

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

### CHAPTER 2:AGAINST THE SIMPLE OBJECT

In the previous chapter, the central argument lay in the direction of Heidegger's illegitimate privileging of time over space. This argument was performed principally through a reading of section 70. The subsequent argument against the possibility of a phenomenology of death ultimately served to confirm this earlier discussion.<sup>1</sup> In addition to this main argument, it was also mentioned that Heidegger reverts to the notion of 'Zeit-Raum' soon after "Being and Time", with the publication of the "Beiträge". This reversion serves as an implicit critique of his earlier distinction and privilege. On top of this, in "Time and Being", Heidegger refers back to section 70 and rejects it. All in all, the project of "Being and Time", although rich in phenomenological and ontological insight, is ultimately an unresolved one, on these terms alone.

In this chapter, I want to argue that the tensions and philosophical illegitimacies of "Being and Time" are an echo of an earlier work of philosophy, Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason". The problems encountered in Heidegger can therefore be situated within the tradition. I will do this by way of examining Heidegger's text, written at the same time as "Being and Time", "Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics".

The reason for approaching Kant through Heidegger's text can be clearly stated. In the Kant book, Heidegger expresses an emphatic preference for

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<sup>1</sup>That is to say, the limits of Dasein's ecstatic temporality exceed the boundaries of what is possible as a phenomena. As the 'possibility of the impossible', Heidegger's being-towards-death suspends the phenomenological project, in a manner which he later will avoid. See note 14 in the following chapter.

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

the first edition over the second edition of “The Critique of Pure Reason”. The problem with the second edition for Heidegger, in particular with the addition of the “Refutation of Idealism” and the “General Remark on the System of Principles”, is that the privilege accorded to time as the primordial function of the transcendental imagination is devalued. Kant introduces the condition that the intuition of external objects is equiprimordial, with time, for the possibility of all representation. In other words, Kant no longer takes inner sense to be more fundamental than outer sense. Moreover, Kant seems, on Heidegger’s reading, to substitute the transcendental understanding for the transcendental imagination as that which grounds the synthesis between concepts and the receptive faculty. Given this substitution, Kant’s thought paves the way for the Idealism to come. Kant ends his re-writing by erring on the side of the concept. In this light, one could say in extension of Heidegger’s reading that the empiricism of the ‘Refutation’ acts as a counterbalance to the privilege accorded to the concept granted through the substitution. Put simply, the transcendental unity of apperception, on the one hand, would seem to further sediment the privilege accorded to inner sense. But this second edition substitution comes hand in hand with the sections devoted to introducing an equal primacy accorded to exteriority. Kant seems to exaggerate further the primordially of time, only to install at the same time an attention previously absent on the transcendental conditionality of space. The second edition can therefore be seen, under Heidegger’s careful and yet violent reading, to bring the first Critique closer to an unresolvable tension over the question of ontological primordially.

For these reasons, Heidegger’s preference becomes clear to understand. Heidegger prefers the first edition to the second because it chimes with his

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

own findings in “Being and Time”, especially with the work of section 70. Heidegger wants, in “Being and Time”, to privilege the fundamentality of time. It is only in Kant’s first edition that it is possible to do this without ambiguity.

The question to put to Heidegger’s early Kant text is this: if his privileging of time over space in “Being and Time” has been found to be suspect, and if he himself reneges upon the privilege in later work, how are we, in this light, to go on to read his preference for the first edition of Kant’s first Critique? If the later Heidegger returns to a time-space of equiprimordial proportion, would it not be possible to establish in retrospect that the specific argument and preference for the first edition of “The Critique of Pure Reason” in “Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics” is itself *Unhaltbar*, that is, unsustainable? In other words, when Heidegger recalls section 70 in “Time and Being”, should he not also have recalled his preference for the first edition of the first Critique and rejected it?

This question, to be explored in a moment, leads to a further one. If Kant’s text in the second edition is witness to an equiprimordialisation of space to time, such that something like a *spatio-temporal* schematism is opened up, what becomes of the apriori conditionality itself? If space gets involved within the subject’s construction, in particular the space of the other and the space of exteriority, does not this transcendence occur *aposteriori*?

In order to develop this conception of a ‘transcendental’ spatio-temporal horizon, I shall have to leave the terms of Kant’s Critique. This is because the juxtaposition of both editions in one volume leads to an unresolvable work of philosophy. I shall argue in the fourth chapter that it is only beginning with Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology that a spatio-temporal

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

schematism can be fully resolved. In this current chapter however I will argue that the ‘phenomenology’ of Whitehead goes some way towards providing the grounds for such a resolution.

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To begin then, with Heidegger’s text, “Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics”. I propose to concentrate on just two sections of the text, sections 10 and 35. I will show that Heidegger’s relation to the two editions of Kant’s text is ambivalent. Furthermore, I will ground this ambivalence in Heidegger’s own unresolved (at this stage) thinking about time in relation to space. In other words, I will show that the tensions and illegitimacies within the argument of “Being and Time” section 70 have their place in Heidegger’s Kant text, at the same time.

Heidegger’s preference for the first edition of Kant’s first Critique appears, *prima facie*, to be the result of an issue in Kant at the most indirectly linked with the relative ontological import of time over space. Heidegger states that it is the centrality of the *transcendental imagination* in the first edition which leads to his preference. This faculty, as opposed to the transcendental unity of apperception (emphasised in the second edition), is the faculty which opens Dasein up to an understanding of metaphysics. The transcendental imagination, Heidegger asserts, is rooted in primordial temporality. As such, the synthesis of the imagination is at the same time the subject’s *temporalisation* of time. Time works through the subject, Heidegger claims. And therefore time is a matter of what he calls ‘auto-affection’. On these terms, time’s grounding in the subject and the subject’s

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

grounding in time is a matter of equiprimordiality. Both are grounded or rooted in each other. And henceforth, Heidegger argues that metaphysics, as the possibility of *transcendence*, can be thought.

The interpretation of the transcendental imagination as a root, i.e., the disclosure of the manner in which the pure synthesis puts forth and sustains the two stems [of sensibility and the understanding], leads naturally back to that in which this root is rooted, primordial time. The latter alone, as the original tri-unitary formation of future, past, and present, makes possible the “faculty” of pure synthesis and with it that which it is capable of producing, i.e., the unification of the three elements of ontological knowledge, the unity of which forms transcendence. (Heidegger, 1962:201)

Heidegger therefore reads a threefolded ecstatic temporality into Kant’s notion of the transcendental imagination as being the root of subjectivity’s temporisation and the timing of the subject. The transcendental imagination is the ground of transcendence, and therefore of metaphysics. In contrast, the second edition’s substitution of the transcendental understanding for the faculty of imagination leads Kant’s Critique, in Heidegger’s eyes, to fall back on the side of the concept, thus paving the way for Idealism. By falling back on the concept, Heidegger is claiming that the centralisation of the understanding over the imagination in the second edition forecloses the possibility of transcendence being thought. The understanding, as the faculty concerned with the application of the concept, can only think within its own terms. As such, the understanding would, one might presume, remain merely logical, or blind. At the very least, it would be non-

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

metaphysical, stuck within an immanence whose limits it cannot think. Hence, Heidegger states his preference in the clearest terms,

The first edition is more faithful to the innermost character and development of the problematic which characterises the laying of the foundation of metaphysics because, by virtue of its indissoluble primordial structure, the transcendental imagination opens up the possibility of a laying of the foundation of ontological knowledge and, hence, of metaphysics. Therefore, relative to the problem which is central to the whole work, the first edition is essentially to be preferred to the second. (Ibid:202)

Because the transcendental imagination, as the 'root' of synthesis is rooted in primordial time, transcendence, as the opening to metaphysics, can be inaugurated. Heidegger's preference for the first edition therefore appears as a clearly stated claim (whether or not one agrees with him). He is claiming that the first edition is the more metaphysical work, precisely because it allows for the metaphysical opening of transcendence to be thought.

However, it is important to note what I would claim to be the more fundamental issue at work in Heidegger's text, beyond a debate about whether the transcendental imagination ought to be privileged over the transcendental unity of apperception. This more fundamental issue concerns the ontological status of space with respect to time.

In the Kant text, Heidegger prefers the transcendental imagination as the root of synthesis because it stands for the synthesis that produces (or is 'produced by' - Heidegger's text unwittingly circles around an abyssal

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

subjectivism that threatens to englobe all other forms of conceptuality) the transcendence of *time*. In this respect, the preference for the imagination is a way of stating the metaphysical primordially of time over space by proxy.

The interesting point one notices in reading the two sections under analysis here is that one can witness Heidegger's own uncertainty about the ontological function of space projected into his reading of Kant. In other words, although Heidegger clearly wants to maintain a temporal primordially in arguing the case for the first edition of the "Critique", he struggles to uphold this privilege at key points in the text.

For instance, in section 10, after reviewing Kant's argument concerning time as the pure intuition applied to the data of internal sense, he wonders

We will not pass judgment at this time on the question as to whether this argument in support of the universality of time as pure intuition justifies the central ontological function of time attributed to it. We will also leave open for the present the further question as to whether space as pure intuition is deprived thereby of a possible central ontological function.  
(Ibid:53)

Heidegger's concern over the ontological status of space becomes intensified in his later discussion of the two additions to the second edition already mentioned. Although Heidegger had stated, a couple of pages previously, his preference for the first edition, later on in section 35 he somewhat confusingly attempts a vigorous defence of Kant's second edition. This defence turns precisely around the apparent destabilising of time's privilege in the second edition. But again, there are moments in this

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

defence where Heidegger's ambivalence over the Kant's argument reveal much about his own quandaries at the time.

Heidegger begins his examination of the second edition insertions by registering Kant's apparent refusal to continue the ontological privilege of time. Heidegger writes

It is true that in the second edition, Kant apparently refuses to acknowledge the transcendental priority of time in the formation of transcendence as such, i.e., he disavows the essential part of the laying of the foundation of metaphysics, the transcendental schematism. (Ibid:204)

Heidegger is referring to the additions of the "Refutation of Idealism" and the "General Note on the System of Principles". As we shall see in a moment, these two sections both introduce, for the first time in Kant, the idea that the reception and comprehension of things requires an outer intuition at the same time as an inner intuition. In other words, that the a priori form of space is always already involved in any cognition, through the work of the temporising subject. Heidegger's contention in the above passage is that this novel equiprimordiality accorded to space interferes with the schematism. Until the second edition, the schematism had been taken to be the operation by which the concepts and categories of the understanding are applied to empirical objects. In the first edition, Kant claimed that the mode of this operation is purely temporal. Therefore, Heidegger would appear to be correct in drawing attention to the fact that the two added passages referred to above disrupt the work of the transcendental schematism.

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

After a brief discussion on the “General Note”, Heidegger continues

Here appears the transcendental function of space, which unmistakably opens up a new perspective for Kant. Space enters into pure schematism. It is true that in the second edition the chapter on schematism has not been modified to take this into account. But is it not necessary to conclude, nevertheless, that the primacy of time has disappeared? This conclusion would not only be premature, but to attempt to infer from this passage that it is not time alone which forms transcendence would also be a complete misunderstanding of the whole interpretation carried out so far. (Ibid:205)

Thus Heidegger begins his ‘defence’ of the second edition. In this section, Heidegger notes, in passing, that the schematism would need to be ‘modified’ in order to take a revamped spatio-temporal ontology into account. This one sentence condenses and contains the root of the trouble, both for Heidegger and for Kant. Before examining this trouble, let us carry on with what Heidegger has to say.

In the next paragraph, we see why Heidegger wanted to minimise the difficulties and disruptions involved in shifting from a temporal schematism to a spatio-temporal schematism. Here, Heidegger attempts to argue that Kant was nonetheless correct in restating the primordially of space in the second edition. Heidegger argues that this restatement does not interfere with the real primordially of time itself.

However, it is not in this form but as pure self-affection that time is the primordial ground of transcendence. As such, it is

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

also the condition of the possibility of all formative acts of representation, for example, the making manifest of space. It does not follow, then, that to admit the transcendental function of space is to reject the primacy of time. Rather, this admission obligates one to show how space, like time, also belongs to the self as finite and that the latter, precisely because it is based on primordial time, is essentially spatial. (Ibid:205)

We now have all the pieces of Heidegger's argument put together, so that we can begin to see their fault-lines. Heidegger, in the above passages, attempts to defend the second edition's equiprimordialisation of space with time. This is on the basis that time's privilege does not in reality get displaced. For Heidegger, the transcendental imagination can be considered as spatio-temporal. This is because spatio-temporality itself can only be grounded in the primordial root of all transcendence, time. Therefore, Heidegger agrees with second-edition Kant that space is an essential intuition for the subject's understanding of objects. And he grounds this agreement in an underlying temporality which is not affected by introducing the primordially of the transcendental function of space. Hence Heidegger holds that Kant's second edition schematism can be 'modified'.

In disagreement with Heidegger, I contend that his agreement with the second edition (after stating a preference for the first a couple of pages previously) cannot however be maintained. In refusing the 'apparent refusal' of acknowledging the transcendental priority of time, Heidegger attempts to hold on to two incompatible positions:

- 1) That the schematism is spatio-temporal. In other words, that in terms of

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

the subject's intuitions, inner sense and outer sense are equiprimordial. The object's space (a/part from the subject) is woven inextricably into its time. Space and time are therefore reciprocally determinative forms of intuition.

2) That time is ultimately more fundamental ontologically than space.

His attempt to resurrect an appreciation of the second edition would turn around resolving these two points into one thesis. And resolution would come if Heidegger himself could provide the 'modification' necessary to Kant's account of the schematism. But, I suggest, how could Heidegger attempt this reworking, on the basis of the absolute value he places on time itself? How can a spatio-temporal schematism, translating or informing our reception of the world in relation to pre-ordered ways of seeing and receiving, be itself grounded in primordial temporality? It would appear that something more than a mere 'modification' to Kant's schematism is in order. That is, Heidegger has two choices. Either he continues to develop a quasi-Kantian spatio-temporal schematism by rejecting the absolute primordially of time, or he maintains time's primordially and rejects the transcendental equiprimordially of space.

In other words, the above cited passages from "Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics" repeat the same problems encountered in the reading of section 70 of "Being and Time" performed in the previous chapter. Heidegger's phenomenologico-ontological appreciation of the subject's spatiality is undervalued by the subsequent grounding of space in time. In the Kant book, the question of the transcendental-ontological function of space is in the same way at stake in Heidegger's repetition of the Kantian temporal privilege. And just as in "Being and Time", the priority accorded to time feeds into an implicit subjectivism, so too does a subjectivism

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

manifest itself in the Kant book. A form of this was uncovered in the last Heidegger passage quoted. Time as 'pure self-affection' is the ground of all transcendence. In other words, it is the subject's self-differentiating play (operating as the transcendental imagination) that opens up transcendence. Again, it is clear that this construction of the ground must lie in tension with the two added passages of the second edition of the "Critique" that we have been discussing. For Kant, at least the Kant of the second edition, would surely disagree with Heidegger that time as self-affection is the ground of all transcendence. Is it not the very point of these two passages to affirm that time as the form of inner sense cannot be considered as sovereign over space? That is, that space itself must be involved in the production of transcendence (or rather, to avoid subjectivism, that transcendence produces *itself* through spacing as well as temporising?)

Subjectivism also rears its head in the earlier passages from Heidegger's Kant text, as mentioned in passing above. It remains unclear all the way through the text whether primordial time is the ground of all synthesis or whether synthesis and transcendence are reciprocally determinative. If we assume the former position, then time itself exists as something outside of the temporising agency of the subject. In other words, primordial temporality becomes something quite mysterious. Alternatively, if primordial temporality just is the manner in which the subject temporises itself through auto-affection, then time and subjectivity become equiprimordial. On this basis, the transcendence of metaphysics is grounded in the subject.

In section 35, the conflict between a primordial time that temporises mysteriously beyond the primordial synthesis of the transcendental

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

imagination and a primordial time that just is that operation of synthesis is condensed into two sentences,

..the primordially unifying element, the transcendental imagination, apparently only a mediating, intermediate faculty, is nothing other than primordial time. Only because the transcendental imagination is rooted in time can it be the root of transcendence.(Ibid:202)

In these two sentences Heidegger is making two incompatible claims. On the one hand he is arguing that the transcendental imagination can be called by another name - 'primordial time'. On the other hand, he is claiming that the transcendental imagination is *grounded in* time, as if time had some independent ontological status.

To complete the parallel between the two sections under analysis here and section 70 of "Being and Time", it would be necessary to show how the Kant text employs wholly spatio-temporal language in order to access what are apparently most primordially temporal phenomena. I shall not however rehearse the words and the contexts in which this denial of the spatio-temporality of language is ordained.

How then is it possible to look again at Kant's first Critique in a manner sustained and influenced by the way in which Heidegger looked again at section 70 and rejected it? I suggest that in order to begin to clarify the import of the second edition of the "Critique", we need to return to the question of a spatio-temporal schematism, as something that, in order to be thought, must involve much more than a mere 'modification' upon a pure

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

temporality. To begin this task, I will return to look at the two passages in Kant that Heidegger has been discussing.

In the “Refutation of Idealism”, Kant writes

Certainly, the representation ‘I am’, which expresses the consciousness that can accompany all thought, immediately includes in itself the existence of a subject; but it does not so include any *knowledge* of that subject, and therefore also no empirical knowledge, that is, no experience of it. For this we require, in addition to the thought of something existing, also intuition, and in this case inner intuition, in respect of which, that is, of time, the subject must be determined. But in order so to determine it, outer objects are quite indispensable; and it therefore follows that inner experience is itself possible only mediately, and only through outer experience.(1929:246)

Already, in this passage, it is clear that the schematism cannot be maintained in the same manner merely by ‘adding on’ an account of the space of the subject. Kant is clearly disagreeing with his claim in the ‘Transcendental Aesthetic’ that time is the more primordial form of intuition. What needs to be decided is how fundamental this disagreement is. What would have to change in Kant’s account in order for the equal primacy of outer sense to be maintained throughout his text?

I suggest that the modification would have to be absolutely fundamental. Time can no longer be taken to be generated out of an ‘auto-affection’. This is because, as Kant argues in the above passage, there cannot be an ‘auto’, an auto or self, without the experience of outer objects. The self alone

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

therefore cannot be the basis for the genesis of time and temporisation. The 'within' of the subject's time cannot ground itself without the 'without' of exteriority. And therefore, the subjectivism that both Kant and Heidegger are prey to early on in their thinking collapses. The subject's self-differing temporisation of itself cannot be the sole basis for transcendence, for rising above the present moment through an encounter with time's horizon. Transcendence, the opening to metaphysics, would henceforth become grounded in both the within of interiority and the without of the world. Transcendence would be chiasmically grounded in immanence, and vice versa.

But then a more fundamental collapse still would have had to have occurred through Kant's additions- a collapse of a strong ontological distinction between the inside and the outside of experience and self-knowledge. The figure of the 'mobius strip' would have to be inserted at the core of ontological difference. Through the supplementation of the above remarks, the Kantian notion of self is decentred and displaced from the centre of metaphysics. It is as if Kant is enacting the final flourish of his Copernican turn in the Refutation. Only in this second edition supplement does Kant relinquish a metaphysical equivalence between time and subjectivity. The problem is that he did not realise the absolutely revolutionary nature of this flourish, at least in the terms of the first Critique. The "Refutation" and the "General Note" act like silently ticking bombs that must wait two hundred years to detonate. The subject's inner space is constructed only on the basis of the external world. What needs to be acknowledged is that this equiprimordiality would fundamentally challenge and shake all traditional forms of transcendental argument. The transcendental forms of the subject's representational capacity are, in Kant's words, *apriori*, or set in

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

place prior to all experience. However, with the equal primacy accorded to the experience of outer objects in the passage above, this apriori framework cannot be maintained. The experience of outer objects cannot be a pure intuition. Rather, the experience of outer objects can only come, with an obviousness to the point of tautology, *through experience*. The space of the subject would therefore become an *aposteriori* intuition.

And yet the collapse of the transcendental through the collapse of an unambiguous ontological distinction between interiority and exteriority goes further. If interiority is dependent upon exteriority (and vice versa), then the internal time-consciousness of inner sense itself can no longer be a pure intuition. The apriori, the most important and central aspect of all transcendental structures, is put into crisis. Nothing is decided in advance of existence in the world and the experience that takes place within it. Kant's supplementary remarks would therefore, if their work was implemented throughout his text, lead to something close to one of the founding tenets of existential phenomenology. Under these conditions, there is no notion of the 'universal' available, since all beings exist, and on the basis of that existence, they exist in time-space. The transcendental, as the pre-historical and pre-subjective ground of the subject, is shown to have been a chimera. The transcendental is revealed, through a critique of critique, as particularity masquerading as the phantom of the universal. As Gilles Deleuze has shown, Kant's construction of the transcendental merely privileges one arbitrary form of thinking about objects, structuring this privilege around the deception of an ahistorical universality.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>See chapter 3 of "Difference and Repetition".

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

If we heed the words of the Refutation correctly, I argue that we are forced to the following conclusion: there cannot be a universal subject, nor a universal object. The subject comes to be aware of itself and to express itself only in and through interaction with the world. The subject therefore becomes a self-reflective being only in the *time-space* of the world. Only in this here and now of the present can the subject have any sense of self. The subject becomes something like an event in the history of the world.

As I have said, Kant himself was not capable of registering the revolution in thinking he had set in place. He maintains an epistemic separation between inner and outer intuitions that cannot remain legitimate in ontological terms, given his remarks on their reciprocal nature. For instance, in the ‘General Note’ - the addition that follows immediately on from the ‘Refutation’, he writes

But it is an even more noteworthy fact that in order to understand the possibility of things in conformity with the categories, and so to demonstrate the *objective reality* of the latter, we need, not merely intuitions, but intuitions that are in all cases *outer intuitions*.(Ibid:254)

How is it possible to set about rethinking the self and its spaces and times, outside of a privilege granted to the subject to inaugurate those spaces and times? What becomes of what had been referred to as ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ sense, if the space of the outside is introduced as of equal primacy to time in the transcendental realm? How can we draw away from the centrality of the subject, and draw upon its decentering? And how do we think *beyond* transcendentalism, given the crisis of the apriori discussed above? How can we flesh out the idea that far from being a logically necessary hypothesis for

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

the production of sense and cognition, the subject is an event in the history of the world?

I contend that it is not possible to do this within the terms of Kant's first Critique, even though it is only on the basis of its second edition that it is possible to begin to clarify how one can proceed beyond transcendentalism. Nor, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter, is it possible to proceed beyond the impasse of the cleft between space and time in the early Heidegger. In both cases, an attention placed upon the spatiality of knowledge (knowledge of self and knowledge of the world) is critically undermined by an illegitimate temperocentrism. In Heidegger's "Being and Time", space, as of the world, is mund-ane. From the mundanity of space, Heidegger is only one slippery step away from describing its banality. The space of the world is henceforth the average, down-levelling space of *das Man*. Time, on the other hand, remains unadulteratable, the repository for all that is higher. Time remains the key to the transcendence which acts both as the base for metaphysics and its ultimate destiny: authentic being.

For these reasons, I will leave Kant and Heidegger aside for the rest of this chapter, in order to proceed towards what both thinkers have thus far been seen to fail in their attempt to think: a spatio-temporal schematism, or a phenomenology of time-space.

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In order to begin outlining such a schematism, I will turn first to the thought of the British philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. I will examine his book "Science and the Modern World", in particular what he introduces there as the 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness'. This thesis is the key to

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

Whitehead's genealogy of the abstraction of space and time in the history of modern thought. Whitehead's aim is to rethink immediacy, and ask after the structure of concrete reality in our experience. As I shall argue, an implicit phenomenology governs Whitehead's thought, a desire to return thinking to the facticity of lived or immediate experience which at key points in the work tries to act as ground to what we might call Whitehead's general theory of nature.

The fallacy of misplaced concreteness asserts principally that modern science and thought has posited as most concrete or real that which has what Whitehead calls 'simple location'. Epistemologically speaking, what is most concretely real is paradigmatically an object fixed in a determinate space across a determinate time series. The criterion of concrete reality is hence measured by the degree of an object's separation and fixity, what we might think of as its 'certainty in space'. Perceived objects are non-relational, 'in-itself' entities, and as such are known according to a one to one representational mapping between the subject's cognitive act and the object. In short, the thing as a non-relational, discrete, in-itself entity, is potentially available to the subject as transparent knowledge. In the present of the perceiving act, the object does not refer outside itself, it has no 'ecstatic' value.

For Whitehead, this thesis about the primordial epistemological and ontological constitution of objectality is at one and the same time a thesis about the modern epoch's thinking about the nature of space,

There were different theories as to the adequate description of the status of space. But whatever its status, no one had any doubt but that the connection with space enjoyed by entities,

## Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object

which are said to be in space, is that of simple location. We may put this shortly by saying that it was tacitly assumed that space is the locus of simple locations. Whatever is in space is *simpliciter* in some definite portion of space (1946:65).

The connection between the thesis of simple object location and the ‘structure’ of space as a whole is therefore clear: the object, occupying a simple determinate location itself implies that space in totality consists of the sum of possible simple locations for objects. Space, like the objects within it, has a non-relational character. Each portion of space is an absolute, in-itself zone that may or may not be occupied by objects. Space itself is therefore *absolute*, (onto)logically independent of objects.<sup>3</sup> Space is like an empty container, an insubstantial substance that locates (or dislocates) other substances. Therefore, just as the *relation* between objects is not essential to the character in itself of each object, there is merely a juxtaposed relation between them, so the *relation* between portions of space is not essential to the character in itself of each portion of space, there is merely *juxtaposition across spaces*. Moreover, the space for simple objects is indifferent to them. This construction marks space out as an homogenous and isotropic expanse. There is, in effect, no *depth* to space. Depth is reduced to being a repetition of the x or y axis. The z axis has no unique quality that marks out a difference in the object or in space.

At base, this paradigm of concrete reality can be shown to privilege *analysis* as the most primordial level of being. What comes first are separate entities.

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<sup>3</sup> As Whitehead writes, ‘According to the absolute theory, which is the traditional view (held explicitly by Newton), space has an existence, in some sense whatever it may be, independent of the bodies which it contains..’(1946:177)

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

They have no attachment, either to other entities or to the place in which they are situated. To repeat what was stated above, entities are therefore devoid of any 'ecstasy'. Entities are given relationality *only after* they are fully constituted in their being. This subsequent production of relationality can be called 'synthesis'. The binary of analysis and synthesis can therefore be seen as a frame which reduces all claims to a precessive non-relationality.

From this summary of Whitehead's characterisation of the epistemology of modern experience as patterned by a scientific world-view, we may extrapolate several points. Firstly, the nature of the object as set up through the modern scientific paradigm implies that the object cannot resist the epistemological drive to capture it as a known object. Nothing is hidden about the object; it can potentially be exhaustively analysed and ordered and measured by the systems of thinking of scientific method. The object therefore is transparently assimilated / assimilable into the order of the known, it is without alterity. For this reason, the object is not essentially confined to a certain place- the ideal object of experience is reducible to the pristine possibility of being understood without context. There is no disclosive background or horizon (be it spatial, temporal, historical, linguistic, cultural, or a combination of all five) within which the object must be embedded in order to reveal itself, in a clearing of truth. There is no relation between the object's availability for cognition and a nuanced Heideggerian-style *a-lethe-ia*. The paradigm of locating the object- for instance in a physical space ordered mathematically- as object 'a' located at specific values given within the variables x, y, z, demonstrates the minimal significance of the coordination of the object in terms of its structure and essence. The object can be wrenched from the specific boundary limitations of the current context, or alternatively those boundary limitations may be

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

left unspecified, and yet the entity would not suffer a reduced epistemological value. The object exist and is known without obscurity and without doubt, and it can be known by anyone, at any place and any time. The object is paradigmatically mathematical. In mock-Saussurian terms, one might say that the first principle concerning simple objects is that they have an *arbitrary* relation to their enframing spatial context.

The simply-located object, situated in absolute, non - relational space, is therefore constructed as the most concrete, the form of the most immediate concrete reality, in modern scientific thinking. The idea that knowledge must be embedded within practices, contextualised, in order for it to be such, the founding tenet of existential phenomenology, is rejected. The modern paradigm minimises attention placed upon the *praxis-horizon* of immediate experience, an attenuation that effectively installs a non-horizon as the horizon of experience; that is it conditions any reading of experience in terms of the possibilities of transparent, calculable knowledge.

This claim that the simply located object is not context - dependent, made available only in relation to a placial matrix or horizon, that space itself is absolute, and as such, independent of objects, has severe implications for the status of human 'lived experience' in modern thinking. In terms of the modern paradigm, objects in space are seen as *distorted* by the inherent perspectivism of the subject of experience. Scientific method posits as its ideal a non - perspectival standard of recording the object. As with Kant's notion of space as an apriori pure intuition, absolute space returns in the guise of a non-metaphysical necessary hypothesis for the experience and measurement of objects. Space no longer hypostatised as a global entity, an etherous container, but rather understood as an abstract universal form. The

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

“ideal” space of measurement in the modern era would be that of the *axonometric*, an absolute space where all perspectival value is erased. In architectural forms of spatial representation, axonometric diagrams are drawings without depth. Lines going into the distance of the drawing do not converge upon a vanishing point. Perspectivism is, according to the esteemed value placed on the axonometric, a distorting element, a derivative subjectivism. Not an intrinsic value of immediate concrete reality. Although the axonometric is a more recent form of visual representation, in a sense it applies the Cartesian logic and ontology of space as a mathematical co-ordinating grid, as an abstract frame devoid of content, to the limit. The simple object, slotted into the place it arbitrarily occupies in the grid is therefore ‘purely Cartesian.’

Implicit therefore within Whitehead's symptomatology of the conditions of modern experience is an account of the devaluation of the subject's experience of the world *through* an internalisation of the values of modern scientific thinking. What we have by and large rejected or forgotten is a sense of the concrete relations at work between the body and place, of the truth of an embodied *perspectival* relation to the world, in favour of a purely ‘objective’ hermeneutic of experience. For the sake of transparency and certainty in space, our understanding of our experience has lost its depth. Within the conventions of all scientific programmes, perspectival accounts of experience must always, in order to achieve an approximation to the truth of nature, or, in the grandest sense, of a possible metaphysics of the truth of being, be filtered by some version of an axonometric programme. That is, all perspectival value must be sieved out or erased. The vanishing point vanishes. Space is made absolute, ontologically independent of objects, as the site of their possible location, in order that they may be

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

measured. Only after this idealising process has been achieved can concrete reality be determined as an objective actuality, as the relation between an object and a determinate location. This reality of the entity is presumed to be a non-relational, concrete, in-itself object, measured across universally isotropic space, a space of measurement with no characteristics unique to itself beyond this minimal role as the matrix of metrication, of abstract measure, the sum of simple locations.

Against this prevailing devaluation of the embedded character of the subject's experience, Whitehead's 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness' marks the beginning of an attempt to return philosophy to an appreciation of the immediate profundity of lived experience. Whitehead's text is imbued with an under-theorised drive towards a phenomenological methodology. Hence we come across the following passages and phrases. He writes of a motivation towards 'An analysis *more concrete* than that of the scientific scheme of thought' (1946:91) [emphasis added]. He also suggests a return to the 'ultimate fact of experience' (Ibid:81). Here Whitehead's language comes closest to those of his continental contemporaries, the use of 'fact' approximating to Heidegger's *Faktizität*. As with Heidegger, the subject's ecstatic facticity of being in the world is fundamentally grounded in the corporeal character of Dasein, 'I shall argue that among the *primary elements of nature as apprehended in our immediate experience*, there is no element whatever which possesses this character of simple location' (Ibid:72) [emphasis added]. And later on, he writes, 'In being aware of the bodily experience, we must thereby be aware of aspects of the whole spatio-temporal world as mirrored within the bodily life.' (Ibid:113)

However, it is not possible to find a sustained methodological development

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

behind Whitehead's desire for a return to the immediacy of experience. We can nonetheless glean from what is there in the text certain principles which organise Whitehead's phenomenological bias and allow him to develop it. The key principle at work in his thinking are the possibilities and limitations opened up by the *embodied* nature of perception. In order to begin to see the ontological importance of the body for Whitehead, it is necessary to introduce some of the basic concepts of his thinking.

To begin with, in his opening remarks on the complexity inherent in our actual experience of immediate concrete reality, Whitehead positions his thinking on an abstract level. One has a sense of a residual scientificism driving him to abstract yet again from the complex influence of embodied perception on how we understand spatiality. It is as if Whitehead falls into his own trap of an over-valued abstraction. He starts by distinguishing the 'separative' from the 'prehensive' aspect of space-time. The former refers to discreteness or the interval between things in space. In other words, the separative refers to what I called 'analysis' above. The prehensive on the other hand refers to the ways in which things are 'together' (or 'synthesised') in space or time. He then adds a third aspect of space-time, that of its 'modal' nature. In Spinozist fashion, Whitehead's notion of 'mode' corresponds to the process of individuation and determination of the object. He adds that taking determination or modality in-itself, one is tempted to posit simple location as the most concrete. It is easy to imagine that that which is determinate and determined in space-time is that which is simply located *there*. In other words, it is easy to fall into the trap of equating individuation with simple location. Whitehead suggests that only by thinking modality *in terms of* the separative and the prehensive (in terms of analysis and synthesis) that we can escape this inclination to posit an equivalence

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

between individuation and an analytic simplicity. As we shall see, this attempt to think synthesis as equiprimordial to analysis is vital to understanding the radical opening offered up in Whitehead's philosophical project. In the following chapters, I shall be arguing in effect that treating analysis and synthesis as equally significant allows for ontological difference to be thought of as a *transcendence within immanence*. But I am already leaping ahead of myself in suggesting this.

From this basis, Whitehead launches into a quasi-Leibnizian account of the essential relationality of space. The abstract character of this account mentioned just now appears in the form of a minimalist notion of perspectivism. Rather than embodied perception being the essence of perspectivism- a position which demands that embodiment itself is thought on all its levels, or at least that the plurality inherent within a thinking of the body is gestured towards, the perspectival is registered as the mere locatedness within space of the agent of perception. A monadic generality invades the text. Whitehead's aim is to show how the perspectival character of the experience of space entails that relationality, or the 'prehensive' is the most important aspect, the 'prime fact.' He introduces an example,

Thus if A and B and C are volumes of space, B has an aspect from the standpoint of A, and so has C, and so has the relationship of B and C. This aspect of B from A is of the essence of A. The volumes of space have no independent existence. They are only entities as with the totality; you cannot extract them from their environment without destruction of their very essence. Accordingly, I will say that the aspect of B from A is the *mode* in which B enters into the composition of

## Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object

A. This is the modal character of space, that the prehensive unity of A is the prehension into unity of the aspects of all other volumes from the standpoint of A. (Ibid:181)

In this passage it is as if the deeply placed relationality of space, its ontologically grounded relationality, subjects the body of perception to a pre-phenomenological perspectivism. Prior to our *experience* of the world from our determined position, prior to reflection on this experience, there is the brute facticity of positionality itself. Whether or not we reflect or are conscious of our positioned reading of the world, we are none the less positioned. Perhaps this is why Whitehead sounds quite abstract here; in order to think the relationality of space, we need not refer to the embodied nature of perception, we need only think the *locatedness* of perception that makes spatiality inherently relational. That this is Whitehead's point, that he affirms a basic physicalism in his thinking against simple location- that he locates location itself in the simple manner of a cartographics, a physicalism- is confirmed a few pages later, when he explains the use of the word 'prehension' rather than 'apprehension',

The word 'perceive' is, in our common usage, shot through and through with notion of cognitive apprehension. So is the word 'apprehension', even with the adjective *cognitive* omitted. I will use the word '*prehension*' for *uncognitive apprehension*: by this I mean *apprehension* which may or may not be cognitive. (Ibid:86)

The 'may or may not', I am suggesting, confirms a preference for thinking perspectivism on the basis of a pre-experiential mathematical positionality, rather than on the complex basis- extra-physical in part- of the embodied nature of perception. The perspective of the subject of experience is

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

modelled in the abstract with A's and B's. We shall pause to question this privileging of a certain way of thinking about perspectivism shortly.

Nonetheless, prehension, the gathering of the environment, of Whitehead's A's and B's and C's construed only from the relation between them, already takes us outside of simple location. A thing in space, or a volume of space, can only have spatial significance in and through its relation to the surrounding spaces. What is present, the object of perception, cannot make sense solely in terms of a one to one epistemological mapping between presentation of the object and representation in the mind, the optics of capture. The object of perception, the thing or volume of space, is perceived and made sense of only through the relationality inherent within and through the subject's delimiting *perspective* on the world. 'The volumes of space have no independent existence.' The object of perception, what is given to cognition, cannot be discrete, simple, simply located. It contains *within itself* aspects of its surrounding context. In other words, instead of the inaugurating primordially of *analysis* which acted as the basis of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, Whitehead posits an equiprimordial synthesis or prehension. The thing discloses itself on the basis of its environment, starts presencing from the boundaries that separate it from the other (things in space), a separation that yet affirms relation. The immanence of this mode of being in this present (Whitehead's 'prehensivity') only occurs on the basis of its being a gathering of what is always already dispersed or separative. Immanence can only be constructed in relation to a precessive transcendence (and vice versa).

This privilege ascribed to a primordial synthesis accords with the findings of Gestalt psychology's investigations into the figure-ground relation.

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

Whenever we perceive an object, the argument goes, we only make sense of that object in terms of the background of the context in which it is situated. We can only understand and makes sense of this being a tree on the basis that it is a tree in a field near other trees. A tree that floats around as a sprite on a computer screen-saver is sense-less. Or rather, whatever ‘sense’ we ascribe to it is derivative upon the possibilities of contexts being given. For example, one such possibility is that whenever we see an image of a tree (or any other image) in abstraction from the lived reality of trees (or the lived reality of x), we make sense of that image to the extent that we *associate* it with its context.

For Whitehead, there is no simple interiority, no in-itself objectival transparency. The spell of simple location is broken by the constitutional necessity of exteriority: ‘you cannot extract [the volumes of space] from their environment without destruction of their very essence.’ (Ibid:81) Furthermore, one might add that whilst there may be no optimum place for witnessing the presence of the object (for example, how would we determine the perfect vantage point and context within which to experience a tree – from close up, at a distance?) this does not entail, as previously with the simple object, that the object can be viewed from anywhere in the same way. The object’s presence is at work in its environmental context. This context can never be ‘saturated’; it is always excessive to the imposition of a limiting frame. Beyond this, the object signifies across time as the presencing of the trace, of memory. In other words, after the collapse of the illusion of simple location, there comes the collapse of the dream of a transparent knowledge of objects. We can never be certain of the space of objects. After imbibing the philosophical resources of the following chapters of this thesis, we will be able to say that understanding objects can

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

only occur through a perceptual faith that faces the world in light of an acknowledged and irrevocable uncertainty.

In order to develop the prime significance of the relationality of space given through the pre-reflective prehension of the transcending environment and to show the philosophical significance of such an account, Whitehead returns to Berkeley, in this return enacting a striking subversion of the idealism of the latter. Berkeley's idealism, as is well-known, is epitomised by the dictum *esse est percipi*. To be is to be perceived. Beyond perception, the existence of things in themselves, hence the unity of nature, is guaranteed only in the mind of god. Whitehead furnishes several citations where Berkeley is seen to argue that what is taken to be the perception of the thing in itself, of trees in a park or books in a closet, or of the distant object on the horizon, though apparently outside of a perceptual relation, are nonetheless constructions of the mind. The clearest example to demonstrate this argument comes when Whitehead quotes from the Alciphron.

Berkeley argues in the dialogue between Euphranor and Alciphron that the small round object perceived on the horizon cannot be the same thing as the 'large square building with battlements and turrets'- i.e. the small round object when one is much closer to it. Euphranor concludes, 'Is it not plain, therefore, that neither the castle, the planet, nor the cloud, *which you see here*, are those real ones which you suppose exist at a distance.' (1946:85)

In Berkeley, the ontological deficit between appearance and the reality of the thing in itself, between the perceived object and being, is bridged by the mind of God. When the tree in the forest is not being perceived by human (or animal?) eye, it does not cease to exist because God, in his fly-like

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

infinite ocularity, continues to watch it. What is of interest for Whitehead in Berkeley is the idea that there is, in this way, always a *beyond* to the present moment of perception. In other words, it is impossible to trap or contain an object through the precision of a rigorous gaze. The object is not simple, and therefore it will not yield to the metaphysical desire for transparency and certainty.

Berkeley therefore provides Whitehead with the beginnings of a solution to the abstractionism of modern scientific thinking. He allows Whitehead to begin thinking the ecstatic transcendence of the here and now of perceiving an object. In order to use Berkeley in this way, all Whitehead must do is substitute transcendence (of this illusion of simple analytic truth) for the 'mind of God'.

This unity of a prehension defines itself as a *here* and a *now*, and the things so gathered into the grasped unity have essential reference to other places and other times. For Berkeley's *mind*, I substitute a process of prehensive unification. (Ibid:87)

Let us try to expand upon this quote. The object that is perceived cannot ever be perceived exhaustively. Each 'here and now' of perceiving leaves a remainder of the unperceived. In Heideggerian fashion, each moment of revealing brings with it an attendant concealing. The difference between Heidegger and Whitehead on this point is only one of varying modes of expression. If anything, I would argue that Whitehead allows for a more concrete formulation of the thing's transcendence of the present. It is possible to describe 'the thing in itself' from this framework as an unrealisable virtuality, an inexhaustible resource for actualisation. The possibility of a noumenal absolute realisation of the object therefore

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

becomes strictly impossible. The 'Real'- transparent absolute reality, is the virtual (and as such unobtainable and unrepresentable), whereas appearances are actual. As such, appearances occur within an always already relational spatiality. Spatiality *is* the manifold of appearances across their intervals, or the levels of their being. An object - appearance does not occupy a slot in an independent spatiality; it is rather a **moment** *within* spatiality. It is therefore ineradicably temporal. Space is no longer the absolute form of outer sense, a series of frozen frames or *tableaux vivants*, transcendental. It is no longer purely spatial, or absolutely separate from the pure intuition of inner sense. It is rather always transcending itself across its moments. Introducing ecstasy into our experience of things therefore equates with a realisation of the fundamental *spatio-temporality* of our experience (or our selves and the world). Furthermore, each revealed aspect of an object is *partial*, its embeddedness within a relation to other things entails that no one perspective can provide a totalizing comprehension, a saturated context. The sum of all aspects, a view of the object from everywhere, is a non-realizable hypothetical construction. Whitehead can be seen to be providing a spatio-temporal schematism, a phenomenological ontology of the object.

We can therefore begin to re-imagine the basic constituents of each simple act of perception of external 'objects'. It is possible to say that elements of the present prehensive unity have been present before this gathering event of being, and will be present after its evanescence, and yet this elemental repetition does not reside within Sameness. Each actualisation occurs within the singularity of an unrepeatable moment. The virtuality of the thing, the plenitudinous *ding an sich*, is not a universal that receives undifferentiated particularity through each actualisation. Elements, for example colours, are

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

never the same everywhere.<sup>4</sup> They form, in each durational patterning, a ‘style’- each element of the prehensive unity mirrors or exemplifies the rest.

For example, the green of this leaf exemplifies its textural qualities, its weight and so on. The prehensive unity of the leaf, the sensuous qualities it gathers, tend towards a ‘synaesthetic conformity’. This green differs from the greens present on the surface of an apple, even though they may be of the same shade. In other words, the green *transcends* its own ‘sense modality’- synaesthetic conformity or styling is the first mark of the thing’s ecstatic elemental composition. Each experience of colour therefore resides within the singularity of the thing and the moment of its being experienced. It cannot be reduced to the ‘sameness’ of the universal colour whose name it shares. This universal colour is a virtual, unrealisable thing-in-itself, a virtuality.

This difference of the singularity of experience becomes more marked when taken in relation to the environmental character of the prehensive unity. For instance, when we move beyond the elemental composition of the thing to the ecstatic relation to its (back)ground(s); the leaf as it rests balanced on this shoot, on this twig, on this tree, in this place, at this time of day, in this season and so on. In this way, we can see that the thing gathers or articulates or exemplifies its context, gives it a significance it would not otherwise have, as the figure is said to articulate the ground of the Gestalt. We begin to see that something like a ‘double ecstasis’ of style is taking place: the thing’s presencing singularity in this moment reflects the background horizon of its context, and vice versa. The leaf’s tangible

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<sup>4</sup> The painter Josef Albers in “The Interaction of Colour” comprehensively formalises this assertion.

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

greenness would begin to embody the spirit of the place, capture the season, illuminate the light of day, as the place, season or day is articulated by the leaf. Or the smell of the seaweed or the sound of the waves would exemplify the seaside town, the town itself at the same time expressing the way in which this odour or that sound is experienced. The event of perception therefore is seen to occur amidst a dynamic durational field; the particular extends beyond itself both in space, condensing the significance of the landscape or the cityscape into the living essence of a thing, and in time, as the thing and its elemental constituents refer to themselves across contexts, through differentiation.

These insights into the phenomenological structure of experiencing the transcendence of ‘things’ beyond the simple locationalism of classical epistemology are elaborated, with a nod to Whitehead, in Alphonse Lingis’ text , “Foreign Bodies”. In the quote below, it is possible to note how singularity, the ground or embeddedness of the perceived object and its synaesthetic essence are registered,

The sensible elements themselves are not really particulars. They should not be defined as items that are what they are, when and where they are. Not one of them is just a here-and-now particular, contingent and unfounded such that it can only be recorded or not recorded. Each of them goes beyond simple location; there is not one that is instantaneous, that does not prolong itself in duration. And there is not one that is simply here: a point of red reduced to itself is not visible and is not red; it needs to be reinforced, prolonged by other spots, to be red. It is not simply red within its own borders since it can

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

be the red it is only if the background is the color or colors it is. And this red looks tangible, is a tangible red. (1994:6)

The colour red cannot, under Lingis' argument, be reduced to an a-contextual essence. In Bergsonian fashion, Lingis is arguing that red endures by differentiating itself from itself across its moments and within its contexts. Red is an immanency that 'signifies' or expresses itself only on the basis of a *transcendence* of that immanence being constitutive of its appearance.

The phenomenology developing out of this model of the prehensive unity in process, of a gathering expressed in two moments- of the perceived object as a synaesthetic conformity of elements firstly, and secondly, of the thing's capacity to articulate and condense its context, suggest that a return in philosophy to the complexities of the lived experience of perception is best articulated as a *poetics*, rather than a science. The event of perception, as a singularity, forecloses the universality necessary for strictly universalist categorisation. At the least, the conventional name ontology often at work in scientific discourse must be rethought as naming process rather than object, as Whitehead goes on to argue. Each event of perception, actualising itself by differentiating itself from the paradigmatic recession of the virtual thing in itself, can only be thought as a singularity, in the here and now, as lying in essential (differentiating) relation to other places and other times. And the expression of the singularity of experience (and therefore of the singularity of things in the world, caught within and yet forever transcending the finitude of experience) has often been the 'aim' within the poetic work.

For example, such a poetics is exemplified in Haiku poetry, where the

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

particularity of a thing experienced in a specific time and place is captured, the mode of capture often taking the form of a condensation of context, an elsewhere that maybe simply a spatial *there* always in relation to the *near* dwelt upon, or the context of place placed in relation to memory and repetition, as Casey argues.<sup>5</sup> Dancing with the present entails that the footsteps mark the time of the absent. In Western literature, it is Marcel Proust who most profoundly contributes to a phenomenological ontology of difference, of transcendence within immanence. In the last volume of “À la Recherche du Temps Perdu” he writes for instance,

An image presented to us by life brings with it, in a single moment, sensations which are in fact multiple and heterogeneous. The sight, for instance, of the binding of a book once read may weave into the characters of its title the moonlight of a distant summer night. The taste of our breakfast coffee brings with it that vague hope of fine weather which so often long ago, as with the day still intact and full before us we were drinking it out of a bowl of white porcelain, creamy and fluted and itself looking almost like vitrified milk, suddenly smiled upon us in the pale uncertainty of the dawn. An hour is not merely an hour, it is a vase full of scents and sounds and projects and climates, and what we call reality is a certain connection between these immediate sensations and the memories which envelope us simultaneously with them- a connection that is suppressed in a simple cinematographic vision, which just because it professes to confine itself to the

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<sup>5</sup> See Casey's “Getting Back Into Place” p280.

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

truth in fact departs widely from it- a unique connection which the writer has to rediscover in order to link for ever in his phrase the two sets of phenomena which reality joins together. (1970:253)

Here, with the example of the book, Proust can be read as providing a literary counter to the simple locationism that is endemic to modern thinking. The space of the book's title words cannot remain secure within their own fixed frame of the present. The space of the letters is automatically working within the experience of the narrator as essentially related to other times and other places. Conversely, the pure time of Kantian inner sense is, in the above passage, interrupted by manifestations of outer sense ('an hour is not merely an hour..'). Each 'form' of pure intuition is chiasmically and constitutively interwoven with modes of its transcendence as the involuntary work of memory perdures within the present moment of perception. Moreover, the sensuousity of Proust's prose brings us closer still to understanding the centrality of the *body* in the construction of a spatio-temporal schematism. It is only through the residuum of traces of the experience of the senses (rather than 'sense-experience') that the present can be received and understood. The subject becomes an event in the history of the world it has felt, reached out to, caught hold of, loved....

This last volume is replete with similar passages whose evident influence on both Bergson and Merleau-Ponty's work is striking.<sup>6</sup> There is in Proust's

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<sup>6</sup>However, Proust's multilocal poetics may be criticised for an implicit nostalgia. Involuntarily remembering (through the traces of sensibility that alert the body to the past moment) returns the person to the *Ur-* moment, the primal scene of sense. This 'primality' masks the instability of the original. The first context itself must be full of traces, lines of flight, resonances. The 'original

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

project a strong parallelism with Whitehead. Both want to think beyond objectivism, beyond a false account of how to express the experience of what I have been calling immediate lived experience. In Proust, this takes the form of a polemic against a descriptivist model of literary realism,

And this is why the kind of literature which contents itself with "describing things", with giving of them merely a miserable abstract of lines and surfaces, is in fact, though it calls itself realist, the furthest removed from reality and has more than any other the effect of saddening and impoverishing us, since it abruptly severs all communication of our present self both with the past, the essence of which is preserved in things, and with the future, in which things incite us to enjoy the essence of the past a second time. (Ibid:248)

It is striking that in this passage Proust repeats exactly Whitehead's thesis of the 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness.' For Proust, what has been taken by novelists to be the most immediate form of reality is but an abstraction. In opposition to this history of abstraction in the novel (perhaps culminating in the laborious 'realism' of Emile Zola, one might suggest), Proust outlines a primordial prehensivity of being. The present, as he says above, is always already in communication with a past which it preserves (through the involuntary retentions and releases of memory). The present, acknowledged as a plenitudinous enfoldment of spatio-temporal difference is, if we trace Proust's hopes beyond their negative expression in the above passage, a

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moment' that encroaches upon the present is therefore *itself* encroached upon, an encroachment that threatens its originary status as a past-present. Proust seems to solicit the present only to privilege past and future presents; we must, in being faithful to the logic of the trace, go further and destroy all presence.

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

moment of joyful enrichment, which would reach its most resounding epiphany in the poetic or literary work.

By this stage, with the above initial development of a *poetics* of the space - time event, we have come a long way from the abstract frame of modern constructions of space, be it Cartesian or Kantian, axonometric and isotropic. Moreover, we have begun to elaborate a spatio-temporal schematism, at work as the condition for all possible experience. Instead of the apriori forms of pure intuition, space and time have been seen to be constantly and primordially intertwined in our experience. Through Whitehead and Proust the remnants of a Lockean distinction between primary and secondary qualities is thoroughly rejected in favour of what I called a double ecstasis of the thing articulating its context and a context being articulated through the thing. A colour is neither a secondary quality nor the realisation of a universal. It is rather an aspect of a particular thing's 'style of being' that makes sense only according to what I referred to above as a 'synaesthetic' conformity. The thing reveals itself partially, in the present event of perception. What was known in philosophy as the 'universal' therefore always differs from itself across the singularities of its manifestation. The thing is a 'mode' in the singular transaction between sameness (prehension) and difference (the separative) in the present. As Alphonso Lingis writes,

The sensible field is a realm of being where all points become pivots, all lines become levels, all surfaces become planes, all colors become atmospheres, all tones become- as in dodecaphonic music- keys. There are not particulars and universals in the sensible field; what there are are particulars

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

generalizing themselves, a whole landscape concretizing momentarily in this red, a whole love given in the condensation in a vase of flowers, a whole adventure or fatality sounded in the five little notes heard in *Swann's Way*. Each given is the spot and moment in which a schema of being is being elaborated. Artists have a precise knowledge of this; their knowledge consists in knowing what a color does to a field, to another color, to a zone of space; in knowing what a line does to the zone it moulds, to the space it bunches up, bulges out, or flattens, to the color, to the field of tensions; and in knowing what shapes move, creep, crawl, leap, set up movement in a whole field. (Ibid:7)

The immediate reality of the perceived object lies in its aspects, not in the virtuality of the thing in itself as the resource of style. The thing's reality lies not in itself, in its simple, discrete, isolateable position, but in the interconnected web of aspects that mesh it to the environment of other bodies around it, as it exemplifies or mirrors them through the double-articulation of prehension. And therefore 'space' loses its ability to function as an abstract noun and therefore to suggest an absolute space, be it logical or ontological. The object produces space, as space produces the object. 'Space' therefore becomes irreducibly singular. To refer to it in the abstract, all that can be said is that it is anisotropic and heterogenous.

By this point, we can see that what must be central to a way out of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness is the *body* of the perceiver. This is most obvious in the passages from Proust above, whereby the present becomes imbued with past resonances only on the basis of sensuous traces imprinted

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

upon the body of the perceiver. The body therefore becomes, in Proust, the locus of all transcendence of the present here and now reality of perception. The multiple and heterogenous sensations which issue out of each perceived image are multiple only through the durational density of the embodied subject's experience.

In Whitehead, it is clear that the body is central to the difference between falling into the trap of modern abstraction and returning our experience to the *multilocationality* of things. We have noted already that in places Whitehead falls prey to his own trap of abstraction and thinks the perspectivism of the body in terms of something like a simple location. It is now time to emphasise how the body is given ontological primordially by Whitehead. I shall begin this by returning to Whitehead placing emphasis on the perspectivism of the embodied subject.

..note that the idea of simple location has gone. The things which are grasped into a realised unity, here and now, are not the castle, the cloud and the planet simply in themselves; but they are the castle, the cloud, and the planet from the standpoint, in space and time, of the prehensive unification. In other words, it is the perspective of the castle over there from the standpoint of the unification here. It is therefore, aspects of the castle, the cloud, and the planet which are grasped into unity here.(Ibid:87)

The locus of prehension, the site of the aspect of the object, is the body, as Whitehead indicates. He writes,

In this sketch of an analysis more concrete than that of the

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

scientific scheme of thought, [a gesture towards a ‘poetics’ of the event is made available here], I have started from our own psychological field, as it stands for our cognition. I take it for what it claims to be: the self-knowledge of our bodily event. I mean the total event, and not the inspection of the details of the body. This self-knowledge discloses a prehensive unification of modal presences of entities beyond itself (Ibid:91).

As Whitehead implies in this passage, thinking the structure of the thing’s availability to perception beyond a one to one mapping between the object and its representation to consciousness, beyond an account of perception allied to the metaphysics of simple location, leads to another way of thinking the philosophical structure of perception. This in turn leads to a complete re-evaluation of the ground of all metaphysical thinking. Far from it being time, as an ‘auto-effection’ of the subject, that allows for transcendence and the opening towards metaphysics, it is *the body*, which produces the beyond of the present. It is through the body of the subject that the present is imbued with difference. It is therefore through the body that the perceived object is most primordially a relational complex. It is the ontological primordially of the body that allows for something like ‘synthesis’ to be equiprimordial with analysis in the structure of perception. form of being.

The ramifications of this conclusion will need to be drawn out. As we shall uncover in the fourth chapter, it is only through a reworking of what it is to *perceive*, that questions of ontological difference can get resolved. And it is only in terms of re-evaluating the ontological status of the body itself that

## Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object

we can understand perception from the point of view of lived experience.

For the moment, one can say that the body we are referring to is hardly the body as an entity in itself of which we may or may not be aware. To think of ‘the body’ in this way is to fall yet again into Whitehead’s fallacy. Perception, through the body, is not *of* the body itself, but towards what is outside, beyond the body. Perception is not therefore a matter of reading the data that modifies the sense organs, it rather involves a relation to the otherness of the Umwelt that displaces any possible ‘inspection of the details of the body.’ In perceiving the world, my sense of simple location, of being this body here, recedes in favour of a sense of bodily ec-stasis. The body as simply located disappears, becomes absent.<sup>7</sup>

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Having voyaged through Whitehead and, along the way, embellished his thinking in various directions (principally with the help of Proust and Lingis), it is now time to begin to expand upon the *philosophical* implications of going beyond the simple object. As I hinted in the last few paragraphs, Whitehead allows us to realise the reciprocity that lies between ontology and perception, *through* a somatocentric theory. For the moment, this drawing out of implications will be succinct, for, as the next chapter will show, a lack has gathered around the argument as it has developed.

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<sup>7</sup> Drew Leder writes, in “The Absent Body” ‘My perceptions are never lived as bare concatenations of sense-data but reveal what is Other, a realm of external objects. If I were to apprehend all perceptual events simply as modifications of my body located within the perceiving organs, I would have no experience of an outer world, and thus, ultimately, even of my own body as a worldly thing. My being-in-the-world depends upon my body’s self-effacing transitivity.’ (1990: 15) As Alphonso Lingis puts it succinctly, ‘From the first, not a patch of color or a pressure but some thing touched the sensibility.’ (1994:9)

## *Chapter 2: Against the Simple Object*

The leaf in the garden, the sound of the waves slaking against the town's stony beach: each event of perception, gathering as it does within its moment an environment an ambient framing of things through the ecstatic body of perception, therefore embodies an *immanence*. Environmentality, the transcending yet constitutive context of the moment, *dwells within* what is present. What is present, here and now, expresses this context, this place. And yet, as was shown in the account of the double nature of ecstasis, this in-dwelling gathering of the far in the near has a second moment, that of referring or invoking other times and places. The perceptual event's second moment is therefore that of *transcendence*. This event always refers beyond itself in its present gathering of the world. This 'beyond' is both the beyond of the 'far' as the surrounding environment and as the temporal 'far'.

It is now possible to state that through embodied perception, there occurs an incorporation of *transcendence within immanence*. Each moment of an event of perception is imbued with this double movement whereby what might at first sight be taken as simple present and a simple location is subject to both a gathering and a dehiscence. The event of perception involves a drawing in of the far (Heidegger) and a movement beyond itself in space and in time (Whitehead, Proust, Bergson, Merleau-Ponty, Lingis). A phenomenology of the difference of the perceptual event incorporates ecstasis as a transcendence within immanence. In this way, the impasse of not being able to think the spatio-temporal schematism that Kant suggests and Heidegger repeats and yet does not resolve will become available.