Time, Space, Essence, and Eidos: A New Theory of Causation

Graham Harman

Abstract

This article attempts to develop the abandoned occasionalist model of causation into a credible present-day theory. If objects can never exhaust one another through their relations, it is hard to know how they can ever interact at all. This article handles the problem by dividing objects into two kinds: the real objects that emerge from Heidegger’s tool-analysis and the intentional objects of Husserl’s phenomenology. Each of these objects turns out to be split by an additional rift between the object as an enduring unit and its plurality of traits. This explains Heidegger’s notorious ‘fourfold’ model of the thing. This article shows that Heidegger’s Geviert must be reinterpreted as a system of four tensions that can be identified as time, space, essence, and eidos. Time and space can no longer be left as peerless dimensions of the cosmos. Instead, they are shown to arise from the tensions between things and their qualities. And for this reason they are joined by essence (in the classical sense of the term) and eidos (in Husserl’s sense, not Plato’s) as two out of four basic features of the fabric of the world.

Full Text: PDF HTML