symbolization of justice is a key term which opposes the foundations of difference, for it is above all, an in-itself, that leaves the room for all to access it. What Meillassoux has in mind is upholding this concept of the fourth world without a foundation so that the symbol of justice will not to be found in an afterlife but can be accessed in the world of the now (p.101). Thus, this symbol must be inscribed as a truth for all the living and the dead that partake in the truth of the recommencement of all humanity. The recommencement of humanity for Meillassoux, is the ‘ultimate ontological possibility of the world’ that promises us our rebirth (p.101) Following from this premise, the *symbol* is humanities rational guarantee of the universal. Since, justice has no foundation, what distinguishes it from any form of foundational concept, is that it incarnates the principles of existence into a purely immanent form. Symbolization is thus a faithful relationship of our own awareness of this truth in the present world (p.101). What is incarnated is the pure discourse of *values* that are attached to a discourse of *truths*. And these discourses occur between our world and justice. This means that the advent of truth and its discovery are values that remain incarnated by the disclosure of reason; and not by the intervention of some transcendent order or revelation. This means morality is an advent of truth and not a foundation of tradition and politics (p.101) We are stuck between the despair of the world and religious baggage that causes us metaphysical harm, by its sheer absurdity. Philosophy must move away from the sophist (post-modernist) who claims there is no meaning in the world; and also the religious zealot who inscribes value by irrational and transcendent principles. This means that real truths must not appeal to any kind of social order or authority (p.104) Philosophy’s place within the world, is to counter the sophist and the religious zealot, by stating that justice as an advent, is neither a social illusion, nor a surrender to a tyrannical God. The symbolization of justice is Meillassoux’s ethics of the fourth world, which, states that it must re-create the renewal of *hospitality* between humans, the world and the dead (p.107). This is the task of the philosopher, to open the space of hospitality, by thus inscribing an immanent mode of virtue ethics. The philosophical symbol represents to the philosopher that moral aspirations are not an absurdity or an ideology, but represents the infinite mark of absolute truth. The Problem with the symbol in the past was it became too metaphysical.

The symbol of justice must become an advent of contingency, allowing for the renewal of the dead. Symbols, throughout the history of philosophy have also swallowed our world whole, and have sutured us to the model of necessity. Philosophy has been riddled with symbols, which, have sutured it to other-worldly conditions. The cosmological symbol, the naturalistic symbol and the historical symbol are the three modes of symbols that have dehumanized the mode of ethics. All three of these philosophical symbols blur the boundary between activity and prescribed norms. All of these norms have essentially failed due to the fact that they depended on the real belief of necessity which, can conjure up the absurdity of religious myth (Harman p.106). The *Cosmological* can easily be represented as a transcendent first principle that caused all life; and thus its religious taint ties together, an origin that is dependent on the laws of the one that caused all life. Thus, dehumanizing mankind, with the fall; and original sin. The *historical* symbol becomes sutured to the trustworthiness of a party or a political mechanism, such as the invisible hand of the market, the productivity of capitalism, propaganda and hatred; and the role of tyrannical dictators who’s rules command that people kill or be killed. The historical also falls prey to a dialectics of spirit that somehow leads humanity to an end in themselves that is wholly unreachable. The naturalistic symbol fails to show the value that is inherently in all subjects, instead it grounds the ethical in a world soul or an Elan Vital that animates all life. The Naturalistic suture dehumanizes humanity by its own self-denial of the religious, yet it demands that it is the power of the élan that contains the morphogenic transformation of matter into life. Thus, creating an amoral vitalism that brackets the human as a simple sequence of an act of pure flourishing. The only way of reconciling humanity is by its acceptance of the Fourth symbol.

The fourth symbol is the ethics of the *fourth world of justice* (P.109). This justice is the justice for the dead, thus, we must attach reasonable belief with virtuous atheism in order to get at the heart of the fourth symbol. Meillassoux calls the fourth symbol the symbol of Factiality. Meillassoux claims that the symbol of factuality demonstrates the pure truth of contingency. It recognizes the pure event of the *advent ex nihilo*. If the good is not a foundation, but is an illusion, this illusion, as a symbol, must be that which, all humans must strive for. The illusion of the good must no longer lead humanity to the act of despair or faith in another world. It must lead to a contingent hope that the world in the future, will be able to produce an infinitely measureless novelty; born by our own thought and that which grants us the ability to raise the dead (p.111). Being can no longer be evaluated by being or difference, but must be the realm of pure creativity where any advent can take place. This is a critical move because it seems as though this realm of pure creativity is nothing but another illusion or a *noumenal* barrier between the world of material events and the world of thought.

How is Meillassoux creating novelty by upholding a sharp barrier between the world of necessity and the world of contingency? If we arm ourselves with the symbol of Factiality we remove despair, if and only if, we accept the rigidity of the *advent ex nihilo* which, implies, it is the *only* possible solution for the raising of the dead, which, still remains as an elusive illusion. Is this gesture not also restricting the possibility of absolute novelty? It seems we are at an unusual Kantian schism. The world of necessity gives us differences which leads to injustice and horrible deaths, and also the constancy of laws. Could the gesture of choosing the condition of contingency be merely noumenal? Do we have horse blinders on from the evil of the world that makes us no longer believes in humanity? Kant defines the noumena as a barrier of thought, now Meillassoux has an answer to my questions, since, there is *no thing in itself*; and we are stuck between two worlds, one of necessity, the other contingency, and this tight tension is solved by a very Badiouean gesture. We must *choose* the world of contingency (p.233). If there is no barrier between these two worlds; and if there is *no thing in itself*, there is only an *ethical scission* between *deciding* on the division of the worlds (p.113).We must choose between the two worlds. Either we choose a world where the dead can be resurrected, or we choose the world of brute necessity. Meillassoux has radicalized contingency by making each and every human choose the path which, paradoxically forges their ethical scission on the activity of their ability to choose. Meillassoux’s response to my accusations of noumenal distinctions and limitation of his thought would be based on the realization that this *waiting* for justice should abolish all necessary constraints. Value can once again return to life because this illusion is being wagered on. The wager is thus, grounded on a being to come (a virtual god) and a people to come. In this sense, Meillassoux has answered the age old question from Pascal that it indeed, is better to believe in one’s conviction, then, fall face into despair. If hope is the contingent metaphysical device to reveal us all to a belief in the world, then, it too must help us find the unity in humanity. Thus, like Badiou, Meillassoux’s philosophy needs the activity wagered on by each individual in their own fidelity. Our fidelity is the configuration of humanity, it is what recharges the community as a whole, for both the living and the dead. Justice has a value beyond any form of symbolization. It essentially goes face to face with the illusion of the fourth world and ultimately forces us to *desire* the world of justice. To escape the charge of *noumenal* paradoxes, Meillassoux claims that nothing is above the human. The human is the ultimate effect of the *advent ex nihilo* (p.109). No being has the ability to go beyond the human, since, the three worlds of thought, matter and life occur *for us*. The only other thing that can make this great leap is *justice*, for *justice* is always-already for thinking beings (109).

**Humanism and Prometheanism**

For Meillassoux the effect is always greater than the cause, this amounts to saying that humanity must ground the absolute value for thought in the eternal. If the eternal is grounded as a transcendent principle then eternity is nothing more than an abstraction. Every human person that is submerged in the world of the eternal, deserves justice; and for Meillassoux, this is not some tautology. The very ‘value of value’ inscribed in humanity comes from the very constitution that the humanity has no cause. If humanity indeed had an origin or a cause it would reduce the sheer absolute nature of mankind to a limitation. As Meillassoux states … “[E]very cause is inferior to humanity” (Harman p.210). This means humanity must endeavour to reach the eternal by crossing through the world of thought. If humanity crosses back into the world of matter, it is reduced to necessity; and the constancy of laws, which, would make the advent nothing but neutral becoming (p.210). As confusing as this sounds, Meillassoux is implying that the radically novel event of the advent, must be upheld, since, it is humans that gain from real value, the value of thought, matter and life must be grounded on the mere fact that the eternal can be thought and chosen.

My only suspicion about the following argument is if humanity gives the eternal value how has this not collapsed back into a concept of the one? Isn’t inscribing value of the eternal grounding it as a foundation? The only other way that Meillassoux can get out of this collapsing of positions, is to state that the eternal must in some way be a symbol; and as a symbol it must express the brute force of contingency, as opposed to being an *absolute one* that grounds humanity. However, Meillassoux doesn’t answer the question he merely states that contingency applies to every single thing; and this means that value is added to the eternal only by the act of choosing the eternal as the void or null set of the non-whole. And this non-whole is never a beginning nor end, but is that which is interwoven with the multiple of multiples. I find this argument to be insufficient in the sense that it does not answer the question about grounding the eternal within a contingent universe where things appear for no reason. If the *absolute eternal* is grounded within the 4 worlds as properties of the human condition, then this would imply that these worlds are not contingent but are a part of a necessary situation. But Meillassoux does have an answer to this rebuttal. What constitutes real value for Meillassoux is human knowledge of the eternal. This human knowledge is where value is not allocated to the human because of what *they know* but because the fourth symbol or our *factaility* allows us *to know* in the first place (p/106). It seems as though Meilassoux has indirectly, like Badiou, resurrected a neo-humanism in the face of resisting postmodern philosophies. But like Badiou, Meillassoux also does not accept the conditions of our mortality or our finitude. The stain on humanity is this derogatory knowledge of our mortal essence. This means that Meillassoux’s philosophy has not collapsed back into a necessity, because the eternal is gained once we recognize that we are immortals and infinite within an infinity. This recognition is a negation of finitude; and once we have accepted this negation, this allows for the space of the possible resurrection of the dead. Badiou’s philosophy also incorporates this concept. Both Meillassoux and Badiou uphold the condition of *the impossibility of all possibilities*. This impossibility as a possibility stands in the face of our existence, and screams to us, “*that there is never a limit, there is no end and we cannot mourn the death of spectres for these essential spectres have too passed all limits and all ends”*(p.107)

This means that the world of the human is nothing but an ultimate spectre that has taken place and will continue to live on forever (p.212). Humans are this ultimate principle, and as long as they exist, the eternal will exist, as a continuous movement of the absolute. The Human becomes the ultimate principle *par excellence* (p.108). Meillassoux is careful about this conviction of the human as the ultimate principle, because even though humanity is all that there is, this conviction does not lead us to the proposition that Humans have become God. To state that humanity has become the new God is to give the human all the power and negativity that are associated with God. This means that Humanity is responsible for all the deaths in the world and also those spectres that have passed on that haven’t been mourned yet. The Human cannot have the attributes of a transcendent God. This misrepresentation would conjure up a *promethean* vision of humanity where mankind would *idolize* its own power thus turning humanness into the foundation of Idolatry. What represents the ultimate advent of the human is the pure knowledge of thought; and this thought, is the symbol of the advent of contingency. The human is not a conjuring up of promethean humanism but is the *factuality* and ultimate effect of the advent (p.214). Meillassoux’s point is that *factuality* is an expression of a Divine Humanism, which opposes both the promethean *idolatry* and the *blasphemous* religious humanism that invert the qualities of value (p.214).

**Chance and the Dice Throw**

The basis for the fourth world of justice is maintained on the possible condition that this world be wholly desired; and that this desire is only for our present world. This is only possible by the configuration of an *ethical scission* and this scission is another mode of pure *chance* that must be affirmed and desired. In some of the most poetic pages of the Divine Inexistence, the most crucial part of answering the spectral dilemma is decided upon by the desire for real *change*, but also the desire for real *action*. Meillassoux gains this arsenal of the desire for the hope of the advent of recommencement of humanity from Mallarme’s poem ‘coup de des’. What Meillassoux invokes in the roll of the dice is the aspect of pure chance in the advent, and also the affirmation of hope within the here and now of the dice throw. This dice throw is to be understood differently than Nietzsche’s eternal return of the same and Deleuze’s notion of the three synthesis of time (Meillassoux, The Number and the Siren p.47) In Nietzsche, one must affirm the eternal return of the same, as in re-live the same events over and over again eternally to make the moment their own. What makes Meillassoux suspicious about this mode of metaphysics is that reliving the same event leads to two modes of resentment. The first is the despair of living those frightful moments of existence, over and over infinitely (Meillassoux p.49) This amounts to the cracking point of existence and the end result for the subject is the effect of nihilism. This not only destroys the notion of the past for the dead and future for them to arise, but it distinctly blurs the infinite capacity of chance, and at the same time, Nietzsche, is depending on a mode of necessity, that isn’t open to the possibility of change or contingency. What the eternal return of the same relies on are the laws of repetition which can be seen as a dependency on their constant nature. Even as a thought experiment Nietzsche’s eternal return of the same is not open to the world of justice or open to the resurrection of the dead. Nietzsche test is only open to the grounds of the repetition of the same. And the repetition of the same can never produce a true novelty. This is the second mode of resentment in Nietzsche’s philosophy. The pure power of becoming-novel is excluded from the act of repeating the same events day in and day out. Nietzsche’s model represents the absolute mode of *idolatry* for mankind is an end in themselves that repeats the same events over until they have realized the truth, which, is the affirmation of life and humanity as the centre of the universe (Meillassoux p.51).

For Deleuze in the three synthesis of time, the eternal return represents the pure and empty form of time, where the death drive reveals the destruction of the self where each sequence peels a layer back of the passive self. The destratification of selves beneath the death drive is revealed as thousands of Fichtean selves potentially bursting forth as *larval selves*, actively awaiting their virtual representation to be actualized (p.53) This entire process is dependent upon the actualization and individuation of pure potentiality. Notice for both Nietzsche and Deleuze, the resurrection of the dead and the hope for justice is nothing but an illusion. Deleuze’s own monism equates itself with an inverted leibnizianism, which, creates an eternal one that produces pure differences, which are individuated in it, thus turning Deleuzian ontology into the mode of *blasphemy* that the zealot needs to create pure differences within a transcendent foundation. The dice throw according to Meillassoux, is meant to exemplify *this* present moment. The here and now *must* be affirmed in the pure power of the advent ex nihilo (p.55)

Both Nietzsche and Deleuze’s mode of metaphysics are dependent on a model of necessity that ignores the radicalism of change and the becoming-novel of life. Meillassoux’s dice throw accepts every fibre of being and allows for the possibility of change under the conditions of contingency. This amounts to a role of pure chance that can openly activate the possibility of all impossibilities, (the raising of the dead and the recommencement of all humans on earth) (Meillassoux p.57) Meillassoux’s main point is the acceptance of the present, and like Badiou upholding the contingencies of truth. The conditions of a new world to come involve a form of *messianism* which, includes all desire for the rebirth of the world. If rebirth is only a preliminary desire for the world of justice, then, this commencement will be utterly static. It is a necessary condition to maintain that the world of justice is itself a possibility, but only on the condition that it *ought* to be desired in action with the present world. If we await the world of justice as a Deleuzian passive-larval self, then, we make this world of justice alien to thought; and this makes it impossible to exist (Meillassoux p.59). The return to life and the resurrection of the dead depends on the spontaneous novelty of the advent. The roll of the dice is this pure chance of the advent. One can compare the spontaneous act of contingency with the free throw of the dice that is both never a guarantee of an event, and also an absolute guarantee of the event. No matter what the throw, Meillassoux affirms its possibility, this is the most universal idea in Meillassoux’s philosophy, that this dice throw represents the possibility of the essential spectres to rise again and live with us once more. The ultimate world, for the ultimate human, is causally independent of all our actions, which, is why the wager is needed. We need to wager on the dead. Contingency is demanded as the sheer possibility of the advent; and that this advent is conjured up with existence and resurrection, by the fidelity to the impossibility of all possibilities (Meillassoux p.63).

**The Child and the Divine Inexistence: the Conclusion to the Spectral Dilemma**

At the beginning of this paper I proposed that the only way to answer the spectral dilemma was by doing a proper survey of Meillassoux’s Contingent Metaphysics. As well as having an understanding of his ethics of the fourth world; and knowing what the Divine Inexistence is. So far we have answered the condition surrounding the contingent metaphysics, and we have investigated the entirety of Meillassoux’s Divine Ethics of the Fourth world; and I have discussed at length, what the Divine Inexistence is. It is now time to discuss a resolute solution to our problem.

Meillassoux’s Divine Inexistence is the very fabric behind the dilemma, because we now recognize a God that is no longer allied with blind and amoral chaos. We longer recognize a God for the zealots and idolaters; but one that stands with the rebirth of humanity in the world of justice (Harman p.116). What is missing from humanities entrance to the world of justice is that it must be incarnated in the world of justice. This incarnation is the final act within the play of contingency and it is named the *Child*. Meillassoux calls this the ‘infans’ or the child in French. The child is the mediator in this Divine Inexistence, because the child is the bridge from the unborn to the connection of the living and the dead (p.116). The *infans* is the point of the event where all of our ancestors simultaneously converge with our descendants. The infans carries with it the promise of *life* to the unborn and who also refuse the death of all who died early. This means that Meillassoux is holding onto contingent vitality and not a necessary vitalism.

The child, according to Meillassoux, never breaks the connection of lovers, but is their desire of life *in-itself* which, resonates with both the living and the dead. The child becomes the *amorous* event (in the Badiouean sense) that ruptures both the world of the living and the world of the dead. It is the child that states *“we still don’t know what a world can do*”, for the child is the hope for the rebirth of the dead (p.221)

It is through the innocence of the child that the promise of life is answered; and a renewed desire for *this life* is created through the child. What the child possesses is the memory which can grasp the heart of the contingency of all things, which, can hold a reunion beyond the grave. It is only in this childlike state that we can practise our immortality; and it is the child that carries with it, a part of the Divine (223).

The Divine transfers the consequences of both atheism and theism, it pushes them both to their ultimate limits and reveals their truth. The Divine can only be understood from the point of view of the *infans* or the child that utters the statement that “God does not exist” but at the same time *necessarily* affirms his existence (p.230). Only the *Divine inexistence* guarantees the possible advent, because, this advent, is the immanence of pure thought. The Divine pushes the immanence of atheism and theism to their limits thus negating the religious and irrational necessity, but also saving the power of possibility. *The Divine Inexistence* is the ability to *name* the advent both hope and justice for the dead. In the act of pure contingency humanity is the ancestors to the God to-come; and this act of contingency allows us to suspend *belief* and *faith* in order to understand that essential mourning can be completed, *by us* **who choose** the fourth world; and who hope for justice. We must be like the child that incarnates themselves into the act of blind fidelity (232). To produce the absolute wager, which is the dead will rise; and live once more again with us on earth. And this is an absolute truth that is both impossible and possible that can wager on the God to come and who will arise as the advent of contingency. To solve this dilemma the reader must *choose* their own desire and their own form of action *now* …. “Roll the dice”

Bibliography

Badiou, Alain, and Oliver Feltham. *Being and Event*. London: Continuum, 2007. Print.

Cantor, Georg. *On a Property of the Collection of All Algebraic Numbers*, Oxford 1955. Print

McManus, Matthew. (Dissertation) *Becoming to Belong: An Essay on Democratic Egalitarianism and the Impact of Law*, York University 2015 Toronto

Meillassoux, Quentin. Spectral Dilemma. Collapse IV ed. R. Mackay, London 2008.

Meillassoux, Quentin, Robin Mackay, and Stéphane Mallarmé. *The Number and the Siren: A Decipherment of Mallarmé's Coup De Dés*. Faimouth, U.K.: Urbanomic, 2012. Print.

Meillassoux, Quentin, and Alain Badiou. *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*. London: Bloomsbury, 2012. Print.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Difference and Repetition*. New York: Columbia UP, 1994. Print.

Harman, Graham. *Quentin Meillassoux: Philosophy in the Making*. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.