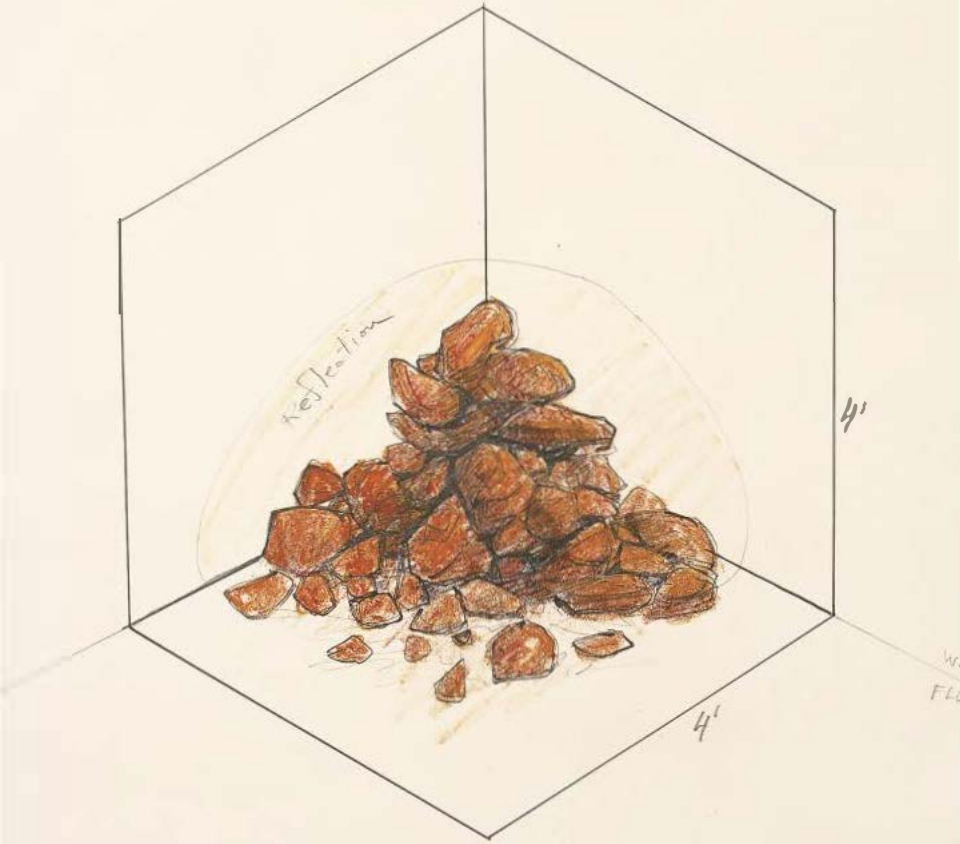
GILLES DELEUZE

WHAT IS GROUNDING?



#7

RED SANDSTONE MIRROR
3 mirrors set into corner
Sandstone shoring it up
leave dust streaks on mirrors

R. Smithson

WHAT IS GROUNDING?

MÉMOIRES INVOLONTAIRE SERIES

GILLES DELEUZE
WHAT IS GROUNDING?

From transcripted notes taken by Pierre Lefebvre

Translated, introduced, and annotated by

Arjen Kleinherenbrink

Edited by Tony Yanick, Jason Adams &

Mohammad Salemy



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EDITORS' PREFACE

In the work of Marcel Proust, mémoires involontaire refers to involuntarily-triggered memories that, while linking past and present as all memories do, does not invoke a past that was consciously lived, but that was instead "passed through" In the process, the unconscious past becomes the material for the production of the new, that which recapacitates not only the present, but also the future.

MÉMOIRES INVOLONTAIRE intervenes in the prevelant understandings of cultural, theoretical, and other literary canons by renewing texts of the past in the present, for the construction of alternate futures. By disturbing collective memories that have either forgotten about such works or were never aware of them originally, the series not only invigorates memory, but also intensifies imagination.

The inaugural text in the series is the first English language translation of the near-complete transcription/ lecture notes taken by a student enrolled in the earliest recorded course offered by Gilles Deleuze, *What is grounding?*

(*Qu'est-ce que fonder?*). It is here that the history of philosophy is engaged in a direct manner (prior to the "method of dramatization"); that the originating ideas of *Difference and Repetition* begin to develop; and, that the key to groundbreaking readings of Deleuze is introduced (e.g., Christian Kerslake's *Immanence and the Vertigo of Philosophy: From Kant to Deleuze*).

We would like to extend thanks to Richard Pinhas, whose website *webdeleuze.com* retains the first appearance of these notes in the original French; to Arjen Kleinherenbrink, our translator; and, in particular, a very special thank you to the Friends of The New Centre, without whose support this publication would not have been possible: Carlos M. Amador, Bruce de'Medici, Harry Durán, Bob Goodrich, Bradley Kaye, Michaeleen Kelly, Ivan Niccolai, Chris Peterson, Tracy Sushcski, Laura Wexler, and Philip Wohlstetter.

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May 2015

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

What?

What is grounding? is a translation of extensive notes to *Qu'est-ce que fonder?*, a seminar Deleuze gave in 1956-1957. It sees Deleuze engaging with a series of philosophers ranging from Plato to Heidegger in order to investigate the meaning, importance, and sheer possibility of ground for both philosophical thought and reality at large.

The notes to this seminar have a strange history. They were originally taken by one Pierre Lefebvre. Given that only a handful of sentences in the notes are incomplete, plus the fact that the style of phrasing is clearly Deleuze's own, Lefebvre must have used either a tape recorder or shorthand to retain almost everything. In any case, the notes remained a buried treasure for over five decades, until a French transcript surfaced online several years ago. Among other places, it can now be found on a website hosted by Richard Pinhas, a famous electronic rock musician and former student of Deleuze. His website also hosts a Spanish translation of the first few pages, a project pre-

maturely abandoned for unknown reasons. The story in the pages to follow has thus passed, at the very least, from Deleuze to a tape recorder or sheets filled with shorthand, then probably to a typewritten transcript, then to HTML, and now to this book.

When?

Deleuze taught *What is grounding?* very early in his career. The only texts predating it are his repudiated 'Sartrean' articles from the forties, the essay *Instincts and Institutions*, and his 1953 book on Hume, *Empiricism and subjectivity*.[1] The seminar is contemporaneous with two essays Deleuze published on Bergson, one in *Les philosophes célèbres*, a volume edited by Merleau-Ponty, the other in *Les etudes bergsoniennes*.[2] It predates Deleuze's second book *Nietzsche and philosophy* by five years, and *Difference and repetition* by little over a decade.

Deleuze gave this seminar at the lycée Louis le Grand, where he taught philosophy before becoming assistant professor at the Sorbonne later in 1957. At the time,

1. *Instincts and Institutions* was originally the introduction of a schoolbook with sixty-six texts on institutions, edited by Deleuze and belonging to a series supervised by Canguilhem. It has been republished in *Desert Islands and other texts – 1953-1974*.

2. Both republished in *Desert Islands*.

Deleuze's lectures were already 'must-see events', and the transcript of the seminar shows why this must have been the case.[3] For *What is grounding?* is no mere tour through the history of philosophy. It is a tale spun by an extremely talented philosopher who, already in his early thirties, interprets the great problems and thinkers from the history of philosophy in a way completely his own. As a consequence, the reader is not confronted with a mere reflection on what has been said in the past, but rather with a mobilization of resources, or better yet with a transformation of thinkers and concepts into the building blocks for what will become Deleuze's own philosophy.

Why?

This brings us to the relevance and importance of making this text available to a larger audience. For the translator, there is of course the attractive idea of contributing to what may one day be a 'complete Deleuze', as well as a desire give others access to Deleuze's guided tour through the history of philosophy. Fortunately, there are also more compelling and scholarly arguments for the importance

3. See Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, p. 96.

and urgency of this text, three of which I would like to mention here.[4]

First, *What is grounding?* ranges over an impressive array of philosophers and concepts, all organized around the question of *ground*. 'Ground' should be read in two senses, as Deleuze is equally interested in ground as the sufficient reason for concrete entities, as he is in ground understood as a point of departure for philosophy (and therefore in all that follows: are these two the same?; are they even thinkable or possible?; et cetera). This investigation involves an explicit engagement with both Hegel and Heidegger, something unique to Deleuze's oeuvre.[5] Both thinkers are treated with appreciation rather than scorn, and Deleuze obviously uses many insights from Heidegger's *What is metaphysics?* and *Kant and the problem of*

4. Christian Kerslake has written an extremely interesting study, *Immanence and the vertigo of philosophy*, in which *What is grounding?* takes center stage. His book rigorously testifies to the fact that the entire Deleuzian enterprise can and *must* be seen in new light by whoever reads *What is grounding?* attentively. Unfortunately it is impossible to here repeat all the ways, uncovered by Kerslake, in which *What is grounding?* ties into Deleuze's further work as well as his known interests and concerns.

5. Except, concerning Heidegger, the famous note appearing out of nowhere in *Difference and repetition* and the essay on Heidegger and Jarry's pataphysics in *Essays critical and clinical*, and, concerning Hegel, the frequent jabs at philosophies making foundational use of negation scattered throughout Deleuze's writings.

metaphysics, and Hegel's *Phenomenology of spirit* and *Science of logic* as key elements in his seminar. In addition, the reader also encounters philosophers rarely considered relevant to Deleuze's thinking, including Fichte, Shestov, and Bacon. This, then, is the first point: there exists a certain image of Deleuze as a thinker who places himself in a 'minor' philosophical trajectory consisting of Lucretius, Spinoza, Nietzsche, and Bergson, among other things because he tries to avoid Heidegger, Hegel, and phenomenology at large. *What is grounding?* shows this image to be false, first because we see clearly how Deleuze's so-called enemies are in fact his resources and counterpoints, and second because his historical predecessors turn out to include not only more philosophers (and therefore more problems and concepts) than we usually think, but also far more 'minor' ones than those we already knew.

Second, *What is grounding?* introduces key concepts from the later works in which Deleuze presents his own philosophy. The investigation of ground involves careful consideration of the notions of repetition and intensity, a systematic reading of Nietzsche, extensive use of insights from mathematics, reading Freud's work as a philosophical resource, and so on. This makes *What is grounding?* a highly interesting introduction, supplement, and compan-

ion to Deleuze's later works, especially to *Difference and repetition* (for 'ground' insofar as philosophy tries to systematically think reality) and to *What is philosophy* (for 'ground' insofar as philosophy considers itself and the nature of the concepts through which it functions). Vulgarly put, *What is grounding?* is to Deleuze's other works what Tolkien's *The Silmarillion* is to *The Lord of the Rings*. One does not necessarily need to read to former in order to understand the latter, but whoever does so will inevitably find her or his understanding of the later works and the concerns animating them significantly enriched and refined.

Third and finally, *What is grounding?* is perhaps most interesting for what it culminates in. The entire investigation is carried out in order to become able to decide between what Deleuze calls 'method' and 'system'. Should philosophy turn out to be a method, then its deepest concern must be how human beings experience reality. It then centers on cognition. However, if a philosophy can be a system, it will instead be the enterprise of expressing what it is to be any being whatsoever, as well as what it is for one such being to relate to another. It then centers on things, rather than our experience *of* things. Crudely put, what is at stake is thus deciding whether philosophy is first and foremost epistemology or perhaps phenomenology, or on-

tology. Even though the text does not yield any explicit judgment, it is more than clear that Deleuze is leaning towards philosophy understood as *system*. This, when taken seriously, could lead to a reinterpretation of much of Deleuze's work, especially for those who have perhaps seen him as more of an anarchic thinker than he may actually be. In any case, after reading *What is grounding?*, one cannot help to think of Deleuze's letter to Jean-Clet Martin, where he writes:

> 'I believe in philosophy as system. The notion of system which I find unpleasant is one whose coordinates are the Identical, the Similar, and the Analogous. Leibniz was the first, I think, to identify system and philosophy. In the sense he gives the term, I am all in favor of it. Thus, questions that address "the death of philosophy" or "going beyond philosophy" have never inspired me. I consider myself a classic philosopher. For me, the system must not only be in perpetual heterogeneity, it must also be a *heterogenesis*, which as far as I can tell, has never been tried.'[6]

6. Deleuze, *Two regimes of madness*, p. 361.

This, combined with the fact that our current philosophical moment is characterized by a surge in realist philosophy which precisely aims or claims to replace a certain dominance of phenomenology with a renewed primacy of ontology, *What is grounding?* will certainly have its part to play.

How?

Readers are kindly asked to keep in mind the following points when reading the translation:

1) The French transcript contains minor errors in spelling and punctuation, and at a small number of points some words are missing. The English translation only corrects them when one can be certain of what Deleuze actually said. In such cases, the translation is italicized.
2) The translation aims for accuracy, not for fluency. The French transcript contains many phrases in telegraphic style, which has most often been retained in the translation, even though this might not result in the most fluent text or the most natural way of phrasing. Whenever words have been added to prevent the

translation from becoming unacceptably fragmented, these have been [bracketed].

3) All footnotes in the text have been added by the translator. They contain clarifications of certain remarks, references to texts Deleuze mentions, and alternative translations for certain terms. Unfortunately, several obscure and ambiguous references could not be traced. In those cases, silence was preferred over wild guesswork.
4) The French transcript is organized into chapters and sections, but not in a coherent way. Especially the fourth chapter of the seminar is problematic in this regard. To compensate, the translation adds new headers and sections, following the structure from the French original as much as is possible.

In addition, it is perhaps best that the reader is aware of several decisions made regarding the translation of specific terms.

Connaissance is translated as *knowledge* or *cognition*, depending on context. Coherently using either one was impossible. Deleuze often uses the term in reference to Kant, where *Erkenntnis* (of which *connaissance* is the French translation) indicates more than knowledge in the con-

temporary sense of a truthful proposition. For example, in the *Critique of pure reason* Kant clearly holds that there is such a thing as a false *Erkenntnis* (A58/B83). The solution then seems simple: translate *connaissance*, from *Erkenntnis*, with *cognition*, and translate *savoir*, from *wissen*, with *knowledge*. Unfortunately, this does not work. For example, 'le noumène, être purement pensé n'est pas objet de connaissance' would then suggest that something purely thought does not involve any cognition, which is absurd, whereas it *is* acceptable to say that it does not involve knowledge. Thus the only solution was to alternate between *knowledge* and *cognition* depending on the case and to the best of the translator's abilities.

Fondement and *fond* are both translated as *ground*, even if a particularly picky reader may discern a connotative difference between something like *under*ground and *back*ground in the French. This translation respects Deleuze's constant engagement with the post-Kantian and Heidegerrian concern with *Grund*. Hence *fonder* is translated as *grounding*, and for the sake of consistency the neologism *grounder* is introduced to translate the occasionally occurring *fondateur*. Interested readers can turn to Christian Kerslake's study of *What is grounding?* for an extensive analysis

of why *ground* is the right translation, and not foundation, origin, depth, and so on.[7]

Dépasser has been translated as *going beyond*, except in reference to Heidegger and Husserl, in which case *exceeding* was deemed the more appropriate choice with regards to the German terminology to which *dépasser* refers.

L'existant is the term Deleuze uses for what Heidegger would call *Seienden*, or beings. To retain the connotation of the prefix, however, *existing thing* and *what exists* (for *existants*) were preferred. This also allowed for a neat separation between the French *l'existant* and *l'étant*, with *being* being reserved for the latter. As is common practice, *être* has been translated with Being with a capital B whenever it refers to the grand metaphysical notion instead of the quotidian verb or noun.

7. Cf. Kerslake, *Immanence and the vertigo of philosophy*, pp.13-21.

1 FROM MYTHOLOGY TO PHILOSOPHY[8]

The empiricists are right: what we realize are natural ends. But perhaps behavior has other dimensions. Are there perhaps ends to behavior of which the realization happens in the unconscious?

1.1 Natural ends and infinite tasks

On the one hand, the human being can realize natural ends, but at the same time, does it not produce something in itself by virtue of being human? It transforms the natural ends. What is the function of a ceremony and of a ritual? It is distinct from a natural end. Take a social group [like] the family in its ceremonial aspect. It acts strangely. It wrests determinations from nature to create the events of history: eating, loving, sleeping, and dying. The function of the family is the sharing of food, sexuality, sleep, and death. Death is a determination of nature. The family makes it a historical event by collecting it in memory. This ritual activity must be called ceremony. Similarly, sexuality

8. The introductory portions of this seminar are missing: Deleuze began by bringing up the foundational heroes of mythology. For example: Odysseus.

becomes a spiritual event,[9] for example under the form of consent. Nature is raised to the level of history through the ceremony. It is at the same time that the human being transforms and that it realizes natural ends by indirect means.

Thus human behavior has three poles: natural ends are natural ends which are being transformed, but natural ends subsist in themselves, outside the ceremony. This is how the human being realizes them. But if the human being does not realize natural ends, this does mean that they do not exist. They do not lend themselves to realization, because the transformation of natural ends into cultural ends renders them infinite. This must be taken literally. The dead whom we love are an inexhaustible task for us. It matters little if we distance ourselves from that. It remains no less infinite. Saying 'I love you' instead of saying 'I desire you' is to propose an infinite task. Thus this does not present itself as something to realize. But what is it for? People will say these tasks are only thought or felt. If, then, mythology is the imaginary, it is because infinite tasks are not to be realized. Mythology presents us this state of infinite tasks which ask us for something else than their realization.

9. Or: event of the mind.

The gods spend their time drinking a drink reserved exclusively for them. We find the sense [of this] in trying to live a symbol. The immortal gods spend their time drinking. There are initially two groups of superhumans who struggle to become gods. At stake in the struggle is the drink which renders immortal. So the gods are immortal because they drink. It is the transformation of the natural end, drinking, into an infinite task. If the gods would stop drinking, they would no longer be immortal. The purpose which infinite tasks serve is that only they allow the human being to realize natural ends in a way that will no longer simply be direct. This is why cynicism is anti-philosophical. The cynic must be taken at his word. What allows for the trap? The detour that the cynic sees. It is precisely that the cynic denies the transformation of natural ends into infinite ends. But natural ends are not yet ends of reason. They are values, sentiments which are felt and lived. Then what will we have to call reason? If, for their part, natural ends present themselves for realization, this time it will be infinite tasks which demand to be realized. They will become the proper end of reason. This is what happens when thought commits itself to realizing itself.

So now there are four terms: Indirect means, Natural ends, Felt cultural ends, and Cultural ends of reason. What then is the infinite task of realization?

1.2 Will, value, ground

Kant and Hegel say that the will contemplates itself or rises to the absolute when it is the will to freedom. In this will to freedom there is the activity of being reasonable, which consists in realizing the infinite task. For Hegel this realization takes place in a history. The grounder is then the one who poses and proposes an infinite task. How does he propose it, and in what order? To ground is to raise nature to the level of history and of spirit.[10] All who propose values to us appeal to a ground. So when does the problem of grounding become philosophical? From the moment when the grounder proposes infinite tasks to us as something to be realized in this world itself. The notion of ground already becomes clearer. In a first way, the human being experiences itself as a feeling being, and in a second one as a reasonable being. One way or another, the ground becomes aware of itself. It is no longer about grounding at the level of values, but in examining what grounding is. The ground itself must be grounded.

10. Or: mind.

From the four characteristics of the ground, we can retain the equivocal character of the grounder. This is not so much the one who grounds as it is the one who appeals to a ground. Taken literally, to ground is to appeal to a ground. For example: Moses is a grounder, because he brings a religion while claiming it is grounded. It will have to be asked what this bizarre being who appeals to a ground is. Whence the expressions 'well-grounded' and 'ill-grounded'? A new investigation begins: when do we appeal to a ground? When one no longer relates one's activity to himself as an agent.

But when do we invoke something else? As we have seen, it is to pass from mythology to philosophy by finding a common subject in their acts (characters). This common root is the infinite task. We have seen that there were four characteristics in human behavior:

1. The human being pursuing natural ends.
2. It pursues his ends obliquely. It makes use of means.
3. What makes such a detour possible? It is that at the same time and elsewhere the ends of nature reverberate in the imagination. They transform into original human values or ends. It is precisely they who present themselves as infinite tasks, but who in themselves are

not to be realized. They are to be undergone. They determined a kind of action: the ceremony and the ritual. These are what permit the indirect realization of the ends of nature. The human being is already a grounder. We answer the question: what is grounding for?

4. These original ends of the human being are not yet those of reason. Reason as supreme end could only present itself to the extent that the infinite tasks themselves become things to be realized.

Values have an extremely ambiguous character. It always seems as if there is a sort of mystification in them (cf. the philosophy of values). The notion of value has been created by Nietzsche in *The will to power*. For him there is no truth, there are only evaluations. To affirm that everything is value is to present a mystification which must be destroyed. Whence Nietzsche's polemic. Conversely, the philosophers of value refuse this mystification. But there it is all the same. We no longer know what we talk about.

Cynicism is wrong, because it wants us to stick to the ends of nature, whereas values are the rules of an indirect determination of the ends of nature. What it gets right is

that values are only a means. But submitted to the tribunal of reason, values become the end of the reasonable being.

Realizing the human beinzg has no sense. So how does the conversion work? The infinite task as value was a content of the will. It concerned something else than a simple desire. To love is first of all to want. On the level of values, the will had a content exterior [and] heteronomous to it (Kant). 'I want to drink' is something else than 'I desire to drink'. But then the will is still exterior to the content of the will. The conversion is simple. These values to be realized take on their particular figures because the will becomes autonomous. It is a will which wants nothing else than itself. A will which wants nothing but its own content. Autonomy is presented as universality. It is exactly Kant's autonomous will. It is the will of freedom (universal freedom). The Kantian morality (*Critique of practical reason*) consists in saying that there is a freedom of the will when it wants, and wants nothing else but, freedom.

The diversity of values came from their being transformed natural ends. They were still attached to natural ends. But when the will determines its own content, there is no longer a diversity of values. Grounds are no longer infinite tasks presented as values. The foundation became conceptual. We pass from mythology to philosophy.

2 THE ESSENTIAL BEING OF A GROUND OR REASON

'What constitutes the essential being of a ground or reason' (Heidegger).

2.1 Claims and rights

Heidegger wants to seek out the ground of the ground. He thinks the search stops at the reason of reason. 'Freedom is the ground of the ground, the reason of reason'.[11] We have seen that to ground is to appeal to a ground, to pose a question as already grounded. Now, what is the one who appeals to a ground? Who needs one's action to be grounded? It is one who claims. To claim is to claim something by virtue of a right. Perhaps this right is invented, it will be said of it that this right is not grounded. We lay claim to the hand of the girl and to power, and perhaps to both at the same time (cf. Odysseus).

11. See 'the principle of reason too lets its non-essence interfere with the essence of ground [...]. The ground that springs forth in transcending folds back upon freedom itself, and freedom *as origin* itself becomes "ground". *Freedom is the ground of ground*'. Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, p. 134.

What does 'right' mean here? Every claim presupposes a right. We can have a bad temper because of moods. That is juvenile. In aging, bad temper exercises itself in the name of a right. It is indignation. Bad temper appeals to a right. There are two ways of being hungry. In itself it is the state of need which presents itself as being the case in the experience of urgency. We seek to satisfy our hunger. Everything is a relation of force. But the state of urgency implies a certain time, a need to retain a certain determined and limited time. Need is our most profound experience of being in time. The other way of being hungry: when a human being is hungry, it can happen that instead of looking for something to eat in nature, it demands. There is a relation of fact and force. But is it not the demand which has been grounded?

The ground is thus that which will or will not give us the right. It will present itself as the third. The ground or third ground. To claim is to lay claim to something. In claiming one claims to appear before that which can give or confirm one's right. It is to accept to submit to the test. The ground is the third, because it is neither the claimant, nor to what he lays claim to, but the instance which will make the claimed yield to the claimant. The object in itself is never subjected to the claim. The demand and

the claim always come to the object from the outside. Example: in making a claim to the hand of the girl, what can one appeal to? As arbiter we use the father who is the third, the ground. But the father can say: complete a test, slay the dragon. What grounds is then the test. Confronting the ground is not without danger. The claimants have neither Penelope, nor power.

The father can also say that it depends on her. There is then still a third. The love the girl experiences is not like her being itself, but the principle which makes her being yield to the claim. There is always a third and it has to be sought out, since it is the ground which presents itself as a third.

But is it third because it arrives third? Certainly not. It is even the first. But it is third because it works in the shadow, in the unconscious. It is primary. What there is at the beginning, well that would be the third. An exploration of the unconscious will therefore without doubt be necessary.

But why make a demand? Since it is not without danger, it must be because it serves some purpose. Without doubt this something is given to me in a new way. Moreover, appealing to a right is to lose time. This loss must be compensated. But in the detour, do we not risk losing sight of what we claim? Why do the philosophers say of the

ground that it is a third? A more philosophical definition: the ground is the instance invoked by and in the demand or the claim, so as to yield the thing to this claim.

Question: on account of interesting myself in what yields the thing to the claim, will I not simultaneously risk losing sight of the thing itself and of myself?

2.2 Hume to Kant: formation of the idea of the transcendental

In his own way, Kant had a position such that the problem of the ground was posed in relation to the claim. It is a mysterious notion of Kant: the transcendental. To understand this we must historically depart from Hume, to whom Kant owes much, even though the former was an empiricist.[12] Kant will discern that the problem of the ground must be posed otherwise. (Hume had not seen it, but it is thanks to him that Kant continues). Hume has brought in something new: the analysis of the structure of subjectivity. As it happens, the word 'subject' is very rarely employed by Hume. Perhaps it is not coincidental. Hegel also analyses subjectivity without using the word 'subject'. It is the same with Heidegger, who goes even

12. Most famous for *A treatise of human nature* and *An enquiry concerning human understanding*

further and says that the word 'subject' must not be used. We must designate it with the essential structure that we have found. When we have defined the subject there is no longer a reason to talk about it. Heidegger [and] Hegel tell us that the subject is self-developing. Hegel analyses it dialectically. To self-develop is to self-transform, et cetera. The essence is mediation. Heidegger says that the essence of subjectivity is transcendence, [but] with a new sense: it used to be the state of some thing which was called transcendent, with Heidegger it is the movement of self-transcendence. It is the mode of being of the movement to what transcends itself

Hume wonders: what is knowing? He tells us it is to go beyond the given. Knowledge is defined as going beyond. Analogy of the three authors. To know is to go beyond, because it is to say more than what is given. I say the sun will rise tomorrow. It is a judgment posited as true. It implies, so it seems, the affirmation of something which is not given. It is for example 'always' or 'tomorrow' which is not given. What is given to me is that the sun has risen plenty of times, and I know that in the past it has not ceased to rise. [Still,] I do not say that it has always risen, but that it will rise tomorrow. (It is the same for water which boils at 100°). Hume has foreseen the problem of the ground. The

question 'by what *right*' (quid juris) is posed. In the *Treatise on human nature*, Hume says: I do not dispute the fact, I am not skeptical of that. It must be said that the sun will rise tomorrow. He is convinced of it. But his problem is where this reason comes from. It is the problem of the ground of induction. He is convinced that it lies in human nature to say that water boils at 100 [degrees]. But by what right do we say it? By what right do we make an inference from the past to the future? I go beyond the given if I judge, but it is not the given which can explain that the human being goes beyond the given.

Hume stumbled onto an extraordinary problem. He poses the problem as follows: to know is to go beyond (that which we called a claim, a demand). But where does that come from? It is to ask what grounds knowledge. And according to Hume that can only be a subjective principle. It is not the object, it is the subject which allows us to find the ground. It is the subject who goes beyond, who evokes the problem of the ground. What grounds knowledge thus cannot be sought on the side of the known object. Hume's answer can seem extraordinarily disappointing. This comes from his genius in posing the problem in extraordinary fashion. This answer is that it is the principle of human nature which allows for going beyond what is.

This principle is habit. What does he want to say? This principle is the possibility of the human being to take on habits. According to him, habit implies a repetition of similar cases, and it is experience which affords that ('I have seen the sun rise a thousand times'). Experience yields a repetition of similar cases. Repetition changes nothing in the object itself. Every case is logically independent of every other. This requires that human nature is disposed towards that. Whence the strange identity of reason and habit in Hume. Hume has posed the problem in general terms, but he has not responded to it. The principle seems psychological to him. In this sense, without Hume there would not have been Kant to retain the legitimacy of the ground.

Kant will push the problem to the end and will go beyond this psychological interpretation. For Kant, the ground must be a subjective principle, but it cannot be psychological. It will be a transcendental subjectivity. Kant mentions something he noticed: there is this curious fact. The subject does not just go beyond the given, but the given also abides by this going beyond. It is true that water abides by the judgment of the human being and really boils at a hundred degrees. [Yet] the given is particularly hostile to this going beyond. Kant concludes Hume has

not explained this. One reason for this is that he could not, [because] he has concluded that it is a principle of our human nature. Kant tells us that human nature goes beyond the given of nature, and moreover that nature abides by this going beyond. How to explain that Nature submits to human nature? Hume had thought about this and says: 'it is because there is a harmony between the principles of Nature and human nature'. He is very inconspicuous about this harmony. He says that if we might want to invoke God [here], it is [nevertheless] not that. But Hume hardly invokes God. He invokes God for the sake of the cause. He had need of God. We might say: what is so surprising about there being this harmony? But at that point, we cannot say that the principles of human nature and those of Nature agree, since the former are precisely those by which I go beyond human nature. There will have to be a submission of nature to human nature.

This answer by Hume was coherent, but it was hardly informative and it remained worrisome coming from an author who attacks the idea of God. So what will be Kant's thesis? For him there is no choice. It is necessary that the given by itself (Nature) is thenceforth submitted to principles of the same kind as those to which human nature is submitted, and not the inverse. It must be that

the sun insofar as it is given is submitted to principles of the same kind as those on which my consciousness of the sun depends when I say that the sun will rise tomorrow. The ground can therefore not be psychological. Now, the principle according to Kant must be the principle of the submission of the given to cognition. The principle which renders cognition possible, which grounds it, must at the same time render the submission of the given to that same cognition necessary. The principle is thus no longer psychological, because it only was so to the extent that it was merely the principle of knowledge. Whence Kant's paradox: the ground is subjective, but it can no longer revolve around you and me. The subject is not nature. What Kant will call the transcendental subject is this subject which will distinguish itself from empirical or psychological subjectivity, because it will account for [the fact] that the given submits itself to going beyond what I carry out. What renders cognition possible must render the submission of the given to this same cognition necessary. In the Kantian style, what does this give us? In the *Critique of pure reason*, only in the first edition and removed from the second because it was too clear and could lead the reader into error, we find it at last. It is the text on the three syntheses (2nd section). The synthesis of the manifold has a triple aspect.

These three aspects are synthesis of apprehension in the intuition, synthesis of reproduction in the imagination, and synthesis of recognition in the concept.

If the given was not submitted to principles of the same kind as those which allow for cognition: 'our empirical imagination (that is to say our faculty of knowing by procedure, our faculty of passing from one representation to another according to a rule) would never have anything to do conforming to its abilities, and hence would continue dwelling buried in the depths of the mind like a dead faculty unknown to ourselves'.[13]

2.3 Characteristics of the ground in the Critique of Pure Reason

The three major works of Kant [are]: *Critique of pure reason* (ground of knowledge); *Critique of practical reason* (morality); *Critique of judgment* (living and work of art). On the level of the first book, transcendental subjectivity remains a logical demand. He tells us that knowledge is a fact. It is a fact that there is mathematics and physics. Fact is that

13. Kant, *Critique of pure reason*, A100. It is the passage right before the famous cinnabar example.

cognition succeeds. The question posed by Kant is: under what condition is cognition possible?

But what are the conditions of possibility? Quid juris? It is a completely original position. Since it is a fact that we cognize, we cannot escape the idea that the objects must be submitted to principles of the same kind as those which govern cognition. The idea of transcendental subjectivity must be inferred from a state of affairs. That the idea of transcendental subjectivity is indispensable is not to give [it?] a being in itself. (The two other books specify the richness of transcendental subjectivity). In Kant, the ground has three characteristics: conditioning, localization, and limitation.

1. The ground is a condition. The condition is that which renders possible. It therefore is a curious notion, since it concerns cognition. There is a principle which renders cognition possible. The classical problem of possibility completely changes sense. The possibility is the condition of possibility. For the classical philosophers, the possible is the non-contradictory: the square circle is impossible. That which 'does not imply' (that be read as: does not imply contradiction), that is possible. A thousand things are not contradictory and never-

theless not real. The possible was thus a logical notion and it was [defined as] being in so far as it did not imply contradiction. The non-contradictory constituted the very being of the possible. The problem of existence was posed as the passage from the possible to the real. In the understanding of God there is the system of everything which is possible, and by an act of will God makes certain possibles become real (cf. Malebranche, Leibniz). The possible becomes possibility of being itself. It conditions being itself. Now, for Kant there is an indubitable discontinuity between the possible and the real. The idea of a hundred degrees is always the idea as possible. The idea poses the object as being able to exist. The idea of something is always something as able to exist, and existence adds nothing to the idea. Existing is always exterior to the idea: there is no passage from the possible to the real. Existence is not given in a concept; it [existence] is given to it [the concept] in space and time. These are the milieus of existing. Kant examines the conditions of the possibility of being in existence. It literally concerns a kind of logic about that which is. The ground is precisely the principle which renders possible. And here we have why Kant opposes transcendental logic, which is

the study of non-contradiction, to formal logic. The contradiction is nothingness. But instead of logically considering that which does not imply contradiction, Kant will make a ground based on the conditions of possibility. The ground renders something possible by rendering the submission of something else to this same cognition necessary. The ground grounds something by rendering necessary the submission of something else to that which it makes. It is the third. Kant says that the condition of experience is at the same time the condition of the objects of experience. The Kantian phenomenon is not at all the appearance. He is often interpreted as a compromise of appearance / being. That is to understand nothing, because Kant wants to go beyond appearance / being. The phenomenon is not an appearance which would hide the being,[14] but the being insofar as it appears. The 'noumenon' is the pure thought and it does not distinguish itself from the phenomenon as appearance and reality, but as being which appears and being purely thought. The ground grounds by rendering possible. It

14. 'L'être' here does not have a holistic sense (Being), but rather the sense of 'that which exists' i.e. a thing.

renders possible by submitting the being to cognition and this manifests itself in the opposition.

2. The ground localizes. The ground develops. It poses what it grounds in a given, in a milieu.[15] Cognition is precisely in the milieu and almost in the milieu of that which it knows. Now, it cognizes phenomena. In rendering cognition possible, the ground situates knowledge in the domain of phenomena. It will be cognition of phenomena. There is only phenomenal knowledge. The noumenon, being purely thought, is not an object of knowledge. What is grounded: cognition is situated in a milieu defined exactly by what was essentially related to cognition. Whence an amazing formula: 'cognition only begins with experience, but it [cognition] does not derive from it [experience]'.[16] Kant goes beyond, or pretends to go beyond, the empiricists and the rationalists. For the former, consciousness only begins with experience. Kant agrees with them: I cannot tell, before the experience [of it], whether the sun will harden or melt the clay.[17] But the empiricists have forgotten that knowledge does not de-

15. Or: medium, middle.

16. Kant, *Critique of pure reason*, A1.

17. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A766/B794.

rive from experience. What grounds in experience is not what we know in experience. What renders cognition possible is not given in experience. This is why these conditions are transcendental. I do not know any object *a priori*. I must wait for the experience in order to know. Nevertheless, I still *a priori* know something about the object: that it will be in space and in time, and that it will fulfill certain conditions, at the same time conditions of cognition and conditions of the object of cognition. That is to say, I know of each object that it is submitted to causality, that it is one and multiple. But what are the conditions? The one, the multiple, and causality are categories. Kant makes a table of categories. He has twelve of them (not space and time). These are the universal predicates or attributes which are attributed to all possible objects. I do not know any object *a priori*, but I know *a priori* all the conditions to which any object whatsoever is necessarily submitted. The ground must allow for knowledge, a knowledge of phenomena.

3. The ground limits. It imposes a limit on knowledge. If I claim something *a priori*, without experience, I thereby go beyond the limits of knowledge. And when does one make such a claim? When I do metaphysics. When

I think that the categories, instead of being conditions for phenomena, give me knowledge of an object in itself. Instead of saying that each object is submitted to causality, metaphysics thinks that the principle of causality will make something known independent of experience: the soul or the world or God. Whence the famous themes of the *Critique of pure reason*: a critique of metaphysics, not because he wanted to replace it with science (like the scientists), but because he wants to replace it with a transcendental logic. To replace philosophy as science by a reflection on the possibilities of science. The idea of science is not scientific. Only a philosophical analysis can justify this idea, the ground of knowledge, by giving it foundations beyond which it cannot go.

The enemy of cognition is not just error. It is threatened from within by a tendency, an illusion according to Kant, to go beyond its own limits. In the last part, then, Kant tries to show us that our questions about the world and such are false problems.

2.4 Heidegger after Kant

These three senses are also found with an author who, in this sense, is not wrong to appeal to Kant: Heidegger (cf. his book on Kant and metaphysics). For Heidegger, the world is the structure of human existence. Then the notion of world can no longer be separated from the human being's way of being. This [way] is transcendence or exceeding. The word 'transcendent' no longer signifies a being exterior or superior to the world, but an act. Human existence exists as transcendent. Heidegger distinguishes that which we exceed and that to which we exceed. Transcendence is the essence of subjectivity and he replaces even this word with transcendence. That which we exceed? Insofar as the human being has a body and such, it is an existing thing among other existing things. But the human being is not an existing thing like the others, because of this power to exceed. And what is exceeded is the existing thing itself, it is what has been created.

Towards what is it exceeded? Towards the world. But this 'towards what' does not exist independently from the act of transcendence. What is exceeded is surely the totality of created [things], but that towards which we exceed is the world [as] structure of subjectivity. Here we find Heidegger's fundamental distinction: the existing thing

and the Being of the existing thing. All philosophers, except Kant, have treated Being as something which is. Heidegger reproaches them, he goes as far as saying that it is essential to metaphysics to treat Being as an existing thing, and its history is that of forgetting Being. The Being of the existing thing does not come down to any existence, not even that of God. It is the Being itself of what appears, it is that in which each apparition as such finds itself grounded. The privilege of the human being is precisely to exceed the existing thing and to place itself in relation with Being. The human being is the shepherd of Being. Nevertheless, the human being is amidst the existent things.

Heidegger's master was Husserl. With him, the notion of consciousness receives a new meaning. It is no longer defined as interiority. For him, consciousness is defined as exceeding: 'all consciousness is consciousness of something'.[18] This is the notion of intentionality. Could Husserl preserve the idea of consciousness to the extent that he renovated the idea of subjectivity? Is Heidegger not right? In any case, it is based on this new Husserlian conception

18. Deleuze paraphrases §14 of Husserl's *Cartesian meditations*: 'the word intentionality signifies nothing else than this universal fundamental property of consciousness: to be consciousness *of* something; as a *cogito*, to bear within itself its *cogitatum*'.

of subjectivity that Heidegger will conceive of the world. The triple [*sic*] notion of ground becomes clear:

1. By exceeding, human existence brings about the world. It institutes the world.
2. Take human reality as a foundation. The human being is in the world at the same time that it makes the world happen. It is in the middle of it. Moreover, it is invested in what exists, because 'in order to exceed what exists, one must still be attuned to its tone'.[19]
3. Grounding signifies motivating. Heidegger develops the theme that all motivation finds its root in transcendence. Posing a question about what exists presupposes an act of transcendence.
4. Whence the identification between transcendence and freedom. Freedom is what grounds the ground itself. Freedom is the freedom of grounding. It is the reason of reason.

19. See 'As finding itself, Dasein is *absorbed* by beings in such a way that, in its belonging to beings, it *is thoroughly attuned by them. Transcendence means projection of world in such a way that those beings that are surpassed also already pervade and attune that which projects*.' Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, p. 128.

What is the difference between the Kantian thesis and that of Heidegger? We have seen the resemblance. The difference is peculiar. The influence of Kant on Heidegger is evident, and nevertheless there is a change of tone. It exists so that no misinterpretation is made of Kantianism. Kant's 'phenomena' are precisely what exists. It is what appears and not the appearance. Now, why does Kant oppose phenomenon and noumenon? Because he is the first to not have confused what exists and the Being of what exists.

How to conceive of the relation of the two subjectivities? With Heidegger, the transcendental becomes a structure of empirical subjectivity itself. Only this becomes the essential structure. The transcendental is reduced to transcendence, to exceeding. Perhaps transcendental subjectivity thereby loses its importance. In Kant it rendered cognition possible, because it submitted sensible objects to human cognition. But the transcendental subject is what renders transcendence possible in necessarily submitting the phenomena to this operation of going beyond. The transcendental subject is that to which transcendence itself was immanent. With Heidegger on the contrary, what disappears is the distinction between transcendence and the transcendental. With him they are identified up to the

point that what grounds is no longer distinguished from what is grounded. Whence that the root of all ground is freedom.

2.5 Conclusion to the second chapter

We have tried to show in what [sense] the ground was a third. What is grounded, we were saying, does not just enter into a relation with the ground. It grounds something in giving it something else. The entire problem is knowing what the nature of this other thing is. Among philosophers, it seems that once the ground is found, it changes nothing. Kant grounds mathematics and physics and yet he tells us this is a fact. They remain the same after having been grounded. Nevertheless, if the ground lets that which grounds subsist, we can wonder what purpose it serves. Conversely, if grounding changes something, then we see the point.

Does not every ground lead to an unexpected surprise? Does the ground not lead to something we did not expect? Perhaps it is just at first glance that things stay the same in Kant. See *Alquié*'s book on Descartes.[20] According

20. Ferdinand Alquié (1906-1985). French philosopher famous for a decades-long polemic between his Cartesianism and Martial Gueroult's Spinozism. Alquié directed Deleuze's secondary doctoral thesis *Expressionism in philosophy: Spinoza*. At the time of the seminar Alquié

to him there is an entire evolution of Descartes. Little by little he would realize that a mathematical method was not enough to ground knowledge, but that a truly metaphysical ground was necessary. But, says *Alquié*, this leads him to a complete reversal of the idea which he had created about science. The search for the ground thus brings us something else than what was expected. We can call this surprise or deception.

It still needs to be asked why philosophers give us the impression that we must look for the ground when it nevertheless changes nothing. Problem with Kant. But precisely with him, there is a separation: the operation of grounding is separated from the change which bears the operation of grounding. Having said that the ground really has the characteristics which Kant and Heidegger recognize of it, in what is what is grounded, by its own nature, going to manifest change, the modification which will allow for answering 'what is grounding?'

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had already published three books carrying the name of Descartes in their title and many more in which Descartes is the main point of reference, making it unclear to which book Deleuze refers.

3 GROUND AND QUESTION

The ground is a third. The establishment of this fact takes another figure. In what does the grounded thing change its state? This third neither boils down to the grounder, nor to the beginning. What is it? What surprise does that which is grounded bring us? Here we might ask what the motive of philosophy is. For some it is wonder. For others it is anxiety. We have seen that which appeared anew, though mythologically: it is a cosmic dimension. Repetition, eternal return (a theme dear to Nietzsche). Result: whoever appeals to a ground makes a demand. He poses as if being provided with a right. The claimed thing is the ground. This opposes the human being to the animal. The human being finds reason within the form of the enunciation of a right. We have distinguished three senses of 'ground' with Kant and Heidegger.

1. To ground is to render the submission of the one to the other necessary. The ground is truly a third term, the third.
2. The ground is the assignment of a domain or of a territory.

3. The demand has conditions of validity. That limits the domain.

Here we retrieved the same two problems, but on a philosophical plane. Equivocal: the ground and the one who appeals to it. What does the principle that grounds teach the grounder? Is it [that] this principle pre-exists? It is an answer that he learns? The relation between the two terms, the grounder and the new figure of the ground, must be in the idea of grounding itself. Is that which the ground reveals, far from being an answer, not a question [instead]? The sphinx formulates a question. Whoever appeals to the ground receives a question about the ground. The mythological equivalent is the oracle, the prediction. The ground tells us what it is about. This presupposes that we do not know in what the question consisted before appealing to the ground. Now, the relation of ground and grounder is especially complex, as the ground does not present an answer, but a question. Therefore, it is by confronting the ground that one is grounder, one disposes of the question. We should discover the new figure which the grounded itself assumes. But what is this question? We always believe that it is solutions which must be determined. The activity of interrogating receives its determination

for us from what it eliminates. Now, because of that it is suggested to us that the question has a structure in itself. What is the question which reunites ground, grounder, and change of the grounded.

Particular style among philosophers. There are questions specific to philosophers, which render one speechless. After some effort, Heidegger arrives at a question which risks deceiving us. He arrives at 'why is there being instead of nothingness?'[21] And what he keeps repeating is that he wants to suggest that we cannot wait for an answer of the empirical type to empirical interrogations. Perhaps at the philosophical level the answer is contained in the question. Leibniz: why is there something rather than nothing? Why is there this rather than that? Henceforth everything is reversed, the ground teaches us a question and only the question can elucidate the problem. What are the possible hypotheses? For whatever philosophical question, we can make three hypotheses:

1. Maybe this is deliberately a question without answer. Its purpose would be to silence the answers. Philosophy of the paradox by Kierkegaard, by Shestov. [Shestov was] Russian, [it is] strange [that he] died around

21. See Heidegger, *An introduction to metaphysics*, pp. 7-8.

1930, because Shestov did not know Kierkegaard until very late [in his life], and the resemblance between their philosophies, even in their way of expressing themselves, is an amazing case of coincidence. He has written in the tone of commentary, an extraordinary tone. He departs from Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. His thesis on Shakespeare is impossible to find. They also call this philosophers of the scandal, of provocation. Thinking is also thinking against reason. The decomposition or betrayal starts with Socrates. As we shall see the two authors diverge. At the end, for Shestov, what remains is the human being and his questions: absurd. For Kierkegaard what remains at the end is faith. Abraham's son is restored to him, but in the domain of the absurd.

2. The question is such that it, in a certain way, contains the rule of all possible answers within itself. It tells us the principles to be used in the solution of all problems. Leibniz thinks that a method must be universal. It is the universal characteristic of which the principle would be discovered in the structure of all problems. Four principles: Identity, Sufficient reason, Indiscernibility, and Continuity.

3. The question gives us a rule to distinguish true problems from false ones, and this is what we must expect from what grounds. It is Kant's direction. For him, the problems posed by Leibniz are a typical illusion: why this instead of that, et cetera. Bergson is an author who is quite Kantian in this sense. An irrational vision of the ground.

First hypothesis: the ground is linked to the ground. Obscurity of this notion. Is appealing to what grounds not being ready to go up to the absurd?

Second hypothesis: the ground is rationally known. Is this not the idea of sufficient reason as Leibniz says? [The idea] of the radical origin of things, Leibniz says.

Third hypothesis: the ground would have a critical conception. Is there not also this aspect to the ground? Distinction between validity and non-validity.

Historically, a great philosopher who has handled these questions is Socrates. There is an essential relation between ground and question.

3.1 Socrates and the question

Socrates proceeds by question and answer. But as his answer Socrates says 'it has nothing to do with me'. He

says 'I am the question or love or the philosopher'.[22] What is in question is the dialectic. It starts with Parmenides, with Zeno. We find it again in Socrates and Plato, in the Stoics and Aristotle. We find it in Kant, Hegel, and Marx. They all appeal to the dialectic differently. Etymologically: conversation and distribution. How do these two notions organize themselves in the dialectic? What is distributed in the conversation in order for it to be a dialectic? Questions and answers are distributed. Great difficulty of Socratism. Socrates was against a state of affairs which he deemed characteristic of the Athenian city: everybody in politics talks perpetually, and without knowing [anything]. (Which is why he flirts with sports). Democracy: anyone can say his piece. He rebels against that. Socrates' questions in the small dialogues consist in circling around the interlocutor, in stranding him in contradiction, up to the point where he has just one thing left: his anger. Socrates leads the other into contradiction. At first sight, the dialectic consists in a distribution of questions and answers according to characters.

But it is never Socrates asking the questions. They tell him 'you are an electric ray'.[23] It is about something else.

22. Socrates never says this, anywhere.

23. The fish, that is. See *Meno* 80a, where Meno says Socrates'

The two persons annihilate each other. The interlocutor is annihilated in the sense that he falls into contradiction. He is dead on the level of *logos*. Socrates himself says: 'it has nothing to do with me'.[24] He seems to be removing himself. Whence the symbolic importance of Socrates' death. This is also a death in the *logos*. At first sight it concerns a distribution, at a second glance it is a double annihilation. It is necessary to first of all force people to shut up: first aspect of the question. Shestov found this very well, because according to him we have to stay there and push these questions, which are my answers, as far away as possible, because the essential point is to silence the answers. What is Socrates against? Against the *doxa*, against opinion. The state of the *doxa*? It has an essential theme: 'on the one hand, on the other hand'. It affirms partial truths and affirms them as follows: where they of course touch upon one's own genius, one's own truth. What it poses as absolute is a partial truth. The 'on the one hand and on

ceaseless questioning tends to numb the minds and tongues of other participants in conversations.

24. In *Meno* 80c. Socrates replies to Meno that he is generally just as numbed as anyone else, and hence he cannot be responsible for bringing about this effect: '...I myself do not have the answer when I perplex others, but I am more perplexed than anyone when I cause perplexity in others'

the other hand'[25] is the worst enemy of opinion: *doxa* turns things into parts.

Beautiful text by Marx in *The poverty of philosophy*. He says that Proudhon's philosophy is a petty bourgeois philosophy, because he believes the dialectic is 'on the one hand, on the other hand'. A thought which remains in this stage, says Marx, is a thought of petty bourgeois opinion. Opinion allocates its great themes at this level. The structure of opinion rests on a structure of appropriation. Philosophy has it in for this situation. Good sense is the target of philosophy. It denounces good sense's pretention of being philosophy. Good sense divides truths into parts. There is a diabolical arrogance to one who divides and yet usurps, because these are only partial truths.

Descartes' phrase: 'good sense is the best distributed thing in the world' has a deliberately comical side.[26] By its essence, good sense distributes, divides. There is an internal mystification in this text. It suffices to look at the context, nobody says I am stupid. Descartes says: let's take that literally. It is quite riveting, but very dangerous. Funny

25. This phrase seems strange given the preceding and following sentences, and I suspect that instead of 'opinion' it should read 'philosophy'

26. 'Good sense is, of all things among men, the most equally distributed' Descartes, *Discourse on the method*, p. 45.

path for philosophy: Descartes says that there are imbeciles *de facto*, but never *de jure*. The problem of stupidity is relegated to individual psychology. This interpretation is very serious and questionable. He has eliminated stupidity from the theoretical problem of thought, which will be reduced to the true and the false. So the essential rule of good sense is division.

Confirmation: in *The difference between Fichte's and Schelling's systems of philosophy*, Hegel writes amazing pages on the opposition between good sense and philosophy. Hegel says that on the level of good sense, of *doxa*, the absolute is nothing more than sentiment, and that truth dwindles into simple partial truth, but good sense presents this as ground of the truth by presenting it in the absolute. Now, Hegel wants to go beyond this stage (Marx as well, with regards to Proudhon). The absolute cannot be the object of a sentiment. Truth cannot be partial truth. It is Hegel's concept.

The secret of Socratic irony: the dialogue proceeds by a division. He thinks that each partial truth proceeds through contradictory truth. Socrates has taken just enough *doxa* to contradict it. The partial truth opposes itself to [another] partial truth and falls into contradiction. It seems a good organization of a dialogue, [but] in reality

it is the termination of dialogue, though from the inside. *Doxa* is left with only one solution: anger. *Doxa* feels the sentiment of its absoluteness waver. All opinion is conformist. It is non-paradoxical. Paradox seeks to find a domain where divisions contradict themselves. The Ancients and Socrates were also fond of paradoxes. Also see the modern paradox of vicious savages on the idea of the arts.[27] Math is there to resolve them. The rule of the island: one is told 'say a sentence, if it is true you will be hanged, if it is false you will be shot'. Then one day a stranger says 'I will be shot'. And then we can no longer shoot him.

The logicians have applied themselves to the problem of the paradox. Cantor has elaborated a theory of mathematical sets. He found a bizarre paradox. Any set which does not contain itself as an element is called normal. We do not arrive at a total interiority. Call E the set of all normal sets. Instant logical contradiction. Paradox. Essential constitution of an element such that it constrains and forces the set of which it is part to contradict itself, that is to say contradict itself as element. 'I lie' is nonsense, because it is nothing other than the determination of

27. Probably a reference to Michel de Montaigne's *Of cannibals*, in which 'savages' are lauded for their virtuous simplicity, whereas 'civilized' peoples are depicted as the *real* savages, living in a corrupted or corrupting culture (the '*méchants sauvages*').

something filled with misleading propositions. The point of view of Pascal has to be analyzed from a purely logical and even formal perspective.[28] The bet does not concern God himself, but the existence of the human being for whom God exists and that of the human being for whom God does not. Pascal says that if the latter knew he had to bet, then he would not have chosen his mode of existence. From a formal perspective the theme of the choice assures two logically contradictory determinations. There we have a veritable aggression against good sense. The paradox demonstrates contradictory characteristics of partial truths in themselves. The paradox presents me an element which is impossible to allocate in the set of which it is a part, because it [already] entails this set in comprehending itself as an element.

The question comes back to Socrates. Good sense and philosophy are enemies (real bullfighting). Socrates is dead because of it. Anytus is the representative of the Athenian middle classes.[29] He represents the ideology of the middle classes, which is an appeal to fair representation. In the myth of Protagoras, Plato does not take a sophist into consideration, this myth is that of the division (technique =

28. Pascal's famous bet can be found in section 233 of the *Pensées*.

29. Anytus was one of the prosecutors of Socrates.

unequal division; political consciousness = equal division). There was language, *logos*, in the division. But good sense says philosophy this is nothing.

But what is the origin of philosophy? Problem: why is philosophy not a part of all civilizations? Philosophy is essentially something Greek and it cannot be found in other cultures, regardless of which culture. The countries that have established philosophy? First Greece, then it became French, English, and German since the 19th century up to our own time. The French revolution was not thought up in France, but in Germany. How to explain that Spain, Italy, even though we can name philosophers from these countries, have not produced foundational philosophical currents?

Hypothesis: perhaps because philosophy finds its origin in the very existence of its enemy, in the middle class? Rome, big problem: early disappearance of the middle classes. True for Spain, false for Italy. At the level of Socrates it is definitely true. Socratism is constituted in opposition to *doxa*. For Isocrates *doxa* is the only philosophy.[30] Proceeding from a thought proceeding by division. If philosophy is born in Greece, it is because it [Greece] forms a negative condition for its existence.

30. Ancient Greek rhetorician.

Conclusion regarding Socrates' method itself. It seems to install rules which turn language into a serious thing. That which produces doubt is Socratic irony. In effect, there is no Socratic dialogue. He borrows the dialogue in order to annihilate it. He wants the dialogue to terminate itself. There is a seduction to dialogue. That is what Socratic irony is. With every question he poses, he eliminates a partial truth, and at the end there is death by contradiction, represented by one who contradicts.

Other idea from Socrates: what happens during this destruction? Socrates knows it has nothing to do with him. He does not believe in the dialogue. What does that signify positively? The sophists hated long speeches, because these were the speeches of certain persons. It is not speech itself which Socrates refuses, but [he wants] that speeches no longer be that of persons. He wants that the science of speeches comes from an identity of speech and the thing: it is the Idea. He wants the *logos* to be the expression of the real as such. The relation is no longer between souls, but between the soul and the idea. This is what Socrates calls reminiscence. It is that the idea presents itself as already there. The way in which the soul establishes contact with the idea is always for the second time. The forgotten is nevertheless fundamental. It is meta-psychologi-

cal. The forgotten has become the fundamental relation between the soul and the idea. How can the forgotten, a negative term, have this role? The incarnated soul finds itself before exterior objects which tell it something. It is thus in the sensible world that we have encounters which awaken the recollection of the idea in us. The fundamentally forgotten expresses itself in the encounters we have in the world. The forgotten poses itself as being already there, whence the whole theme of anterior existence. [It is] thereby [that] Socrates has a mathematical problem solved by a slave.[31] Thus the question had to be such that it concerned a veritable ground, likely to serve out rules for the solution of problems. It is because the question rises to the idea that it enters into relation with principles serving for the solution of problems.

How do sensible things participate in the Idea? In Plato's philosophy, the most profound thing is knowing how the ideas exist among themselves. It concerns thinking the relation of the intelligible. This will be the most profound object of the dialectic. The proper question concerns rules permitting the constitution of the rules themselves.

31. Plato, *Meno*, 82b.

3.2 The question that silences: Kierkegaard and Shestov /// 3.2.1 The most lyrical and the most simple

Kierkegaard and Shestov have an ambivalent attitude towards Socrates. They hate him and yet they are obsessed with him. They oppose Socrates to Job. What interests them in Socrates is the first aspect of the Socratic question, the irony (cf. Kierkegaard's concept of irony).[32] Socrates nevertheless distorts the question which silences by going beyond it. For them, Job is the private thinker, he knew how not to betray. Socrates turned himself into a public professor. Job is the one who asked for explanations which he demanded [would be] first hand. Now, ***doxa*** by nature contents itself with a second-hand answer. But for Kierkegaard and Shestov, reason contents itself with a second-hand answer. Reason demands that we submit ourselves, that we recognize the law. The problem of thought will be posed in singular fashion. Reason calls the crime of the spirit the crime of the law.[33] But Shestov says that reason has never called the death of Socrates scandalous here and now.

32. In Kierkegaard's *On the concept of irony with continual reference to Socrates*, his university thesis.

33. Or: of the mind.

Socrates' treason is that he settled for demanding second-hand explanations. Job will stick to his questions and will not content himself with a second-hand answer. Job takes God aside, he demands a first-hand answer. Perhaps such an answer does not exist elsewhere. This refusal of reason is important because we find it again in the philosophers called 'irrationalists'. They privilege other powers than thought. But most profoundly, they think we can think against reason. But why [do] that? Because reason always invites us to obey, to submit ourselves to generality. So Kierkegaard has a secret in his life which suffocates him, 'the thorn he has in his flesh',[34] Kierkegaard's relation with his father. It only ever happened to Kierkegaard as a story, but it is a considerable one, his engagement ('am I able to get married?'). The engagement/marriage problem only makes sense on the level of ethics. Kafka's problem was analogous. His [Kierkegaard's] fiancée Regine

34. The exact nature of Kierkegaard's 'thorn in the flesh' is a matter of debate. The following passage from the *Journals and papers* seems to support Deleuze's familial interpretation: 'at an early age [a man] is bound to a suffering which is a thorn in the flesh to him, places him outside of the universally human. Thus hinders him from being able to enjoy life and forces him into a God-relationship as the only consolation and salvation'. (*JP*, VII, A126 n.d., 1846, §4654). However, other passages remain far more open to interpretation (see *JP* §5913, §6492).

was a veritable philosophical concept (see *The seducer's diary*: 'my wife is a little sister to me whom I love a lot, with whom I live').[35] In *Either/Or*, he investigates the meaning of marriage. There is a veritable qualitative leap from engagement to marriage. What does this idea of a broken engagement signify? It is the singular event.

Shestov has given a 'philosophy of tragedy',[36] of the absurd. Also see *The myth of Sisyphus*.[37] He appeals to Dostoevsky, who had made the first critique of reason, not Kant. 'If God does not exist, everything is permitted'[38] is in Dostoevsky and in *The will to power*.[39] It signifies that ordering is necessary. They invoke the Nietzschean theme, 'beyond good and evil' and Shestov adds 'beyond true and false' to it. The Pascalian theme of the bet is certainly in this line. Ethics must replace morality.

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35. 'It seems to me as if I myself were an old man, my wife my happily married younger sister in whose house I am sitting. In such hours, time almost begins to drag for me'. Kierkegaard, *Either/Or* II, p. 276.

36. Refers to *Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche: the philosophy of tragedy*.

37. By Albert Camus (1913-1960).

38. *The brothers Karamazov*, part 4, book 11, chapter 4.

39. The latter only contains this statement 'in spirit'. Nietzsche never says it word for word, though 'Nothing is True, all is permitted' from *On the genealogy of morality* (third essay, section 24) comes close.

3.2.2 Morality, duty, law, and power

Morality always makes us think about duty and law. But it also announces to us that duty comes first. The ground of duty is in our supposed perfection insofar as we are supposedly reasonable beings. The problem becomes: 'what *must* we do?'. But a whole group of cursed authors exists. They ask: 'what *can* we do?'. Then duty does not come first. Their concern is following through on what we can. If it is not true that duty and law come first, then all power must be realized.

The origin is legal. A reversal appears around the sixteenth century, one which risks going unnoticed today. It is the theory of the state of nature and the civil state in Hobbes, a veteran of paradoxes. We had a classical theory in which we confused it with that against which it rose up, the ancient theory of natural law which expressed our nature of being reasonable. Hobbes begins by demanding explanations. He believes that the natural law has meaning if we relate it to the real and concrete order of motives and passions of the human being. Then power and right are primary and unconditional. Then in Hobbes there will be the idea that the law must limit power (it still remains primary). Now, we will find this legal theme again in all the authors who criticize the law.

The problem of ethics is that of power. That was already the theme of Callicles in the *Gorgias*. He agrees to break the law which separates me from what I can do. Ethics always faces the law. If Spinoza calls his book *Ethics*, this is why. The law which would defend is a mystification to him. The moral law is ultimately nothing but a badly understood natural law (cf. Adam and the apple: an indigestion).[40] Duty is an illusory form to him. Despite his rationalism he keeps telling us that human beings only differ in that which they can do. Virtue is the realization of one's own capacities. A crime is virtuous if it expresses a veritable power. Spinoza is ultimately a rationalist, because he will focus on demonstrating that crime is a diminution of power.

So for all of them it comes down to calling for a realization of one's proper essence. With Kierkegaard this philosophy will be able to call itself a veritable philosophy of the absurd. For him there is an answer on a certain plane, irrational, when the human being has gone all the way to the end. It is already what we can call an existential phi-

40. 'Therefore the command given to Adam consisted solely in this, that God revealed to Adam that eating of that tree brought about death, in the same way that he also reveals to us through our natural understanding that poison is deadly' Spinoza's letter to Willem van Blyenbergh, January 5th, 1665.

losophy. For them there are two ways of existing and the notion of choice is understood as follows. There are those who exist in an inauthentic way, those who submit themselves, who do not know what the question is. There are those who exist authentically, who know that the question is to go all the way to the end of what one can. Thus the question of morality concerns something else than the one who questions, whereas the question of ethics concerns nothing but the one who questions. This theme of going all the way to the end will define thought. It must also go all the way to the end itself. And think what? The unthinkable, says Kierkegaard. This thought reconciles itself with life. Kierkegaard demands 'give me a body then'.[41] The relations of thought with life: claim of a unity. Now, it is life which must submit itself to thought in Socratism, it is reasonable, philosophical life. On the contrary, in Kierkegaard life cannot deny itself, cannot submit itself to the order of reason. The paradox expresses a divorce of life and thought. Thenceforth it is thought which submits itself to

41. It is likely that Deleuze here reads Kierkegaard through Camus (which would incidentally also explain the presence of Shestov in the text): '...Kierkegaard himself shows us the path taken [...]. It is the leitmotiv of the *Journal*. 'What I lacked was the animal which *also* belongs to human destiny ... But give me a body then. Camus, *The myth of* Sisyphus, p. 27.

the categories of life. For this, it boils down to thinking the unthinkable (cf. *Philosophical fragments*).[42] Do not think ill of the paradox, this passion of thought, and the thinkers who lack it are like lovers without passion, which is to say lousy partners. But the climax of all passion is always to want its own loss, and it is equally the supreme passion of the intellect to seek the shock, although this shock in some way or another leads it to its own ruin. This is the supreme paradox of thought, to want to discover something that it cannot think itself.

In this book Kierkegaard opposes his method to the Socratic method (see the *Meno*: learning is remembering). Socrates wonders how the question is possible. For him, the activity of questioning implies knowing and not knowing. So the ground of the question lies precisely in remembrance and reminiscence. What does that signify for Kierkegaard?

1. For Plato, all research is research into memory. Truth does not come into the soul from the outside: one who does not know instead only has to take recourse to re-

42. *Philosophical fragments* has appeared in French translation under both titles: '*Miettes*' by Petit (1947, Seuil) and '*Riens*' by Ferlov & Gateau (1948, Gallimard).

membering in order to become conscious of what one knows.

2. When truth is as if internal, then from that moment on master Socrates is but an opportunity for the disciple to recollect (the obstetrician).
3. Forgotten knowledge was always already there. So an instant has no consistency whatsoever by itself. The temporal starting point does not matter. The instant falls into the inessential.

To this, Kierkegaard will oppose that which according to him is the true contribution of Christianity. For him the master is not the occasion it is Christ. Then the moment is something essential. This refers to the issue of the historicity of Christ and of the first man (role of the first, cf. the first love). With the Greeks there is no such first thing (cf. position of a circular time). Henceforth the disciple cannot recover the truth in himself. It is necessary that 'the disciple in himself be a truth'.[43] Henceforth the master presents him the condition to understand the

43. 'From the Socratic point of view, the moment is not to be seen or to be distinguished, it does not exist, has not been, and will not come. Therefore, the learner himself is the truth, and the moment of occasion is merely a jest... Kierkegaard, S. / Climacus, J. (1985). *Philosophical fragments*. Princeton University Press: Princeton, IV 218.

truth. The non-truth of the disciple signifies not just that he is outside of the truth, but against the truth signified by Christ the redeemer. The disciple has lost the condition because of his own fault. At this level the essential concept is that of the sin. The master is no longer an opportunity, the instant becomes decisive. Kierkegaard can say 'all the pathos of Greek thought focuses on memory, all the pathos of our thought focuses on the instant.[44]

But what does the instant signify? It is one and the same as his first theme, the unthinkable. Christianity is the paradox. The instant is one and the same as what purely exists. This existence only arises as soon as your back is turned. What is the absolutely different? Sometimes, Kierkegaard says, it is the pure existed, what purely exists, sometimes it is the instant, sometimes sin, the fundamental category of faith, in the end it is repetition. What does he have in common with all this? In his battle against rationalism Kierkegaard attacks the themes of the rationalist tradition. There were two strangely mixed themes in this tradition, one concerning the relation between essence and existence, the other concerning quality and quantity.

44. 'Whereas the Greek pathos focuses on recollection, the pathos of our project focuses on the moment, and no wonder, for is it not an exceedingly pathos-filled matter to come into existence from the state of "not to be"?' Ibid., IV 190.

3.2.3 Essence and existence, quality and quantity

The first: the ontological proof seems to define the rationalist position regarding existence. It comes in all kinds of shapes, appearing [first] with Saint Anselm. He wants to prove the existence of God, that is to say Existence. He takes a phrase from the Old Testament literally: 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God'.[45] Now, whoever says God does not exist contradicts himself. To do it you have to define God without postulating his existence. Saint Anselm says that God is the being such that nothing greater can be thought. Now, in supposing that such a being does not exist we are in flat-out contradiction, because we can think a greater being, only this time existing. So, I cannot think the idea of God without the object of this idea positing itself as existing. Therefore within ontological thought existence is deduced from essence. His essence envelops existence. There is a paradox, because God is evidently the only case of being like that. The idea of the table poses possible existence, but not the real thing. God is the only case, because he is infinite.

So existence is a perfection (cf. Descartes).[46] What seems strange is that the prima facie evidence is only valid

45. Psalm 14-1.

46. Refers to Descartes' *Appendix to the fifth set of objections and replies*

if we consent to treat existence as a property. Can we treat existence as a perfection, that is to say, as ultimately an attribute? Not at first glance. Existence is the position in the being of the subject of judgment. Existence is positional and not attributive. Since the Middle Ages two critiques (double current) were developed against the ontological proof. For some, God exists necessarily, but if he is possible. For others, God exists necessarily, but if he exists. The one will lead to Leibniz, the other to Kant.

The *Meditations* are accompanied by objections. In the fifth one, Descartes develops the ontological proof and we see the two objections.

1. The one leading to Kant. The proof concludes the existence of God from his possibility. It treats existence as a property. Now, existence is irreducible to a property, yet we do not know that the thing already exists. It is in the third part of the *Critique of pure reason* that Kant will take this critique up anew.

383-384, regarding the fifth Meditation: '...in the case of God necessary existence is in fact a property in the strictest sense of the term, since it applies to him alone and forms part of his essence as it does of no other thing. [. .] possible existence is a perfection in the idea of the triangle, just as necessary existence is a perfection in the idea of God'. See *The philosophical writings of Descartes, v. II*, p. 263.

2. The one which leads to Leibniz seems very different. It consists in saying that we can conclude existence from possibility on the condition that God be possible. It is not because I form an idea in my mind that this idea is possible (break with Descartes: clear distinction between idea and possibility). Moreover, Leibniz thinks this is feasible and reproaches Descartes only for not having done it, but he himself does it.

But do the objections get to the heart of what the supporters of the ontological proof had said? Did they treat existence as a property? First of all, they insisted that this was only valid for God. Moreover, it was not a deduction but an intuition in which we see an existence in the essence. It is absurd to define existentialism as a doctrine in which the existent is irreducible to the essence, because that was already said before them. Proponents of the ontological prove have really not ignored this irreducibility. The ontological proof was the typical example of a rationalist physics and a mathematical physics. Descartes made a veritable critique of properties by replacing them with the idea of quantity and relation. The difference between two bodies is merely one of extension, of movement and

position. The other differences are never anything but in function of life. Everything is difference of movement.

Existence, essence = metaphysical theme. Quantity and quality = physical theme.

Kierkegaard will treat these themes as being one and the same, but at the same time he will call upon the rights of what exists and of quality. The existence of God, he says, appears when we let go of the proof, when we turn our back. It is quite like quantity / quality, says Kierkegaard. The problem is why at some point a quantitative continuity transforms itself into a new quality. A quantity of temperature decreases in continuous manner, the water becomes ice, but the ice appears all of a sudden as a new quality. The qualitative continuity all of a sudden entails a new quality. Why at that moment rather than at another? For Kierkegaard, what exists is quality. It is the leap, the qualitative jump. The one cannot engender the other. This is an important theme, because in physics there is an interesting occurrence concerning super-saturation and all transformations. By active processes we go beyond the normal moment of the apparition of a quality without having it appear. Then, thanks to special bodies, a new quality is made to appear. The two themes in Kierkegaard mingle, because in a certain way in the same manner that

existence appears behind the back of consciousness and that quality arises suddenly and not progressively. Kierkegaard is not original there. With him the right of what exists, the right of quality, the instant, the qualitative jump, what exists and the quality are one and the same as the instant (great error of scientism).

Final point: Kierkegaard tells us something similar regarding sin. There he is much more original. These three first themes are taken up again in a veritable philosophy of sin. He opposes a Christian philosophy to a Greek philosophy. It is to oppose Abraham and Job to Socrates. He thinks that sin cannot be engendered from sinfulness (sinning is a property of human nature). We conclude the nothingness of sin from an imperfection of human essence. Thus the rationalist conception of evil is like the counter-proof of the rationalist conception of essences. Kierkegaard's theme will be: we can never conclude sin from sinfulness. It also implies a qualitative leap. Sin is the brute apparition of a new quality. Sin must then be thought and related to anxiety, which is the relation of consciousness with the absolutely different. Whence the concept of anxiety, which is a category of thought that he would like to see replace the old notion of the imperfection of human nature.

Thought treats its object as the same. For Greek philosophy there is a unity to the intellect. To give a new task to thought from there. That was new. Hence thought is in the paradox.

We approach a definition of existentialism: irreducibility of essence and existence and the primacy of existence over essence. Is that correct? Perhaps still for that of Sartre, but in Kierkegaard it is in fact very different. Kierkegaard calls this 'psychological investigations of sinful consciousnesses'.[47] Shestov calls this 'torrid and glacial waves'.[48] Existence does not favor a theme. They want to make human existence the new object of thought. Thought must know that which is essentially other than itself, and the greatest confusion would be to treat this other as starting from the same. 'Anxiety is the right concept for thought and for psychology' [49] Insofar it is a psychological

47. See the introduction to *The concept of anxiety*: 'The present work has taken as its theme the psychological treatment of "anxiety" in such a way that it has in mind and before its eye the dogma of original sin'.

48. For Shestov every philosophical inquiry 'breaks' upon original sin as if it were a were a wave. See the concluding lines to part II, chapter 10 of *Athens and Jerusalem* (p. 193): 'original sin weighs heavily on fallen humanity, and all the efforts that it makes to deliver itself break, like waves on a rock, against the invisible wall of prejudices that we venerate as eternal truths'.

49. Source could not be traced.

state, anxiety is completely stretched into something irreducible to psychology. Also send the psychologist back to another domain [than that] of the psychologist. Anxiety is the psychological state which corresponds to sin, which becomes an existential dimension. Anxiety is psychological consciousness directed to an object which is irreducible to it. Anxiety is thought insofar as is apprehends its own irreducible difference with its object.

3.2.4 Repetition

The categories become existential when thought thinks something, which is the difference itself between that something and thought. The true function of thought becomes the other and not the same (relatable to Hegelianism). It must reconcile itself with life. Apprehending sin as non-psychological is proper to anxiety. Then it becomes possible for philosophy to think against reason. The three questions: can we have a body?; can we get married?; can we be Christian?, refer to the same thing. They signify: can we reconcile thought with life? This leads us to a philosophy of existence. Then the fundamental category of existence will appear as repetition. Kierkegaard says 'I am the poet of faith'.[50] Being Christian is impossible and

50. Refers to Kierkegaard's pseudonym Johannes de Silentio, who

nevertheless he is it. Being Christian, marrying, and having a body are one and the same as this new function of thought which poses its object as impossible: the paradox. The new object of thought is the absurd. Being Christian is absurd. Kierkegaard announces the repetition which is no longer the question but the answer to the question. Shestov here reproaches Kierkegaard for not having maintained the questions. The answer stems from the absurd, it is the repetition. It is something unique in modern philosophy: how come that from the most diverse backgrounds, without influencing [each other], there are these attempts, up till here just attempts, to construct an original and paradoxical concept of repetition? Two authors who have nothing to do with each other. At the beginning of his book on repetition, Kierkegaard says it is not repetition in nature. He claims to form a concept of a more profound repetition of which physical repetition is merely a physical degradation. He says: Hegel avails himself of a concept of contradiction to create his philosophy. Now, he says with humor, this concept is a German concept. He wants a concept proper to himself here, one from among

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both affirms and denies being a poet. Kierkegaard wrote 'I am a poet. But long before I became a poet I was intended for the life of religious individuality' (*JP* VI §6718).

ourselves: monotony of Danish life = repetition (human of course). It is properly Danish.[51]

A century later, the Americans rediscover Tarde, a sociologist who had fallen into obscurity. For political reasons, Durkheim (he was a reactionary) took control over the teaching of Tarde and smothered him. Tarde wrote a curious book: *L'opposition universelle*,[52] one of the best theories of negation. There he seriously says that the idea of negation is a German idea and he wants a French concept. His whole thesis consists in showing that opposition, that contradiction is nothing but a particular case of repetition.

Nietzsche is certainly not a poet of faith, but still, as with Kierkegaard and Socrates, he wants to return to Pre-Socratism. Zarathustra has a secret, he spits it out, it is a serpent which is the eternal return. This exact moment will return and the thought will also return. He too says it is not a physical repetition (in *Ecce homo*). Every return, he says, which happens in the world presupposes the eternal return. Eternal return explains us physical repetition,

51. 'It is incredible how much flurry has been made in Hegelian philosophy over mediation [...]. 'Mediation' is a foreign word; 'repetition' is a good Danish word, and I congratulate the Danish language on a philosophical term' *Repetition* III 189.

52. First published in 1897.

not the other way round. The eternal return is an original concept of repetition. Freud is the first to teach us that humanity has lived under a sacrosanct concept: the pleasure principle. We naturally seek out that which gives us pleasure. Now, Freud discovers more and more psychic facts which seem to rely on the contrary. We reproduce our past failures, [but] not to overcome them, et cetera. Freud himself hesitates (*Beyond the pleasure principle*). He wonders whether we cannot sample this pleasure by complicating it. He thinks there is a more profound principle in life, the principle of repetition. But he is not a philosopher, and he hesitates. Sometimes, it is he who leads us toward a return to the irrational. Famous thesis, the paradox of death drives. The instinct of preservation is precisely the death drive: I refuse all death which is not mine. But in other texts, Freud also tries to elaborate an original form of psychic repetition, when he speaks in relation to the superego.

Staying with these authors, what do these attempts, which have not yet formed a concept, signify? Kierkegaard's *Fear and trembling*: 'for me it is not about extracting a change from repetition, but about changing the repetition in something interior, in the object of freedom itself, in its supreme interest'.[53] In *The concept of anxiety*: 'habit appears

53. This is not from *Fear and trembling* (in which the word 'repetition'

whenever eternity withdraws from repetition'.[54] It concerns neither psychic repetition nor mechanical forms of psychism (habits), but a more profound repetition which is neither the contrary of freedom, nor the alienation of psychic life. It is one and the same as freedom. Here [lies] a relation with the existentialists. The psychic state is turned toward something. See Sartre's section on Husserl: 'all consciousness is consciousness of something'.[55] Consciousness is no longer defined as interiority, it is transcendence at the moment of going beyond itself. Anxiety is a psychological state which is turned toward something other which is precisely sin, which is not a psychological state. The serious [part] is the movement by which consciousness is directed toward a structure of existence. It is an attempt to place psychology in relation with something other. It brings this back to Platonic recognition. For him,

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does not even appear). Deleuze seems to paraphrase a comment *about* that work from *The concept of anxiety*: '[the author states that] in the realm of spirit, the task is not to wrest a change from repetition or to find oneself moderately comfortable during the repetition, as if spirit stood only in an external relation to the repetition of spirit [...], but to transform repetition into something inward, into freedom's own task, into its highest interest, so that while everything changes, it can actually realize repetition'. See *The concept of anxiety*, IV 291.

54. *The concept of anxiety*, IV 415.

55. *Being and nothingness*, Introduction, §3.

recognition is the essential concept of ancient philosophy. He thinks that Christian philosophy must break with [it]. It is discontinuity. There is the independence of cases. Physical repetition changes nothing ideally in the object. It becomes cosmological. Kierkegaard directs himself toward the concept of a proper psychic repetition. With the eternal return, Nietzsche goes towards a cosmological interpretation. They have all seen the possibility of replacing the dialectic by a different method, a more concrete one according to them.

Kierkegaard distinguishes three stages of existence: esthetic, ethical, and religious.

The first is the stage of seduction, of Mozart's Don Giovanni. The life of the aesthetic can only be realized by a repetition. See *The new Heloise* where Saint-Preux repeats his past.[56] But this is on a physical level. [It is] impossible, the attempt is doomed to fail.

The second is the stage of generality. We enter into the domain of the law. The central situation becomes marriage. The ethical repetition is oriented towards the future, the same tasks are repeated, and the same virtues are sought out. What assures the failure of this stage is sin,

56. A work by Rousseau.

which demonstrates the conflict between singularity and generality at the heart of the ethical stage.

The third stage is the one where repetition takes on its true meaning. He invokes Abraham and the sacrifice of the child. God demands the absurd from Abraham. He must lose everything in order to recover [it].

The dialectic made appeal to the negative. The notion of repetition also appeals to the negative, but on another level. Kierkegaard says that it is the concept of recovery, of repetition become psychic, and it is one and the same with freedom. What is the application? Repetition is the seriousness of life. Then what is grounding for? If the determination of a ground serves nothing, then why do it? It must contribute something new, which is repetition. Odd group if we truly take it serious. The truth of a psychic repetition. For Nietzsche the determination of a ground delivers something new to us, which is the eternal return.

3.2.5 Eternal return in Nietzsche

It is a very fraught notion. Kierkegaard forged his repetition against Plato. He opposed it to Platonic reminiscence. Socrates is the character obsessed over. Nietzsche thinks to go beyond philosophy through and in a return to Pre-Socratism. He never stops telling Zarathustra [that]

these animals are familiar.[57] Is that all which comes back? Everything returns, including the thought that everything returns. What arises is the announcement that everything returns. The exploration of the most ancient is the task of the new man. The overman is one who knows what it is about, who is confronted with the ground itself. With the Pre-Socratics, the eternal return had three signs: Astronomical, Cosmological, and Physiological. Nietzsche has interpreted the eternal return in an original way.

1. The astronomical sense: a series of spheres nested in each other. The sphere of fixed things, the interior spheres in relation with others. There is a time when the stars will resume the same position relative to the fixed starts. The Greeks call this the Great Year, the smallest common denominator of all periods. It appeals to a local movement.
2. The physical and cosmological sense. Is it homogeneous with the first meaning? Appeal to a veritable qualitative alternation according to which the world goes through cycles of generation and corruption, of birth and destruction, of catastrophes, water, fire.

57. Or: informed, aware. The reference is of course to *Thus spoke Zarathustra.*

Periods of contraction and expansion, recommencement of the world.

From Empedocles onward the astronomical meaning takes the upper hand. With Plato and Aristotle, in any case, is there not already a kind of rationalization which prevents us from comprehending the sense? Nietzsche knew how to recover the veritable meaning of the eternal return. With Aristotle the eternal return is first of all related to astronomy, to the movement of spheres nested in each other. The alternations of contraction and deconstruction are only valid for the sub-human world. The mode of local movement thus regulates even the stars. In the eternal return the very principle of local movement follows the cosmological principle. Enormous consequence: the idea that everything returns is watered down. What returns, what repeats itself are similar things regarding the species (Empedocles already has that). With the Stoics we come back to a veritable original content. The eternal return: the Stoics submit the stars themselves to alteration and corruption. It is only belatedly that the signification is astronomical. Deplorable, because [it is] a mechanist vision. There is the primacy of the qualitative, cosmological sense. Nietzsche tells us that the eternal return must

not be confused with cycles. He finds himself before the same problem as the Stoics: mechanism. He fights against the idea dear to mechanism. The eternal return cannot be reduced to a purely physical repetition. His has two meanings: psychically, the return, and cosmologically, the principle from which we must understand the very sense of the return.

With Nietzsche Zarathustra is in a relation of existence. Dionysus, the secret of becoming. It is an enunciable relation. There is a coherence of certain Nietzschean themes: the will to power, everything is becoming, accompanied by the concept of value. What Nietzsche has retained in the first place is the affirmation of a becoming. The idea that everything becomes shows us the vanity of the concept of Being. The notion of value then appears: what we consider stable presents itself as sections taken in becoming, as snapshots. For Nietzsche, the theory of values is never separated from a certain critique of values and the mystifications which it entails. It is a polemical notion, it denounces. Thereafter the notion of value would lose its explosive character. It serves to guarantee a certain order instead of questioning that order. There is a going beyond the moral, ethical problem. It is posed as power. It is about asking what the human being can do. In his

cycs, the law and duty separate the human being from a certain dimension of the human being. A moral vision will be reintroduced, but it will no longer be that of the law and duty. The modes of existence are not having the same value (possible solution). Nietzsche's first theme is thus the opposition of being and becoming. The notion of value is the relation between becoming and power. A constant idea in Nietzsche is that of the strong and the weak. The weak thus defines itself by a power and it will also have to go all the way to the end. There are therefore degrees of value for the weak ones. In *The will to power*, [there is] suppleness, spirituality. The root of willing seems to be one and the same as the essence of becoming.

There is a more profound level: it concerns reflecting on the particular being of becoming. What would this being proper to becoming be? It is the eternal return in relation with Zarathustra. Nietzsche tells us that becoming must not be confused with something become. Becoming cannot be reduced to anything that has become. The cycle and the seasons are things become. This is to say that there is a being of becoming. Becoming is not what it becomes. Becoming is the return of what becomes, it is what returns. A theory of being which reintroduces itself: ultimately repetition will signify this veritable being of be-

coming. [It is] the best way to distinguish becoming from that which becomes.

As for Kierkegaard, his reconciliation is a constant theme in German philosophy: the idea that something is lost. Less than the negation of a theory of a being than a very original creation. Dionysus is in this sense less profound than Zarathustra. We understand the secret of Zarathustra: everything returns, including thought. It invites us to forge a new concept of repetition. The eternal return is not reduced to a purely physical repetition. Thought also returns. It is a psychic repetition (conciliation between the will and duty), cosmological repetition (what returns in repeating itself is physical, since the return of what becomes is the being of becoming). Physical repetition in relation to the cosmological signification can only be understood in relation to the principle of eternal return. It is the attempt to forge an original concept.

In Nietzsche, the difference between the weak and the strong is not the one the fascists saw. His idea is that the weak are not those whose power is less. The physically weak can compensate for that with a spiritual power, with the ruse, with suppleness. The weak, by definition, is one who does not go all the way to the end of his capacities, because he does not dare to, and especially because he does

not know that one must go all the way to the end. This is not theoretical knowledge. What is it about for the human being insofar as it is a human being? This is Nietzsche's question. The weak are as if perpetually separated from their power. They are separated from it in the name of the law. It separates from power, because at the same time that it shows me my fundamental possibility, it forbids it to me: God and the tree. In Zarathustra, Nietzsche takes the Lutheran hymn literally: 'God is dead'.[58] Are we [thereby] thrown into immorality? We find existentialism again. There are ultimately two modes of existence. Immoralism is not immorality. Immoralism is a philosophical vision which leads to the problem of the mode of existence. We cannot just do anything. Moreover, there are things which can no longer be done when one is strong. Nietzsche condemns the paltry and the mediocre in *Beyond Good and Evil*. Something comes to replace morality. There are things one could only do by mystifying oneself.

58. The hymn *O Darkest Woe* (Johann von Rist, 1657): O sorrow dread! / Our God is dead / ...etc.

3.2.6 Intermediate conclusion I

Shestov asked: 'what accounts for all the victims of the Inquisition?'.[59] Why here and know? Reason will remain silent as long as it has not learned anything about the singularity. These are the equatorial zones of thought, a struggle against evidence. Let thought go all the way to the end, even if nothing is there at the end. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche went further. Kierkegaard wants to reconcile thought with the categories of life. Thought must think the absolutely different. With Nietzsche, it is Heraclitus and not Job who is invoked. There is thus a relation between thought and ground which tells us something bizarre. Thought ultimately goes beyond reason, goes all the way to the end.

These existential questions lead us to distinguish two modes of existence: knowing and ignorance, truth and error no longer relate to an order of reason, but to a mode

59. A question originally posed by the literary critic Belinsky and later recollected by Shestov: 'If I should succeed in ascending to the highest rung of the ladder of development, even there I would ask you to render me an account of all the victims of circumstance in life and history, of all the victims of chance, of superstition, of the Inquisition of Philip II. etc., etc.: otherwise I would fling myself headfirst from the highest rung. I do not wish happiness even as a gift, if my mind is not at rest regarding each one of my blood brothers'. *Belinsky – Letter to Botkin, March 1, 1841*, cited in the preface to Shestov's *Kierkegaard and the existential philosophy*.

of existence. The inauthentic mode of existence in Nietzsche: the herd, the plebs spending its time not knowing. The idea of the ground is thus related to existence: the human being exists in such manner that it reveals the ground (Heidegger, see Nietzsche's influence on Heidegger. See *The will to power*, tome 2, page 126 NRF. 'We Hyperboreans').[60] For Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, not for Shestov, thought is not just in an immediate relation with what grounds, but what grounds even reveals something to us, a secret which for Kierkegaard and Nietzsche is nothing but repetition. The ground brings us something radically new: a repetition that is oriented towards the future (Abraham demands from God that all will be restored to him).

3.3 The question which yields a principle to solve all problems: Leibniz

Second type of question: the question which gives us a principle to solve all problems (Leibniz). The idea of a universal science, a rule which allows for solving everything. Other attempt, of the mathematical type. *Discourse on the Method*: the method is a way to solve all unresolved problems. Leibniz reproaches Descartes for not having created

60. 'We Hyperboreans' was a title Nietzsche considered for the preface of *The will to power*.

what he promised: 'the art of inventing'.[61] We must not confuse the attempts at a universal language (Renaissance) which Descartes denounces in a letter, 'our reasoning does not concern the words, but the ideas',[62] with the mathematical attempts.

The *Discourse on the method* we get the impression that we remain unsatisfied. After having announced such upheavals it merely resulted in four rules. But are they also as innocent as they seem? The meaning of the Cartesian method: the method is mathematical in its essence and can be applied to non-mathematical problems. This idea is very common in the 17th century and culminates with Spinoza. Casting philosophy, metaphysics, into mathe-

61. For Leibniz, 'logic' comprises proof *and* discovery, which led him to an idea of a general sciences divided into two domains, one being the art of judging and the other being the art of invention (Cf. *New Essays on human understanding* §476). Leibniz further gave a systematic account of his objections to Cartesianism in *Animadversiones in partem generalem Principiorum Cartesianorum*.

62. Descartes' letter to Mersenne from November 20th, 1629: 'the discovery of such a language depends upon the true philosophy. For without that philosophy it is impossible to number and order all the thoughts of men or even to separate them out into clear and simple thoughts, which in my opinion is the great secret for acquiring true scientific knowledge. If someone were to explain correctly what are the simple ideas in the human imagination out of which all human thoughts are compounded, and if his explanation were generally received, I would dare to hope for a universal language very easy to learn, to speak, and to write'.

matics. This trend continues until after the *Discourse*. But does not something else intervene in the *Meditations*? The preface: the book will clarify problems which the *Discourse* did not know how to pose. Is there not a change of the doubt and of the Cogito? The 'I think therefore I am' does not appear in the *Meditations*, where there is 'I who doubt, I think, I am a thing that thinks'. A curious substitution is carried out. A metaphysical ground has replaced a mathematical method.

The analysis of the Ancients is restricted to the considerations of figures, regarding the algebra of the moderns it is restricted to rules and numbers which make it obscure. Descartes claims to fix all that. Descartes claims to discover a hidden unity across all these obscurities, it is the notion of relation which has two meanings, unity and generality. In mathematics, solving a problem and posing it are the same thing. A problem always has a solution which it merits in function of symbolic systems, of available algorithms (see the difficulty of making an addition or multiplication with roman numerals). The idea that something is conserved in the communication of movement does not come from experience. Descartes answers and says *momentum* is mass times velocity. Leibniz will say: 'Descartes is wrong, it is mass times velocity squared'. Descartes was certainly

wrong, but if Leibniz has made the better experiments, it is because he has a system of infinitesimal analysis at his disposal. Without this analysis one cannot answer with mass times velocity squared. We cannot separate a scientific result from the type of approach at our disposal. Our childhood experience and pedagogy makes us forget that. The scholar is obviously not a student. Now, Descartes' method is a means to pose problems in another way, one which specifies the meaning of a universal method. It concerns the construction of a mathematical problem such that the totality of possible cases is posited all at once. See Pappus' problem in Antiquity which Descartes mentions in his *Geometry*.[63] Until then they solved it at the level of each particular case. Descartes invents, and he is not alone in this, analytic geometry and poses the universality of possible cases all at once. What permits him to do this is

63. The *Geometry* is an appendix to the *Discourse on the method*. Pappus' problem runs as follows: 'if three straight lines are given in position, and if straight lines be drawn from one and the same point, making given angles with the three given lines, and if there be given the ratio of the rectangle contained by two of the lines so drawn to the square of the other, the point lies on a solid locus given in position, namely, one of the three conic sections. And, if lines be drawn making given angles with four straight lines given in position, and if the rectangle of two of them bears a given ratio to the rectangle of the other two; then, in the same way, the point lies on a conic section given in position'.

very curious. Amazing text of the *Meditations*, the second, about the piece of wax. Everything in the wax changes and yet I say it is the same wax. How is it possible? It is not the subsisting extension, as is claimed. He cannot say that, because he will not discover the idea of extension until the fifth Meditation. A logical argument, and in fact he says it in the text: '...is it the extension? No'.[64] So the point in this passage is knowing what grounds the judgment of identity. What remains is extension alright, but that is not what grounds the judgment, the Cogito, thought, does that. This passage is an illustration of the Cogito, [of] that which is coherent.

Conclusion: thought grounds the judgment of identity and it cannot be confused with imagination, which could only conceive of a finite number of cases. We recover Pappus' problem. The Ancients only solved it with the imagination. Thought goes beyond the imagination, but the relation between them is curious, because thought cannot surpass imagination unless it thinks itself. The pur-

64. Second Meditation, §31-32: 'What now is this extension? Is it not also unknown? For it becomes greater when the wax is melted, greater when it is boiled, and greater still when the heat increases; and I should not conceive [clearly] according to truth what wax is, if I did not think that even this piece that we are considering is capable of receiving more variations in extension than I have ever imagined'.

cst algebraic thought implies a geometric design of coordinates in our imagination, but it is not identical to that. Descartes will reveal the transcendence of thought to the imagination.

Why did Descartes' predecessors shackle thought to the imagination? We have to think of their system. The new thing about analytic geometry is the secret of the correspondence between geometry and algebra. The Ancients sought the system of correspondence, but what blocked them was the idea of a geometric heterogeneity. In the work of *Viète* there are grand principles.[65] Two works can add or subtract: homogeneous product, but in multiplication: heterogeneity.

The history of the horse collar in Antiquity. One day an archeologist-knight, commander Lefèvre Desnouettes,[66] looked at the pottery, [and noticed] the harness, the collar was on the neck and not on the shoulders of the animal. He perceived they only used a tiny portion of the horse's strength. He had the impression of understanding everything. He also understands that slavery replaces animal force. Once it is realized, does this invention not

65. François Viète (1540-1603), French mathematician. In a letter to Mersenne from 1637, Descartes writes "I began where he [Viète] left off... See *The philosophical writings of Descartes v III*, p. 78 (479).

66. One of Napoleon's cavalry commanders.

seem obvious to us now? Descartes will treat all powers as lines, there again someone had to think it. In *Rules for the direction of the mind*, Descartes says 'extension is what is absolute, but within extension it is the line which is absolute'.[67] It already says everything. Practical consequence of Descartes' discovery: revolution of equations. Until then, multi-step equations could only be solved indirectly. By making this progress in mathematics, Descartes does not discover what was already [there]. He finds a new system of expression. A symbol is not defined by what it represents, but by the operations it makes possible, the system of equations in which it falls.

The rules of the method then take on new signification. The first. It is not enough to search for evidence, we must first of all have found a domain in which evidence takes on a signification, and it does so only when ideas can be reduced to it, as if to a criterion, and this only if we go beyond the heterogeneity of structures. We must install ourselves on a terrain such that corresponding ideas are related to the criterion of the evidence. It can only become a guarantee of truth once the Cartesian revolution

67. The phrase is '...where measurable items are concerned, extension is something absolute, but among the varieties of extension length is something absolute.... *Rules for the direction of the mind*, Rule 6, §383.

is carried out. The second and the third: the difference between two representative contents is only ever a difference of degree. This too supposes the revolution. In the domain of symbolism, Descartes opened the road to positing the problem itself. But as we have seen, there is a passage from a mathematical method to a metaphysical ground in Descartes' work. In the *Discourse* the 'I think therefore I am' is presented as the clear and distinct model. The 'therefore' is not a consequence. In fact, it is one example of truth among other mathematics of relational form. The 'therefore' indicates a necessary relation made in the order of knowledge. The formula no longer appears in the *Meditations*. Why? There is already enough in the first formula to refute every idealist interpretation of Cartesian thought. In 'I am' there is more than in 'I doubt'. Descartes poses a being more profound than thought: it transcends toward a Being of which it is an attribute. We go from knowledge to Being. Now, we cannot reproach Descartes for having reified thought. *Res* is substance. Is there not already the mark of an evolution? The 'I think therefore I am' makes us pass to Being. Descartes discovers the domain of metaphysical ground, irreducible to relations which unify the objects of knowledge itself. Descartes' ambiguity is the price to pay for the clarity of his style.

What do we learn at the level of this ground? The duality is not just found on the level of the Cogito, but on that of the word 'idea' [as well]. There is hardly any notion as obscure as that of a clear and distinct idea. It is, for example, extension and the determination of extension, then the idea of God, the idea of the Cogito. Difference in the very form of the idea. The idea of the triangle is fundamentally comprehended: the subject posing it goes beyond it. Such an idea refers to a Cogito. The idea of God is only conceived and not comprehended. We cannot comprehend the infinite. The idea of God immediately manifests a presence. In that case the idea is the presence itself. The two directions ultimately to not reconcile themselves in Descartes. Two senses, one in the works, one in the letters. In those he says God is the creator of eternal truths themselves. A curious idea, because the ontology said that pure essences pre-existed the understanding of God. The essences themselves are reduced to the simple status of existents. The consequence is always the affirmation of an order of being more profound than the order of knowledge. God creates mathematical truths in a free act.

Descartes leaves us with three problems. A logical problem: Descartes tells us that the clear and distinct idea

is the present idea. The obscure and confused designate a mutilated state of the idea, but we do not account for it, because we clog it with other elements of affectivity. The relation between Descartes and the Cartesians? With Spinoza and Leibniz we encounter the adequate idea. They pose the question 'what is present in a true idea?'. They go beyond the clear and distinct idea, towards the adequate idea. The first reproaches Descartes for being too fast, the other for being too easy (for employing this word abusively). Now, what presents itself in a true idea? In its essence, an idea is a symbolism and not a representation. Descartes had said this from a mathematical perspective, but not from the point of view of a metaphysical ground. It will be Leibniz' great originality to search for this second point. In Descartes, the determination of the ground is thus lagging behind the mathematical method where the idea was representative of something. Through Spinoza and Leibniz the clear and distinct idea takes on new meaning. The idea becomes expressive. It concerns a new determination of the ground itself, which is determined from a relation of expression and which is discovered in direct relation with the symbolism. The method posed a mathematical mechanism. Mechanism: between two extended things there are only differences of degree, figures,

proportions, movements. Extension was conceived as an inert and dormant mass. God put it into motion. In the *Principles of philosophy*, Descartes says that there is a difference of reason between attribute and substance. The extended thing, he says, is something more. The third difficulty concerns the notion of substance. [What is] the *Res* for Descartes?

Descartes' entire equivocity consists in that he maintains the idea as a mere representation from the point of view of metaphysical ground. At this level, a philosopher takes over from Descartes: Leibniz, who recovers the Renaissance's theory of symbolization. What is expressed in the true idea? The compound symbolizes with the simple, Leibniz tells us.

3.3.1 Leibniz and the concept of expression

Curious oeuvre: lots of letters in which he exposes his philosophy according to the level of his correspondents. The plurality of levels symbolize with each other. He discovers the principle of sufficient reason in metaphysics. He discovers force in physics. And curiously, the two results will support each other. An extraordinary construction of problems solved by a play of principles: identity, sufficient reason, finality, indiscernibles, and continuity. They serve

him in the construction of all problems which ultimately symbolize: universal knowledge.

Physics. He realizes Descartes was wrong. It is mass times velocity squared which is conserved. Is it a simple question of fact? Malebranche also knew that it was mass times velocity squared, and he has concluded that it was of no importance to Cartesianism after all. Inversely, for Leibniz it suffices to confirm that extension is not substance. He reproaches Descartes for having confused relative for absolute. What is conserved is relative speed.

Take A and B.
V is the speed of A before the shock
Y « « « B « «
X « « « A after «
Z « « « B « «

What is conserved is V-y = X2. Only squaring assures positive V. It is the quantity of active force which is conserved. Now, force defined in the instant is the reason for the future effect. This, and not extension, is substance. This will be a phenomenal order. Force is expressed in extension. It is substance, which is to say a power of unification, of dynamism, of a completely different order than the physical

one. Whence Leibniz' theme, the desubstantialization of extension. Is there already, on the physical plane, an answer to the question of what is that which expresses itself? Extension is composed, but it is infinitely divisible. We will never find a simple thing when remaining on its level. It is the critique of atomism, which has claimed to find the simple on the level of the composed. Sure, there are simple elements, but these are dynamic unities, not material ones. Force is the real reason of extension. The metaphysical search had confirmed this, because Leibniz had found the principle of sufficient reason, which had to express itself with the force of an inerrancy of the predicate to the subject. In the third *Meditation*, Descartes tells us that God creates the world at each instant. This is why there is a radical discontinuity of time. One instant is never the reason of the following one. The theology of continuous creation constitutes a geometric representation. Nature is then justifiable with a mechanic science, because it has no power, no potentiality. Everything in the world itself was extension and movement. There was a reduction of physics to geometry. Take a body at moment T. What is the difference between this body when immobile and when moving? Nothing, according to Descartes. Thus the result 'mass times velocity' can only be found when the problem

of movement is posed as Descartes posed it. For Leibniz, mass times velocity squared means that there is force beyond extension. The moving body is different at moment T, because it contains the power of going further as the reason of its future moments. Leibniz could only discover mass times velocity-squared thanks to infinitesimal calculus. Rest is but an infinitely small speed, and there is a difference between the two bodies. Rest is a particular case of movement. Thus the relation between force and future states is a differential, an integral. 1=1/2+1/4+1/5...

For Leibniz, Descartes' great error is to have confused extension and substance. He did not see the most profound, which is force. With Leibniz a grand theory of the phenomenon is founded, though very different from Kant's. The revolution is enormous. Leibniz can reproach Descartes for having maintained the identity of substance and extension, whereas they are contradictory. What does 'beyond extension' signify? It is not like there are forces on the one hand and extension on the other. This is necessarily posed. Force demands it. Leibniz gives a status to symbolization. Extension is the expression of force. Consequence: Cartesian mechanism does not contain its own reason. Exchange of letters between the English chemist Boyle and Spinoza. He sends him the result of two bodies

of nitrate and saltpeter, and tells him we see very well that everything in nature happens mechanically (difference of [degree]). Spinoza answers that he is pushing an open door. There is a new task, which is overcoming Descartes' error of having raised extension into substance. Mechanism is true, but we need a reason of proportion itself. Spinoza then opposes Leibniz and restores the notion of essence. There is an essence of nitrate and saltpeter since the question subsists: why this proportion rather than another? According to Spinoza, the reason can never be derived from finality, which ultimately denies mechanism. On the contrary, Leibniz will find this reason in finality. He first introduces the old argument: demonstration by maximum and minimum is the best. A minimum of means to obtain the maximum of possible effects. Everything happens by mechanism, but it does not have its reason in itself. Leibniz is in the process of determining a new nature of the ground, and this is the reason. The reason for something is what expresses itself, manifests itself, and therefore we have to seek being beyond what manifests. There is the being of what manifests itself. Leibniz: 'the short path of substance' on the first page of the *Monadology*: 'There must be simple [substances], because there are composites'.[68]

68. Leibniz, *Monadology* §2.

Leibniz fights atomism and Cartesianism, and prefights a famous antinomy, Kant's second one in the *Critique of pure reason*, 'the thesis that there is simplicity, the antithesis that nothing is simple in the universe'.[69] He opposes atomism. In his youth he believed it, and he will never lose his sympathy for it. He wanted a spiritual atomism. Atomism divides the extended and encounters simple bodies, the atoms. Critique of the atom or the point: empty notions, because they are contradictory, they imply extension. The point can only engender by movement. He says Descartes has definitively demonstrated this. But can we thereby say that there is nothing simple? 'Sure,', says Leibniz, 'on the level of extension'. Simple things are not of the same nature as compound things. The simple is like the reason of what happens in extension. What is this other nature? This simple will without doubt be of the nature of force. The compound is nothing but the manifestation of the simple. It concerns a proper reading of nature, the interpretation of signs, and then we will know the being of what appears. This is impossible for Kant. Force expresses true substance in its relation with extension, but the veritable substance is metaphysical. It is the world whose force was, in turn, the extended. Leibniz says

69. Kant, *Critique of pure reason* A435 / B463.

that all being has a reason. He sometimes says the ground of the connection is found in the notions. Or otherwise: each true proposition is analytic. Something being given, the principle invites it to relate it to something else, to the cause which is the necessary reason. Sufficient reason is thus what the cause lacks. Whence the second expression.

What is the reason? It must be found in the reason. See 'Caesar has crossed the Rubicon'. Two terms of notions. Crossing the Rubicon is not exterior to the notion of Caesar. But the reason of the crossing inheres in in the monad. The subject as notion. The proposition 'A is A' is true and gives us the form of identity, of every analytical proposition. Hence inversely, every true proposition is necessarily analytical. The notion must comprehend what is exterior to its subject. The exteriority of something finds the level of phenomena in interiority. No longer Caesar, but the notion of Caesar. The monad will be the unity of sufficient reason and individuality. Interiority of phenomena to notions. It was contained in the Caesar-monad that he would cross the Rubicon. Phenomenal transformation of connections, relations. 'Each monad expresses the totality of the world'.[70]

70. Leibniz, *Monadology* §62.

How can there be relations between things? Substance is individual. Each notion expresses the totality of the world. The world is the interiority of the notion itself. The genius of Leibniz was to make the concept an individual. The reason is what contains the totality of what arrives and can be attributed to the corresponding object. Therefore, the concept can no longer be a general idea. It is an individual notion. The concept goes all the way to the individual itself. All possible meanings of the word 'subject' are localized in the idea of the world. The idea of subjectivity is deployed towards the subject of the proposition, the operation of knowledge.

As extension expresses force, the relative expresses the substantial, that is to say monads and their relations. Whence the philosophical status which Leibniz assigns: phenomena are well-grounded. This absolute world leads us to conceive of a pluralist world. This world does not exist outside the monads expressing it. Each monad represents the totality of the world. Hence the monad is the law of a series (mathematical form = 1+1/2+1/4+1/8 etc.). What happens? What distinguishes monads from each other? A first answer by Leibniz is very curious. Each monad expresses the totality of the world, but also clearly and distinctly a part of the world. It is, for example, the

part of the world in relation with Caesar's body. The Cartesian notion of the clear and distinct is radically renewed, because it is subordinated to a theory of the notion of expression. The point of view of each monad is one and the same as its individuality. But what is this empirical body? It is nothing but the expression of the monad's point of view. Leibniz always plays on two inverted tables depending on the people he addresses. The conciliation will be made on the level of God. Whence the strange conception of 'pre-established harmony' that will also be presented in very different ways depending on his interlocutors. This harmony regulates the relations between souls (monads) or individual notions. Since the world does not exist independently from each monad that expresses it, the whole problem of the consistency of the world resided in the relation of monads among themselves. It is a harmony interior to monads which will ground the exterior consistency of the world. He says that the body is the plurality of the world. We must create a spiritual atomism. The monads are spiritual automatons. It is an attempt to go beyond the alternatives of automatism or freedom.

What happens from the eternal point of view of the monads? The expression expresses something, but this something does not exist without its expression. It is al-

ways the problem of exteriority. If for each individual the world seems exterior to it – hesitation of Caesar before the Rubicon – it is because each monad that I am is in relation with the others and there is a correspondence at the proper time. At this level there is no longer choice. The logical coherence becomes delirious. Space and time then express the order of possible co-existences and possible successions. Then the world appears as a well-grounded phenomenon.

3.3.2 Leibniz and principles

Leibniz' metaphysics is the last grand theology in the history of philosophy. Game of principles. First difficulty: The precise relation between the principle of identity and the principle of sufficient reason. The idea of ground demands more than the principle of identity. Philosophy begins with a phrase by Parmenides: 'being is and non-being is not'.[71] At first sight [it is the] principle of identity. Philosophy requires a principle from which to think what exists. Aristotle: 'the problem of philosophy is when there is being'.[72] Is the principle of identity (A is A) what permits

71. Parmenides, *On nature*, II, 3-4.

72. Though the emphasis on 'when' (*quand*) instead of 'what' is odd, this refers to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*: 'And indeed the question which was raised of old is raised now and always, and is always the subject

us this? Being is, non-being is not. The second is the principle of non-contradiction. Hegel remarked that however much we treat the principle of non-contradiction - A' is not A - like a double of the principle of contradiction - A is A - there is an irreducible novelty, the introduction of the negative. Despite that two negations cancel each other, there is only a return to the positive after a negation of the negation. For Hegel, the principle of identity is less a principle then the claim to a principle. It is only after the negation of the negation that the principle of what exists can be grounded. This is why Parmenides' formula is not as clear as it seems. There is something like an identity recovered through something other than itself. Is the same thing not Leibniz' problem? Sufficient reason presupposes the principle of identity, but it is very much another thing than a consequence of this principle. It presupposes it since he said every true proposition is analytical. But there is the reciprocal: every identity is retrieved in what exists and for that we needed another principle than denying the reality of what exists. The principle of reality is incapable of retrieving itself all by itself. Thus the principle of identity is a rule of essences. The analysis, which ends up

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of doubt, viz., what being is, is just the question, what is substance?' (Book VII, §1, 1028b).

demonstrating the identity of Caesar and of crossing the Rubicon, is 'infinite', including for God. It is just that for him it is actual, he grasps it in a single glance.

The second principle: that of finality or of the best. (cf. harmony between notions). Whence the idea of the best of all possible worlds. It is evident from the essences themselves. Each essence is possible and non-contradictory. As a result of this possibility it tends towards being, but it is still necessary that these essences be compossible with each other. The principle of continuity which expresses the relation between each individual notion and its attributes. Thus all principles are the expression of each other. The principle of indiscernibles which gathers up all the others: 'each thing has its notion'.[73] No two notions have the same attributes (attacked by Kant in the *[Transcendental] Aesthetic*). What does this group of principles, which appeal to sufficient reason, signify?

73. See for example section 8 of Leibniz' *Discourse on metaphysics*: 'we can say that the nature of an individual substance or of a complete being is to have a notion so complete that it should be sufficient to contain and to allow deduction from it of all the predicates of the subject to which this notion is attributed.'

3.3.3 Intermediate conclusion II

1. A philosophy of universal symbolism.
2. A game of principles which Leibniz finds in all concrete problems. Sometimes for two cases, being as slightly different as we could want within the Cartesian laws, the effects of their movements will be different. For Leibniz this is enough to establish that these laws are false.
3. Major ambiguity in Leibniz. He always senses that the principle of sufficient reason is something else than the principle of identity. There is an insufficiency of that principle, which cannot recover the identity of things. The determination of the ground presupposes identity, but we need a principle to relate the things to the identity. We must change the notion of the very relations of essence and existence such that what comes first presents itself as ground. Hegel's objection in the *Science of logic*: he congratulates him for having discovered the domain of sufficient reason, but he says that he was wrong in deducing it from the principle of identity.[74]

74. Deleuze alludes to the *Remark* at chapter 3 of book 2 of the *Science of Logic* (II.293).

Domain of metaphysical ground and domain of mathematics with Descartes (see the above). From this point of view the Cartesian ambiguity disappears in Leibniz, it is surpassed. Leibniz can consider that he has re-grounded absolute knowledge, the universal science which uses this method of a whole game of principles in which reason itself is given. From this we can understand a fundamental text by Leibniz: *The radical origin of things*. Two questions: 1) why is there something rather than nothing?; 2) why is this rather than something else?. They will serve as guidelines to the solution of all the problems in the world. The domain of essences governed by the principle of identity responds to the first. The domain of existences governed by the principle of sufficient reason responds to the second.

For Leibniz, to do philosophy is to pose these two fundamental questions. Every theological conception of Leibniz depends on that. The first is a question which receives its answer from the existence of essences itself. These are two questions which will be found at the level of all the problems posed by Leibniz. They already contain the rules for all the solutions. Now, at this level we still encounter the same difficulty. Do the two questions have the same values? Why start with the one rather than the other? It is because in Leibniz essences precede existences.

Are these two questions nonetheless legitimate, is each of them rightly posed? Amazing constitutions of logical principles. Veritable critique of the conditions under which a problem is well-posed. Is it not just the second question which is well-posed? Is the originality of the question of the ground not in the second question? The question became first hand in absolute rationalism. The question, we have seen, was a critique of the conditions of the possibility of the problem.

Then Kant: the *Critique of pure reason*. Until then knowledge is evaluated in terms of solutions brought up to problems, and Kant announces that he is going to pose the question 'are there not false problems?'

3.4 The third type of question: the critical question /// 3.4.1 The concept of error in philosophy

The motive of the *Critique of pure reason*. Thought is entrained by a fundamental, inevitable illusion. It is not an illusion that indicates the reaction of our passions to thought, but the influence of thought on thought. For Descartes, the prejudice came from us not simply being thinking beings. The principle of illusion came from the body. Kant's idea is that pure thought falls into an illusion which is interior to it. Whence a 'transcendental illusion'

and not an empirical illusion.[75] Reason itself engenders the illusion into which it falls. Therefore it can never disappear. It is just necessary to prevent that it deceives us. This illusion belongs to the nature of reason. The dialectic is then at the same time the movement of the transcendental illusion and the consciousness of that illusion. It is a veritable turn in philosophy. He announces that the doctrine of truth must be completely refashioned. The rationalists of the 17th century think that thought as such is right by nature, concerned with truth, a desire for truth (cf. Descartes, Malebranche). They thus interpret error as a bare fact. We only make mistakes because we are not [purely] thinking beings. The method serves to link up human nature with the nature of thought. The doctrine of truth is thus called the constitution of a method.

For Kant it is not enough to [have] a method, the problem is completely changed. We have to wonder if Kant has gone all the way to the end of the consequences. In any case, he has seen that truth qualifies problems. The illusion makes thought pose false problems. There is a rupture with classical rationalism on all points. This principle is also found with other authors, which demonstrates that it is not about a doctrine. With Spinoza, the truth is

75. Cf. *Critique of pure reason* B352.

true in itself. There is nothing positive about error. In God every idea is true. For Kant, thought is not right by nature. But do not all philosophers in a certain way suggest the weakness of the rationalists? See chapter eight of Plato's *Republic*. Plato's theme about the 'ignorant soul'.[76] Is there not more than the simple notion of error? The 'mania' of the Pre-Socratics is quite something else than the fact of being wrong.[77] Plato asks for '*paideia*',[78] [but] thought must first of all install itself in a region or domain where truth exists. Then, far from finding its vocation, its spontaneous nature, it begins by being dazzled and it is necessary to bring in force here. The rationalists think that thought is in relation with the true. What is the best position of the problem? With Plato we are invited to think in existential terms (situation of the consciousness of the soul).

76. Book X of *Republic* argues that philosophy is the only cure to ignorance: [a human being] will be able, by considering the nature of the soul, to reason out which life is better and which worse and to choose accordingly, calling a life worse if it leads the soul to become more unjust, better if it leads the soul to become more just, and ignoring everything else' (*618d-e*).

77. Since this section concerns Plato, this is likely a reference to the short discussion of mania in *Phaedrus* 244a-245a, the point of which is that mania can be beneficial if it is a gift from a god: 'madness (mania) from a god is finer than self-control of human origin, according to the testimony of the ancient language givers' (244d).

78. The education of an ideal member of the polis.

3.4.2 Transformation of a doctrine of truth

First task carried out by Kant and the Kantian tradition: to put to question the reciprocal interiority of thought and truth. Second task: to replace the idea of method with an idea of formation. The truth subsists outside of thought and must force thought in order to make it recognize it. Kant has not seen it that well. Truth subsists outside of thought. Even if we were angels, verily thinking beings, it would settle nothing. Truth no longer qualifies an idea, but must be defined as something. The truth is the being. Why has Kant not seen the second point? Because of the Kantian thesis that the being is not an object of knowledge, but that knowledge concerns the phenomena. But does the other point concerning the illusion necessarily imply this point.

There are thinkers saying that the task is to denounce mystifications. First Democritus, then Epicurus, then Lucretius. Mystification to denounce. A tradition continuing onto Nietzsche, Marx. They tell us the human being is alienated. He is as if private, separated from his own power, his own capacity, if we transport this enterprise to the level of philosophy. One of two things: at the level of Descartes, inferior to the Kantian exploration. The entirely same idea of the false problem appears in Kant. For him,

all false problems consist in taking the more for the less. For Kant, they consist in taking subjective principles for objective principles. Why order rather than disorder, why something rather than nothing? Bergson says this is a false problem, because it depends on the postulate that nothingness is less than being, that the possible presupposes being. See Bergson's article on 'the possible'.[79] We believe that the possible is less than being and so we posit that the possible precedes the being or what exists. In fact, there is not less but more in the idea of the possible.

Now, the illusion, it is positive. We become conscious of it, but it is not destroyed. The classical conception consists in telling us that the truth triumphs over error. The illusion is engendered by thought in its nature. Opposed to 17th century rationalists. It is striking that Bergson tells us the same thing as Kant and that at a one point he goes less far, yet further on another. Less far: the illusion is explained by psychological reasons. By virtue of practical action, Kant has found a transcendental root in the illusion. It does not have its source in anything but thought itself. This thesis animates the full last part of the *Critique of pure reason*. If the source of the illusion is transcendental, it is saying as much that the illusion does not simply

79. See *The possible and the real* in Bergson, *Key Writings*, pp. 223-233.

have an empirical root (a fact of human nature), but a metaphysical one. But then it is the same thing to say that metaphysics is illusory. Metaphysic is not possible, but must be destroyed. It is a very amazing passage from the one to the other. For Bergson, the illusion is fairly simple. It comes down to this: thought takes the more for the less. The problems of classical metaphysics are false problems.

3.4.3 Critique of metaphysics

[There are] two ways to criticize metaphysics:

1. Not serious, in the name of something else than it (in the name of science). It is the scientistic critique. Already see the empiricists and Hume. The sciences of the human being.
2. Serious. With Marx, it is not a about substituting science for metaphysics, but about going beyond metaphysics. The realization and death of philosophy equals the realization and death of metaphysics. Compare it with Heidegger who today appeals to Kant and announces that he wants to go beyond metaphysics. Going beyond metaphysics?

A. Bergson: thought takes the more for the less. The classical questions already seen presuppose the anteriority of the possible. A thing is apprehended in terms of being able to be and not being able to be. Now, Bergson shows that the possible is secondary to the real. There would have been nothing lacking in literature if Proust had not existed, but only once he has existed. The possible is an operation of the real projecting its image in the past. Bergson's critique of the idea of disorder and nothingness has the same sense. Nothingness is being plus the negation which denies it. The idea of nothingness or disorder is purely relative to action. In nothingness there is not less but more than there is in being. Whence that we take the more for the less. As these issues are cancelled, metaphysics is surpassed.

B. For Kant, the form of the illusion is more profound. He wants to reach a transcendental root. What is the formula of the illusion? It consists in taking a subjective principle for an objective principle. He does not want to say that the error consists in taking the subjective for the objective. He is speaking in principle. What does he understand by that? To understand it we must think about his idea of subjectivity, of transcendental subjectivity. We are empirical subjects, but we are not only that. What will a

veritable absolute subjectivity be? A subject which is nothing but a subject will not oppose itself to the objective. The subjective is that which becomes objective when applied to the phenomena.

In Kant, conditions render cognition possible. This cannot be reduced to known objects, since those already imply the conditions of cognition. These conditions are subjective. It is already about a transcendental subjectivity which grounds the object as object of cognition and renders the submission of this object to cognition necessary. The [*Transcendental*] *Analytic*, second part, responds to this. The conditions of experience are at the same time conditions of the objects of experience. The phenomena are what appears. Is cognition just knowing what appears? Not really. What appears is a flux of sensible qualities. Cognition is making these qualities the qualification of something. Kant: the object = x, which is a function of cognition. Some conditions refer to sensibility (space and time), others to spontaneity, these are the categories. There is in Kant a veritable unity of subject and object. Unity of cognition and the cognized. But this unity is subjective (the object as it appears to me). Therefore what was the grand rule of legitimate knowledge? There is no other knowledge than that of phenomena themselves. There is

no cognition of the thing in itself. There is only knowledge in experience.

Second aspect of the Kantian thesis. Kant distinguishes between intuition and the concept. The phenomenon is intuition: space and time form the intuition in which the phenomenon appears. Determining the phenomenon in turn, the categories appear in space and time in any object whatsoever. Knowledge is only possible by concept and intuition. There is no legitimate knowledge unless when I make use of a concept such that I will be able to produce the object in intuition. Kant is going to show us that this is the formula of mathematics and physics. The mathematical concept is the rule of construction of an object in intuition itself. Physics is also reduced to that, even though it proceeds otherwise. Mathematics and physics: system of legitimate knowledge in the second result: answers another formula. There is no knowledge of noumena (risk of misinterpretation). With Kant there is something in itself and noumenal, and each time he says that there is no knowledge of it. We risk treating the thing in itself and the noumenon similarly: worse than a misinterpretation, because they are not one thing. The noumenon is pure thought. Knowledge of noumena would be by pure concept (which is no less impossible than pure intuition). This

knowledge by pure concept is what the classics always call metaphysical. Thus Kant does not repeat that, it is the same thing but from a different point of view. The thing in itself called noumenon, it is what it would have to be if there would be a possible cognition by pure concept. 'The subjective is only what becomes objective when applied to the phenomena'.[80] The subjective principle of cognition grounds the objectivity of cognition in so far as [it concerns a] phenomenon. It would be excessive use of the categories if we set out to know an object outside of experience. [I would then treat] the ensemble of experience as world, I [would] treat it as world. (God is cause of the world: illegitimate exercise).

The illusion of reason consists in making us leave the limits outside of which the categories are illegitimate. According to Kant, the substantial I, the world, and God imply an illegitimate usage of the categories. Nonetheless these three ideas have meaning, they are well-grounded. These ideas of pure reason have a fundamentally subjective sense, they are not categories of understanding which relate to the phenomena, but ideas of reason which re-

80. Likely paraphrases '... I shall have to derive the *subjective succession* of apprehension from the *objective succession* of appearances.... Kant, *Critique of pure reason* A193/B238.

lates to the understanding itself, it is the faculty of relating rules according to principles. The ideas have a legitimate sense on condition that I never forget they are subjective. They are regulative, not constitutive principles. The understanding is subjective, but it has become objective by applying itself to the phenomena. So he has not just found a negative original root for the illusion, an illegitimate root of categories, but moreover he showed that this is inevitable.

So Kant does not critique metaphysics on the first level, and yet there is only mathematical and physical knowledge. Consciousness has to become conscious of this illusion. Whence the dialectic: the movement generating the illusion and the one exposing this illusion is one and the same, because naming it does not annihilate it. Here appears an amazing task that Kant calls critique. The idea poses an object which corresponds with it and which I claim to know only by itself: critique is the dismantling of mechanism and the denunciation of the illusion. Metaphysics as illusion cannot be annihilated, but it can be submitted to critique. In fact, it is about making a new metaphysics (cf. Hegel). Recall classicism: distinction between two worlds which runs through all of philosophy. For Kant there are still essences, but they are not objects

of knowledge. Philosophy henceforth does not have the task of discovering essences, but that of determining conditions. Under what conditions are mathematics, physics, morality, and so on possible? Kant substitutes the notion of appearance. The phenomenon is the conditioned, it is the apparition. In a similarly radical transformation, the idea of condition comes to relieve the classical idea of essence.

Metaphysics becomes a logic, because it is the determination of conditions and not the discoveries of essences. See the later legacy of Kant: there are not two worlds, in a certain manner we assist in a return to essence, but no longer with the sense of classicism. The essence is the sense itself of the corresponding phenomenon. Metaphysics becomes a logic.

3.5 Conclusion to the third chapter

The questions seem very odd. On the existential level. Only examples, the point was to demand an accounting for everything. On the level of Leibniz: two questions, not three. The critical question (preface of the *Critique of pure reason*). Knowledge must comprise the conditions which render it possible.

There were three aspects to the ground:

1. Struggle and opposition of concept and subjectivity. The question went all the way to the end. This struggle, so interesting from the point of view of subjectivity, had its correspondent in the form of an inverse relationship. The concept implied an annihilation of subjectivity. The Idea in Plato implied an annihilation of persons.
2. Leibniz' metaphysical question. This time the concept went all the way up to the individual. The ground presents itself as the sufficient reason, on the condition that it deploys itself and be the rule of an absolute knowledge.
3. Kant replaces the idea of an absolute knowledge, which he condemns, for the idea of a critique of knowledge or the idea of a determination of the conditions of knowing. But does not this ruin of metaphysics announced by Kant make room for the determination of a new metaphysics?

New rule concerning the ground: it is the identity of the condition and the conditioned. Did not the Post-Kantians seek to determine the relation of the condition and

the conditioned in a concept? A tale: Schelling's critique against Kant and Hegel.

4 GROUND AND PRINCIPLE

A question was directed at what grounds. We have found three structures of the question.

1. The question of existence denouncing answers as second-hand. We had to silence the answers concerning the ground and the operation of this ground consisted in the paradox.
2. The question which claimed to lead us to the science of all solutions to possible problems according to a universal principle.
3. The critical question calling for a critique of the conditions under which the ground was posed.

In this triple function of the ground, the notion perpetually oscillates between two poles. Must it be conceived as a principle of things in themselves or as one for our simple cognition of things? Two poles: method or system. The ground of the method = principle of our cognition of things.

The ground of a system. Is there room to propose a methodological or systematic conception of the ground?

All the more important question since the history of philosophy oscillates between these two poles.

4.1 Method and system

What do these two notions signify? Even their exterior characteristics oppose them. [There is] even a grand manifesto of the system which opposes itself to methodology: Hegel's preface on the principles of the phenomenology.[81]

The method: idea of seeking, idea of seeing. It always presents itself as a principle. The method is the organ (the organon). After Aristotle his work is called the Organon. Compare: the new organization by Bacon, extraordinary book.[82] [For] all three lines we find splendid metaphors. We could have believed he had written the works of Shakespeare. No longer a perspective of means / end, but whole / part. The Stoics say the world is a system. Method and system appeal to a principle, but for the first it is the principle of the cognition of things, and for the second it is the principle of things in themselves.

[It is] too easy to say that the system would be the ideal of the method. That neglects that they each, for their part, appeal to a principle. The method demands a principle of

81. The preface of the *Phenomenology of spirit.*

82. Bacon's *The new organon.*

cognition of things. And this principle presents itself as primary and not as subordinated to the principle of things in themselves, if that exists. The system will return to the organism. The organ cannot be understood as a directed set of means. The organism can only be understood from the relation whole / part.

A method can be recognized by three things:

1. A demand for a beginning (Descartes, rules of the method. Start with the simple).[83] In the system a beginning is refused. It presents itself as circular (*Phenomenology of spirit*, *Logic* pp.50-60).[84] For Hegel, the method is such that its content always comes to it from outside, whereas the system makes no appeal to any content coming from outside. It is its own base

83. Deleuze refers to rule five of Descartes' *Rules for the direction of the mind*: 'The whole method consists entirely in the ordering and arranging of the objects on which we must concentrate our mind's eye if we are to discover some truth. We shall be following this method exactly if we first reduce complicated and obscure propositions step by step to simpler ones, and then, starting with the intuition of the simplest ones of all, try to ascend through the same steps to a knowledge of all the rest'.

84. See Hegel, *The science of logic*, 21.58: 'In this advance the beginning thus loses the one-sidedness that it has when determined simply as something immediate and abstract; it becomes mediated, and the line of scientific forward movement consequently turns *into a circle*'.

for itself. Why is the beginning illusory? Because it is the demand of something which would be posited as absolutely immediate. There is nothing which implies immediacy as much as mediation. 'Essential to science (knowledge) is not so much that the beginning should be a pure immediacy, but the fact that the whole of science represents an absolutely closed circle in which the first becomes the last, and vice versa'.[85]

2. A demand for a principle of economy (to be developed from classical rationalism). The relation of means and end then analyzed on the theological level. The principle of economy is located on the level of God. Hence the justification of evil: minimum of means to obtain a maximum of effects. The miracle? Correction of evil which is the downside of the principle of economy. See: Malebranche.[86] God acts methodologically. Other character of the system: the impression the system gives us the exuberance and the excess of the concept. The opulence of the concept opposes itself to the simplicity of the means of the method. The best biologists remind us that organically we have too much of

85. Hegel, *The science of logic*, 21.57.

86. According to Malebranche, evil exists because God was 'constrained' by his attributes and perfections (his simplicity most of all) when creating the world.

everything. See the Dutch biologist Buytendijk, [who] says: 'the bird sings more than natural selection would permit'.[87] So there is this exuberance of the concept in the system. Bad joke by Gabriel Monod: 'the concept is too poor'.[88] On the contrary, what exists does not fill the whole concept. See the concept of love. No lover can say 'I am loved'. The concept overflows it everywhere. It further comprises the sense of an object. It comprises the unconscious, the non-given dimension. We must opposes the fundamental exaggeration of the concept itself to the minimum of means.

3. Artifice and fiction. Rule of the method. Aware of the third, it is necessary to move onto feigning an order between things which do not precede each other. Leibniz: we must use fictions in the method, imaginary symbols which will subsequently be reduced. There is thus a perpetual movement of the human being of the method: 'see everything I obtain with so little?' Hegel says that the system implies a fundamental ruse which is the contrary of the artifice of method. He

87. Cf. 'a bird is not truly free, even though it flies high into the air without any necessity and sings its exuberant song. It is the image of freedom: freedom in its appearance. [trans. from Dutch]. Buytendijk, *De vrouw. haar natuur, verschijning en bestaan*, p. 75.

88. French historian (1844-1912).

says: 'it has nothing to do with me' Coquetry: Hegel says, 'knowledge is a ruse, because in forgetting itself in its object it sees this object become and make itself a moment of the whole, that is to say reflecting itself in this knowledge'.[89] The system is the Annunciation made to Mary. If these notions are opposed then we can expect a polemic.

Reproaches of the method to the system: three essential things.

1. The system is the human being taking itself to be God, because it is inseparable from absolute knowledge. It is accompanied by an appeal to means serving to go beyond the human condition. The method invites the human being to assume its proper condition. [In] Spinoza [the] third genre of knowledge is coincidence with God. Certainly the human condition subsists, it is part of nature. There will always be passivity in the one. But he no less thinks that there are means by which the human being can avert the inconveniences of the human condition. Bergson: 'philosophy will have to be an effort to go beyond the human condi-

89. Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology of spirit* §73.

tion'.[90] The method realizes all virtualities of this condition.

2. Second objection, of a political nature. Right or wrong, philosophers sense danger to human beings in the system, which relates to political theory. The system is totalitarian. Without being coarse to Hegel, he still saw a moment at which his philosophy realized itself in the Prussian regime. And Spengler in *The decline of the West*. Systems are often related to a totalitarian regime.
3. Third objection: third mystification. The system always appeals to an a priori and seems to show contempt for simple experience. Schelling says that the system reintroduces experience through the backdoor. The system seems apt at justifying everything. In fact, it erects the necessity of fact in rational necessity. Identity between the real and reason (Hegel) [is] denounced as an intolerable confusion between the fact and the right.

These are the three objections to which we must respond even if they can seem false. Inversely, the system reproaches the method for two things.

90. See Bergson, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 277.

It always allows a double exteriority to subsist, of such kind that philosophy loses its veritable goal.

Two poles in the method. Leibniz' *Discourse concerning the method of certainty and the art of invention*.[91] He reproaches Descartes for having confused a method of invention (one pole) with a method of certainty (other pole). The first claims to find or reproduce, by original means, an object which on the other hand is already the product of an invention. The human being is located in a nature which pre-exists it. The human being invents objects which are given to it, on the other hand and under another form in nature. Mechanism is a set of means with which the human being reproduces what is given in nature by original means. Amazing text by Descartes when he attacks biology (*The world*).[92] 'I suppose that there is an organism there and my question is: how can we reproduce this organism?'.[93] The human being recovers what nature makes thanks to mechanism, but that is not to say that nature

91. Unclear if it ever appeared in English translation. The full French title is *Discours touchant la methode de la certitude et l'art d'inventer pour finir les disputes et pour faire en peu de temps des grands progrès.*

92. Also called *Treatise on Light*.

93. Likely an allusion to some of the opening lines of the counterpart to *The world*, called *Treatise on man*: 'I suppose the body to be nothing but a statue or machine made of earth… (AT XI 120).

acts mechanically. In any case, that is another problem. To the extent that the method is an original rule of reproduction, the essential thing about it are original rules called mechanism, machines. Primary exteriority presupposes that of nature.

Second pole, method of certainty. Even in the evolution of his own oeuvre, Descartes seems to have passed from the first pole to the second. In the *Rules for the direction of the mind* it is attached to the engineer. Before all else, it is a method of invention. It is then attached to Bona Mens (good sense).[94] Change in the method, it has certainty as fundamental pole. His extension of mathematics to science as a whole is [about] mathematical certainty and not the procedures (he knows that would not be possible for all of it). The method of invention presupposed a nature, that of certainty as well. It is about recovering a pure nature of thought by artificial means. Descartes says there is a natural right of thought, but we thinking beings are not equal to that nature. The method differentiates us. The method raises the thinking being to the point where it rejoins pure thought. In both cases the method thus always presupposes a nature. We must thus recognize the correct-

94. Bona Mens being the personification of thought, consciousness, mind, and right thinking in Roman mythology.

ness of this phrase by Hegel: 'in a method compliance with the goal is always exterior'.[95] The advantage of the system will be: it is able to reach a veritable interiority of the system and its object. So with an original movement, the method of invention represents what is already produced in another way.

On which side is Descartes' universal science? Galileo thinks there is a unity of matter and nature as well. [For] Descartes it is the unity of the knowing subject. 'All the sciences are nothing other than human wisdom, always remaining one and the same, however much it is applied to different subjects'.[96] Compare: simple natures in Descartes. A triangle inscribed in a circle is no less simple than the triangle itself. Therefore simplicity does not concern the object. What is the method actualizing this simplicity of the knowing act? There is a nature of thought that transcends all objects that present themselves to it. The problem is to rejoin this nature by using the method, because our nature is not identical to that of thought. 'We

95. Refers to Hegel's discussion of method, absolute method, and system in the third chapter ("The absolute idea") of the third section of *The science of logic*.

96. See *Rules for the direction of the mind*, Rule I, first section.

must presuppose an order even where objects do not precede one another'.[97]

This is where the critique of the method by the system, which appeals to a total interiority, sticks. Kant says that what distinguishes an organism from a machine is that it does not have a formative energy.[98] The interiority of the system is double.

1. From its perspective, the reproduction or realization is one and the same as the very movement of the thing. Compare: Spinoza.
2. Interiority and reciprocity of thought and its object. A certain type of object responds to each figure of thought.

97 *Discourse on the method*, part II, the third of four precepts to correctly order our beliefs: 'The third, to conduct my thoughts in such order that, by commencing with objects the simplest and easiest to know, I might ascend by little and little, and as it were, step by step, to the knowledge of the more complex; assigning in the thought a certain order even to those objects which in their own nature do not stand in a relation of antecedence and sequence'

98. *Critique of judgment* §374: 'An organized being is, therefore, not a mere machine. For a machine has solely *motive power*, whereas an organized being possesses inherent *formative* power, and such, moreover, as it can impart to material devoid of it—material which it organizes. This, therefore, is a self-propagating formative power, which cannot be explained by the capacity of movement alone, that is to say, by mechanism'.

The method always refers to a nature which it always tries to reproduce or rejoin. It appeals to an exterior nature. It appeals to an internal life or an enveloped history. The system either appeals to a life that runs through it, or a history which develops it. Whence the idea of the moment related to the system of biological parts.

4.2 Principle and ground in the method[99]

/// 4.2.1 Descartes, Spinoza, Kant

1. Descartes tells us that the true method is necessarily analytical, and yet, he says, I also often use the synthetic method I responses to objections, but that is just for the sake of exposition. Question: if the human being was God would he proceed synthetically? Perhaps, although Descartes is not sure. The synthetic method is then in any case just constitutive of a divine procedure. The analysis is the only procedure for the human being due to its situation in its nature.
2. Spinoza appeals to a synthetic method. Cf. Descartes' *Principles of philosophy*. He will expose Cartesianism such as Descartes did not really create it. The *Ethics*

99. The numbering of subsections here was quite chaotic in the original French (A, 1, 2, 1, 2. B, 1, 2, A, B) and has been significantly reworked in the added headers.

proceeds by a synthetic procedure. Thus it is made from the point of view of God (first book: *Of God*).

3. Kant [is] known for his use of the synthesis. In fact, it is always dependence [on analysis?]. Analysis remains fundamental. He explains it in the *Prolegomena to any future metaphysics* and in the *Transcendental Analytic*. The difference with Descartes: because it becomes transcendental, the analysis becomes the principle of a synthesis for us.
   a. The Post-Kantians take up the story anew. Salomon Maimon and Fichte turn Kantianism into a critique of Kant with extraordinary richness. They want to realize Kant's critical idea. They say that his great merit was to find the transcendental, but that he had not managed to rise to a synthetic method. With Kant the ground remains related to a simply hypothetical judgment. He constantly appeals to facts taken as facts, physically and mathematically.
   b. In the *Critique of practical reason*, the fact of morality, the mores. Kant even evokes a fact of reason: the moral law. Starting from that he seeks for the conditions of possibility of these facts. For Kant, if this exists, then it is necessary that there be conditions

> which render it possible. Kant has had the merit of discovering the transcendental, but he has not understood its nature. For Fichte, there must be a transcendental genesis. The transcendental must not just seek the conditions of presupposed facts, but be the genesis of the conditioned instead of giving everything ready-made.

Fichte will appeal to the geometric method which will be the synthesis.[100] Maimon prepares a method which transforms Kant's hypothetical judgment into a categorical judgment.[101] Thus their common theme is to replace the Kantian method with a genetic and synthetic method. Thus the method is essentially an analytic procedure. It is surely the only possible procedure of the human mind, if it is true that this mind has no means to proceed by synthesis in the order of research. If we can have a synthesis on the level of the transcendental, if Fichte and Hume are right, well, then philosophy is a system.

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100. Deleuze's references throughout the course focus on Fichte's *Attempt at a critique of all revelation* and *Foundations of the entire science of knowledge*.

101. Deleuze refers to Maimon's *Essay on transcendental philosophy*.

4.2.2 Bacon and middle axioms

Bacon's images of the sciences. It is a very curious interpretation of Platonism. The human being is not at all in the same situation as God. With Him, the action is like the immediate consequence of knowledge. He induces the ideas and His action consists in combining the ideas. The characteristics are letters. The ideas are letters. It is the divine alphabet. Thus his procedure is synthetic. Voltaire, *Philosophical dictionary*, letter A. It is curious to see that there is no word to designate the set of letters.[102] Alphabet (a, b) is like what we call numbering (1,2).

The Stoics make use of a word without sense to designate the word which has no sense. This word was *lekta* in Greek.[103] It is the sound of certain string instruments and in the Stoics it is the word which has no sense, the absurd word, not the absurd [itself] but that which designates the

102. The *A, B, C, or Alphabet* entry of Voltaire's dictionary opens with 'Why has not the alphabet a name in any European language? *Alphabet* signifies nothing more than *A, B,* and *A, B,* signifies nothing, or but indicates two sounds, which two sounds have no relation to each other. *Beta* is not formed from *alpha*; one is first, the other is second, and no one knows why'

103. The Stoics distinguish between language and logic. Language is about actual utterances and the materiality of speech as sound. It is a corporeal and real part of the sensible world. Conversely, logical statements are *lekta*. They have meaning but not full being, and they are not natural signs of natural objects.

absurd. And the word without sense does not belong to any rule. For Voltaire this word without sense is alphabet. The art of all arts is designated by a word without sense. The situation of the human being is precisely being in a ready-made world. Bacon does not ask to substitute action for knowledge, but he asks how the human being can rejoin the truth with other means. Inverse procedure: the human being knows through acting. The human being can only find true knowledge through action. It is about revealing complexes [and] not [about] recovering characteristics. Analysis and synthesis are not two inverse operations. The human being will have to stop at an intermediary: the middle axioms which are the principles relative to the situation of the human being.[104]

Descartes told us we must not confuse the order of Being and the order of reason. The idea of an infinite God is discovered in the third Meditation. The Cogito is first in the order of knowledge, even though it will be second in the order of Being. It presupposes God. The principle

104. Bacon makes the case for 'middle axioms' and an inductive method because he mistrusts deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning starts with general axioms from which the truth of particular cases is to be derived. Induction, on the other hand, presupposes absolutely nothing according to Bacon, and hence is a superior method.

to which the method appeals is verily the principle of the order of knowledge. It has its proper measure. The principle is thus what is primary. The middle axioms are secondary in relation to ideas (characteristics of Being), but they are principles (primary), because they are principles for knowledge. What are these axioms? Plato proposed the division: starting with a material, divide it in two, to the left, to the right. Take the right one and divide it in two, and so on up to the moment where we can no longer divide. Cf. the *Sophist* [and the question of] what is line angling...[105] According to Bacon we must proceed by scientific experiments. This is what he calls induction. Original relation that we might explain as follows: relation of determination. The straight line is the shortest path from one point to another. What is the subject and [what is] the predicate? Translation: the shortest is the rule from which I determine the line as straight. The middle axiom is pre-

105. At 221b the *Sophist*'s Eleatic stranger says: 'Within expertise as a whole one half was acquisitive; half of the acquisitive was taking possession; half of possession-taking was hunting; half of hunting was animal-hunting; half of animal-hunting was aquatic hunting; all the lower portion of aquatic hunting was fishing; half of fishing was hunting by striking; and half of striking was hooking. And the part of hooking that involves a blow drawing a thing upward from underneath is called by a name that's derived by its similarity to the action itself, that is, it's called draw-fishing or angling – which is what we're searching for'

cisely this relation of determination. The shortest path is the rule of determination. Kant: a priori synthesis is this rule of construction. Example: 7+5=12. The synthesis is not between 7+5 on the one hand and 12 on the other, which is not a conventional symbol. It is in +, which is the rule of construction by which I determine 12 from 7 on the one hand and 5 on the other. That is the a priori synthesis. When Bacon talks about middle axioms, he tells us that it is the rule of physical determination (he was not concerned with mathematics) which determines only difference. The middle axiom of heat is the rule from which I produce heat from cold. It is the system of applied essences Bacon's famous tables of induction: presence, absence, degree. [The middle axiom] is primary in the order of knowledge itself.

The middle axiom was perhaps primary and that of our knowledge of things is not. It is the middle principles which can take on different senses according to the levels. Four tiers:[106]

106. Deleuze names only three: ingenium, mathematics, metaphysics. Perhaps the reference to theology is the fourth. Also, the ambiguity as to whether these three points concern Bacon or Descartes may be because Deleuze is alluding to *both* of them. As for the latter, see Sepper, *Descartes's imagination – proportion, images, and the activity of thinking*, II/3/C: *Descartes and ingenium*.

1. Determination of the 'ingenium'.[107] His formula amounts to reproducing while inventing, because it is made by original means. The situation of the human being in nature is not that of God. When he reproduces he discovers only middle axioms. In the first stage we comprehend the relation between method and mechanism. This is the whole of original means. First inspiration of mechanism, everything happens as if nature proceeded mechanically. It accounts precisely for the situation of the human being in nature.
2. It appeals to mathematics. If the human being can reproduce by mechanical means, are we not tempted to leave natural production such as it happens in simple indifference? On condition of treating the world like a fable. The feeble external world (cf. his portrait, the world 'mundus est fabula').[108] Nature loses its being, it passes in actuality. The world is a fable and in this sense it is amenable to a mathematical construction.

107. Latin for 'innate character' or 'disposition'.

108. 'Mundus est fabula' does not refer to Bacon, but to a portrait of Descartes by Jan-Baptist Weenix in which he holds a book with these words. The aphorism in turn refers to Descartes' description of how the world could have emerged from mere matter in motion, a theory he called a fable because it conflicts with Biblical creationism.

3. Third metaphysical level. Unity of a subjective principle. The method appeals to the determination of a principle of knowledge. Does it suffice? The method is just that, it never presents itself as genesis of the thing itself. Does the method therefore not ask for a metaphysics? Descartes tells us to not confuse the way in which the method invites us to reproduce the thing with the manner in which the thing reproduces itself.[109] It also calls for a metaphysical ground which will account for this prodigious fact: nature conforms to the principle of this knowledge. Thus Descartes will invoke a veritable theology, a divine veracity to guarantee the conformity of the real.

4.2.3 Two senses of 'principle'

Two senses of 'principle':

1. Demand for knowledge in the name of a right (see other chapter).
2. In the sense of the ground it is what accounts for the necessary submission of the given to the principle of this demand.

109. 'se reproduire' also has connotations of spawning and recurring in French.

What is primary, the subjective principle, is at the same time posed secondly in the order of Being or in the order of the ground itself. It is the sense of the notion of method. It demands that we do not confuse the order of being with that of the reasons of knowledge. It resides in the distinction between the two orders. *Alquié*, a modern Cartesian, thinks that the philosophers of the system confuse these two terms. The situation of the human being is thus ambiguous, the human being is at the same time superior to the objects of thought and inferior to Being itself. The error of the system will be confusing Being with the studied object. Is this distinction between two orders well grounded ?

It is perhaps necessary for the clarifications it gives us. A mysterious text by Freud in *Beyond the pleasure principle*. This principle reigns over psychic life, because the unconscious is only desire. At the same time he discovers that there is all the same something beyond this principle, which is the principle of repetition. The unconscious seeks to re-establish the past. Freud has never returned to this principle of repetition, and yet in his last work he tells us 'the pleasure principle is true' (in *An outline of psychoanalysis*).[110] How are these contradictions possible? It

110. Freud writes that ...the id obeys the inexorable pleasure princi-

is necessary to distinguish two senses for that. The pleasure principle is that of psychic life. But must there not be a ground which accounts for the submission of psychic matter to this ground? Then the contradiction disappears. There is a principle beyond the principle. See the end of Book VI of Plato's *Republic*. The sensible world itself divides into two. Its images are reflections in the waters.[111] The image is thus a trompe l'oeil. The psychology of the imagination is never separated from the physics of the image. Same relation between the intelligible world and the sensible world. Equivocal: two interpretations. There are ideas of which the nature is mathematical and [then there are] dialectical ideas. Other interpretation: mathematics and dialectics are ways of treating the object. The mathematician disperses hypotheses. He presupposes in principle the existence of the square in itself, of the even and the odd ... et cetera. The principle is hypothetical (cf. mathematical sciences are hypothetical-deductive). On the contrary, for the dialectic it is from hypotheses that we rise all the way up to the a-hypothetical, unconditioned principle. Is it the same hypotheses? Principle = principle of knowledge, it is hypothetical because it departs from

ple'. *An outline of psychoanalysis*, 5005.

111. Deleuze refers to *Republic* VI 510d.

what is a fact to knowledge. Such is its principle, if it exists. We meet the first signification of 'principle' When Kant talks about the unconditioned principle, it is only there that there is useful determination or a ground. In such a perspective the entire complication is this: how will cognition be conceived? What will it represent? If it is true that cognition presents itself as a method in relation to the subjective principle on which it depends, it does not present itself as a method in relation to the principle which grounds it and therefore it is a system.

One writer has seen this more than any other, this is Kant.

4.3 System and Kantian critique

The *Critique of pure reason*, the *Transcendental Aesthetic*, the *Transcendental Analytic*, and the *Transcendental Dialectic* are not on the same level. The true parts:

1. The *Transcendental Doctrine of Elements*, of which the *Aesthetic*, *Analytic*, and *Dialectic* are the elements. The *Analytic* and *Dialectic* are the divisions of the *Transcendental Logic*.
2. The *Transcendental Doctrine of Method*, which most of the time remains unknown. Kant says that his whole book

introduces the second part. Less than a hundred pages for the method.

The premier part introduces the methodology. The outline of the methodology: Discipline of pure reason, Canon of pure reason, Architectonic of pure reason, History of pure reason

It is an analysis: the first part, the *Analytic*, is a masterpiece. It relates cognition as method to a principle. But within the framework of this method, cognition is also related to a ground. Then it truly becomes a system. Kant will start from nothing. The Post-Kantians give themselves the task of realizing the system which Kant had not been able to develop. Who are they? Salomon Maimon, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel. The system will radically take the place of the method. Hegel goes as far as saying 'it is a grand misinterpretation to say that the dialectic is a method, it is a movement of things themselves'.[112] It is necessary to go up to a synthetic and genetic method. Already the system of things has replaced the method of the cognition of things.

112. See Hegel's *Logic*, §81Z, p.117: 'its [the dialectic] purpose is to study things in their own being and movement and thus to demonstrate the finitude of the partial categories of understanding'.

4.3.1 Kant's analytic

Analyzing is dividing, separating. The question is: into what do we divide? Into elements. Starting from the thing, we must go back up towards its conditions. This procedure will still be analytical. For Kant, the elements are conditions which render cognition possible. Such an analysis does not stay on the same level as what it analyses. The conditions are not on the same level as the conditioned in the sense that they render the object they condition possible without composing it.

Why does he keep these elements? The answer is given in the word 'transcendental'. There is with Kant a fundamental idea of modern philosophy. [We must] study this modern adjective.

There is a finitude of the human being in the Cartesians: quite precise relation human being / God. The human being (its understanding) is finite. The infinite understanding of God is constitutive. This problem of limits of cognition is not *de facto* but *de jure*. Kant: the idea of an infinite understanding loses its sense, it is by no means a constitutive idea. It is only a regulative idea. Whence the critique of the idea of an infinite understanding, and [the idea that] there is no intellectual intuition. The grand novelty of Kantianism is not yet there. Human finitude in-

sofar as [it is] finitude will at the same time be established as constitutive principle of consciousness and of the world itself. This is what Kant perhaps says first in modern philosophy. It breaks the classical alternative. Heidegger: *Kant and the problem of metaphysics*. What is called existence has finitude as essence, which is one and the same as veritable constitutive power. Oddly oriented philosophy: it is in time that the human being is not God, is finite, that he is constitutive of the world. In this sense Kant is completely the first. The problem is how to pose such a finitude. In Heidegger, [it is posed in terms of] existence; in Kant, in terms of the schematism or the transcendental imagination. In *Creative evolution*, Bergson tells us twice that it is important to say that the *élan vital* is finite.[113] The constitutive principle was nothing other than the going beyond its finitude. Or the human being remains enclosed in the framework of its finitude and its state will be necessarily constituted (cf. empiricism).

Kant poses and leaves a problem to philosophy, finitude such that finitude is constitutive. Before him the subject

113. At least one of the two is '[élan vital] is finite, and it has been given once for all. It cannot overcome all obstacles. The movement it starts is sometimes turned aside, sometimes divides, always opposed; and the evolution of the organized world is the unrolling of this conflict'. Bergson, *Creative evolution*, p. 277.

was revolving around the object (cf. Ptolemy). He claims to discover the dimension of subjectivity (cf. Copernican revolution). He makes the objects revolve around the subject. It is not about elevating the human being to the place of God. On the contrary, the reasonable being is defined by opposition to infinity. There is no intellectual intuition. Whence Kant's extreme equivocity and richness. [People say] there are authors from Kant to Heidegger giving the human being the powers of a God. In fact these philosophies do not give the human being such powers. They give finitude a constitutive characteristic and do not elevate the human being to the infinite at all.

Where is the problem? Why is the *Critique of pure reason* not sufficient? To arrive at the formal position it took quite a history. The Post-Kantians reproach Kant for not having known how to stick to the problem and for having reintroduced the questions which the problem drove off. The encounter between the Post-Kantians and Heidegger in his book on Kant invites us to a repetition of the Kantian enterprise. His grand theme will be a constitutive finitude.

Kant is the first to make finitude the most profound [aspect] of reason itself, the very constituent of the reasonable being. It is the duality of the concept and the intu-

ition which is constitutive. We are submitted to conditions of intuition as to our receptivity. All that at the level of pure reason. The human being has a body because it is finite. In Descartes, the cogito is initially the first person (finitude). The human being constitutes the world of its own cognition.

4.3.2 Post-Kantian objections

Three points of objection to Kantianism by the Post-Kantians.

1. Is the Copernican Revolution sufficient? It concerns an analogy when Kant says 'I create a Copernican dream'.[114] It is to be studied from the point of view of its form. In this sense Kant is right (just as profound a revolution). From the point of view of matter he is not that right. In that sense, Kant is closer to Ptolemy than to Copernicus. He puts the human being in the center. The simple hypothesis subsists in the Kantian

114. Kant never literally says that. The 'dream' part is a playful allusion to Kant's 1766 essay *Dreams of a spirit-seer elucidated by dreams of metaphysics* on the Swedish scientist-mystic Swedenborg, in which he introduces for the first time the methodological device of discovering the subjective origins of experience through experience itself. See also David-Ménard (1990).

attempt. Fichte says that Kant remains attached to simple facticity, and that he [Fichte] himself searches for genesis.

2. Kant searches the conditions, for example cognition implies we start from the presupposition of the existence of the conditional. It is the same for Kantian morality. Morality is given as a fact from which we go back to the conditions. Fichte here sees an empirical fact. Yet in the beginning of the *Prolegomena to any future metaphysics* Kant says 'in the *Critique of pure reason* I use a synthetic method, whereas in the *Prolegomena* it is an analytical method, because it is a work meant for a larger audience'.[115] To Fichte's mind, his critique concerns all the works. Kant's distinction is not as clear as he would like to say. For popular works, fine (for *The metaphysics of morals*, for example), appeal to popular consciousness. In the Critiques there are no exterior facts. The difference between the Critiques and the popular works is that in the Critiques there is a synthetic method. The only difference is that he

115. *Prolegomena*, §264: 'I offer here such a plan which is sketched out after an analytical method, while the *Critique* itself had to be executed in the synthetic style, in order that the science may present all its articulations, as the structure of a peculiar cognitive faculty, in their natural combination'.

there starts from particular facts: facts of consciousness. In any case he starts from facts he presupposes. Whence Fichte saying 'Kant has never risen to the transcendental analysis. His analysis is merely regressive'.[116] Instead of from presupposed facts we must start from facts of which we will get the genesis. Then it is more of a genetic method than an analysis. Fichte does not cease to insist on the importance of one word: substitute *act* of consciousness for fact of consciousness. Kant does not rise up to the position of a pure act. When Kant arrives at the methodology, we have said, he has arrived at his goal. See Kant's letter to Marcus Herz.[117] Quite curious book: *Opus postumum*. Development seemingly proving that Kant turned towards Fichte, to Post-Kantianism. The *Tran-*

116. And Kant, in turn, saying in the August 1799 *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*: 'I consider Fichte's science of knowledge a completely untenable system. Because a pure science of knowledge is nothing more nor less than a naked logic, which, with its principles, does not achieve the material of understanding but abstracts from the content of the latter as pure logic, from which it is a vain task to pick out a real object and therefore one never attempted, but which, when transcendental philosophy is at stake, must pass into metaphysics'

117. Deleuze probably refers to what Kant scholars call 'the' Herz letter from February 21, 1772, in which the birth of the *Critique of pure reason* is announced. Kant mentions, among other things, that the *Critique* will deal with the 'method and limits' of metaphysics (see the Cambridge *Correspondence*).

scendental Doctrine of Method, the shortest [part], is the most important. The theory of elements is a theory of materials: aesthetics = receptivity, logic = spontaneity, concept. What houses can they compose? It is the object of the *Transcendental Doctrine of Method*. In the architectonic [there are] conditions under which our cognition organizes itself in a veritable system. It is necessary that our cognition not be an aggregate. Is it necessary that it forms a system? The presence of an idea, our consciousness, must present itself as an organic whole. The system is always comprised in the preceding limits of an analytical method. Problem in Kant: by becoming transcendental, the analysis no longer excludes the system, but even maintains it within its own limits. In this sense it does not go far enough. Distinction between two senses of the word 'principle': hypothetical (difference) and ground (see the above). With Kant, the determination of a ground is more profound than that of the hypothetical principle and therefore he does not go all the way to the end of that to which the question of ground takes us. It is only in giving himself cognition as a fact that Kant arrives at saying 'why is the given submitted to cogni-

tion?'. Must he pass through this hypothetical detour? He is forced to, because he arrives at this system.

1. Intuition and concept with Kant and Fichte. Kant: 1) cognition only justifies that which operates at the same time by intuition and by concept; 2) intuition and the concept have two radically diverse sources, and it is their duality which defines our finitude. It is a fact that our understanding is not infinite. The refusal of intellectual intuition rests on the fact that if we would have it, our understanding would be infinite and [there would be] absolute unity between concept and intuition, which is to say between subject and object of the representation and of the thing. We know neither noumena nor things in themselves. We do not know the thing in itself, the thing as such. Does this imply a restoration of finite understanding? If we can conceive of an intellectual intuition which relates to our finitude, then we will have to speak of a constitutive finitude. Regarding that, Kant is right. Why the word 'intuition'? Space and time would be irreducible to any concept. The state of something given exterior to judgment = the intuition. Kant says that we cannot make space and time into concepts without contra-

diction. *Obscurus sum sed distinctus*, says the concept.[118] There is a lot of theology in philosophy. The right, the ground itself, implies the position of infinite understanding. Kant already leaves the door open for a kind of reintroduction of infinite understanding. Accounting for the systematic character of nature. It has only a reflective role. But this understanding never has a constitutive role. Position of finitude in itself as constitutive.

If the concept and the intuition are two, the concept alone makes us know nothing. This duality develops in the *Critique*: the concept refers to space and time, intuition refers to these categories. The idea of an infinite understanding loses every sense. Receptivity and spontaneity. In the *Prolegomena* and in the *Transcendental Aesthetic* [Kant says that] even [though reducible to] only one object, space and time are not reducible to a same concept. There are always multiple possible objects for the same concept. It is the problem of space. Given a concept, multiple objects correspond [to it] (critique of Leibniz). What will be the nature of the difference between objects? Difference in space is in the mode of 'it is there', in time it is in the mode

118. 'I am obscure yet distinct'.

of 'and it is now' Space and time are of another order than that of the concept (See the paradox on symmetric objects which only appears in the *Prolegomena*).[119] Where is the difference? The third dimension is the condition for superposition. There is a right and a left, a before and an after. For Leibniz, each time that there are two objects, there must by right be two concepts (principle of indiscernibles). The order, or space and time, is irreducible to any concept, so that for two different things the concept can be radically identical.

The second aspect of our finitude: the object in general, transcendental, equal to X. The concept as thought by itself is determined as object of consciousness. Principle for the objects: the whole sense of mathematics is that they are the system of construction to produce semblances in the concept in the diversity of objects.

The first problem: how can the concept find an object which corresponds to it? It must relate to an object, to something. The problem that rests us: did Kant have reason to relate finitude to a duality of concept and intuition? Is there no way to account for a unity of concept and intu-

119. Though the same argument is also famously made outside the Critical project in *Concerning the ultimate foundation of the differentiation of regions of space* (1768).

ition within the concept, while maintaining the finitude of understanding as constitutive? What Fichte ultimately objects to Kant is right. He does not arrive at a genesis. The consequence of such restoration would be the grounding of the system and the grounding of the ground as system. But do not forget the genesis. It is like the auto-formation of the system, Hegel says. This last point would permit an answer to the question of this chapter: it was objected that the system implied that the human being puts himself in the place of God.

4.4 Finitude and ground

How can a finite transcendental I acquire a constitutive power? As for receptivity: it must not be an accidental, but essential characteristic of the I. A sentence by Heidegger in *Kant and the problem of metaphysics*: 'More original than the human being is the finitude of existence within him'.[120] Finitude cannot be understood starting from an empirical nature.

Three directions of the analysis have appeared with the Post-Kantians, and they have not been completely explored.[121]

120. *'More original than man [ek-sistent] is the finitude of Dasein in him'*. Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, p. 160.

121. Deleuze continues to discuss only two: Maimon and Fichte.

First direction: Salomon Maïmon, a bizarre and highly irregular life, grandiose and miserable. He was a rabbi. Had a taste for running away. Died very miserably. For him it was about substituting the duality of infinite understanding and finite understanding with an interior duality [...] itself finite.[122] It will be a duality between consciousness and the unconscious itself (non-Freudian). Kant's concepts do not determine all the variations of experience. For example: concerning the category of causality we know that phenomena are submitted to laws, but this does not tell me to which particular law any phenomenon is submitted. Hence the *critique of judgment* tries the answer this question which was left unanswered in the *Critique [of pure reason]*. Kant did not know how to give a veritable genesis. Maimon reproaches Kant for having believed that it was the reality of the construction which grounded the transcendental possibility of the concept. This possibility had to pre-exist the construction, which merely reveals it. Maimon demands that we find an interior principle of construction. Is this principle not in Kant? See the schematism in the Critique: 'they are deeply hidden, buried in

122. The ellipsis marks a missing section of the original text, but given what follows, the sense of the phrase must have been that Maïmon sought a reconciliation of the infinite and the finite within the finite itself.

the secrets of nature'.[123] Is this not already what Maimon calls for? A concept itself does not determine its object. We will need a rule which will be an act of the imagination, and also productive. Compare: German Romanticism. Novalis, with whom the imagination becomes constitutive of the world. Nevertheless, Maimon says that the construction guarantees the possibility of the concept. He thinks that if an interior principle of the concept is found, the Kantian duality between concept and intuition is from then on surpassed. Maimon's demand is thus excellent. He successively gives two answers which concern mathematics and physics. The first is the principle of determinability (or perhaps determination). The straight line is the shortest path opposition between 'straight' and 'shortest'. But, Maimon asks, do 'straight' and 'non-straight' contradict each other like 'short' and 'shortest'? [They do when] the straight line is not straight, whereas there is a logical compossibility if we say the straight line is not the shortest. It is false, but not in the same manner. The shortest is the rule of construction from which I determine a line as a straight line. 'Straight' seemed the subject, [but]

123. '[Schematism] is a secret art residing in the depths of the human soul, an art whose true stratagems we shall hardly ever divine from nature and lay bare for ourselves' (*Critique of pure reason* A142/B181).

in fact it is a completely external determination. The line is produced as straight. What is veritably internal is 'the shortest' which determines the line as straight.

Three elements in the synthetic judgment: The determinable. Here: the line, The determined. Here: the straight line, and The shortest, which is identical with the concept, because it is truly the determinant.

The legitimacy of mathematics rests on the duality of the concept with this determinant. But the real difficulty was at the level of physics. Were the objects of experience determined? Strange answer by Maimon: [from] Kantian he [suddenly] finds himself a Leibnizian. Leibniz had discovered the infinitesimal analysis. What strikes him is the notion of the differential. A quantity smaller than any given quantity allows him to appeal to a mathematical tool and also a metaphysical concept: the theory of little perceptions. So, the sound of the sea is composed of the clashes of drops. This time Maimon kept his answer. He calls his theory: 'differential of consciousness', in which the genesis is interpreted as a differential one. The generic element is not consciousness. But the notion of composition is renewed by infinitesimal analysis. The ultimate elements are differential. There are differential elements of consciousness which are the ultimate generic

elements of consciousness itself, which at the same time are not given to consciousness. The transcendental genesis of consciousness is thus possible thanks to the differential. Maimon presents his system as a synthesis of Kant and Leibniz. So his answer is this: he replaces the exterior duality for the distinction, within the I itself, between finite consciousness and it's infinitely little generic element. Had the discovery of the infinitely small with Leibniz created a possibility? Now, in theology the infinite is always the infinitely large. Leibniz really seems to encounter another dimension. He discovers the mathematical tool capable of *measuring* this infinitely small. With Leibniz the two directions end by reconciling, but not without difficulty. In effect, Leibniz wants them both at the same time. With Maimon, the infinitely small really comes to replace the traditional infinitely large. Then the infinitely small becomes the genetic principle of the finite. The finite takes on a constituent power for the infinitely small.

Second direction: Fichte. He, in turn, thought that Maimon had not gone all the way to the end. He wants to replace consciousness by a double deduction. The object is for a subject, but different from it. The object is nothing but the product or the [...] of a [...] that the

finite I poses.[124] A double series: Kant has confused the two series and that is why he did not have a fundamental determination of time. Finitude and time are one and the same. What will be the genesis of time? The problem: how to distinguish a past and a future at each instant in time? Equivocity of the word 'present'. We do not leave it and yet it is always other than itself. At this level, time can present itself as a succession of pure presents, and we project towards the presents to come (return to the will as a psychological faculty). For Heidegger it is transcendental: he inquires into the conditions that render possible, in existence, the fact that ... In time, we distinguish past and future in each instant, which ground memory as psychological faculty. Finitude is constitutive to the extent that it organizes time as *ekstasis* (Greek for standing outside oneself). He thus expects a solution of temporality. Organization of three *ekstases* of time. Kant would have seen this in the three syntheses (past, recognition, future, et cetera).

The three directions thus opened present themselves as follows:

124. The ellipses are placed to mark missing sections in the original text.

1. In the interior of the I, finite I, differentiated I
2. In the interior of consciousness, two parallel senses to *interfacts*.[125]
3. In the interior of Being itself, duality between what exists and simple objects.

4.5 Conclusion to the fourth chapter

Before Hegel, dialectic implied a triple idea: conservation, discussion, contradiction. The level of thesis and antithesis, the contradiction is between persons who talk, not between things themselves. In this sense it is a method. See Socrates: 'The dialectic is opposed to long speech'.[126] How can Hegel transform the dialectic in putting the contradiction in the things themselves? Then the method is something else than a method: it is a grounded system. How is that possible? We must put ourselves at the end of history, which has two ends: that of the Napoleonic regime, and that of his system, which is the end of the history of philosophy. Did he believe it? He wanted to tell us that history is finite at each instant (although he does not say it). History is made from the present. Its rule is in the movement and suppression of present contradictions

125. "Interfacts" is not a French or English word, and is probably an erroneous transcription of "interface"

126. *Gorgias* 448e.

and not in the thought of the future. Action is initiated from the present, in the present, and departs from contradictions which are to be removed. In this sense, history is well-defined at each moment. Hegel never harms a philosopher, he agrees with him in a global sense, by accounting [for him]. He, Hegel, completes [and] realizes Descartes, who is a moment of philosophical thought. Philosophers preceding him have truly 'existed'. He does not claim to revise their discussions, but to pick up the thread of universal history that passes through them, and to identify the meaning of their discussions. What has 'existed'? The philosophers discuss. But, Hegel asks, what responds to these discussions in reality?

He replies there are two things, [in] a deeper discussion in reality: work and struggle. It is the sign of negativity. The human being is the unsatisfied of the given. The struggle is negation, transformation, et cetera. It is because struggle and work are real processes that the discussion of philosophers makes sense in second place. The dialectic is then already fully ready to become a system. Hegel was unable to make the dialectic. That is why he calls is book *The Phenomenology of spirit*. Description in such a way that there arises something of [...]?[127] Compare:

127. The ellipsis marks a missing section from the original text.

Kojève. This is why he had to attach such importance to what Hegel says: 'I arrive at the end'.[128] There is no more for him than describing, knowing, and understanding the dialectical movement in things. We must therefore meet three concrete objections against the system.

1. The human beings puts itself in God's place.
2. The system justifies everything (cf. totalitarian states).
3. There is a mystification in it: it did not await experience, yet in fact it always reintroduces it.

First objection. Positive result. Nobody has claimed to put himself in the place of God. A smaller or larger ambition (vision superior to God). When Hegel speaks of absolute knowledge he says us that 'this reveals no other world to us than ours'.[129] Absolute knowledge is knowledge of this

128. Here is Kojève: 'All this presupposes, of course, the completion of the real Dialectic of Fighting and of Work, that is, the definitive stopping of history. It is only "at the end of time" that a Wise Man (who happened to be named Hegel) can give up all dialectical *method* [...] and limit himself to describing the given'. *Introduction to the reading of Hegel*, p. 191.

129. Likely refers to the end of the *Phenomenology of spirit*'s closing section on absolute knowing: 'thus absorbed in itself, [the Self] sunk in the night of its self-consciousness; but in that night its vanished outer existence is preserved, and this transformed existence – the former one, but now reborn of the Spirit's knowledge – is the new

world. Substitution of transcendental imagination for divine understanding. The point of view of the system replaces the concept of infinite understanding, through the transcendental imagination which is that of constitutive finitude. So, many notions cannot be conserved. See: the notion of creation as a theological idea which must be comprehended as of an infinite will and understanding. If this falls, the idea of creation can*not* be maintained. So it is absurd for an atheist to retain the idea of creation, that is to say he can no longer use concepts which are inseparable from the idea of God. Hence philosophy in its difference with theology cannot, as philosophy, take in the idea of creation. See the formation of Husserl and his disciples. Genesis of Post-Kantians: efforts to account for the world in philosophy. Finally it will be necessary to make a grand place for the poets and writers of German Romanticism. Novalis knew Kant really well. He says he wants to make a 'philosophy', not a psychology of the imagination. He says it is by the same movement that nature produces

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existence, a new world and a new shape of Spirit. In the immediacy of this new existence the Spirit has to start afresh to bring itself to maturity as if, for it, all that preceded it were lost and it had learned nothing from the experience of earlier Spirits. But recollection, the *inwardizing*, of that experience, has preserved it and is the inner being, and in fact the higher form of the substance'.

herbs, flowers, and what 'I imagine' This is not just to say that images which the poet has are like the products of nature. It is also to say that nature hides what it produces. Reproduction through artificial means. The thing is originally produced by nature, but we do not know in what way. We can simply reproduce it in the laboratory. But by contrast, Novalis tells us that the imagination is the faculty, which has as its correspondent in the things even the movement by which the things reproduce. Whence the theme of German Romanticism: relation between truth and poetry. For Novalis there is a more profound truth of poetry, which is that images are identical to the movement of reproduction. Hence what Bachelard calls an image (Cf. *The poetics of space*). We wanted to engender it from something else, he says. It is in fact pure creativity. It is pure dynamism. He refuses all psychological or psychoanalytic explanations of the imagination. He comments on certain structures. Romantic coherence of the two parts of his book. To obtain the true image of the square, it must be made dynamic. That is to say that we need to get something to make itself square. I square myself on an armchair. Movement which is first dynamism of the imagination. Whence the wealth that can be rendered of the great poetic texts. The imaginary root of the shell is

the movement by which it produces itself in the imaginary with this same spiral. Novalis wants to say that the movement by which we imagine is one and the same as the movement by which nature produces things.[130] Of course on the condition of knowing how to dream, knowing that it is a very particular tension of thought: liberate the qualities of the thing, which in the state of nature are taken prisoner. Novalis' whole theme exactly has its equivalent in philosophy [when it] poses the principle of a constitutive imagination. In the system, the human being does put itself in the place of God, because the system is to replace the idea of creation by other concepts.

Second objection. In a sense it is more dangerous. A thing that cannot be denied: the way in which totalitarian regimes declare themselves in favor of a system. But on the level of the philosopher. See the phrase by Hegel. What counts is the fact. Only the result counts. It is often said that for Hegel it is the force that puts in the weight. See his texts on the Napoleonic regime. But if we are honest and look at the context, it is a German phrase: 'real' for him must not be confused with 'existing'. He reserves the name for what is produced in reality. It is reality in-

130. Novalis is the pseudonym of Georg von Hardenberg (1772-1801), a poet and philosopher of early German Romanticism.

sofar it results from a production. It is what is real in the product of the action. Does this not change the sense of the phrase? The activity is at the same time the negating element. The dialectic rests on a negative element in reality. What is positive and real is produced as the negation of negation. Attaching importance to the form of the principle of contradiction. A is not not-A. There the negation itself is born. What is real is reasonable. The movement [is] strictly identical to reason: reality is not just some existing thing.

It is the negation of negation in existing. From the point of view of political philosophy, all traditional philosophy can in a certain way interpret itself in appearance and essence, but that presupposes a theology [and] two worlds. See all Greek philosophy, plus the traditional interpretation. In Kant, the phenomenon has nothing to do with appearance. Kant does not think at all that the phenomenon is an appearance. He thinks the phenomenon is what appears. He opposes the thing insofar as it is the same thing insofar as it appears. Space and time are immediate determinations of what appears. The movement of the *phenomenon* presupposes the sudden demolition of the appearance, which is replaced with the apparition. My notion of apparition will relate to notions instead of being

of meaning or signification. It is not about discovering the other world and essence beyond appearance. The task of philosophy is to discover what appears. Essence no longer has anything to do with philosophy. See the beginning of *Being and nothingness*. Heidegger takes *aletheia* literally, the unveiling = the truth in Greek. Sense is the sense of what appears hidden by the phenomenon, the apparition. Hegel therefore develops the theme of the State. Instead of opposing an ideal city referring to an intelligible world, to a true world, he says that [in] essence, real States are intelligible. In this sense everything real is reasonable. We must not believe that the essence of the State is realized in every State. It is the liberty of the individual and the authority of government.

The one negates the other and yet every State is constituted on this contradiction. But not all States are good. In a tyrannical regime there is the suppression of the citizen's freedom. But it is not absent, it is not suppressed once and for all. It is a daily task for the police to suppress freedom. The tyrant is never finished with the freedom of the citizen. For all that, this State is not reasonable, because what is reasonable is the movement of the negative against the non-negative. The negation negates itself.

There is dialectic, because positivity is never but the product of the negation of the negation.

This brings us to the third objection. The question of experience. When we make this objection, we take the system to be what it is not. We then ask a system to tell us the future. Even in the preface of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel says that critique is one and the same as experience. It is a about describing experience such that something necessarily escapes in experience to who undergoes it, and that is precisely the sense of this experience. Not useful, because the conditions of action do not imply any future condition of the future State. It finds its point of departure in the present contradiction.

5 CONCLUSION TO THE SEMINAR

1. To understand the sense of ground, we have seen that we must bring it closer to the mythological notion. Three characteristics have been recognized:
    a) A more profound origin than a single beginning.
    b) The repetition.
    c) The thing assumes a worldly value (the city is grounded on the image of the world).
2. Can these characters take on a philosophical meaning? When the beginning becomes essential, the ground is not the simple beginning which it is the relation of the thing with what it is not. The beginning of mathematics is the relation of mathematics with a culture which did not yet contain mathematics. What is the procedure contrary to the ground? It is necessity of beginning in relation to the thing. Kant showed us that we must call the ground a principle of double operation: it rendered possible something in rendering necessary the submission of something to this something. The operation of the ground consists in rendering neces-

sary the submission of the thing to what it is not. We must rise to the plane of demands of reason. The only operation is that of the ground. The demand does not have a principle of something else, without at the same time something else submitting the given to the demand. Conception of the world in Heidegger.

3. Concerns the other aspect of rituals: repetition. The idea of the principle that grounds invites us to take an original repetition, a psychic repetition.
4. It is necessary that in this repetition, something new be produced or unveiled in the mind. Answer to the question: 'what is grounding for?' What is repetition for? Something new is produced in the unveiled mind. What is unveiled (last chapter) is the veritable structure of the imagination, to wit the sense which cannot be understood except by and in the enterprise of grounding, which far from presupposing a point of view of the infinite, is one and the same as the principle of the imagination.
5. Without the ground it is impossible to distinguish true from false problems.

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