

Phenomenology of Common Truth

(Another phenomenology)

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- 1 - There are things
- 2 - The proper things of external space are made of things

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"Again and again we must emphasize this: In the question of truth posed here, what is at stake is not only a modification of the traditional concept of truth, nor a complement to its current representation, but a mutation of human-being. This mutation is not demanded by new psychological or biological discoveries. Man is not the object of any anthropology. Man is in question here in the deepest and most vast perspective, the one that is properly fundamental: man in his relationship to being, i.e. in the turning point: Being (Seyn) and its truth in its relationship to man."

Martin Heidegger,

Letter to William J. Richardson, 1962

Preface

Why is this phenomenology "another"?

If the phenomenology presented here calls itself "other", it is because it succeeds, in particular, the Husserlian phenomenology whose foundations are presented in the *Ideen*, the one that every contemporary philosopher claims to apply in his own discourse – or at least the one to which he implicitly refers, since in general, when we speak of phenomenology, we do not specify which phenomenology we are talking about, so it is not clear what method, or perspective, or point of view, we are using, or how it differs from traditional scientific analysis.

This "other phenomenology" challenges the "phenomenological truth" of Husserl's phenomenology and only relates to it in name.

The truth – in the sense of "power of seeing" – of this other phenomenology is certainly close to that of phenomenology as conceived by Heidegger: this truth is that of Being, it is the "truth of Being", a truth which, although it has been Heidegger's leitmotif, and has received this appellation from him, is not Heidegger's monopoly: it is that of human-being. Heidegger never set out his phenomenology thematically. If he had done so – and this exposition can be deduced from his writings as a whole, or even identified with them – it is certain that its development would include significant deviations from the present exposition. This is mainly because, while Heidegger did see that

"It is nothingness itself that annihilates"¹, he did not go so far as to say that it is *time* that annihilates, that time is the primary form of logic, that it is time that produces that evidence of things that our logic – the logic of our imagination – renews. Some of these deviations – in particular, the Heideggerian concept of the "historiality of Being" (*Geschichtlichkeit*), or the "destiny-history of Being", to which we will return later – will be considered here as "phenomenological faults" committed by Heidegger: they stem from his imagination, they have no temporal reality. The "historiality"² of Being" is Heidegger's *belief*.

The word "mutation", which Heidegger uses in his 1962 letter to William J. Richardson – a passage of which is the epigraph of the present book – to evoke the change of truth in human being, is only appropriate unless we clarify its meaning or specify what is particular about this mutation. The human species is the product of successive genetic mutations. Not all genetic mutations are successful: a mutation spreads or disappears through maladaptation, a process known since Darwin as "natural selection". Right from the start, the human species already has the capacity to access the truth of Being – the power of sight of Being. If this is the effect of a genetic mutation, it has already taken place, it has succeeded, it has taken place with the emergence of man: man is inseparable from this mutation. But what is special about this mutation is that it only becomes effective within a human life, a life that necessarily begins with childhood. Childhood is the time, immemorial, that precedes the moment, in a man's life, of the actualization of the mutation in question. Childhood ends with the sudden access to the

¹ Famous assertion – read as nonsense by Carnap and the members of the Vienna Circle, then by analytical philosophy as a whole – pronounced by Heidegger in 1929 in his lecture *What is Metaphysics?*. This assertion says nothing other than the essence of logic, of this same logic within which analytical philosophy thinks and which it therefore cannot think. Any "philosophy of logic" coming from this philosophy only thinks of logic within logic itself, in its beginningless continuity. Within this logical continuity which supports it, analytical philosophy can only think logically, according to *our* logic, subservient to it, logic whose origin it does not know, whose origin it does not question. Logic – time and, in addition, our imagination – is the means that nothingness uses to annihilate Being.

² "Historiality" translates here and throughout the book the word "Geschichtlichkeit" used by Heidegger when talking about "die Geschichtlichkeit des Seins". Hence, for Heidegger, the truth of Being is "historial".

truth of Being, with this mutation of truth, regardless of whether this possibility is of genetic origin, and regardless of the idea we may have of the role of genes in such a mutation. In a human life, there is – or there is not – the event of access to the truth of Being. And this has been the case for as long as there have been human beings. Unlike Western thought, which has been instituted since Plato and Aristotle, Eastern thought – Hindu, Taoist, Buddhist, Chan – is centered on this event (awakening, bodhi, prajna). The Western institution of thought does not prevent the event from happening. It only makes it stranger, more difficult to assume in a cultural and mundane environment that totally ignores it. Hölderlin, Rimbaud, Kafka, Pessoa, for example, bear witness to the strangeness that grips them. Rimbaud, in his *Season in hell*, under the title *The impossible*, writes:

" Having found myself two cents of reason – it goes by quickly! – I see that my discomfort comes from not having realized soon enough that we are in the West. The swamps of the West! Not that I believe the light is altered, the form is exhausted, the movement is lost... Well, now my mind absolutely wants to take on the cruel developments that the mind has undergone since the end of the East... It wants it, my mind!

... My two cents of reason are finished! – The spirit is an authority, it wants me to be in the West. It would have to be silenced to conclude as I wanted.

I'd send to hell the palms of martyrs, the rays of art, the pride of inventors, the ardor of plunderers; I'd return to the East and to the first and eternal wisdom. – They say it's a dream of crass laziness!

However, I was not thinking about the pleasure of escaping modern suffering. I was not thinking of the bastardized wisdom of the Koran. – But isn't there a real torment in the fact that, since that declaration of science, Christianity, man has been playing with himself, proving the evidence, puffing himself up with the pleasure of repeating those proofs, and living only like that! Subtle torture, nonsense; the source

of my spiritual ramblings. Nature might be bored, perhaps M. Prudhomme was born with Christ."

The event of access to the truth of Being actualizes in us the mutation that brought about human-being, the essence of man. Contrary to what Heidegger tells us, there is no "historiality" of being, there is no "Ereignis" in the sense of the advent for all of us of the truth of Being – with the help of German pathfinders, Swabians in particular, such as Hölderlin and himself – there are no peoples destined for the truth of Being, nor peoples destined for "faisance", for calculation. This phenomenological error must certainly be linked to Heidegger's political misguidance, to his involvement in Nazism. However, the letter he wrote to William J. Richardson in 1962, in response to a request for clarification of what is meant by "the turning point", an essential passage of which – itself taken from a Heidegger lecture – can be found as the exergue to the present work, clearly states what is at stake with the truth of Being: another concept of truth, which has nothing to do with truth in the scientific sense, in the sense of conformity with what time shows us, another concept that means "power of sight", "field of vision". Phenomenology can only take place with the turning point, i.e. when man, the world and things are thought from the point of view of Being and its truth, its power of sight.

This "other phenomenology" will be referred to here as "phenomenology", as if it were the first and only one. The title of the book is the title of its second section: *Phenomenology of Common Truth*. This second section tells how the truth of Being sees the truth that is first that of all of us, in childhood, and which is expressed by the logos. Common truth – in particular, science –, possibly initially baffled by the *Introduction to Phenomenology* that constitutes the first section, may be then grasped, in the second section, by the light shed on it by phenomenology.

All reading requires the reader to let himself be guided. To let oneself be guided by the text means reading properly. It is not easy to set aside one's own knowledge and follow in the author's footsteps as far as possible, initially with confidence. When, in offering oneself up to reading in this way, one ends up losing all confidence in what is being said, the question arises as to why this happens. Perhaps we realize that the author is on the wrong track, and that there can be no question of following him any further. Perhaps it has become impossible to follow, lacking what is necessary to follow: another truth, another power of view, "a mutation of human-being".

When it comes to thinking, free reading does not influence, nor should it. At best, it can only support, complement, help to better express what is seen, help to mark the differences between the powers of view. When, through reading, a community of views is found with the author, this discovery can be truly jubilant. Reading does not influence, but it can help to clear the way for thought that has already begun. It can enable the reader to move forward now that he or she has the words to say what has already been seen. It can give language the ability to express thought. It can provide our own references, those we make our own. Free reading does not give the truth – "truth" always in the sense of "power of seeing" – nor does it bring about any mutation of truth, but it can provide the words, the references, to tell the truth that is already ours.

The reading practised during university studies – where we learn what we're told we must learn, where we learn concepts, school references, where we practice commentary, commentary where it is one person's concepts against another's concepts, argument against argument, knowledge against knowledge, rhetoric against rhetoric, more or less dubious logic against more or less dubious logic, demonstration of erudition – is not representative of free reading.

Free reading is the confrontation of the author's power of view with one's own power of view. As long as what is said is understood, is seen, then our own truth – our power to see – is not overwhelmed by the

author's truth. This does not mean that we agree with everything he says. It simply means that we know how to read him, that we are able to judge the scope of what he or her says, to criticize. As soon as we no longer understand what is being said, the question of another truth arises, of a power of view that is not our own, of something that is shown and that we cannot see, at least not yet. A phenomenon appears to one or a few of us that does not appear to the reader we are, not yet. It is not necessarily the author who is at fault, or the way he expresses what he sees, but perhaps it is our own power of vision.

We do not all have the same power of vision at this moment. Yet we all have access, potentially and qualitatively, to the human power of sight, the power of sight that perceives all that Man has seen, can see, will be able to see. Access to this power of sight is an event, the event of a lifetime. None of us gives this access to the other.

There are fundamentally two human ways of seeing, two truths.

One is *common truth*, constructed by logic – first by time, then by imagination – and expressed by logos – the discourse we all understand – the most rigorous part of which is science. Science stems from common truth and is learned and transmitted to us all.

Phenomenology considers "common truth" and "logos" to be synonymous, although logos is, strictly speaking, the expression of common truth.

The other truth appears – at least to some of us – in the course of life and corresponds to the sudden cessation of the logical effect of time, the disappearance of the evidence with which things have hitherto appeared. With the suspension of the logical effect of time, we are given a new truth. Following Heidegger, let us call it the "truth of Being" ("die Wahrheit des Seins"). Then, philosophy – metaphysics – begins. This metaphysics is not ontotheological – as is the metaphysics that remains culturally ours – but *phenomenological*. What is ontotheological is founded on a purely imaginary principle – God, or an idea that plays the role of God, an "ideology", an idea that may be that of the sovereignty of *our* logic, i.e. the logic of our imagination.

Phenomenology is based on what appears to us in time, through time – including the interruption of its logical effect – independently of our own logic.

When we say, "to each his own truth", we are talking about the only common truth. It is about the different truths that are internal to the common truth, to the logos, and, in particular, it is about the different beliefs. Within common truth, there are several modes of truth, several modes of common appearance: affective mode, objective mode – i.e. scientific, physical, mathematical –, imaginary mode. Added to this is the mode of belief, born of the purely imaginary, whose consequences can be dreadful. To believe is to take as purely temporal what is purely imaginary. In the world, in the common homeland, it is beliefs that make the differences: differences in culture, traditions, religion, aesthetics, art. All beliefs respond to the same need: the need for meaning, the need for hope. Hope of what? Of eternity. Beliefs – ideological or religious – respond to the common sensation of something missing, a source of anguish that needs to be filled. They respond to the anguish of finitude, they respond to religious feeling, the feeling that is at the origin of religions and that religion suffocates.

Phenomenology is concerned with appearances, with all the ways in which things appear to us. While its own view is external to the logos, due to the suspension of the logical effect of time, it is capable of moving and seeing with the truth of the logos. Phenomenology is capable of seeing and saying what each truth sees. It owes this ability to the initial truth, to the truth of Being.

Time, logic, mathematics, science, politics, art, and love are not seen – thought – in the same way, depending on whether they are seen from the common truth – logos – or from the truth of Being. Phenomenology describes both of these ways of appearing. One, that which comes from the truth of Being, is the initial way. It knows how the other, relating to the common truth, came about from the initial way. The truth of Being knows how to see as common truth sees, and it knows where the

difference between one and the other comes from. If today's logos sees mathematics as stemming from the logic of predicates and the axioms of set theory, the truth of Being sees it as the definitive achievement of time in the gaze of living beings, an achievement that can be reduced to that single axiom that phenomenology calls *the primitive axiom of common truth*. This primitive axiom is: *there are things, there are only things*. When we add to this primitive axiom the principle of contradiction and the axiom that is specific to external space, which says that everything in external space is made of things, then we have at our disposal everything that is necessary and sufficient to develop mathematical science. The primitive axiom of common truth says *mathesis*, the totally stable foundation of *physis*. Physis is what time offers to the living eye. Our mathematical science is the science of the mathesis of external space, the space we all see at the same time.

The *real* is what we see, what falls within the scope of our truth. What we see is what exists: to exist is to be seen by us. Of that which escapes man's truth, there is no question of man being able to say anything. This "that", which escapes the truth of Man, which arises from the pure imaginary, is an object of belief. Phenomenology is realistic. Its realism does not prevent it from seeing – because it does, it's part of reality – that Being, which it sees and whose truth it shares, is indissociable from an *Idea*. This idea is the only pure and *a priori* idea, it is part of the initial, it is at the heart of Being. It is both the source and the motor of common truth, of logos, of Reason, and this without them knowing it. The best way to state the Idea in our own words, those of the logos, is: *there is nothing, there can only be nothing*. What remains to be known is what this "nothing" is, this thing called "nothing". "Nothing" shows itself to us, suddenly, in time, in an instant – the instant of the "mutation of human-being"³. The sight of "nothing" is immediately accompanied by that of its contradiction: there is! The simultaneous sight of

³ Through this mutation "human being" becomes "human-being". Human-being is the human being who accesses the truth of Being.

"nothing" and its contradiction corresponds to the sudden suspension of the logical effect of time. In Being, time is at the service of the Idea: it works to restore "nothing", nothingness. To see "nothing" is to access the truth of Being. Being contradicts the idea within it. It is the absolute surprise: there is!

Being is absolute surprise. Surprise in relation to what? In relation to "nothing". "Nothing" is therefore initial. "Nothing" is therefore as absolute as Being. "Nothing" is *a priori*, it is the *a priori* of Being. "Nothing" is the simplest, the most normal, the most reasonable, it requires no explanation, it is unproblematic. The idea of the simple absolute is at the heart of Being, and Being contradicts it: it is this madness.

Between "There are things" and "There is!", between mathesis and Being, the difference is abysmal. It is even more abysmal than the difference, itself abysmal, between Being and beings. Beings – or physis – is caught up in the continuous march of time and imagination, and this endless march is in search of a goal it cannot reach. The goal of this continuous march, without beginning and without end, is the restoration of "nothing" in Being. The work of the Idea within Being is *logic*. This restoration is acquired, definitive, completed, in that totally stable part of physis that is mathesis.

Being is untouched by logic. The first form of logic is what appears to us as time. Within us and mimicking time, its second form is imagination. The objective of logic is the restoration of "nothing", the annihilation of Being. Of this restoration, mathesis is the definitive achievement in the living gaze. Mathesis is the totally stable, inert foundation of physis. Movement, in physis, is the mark of the logical work that remains to be accomplished, and which is never-ending. The regularity of movement is what logos calls "time".

Time, without beginning or end, works to bridge the abyss between Being and nothingness. The result is beings, beings always on the march towards nothingness, which they will never reach.

Why time? Answer: because there is nothingness. Nothingness is the norm, it is Reason, it is the *a priori* idea at the heart of Being. Through time, nothingness annihilates Being by making everything obvious to the living eye. This "everything" is the things we all have. What is self-evident is normal, unsurprising, and expected. Time makes evident through the habit it generates, through its non-beginning, through its continuity. The hallmark of the ongoing work of annihilation is movement. The regularity of movement – this regularity seen as a result of annihilation – serves as a measure of what passes, of what happens, so that for the logos, time and its measure merge. Between the initial "us" – Being – and "all of us", there is time without beginning and its work of annihilation, its work of "reasoning". The annihilating means of time is the "always already", the non-beginning. It is the "always already seen" that produces the evidence with which things show themselves to the living gaze. This gaze, the animal gaze, our own gaze, stable and multiple, is what time transforms the initial gaze, that of Being. The animal gaze sees things and itself as self-evident, while Being sees itself in total surprise. Time replaces the madness of Being with the evidence of "déjà vu". Time, which does not begin, does not end either; it always has madness to annihilate, because eternally, there is! Its apparent strength lies in the fact that it will always find a logical answer to the ever-finer questions posed by our science. The source of this miracle lies in the fact that our science and the way it works are a product of time, and mimic time: science is logical, it wants to be logical, it can only be logical. Madness is ruled out from the very premises of its reasoning. These premises – the starting point, the axioms, explicit or implicit – are considered self-evident, and the trick is already played. We have been played. We are played by time,

complemented in us by imagination, by science. We are played by logic.

Most contemporary philosophers do not think about the difference between Being and beings, of which they are aware: the famous "ontological difference", as they call it. They give different definitions to the ontology this expression refers to – if, that is, they define it before talking about it. They are aware of this difference – between Being and beings – because they have been told about it, notably by Heidegger and, above all, by commentaries on Heidegger's words. They are aware of it because they talk about it, because it is discussed in the teaching provided by the University. They have a certain view of it, but they do not see it as it needs to be seen. They dismiss it as thought that "leaps over its shadow, claiming to have a superior revelation of the 'in-itself' of things". No one would dare to say, directly, that Heidegger – who himself said that "No one can jump over his own shadow" – claimed to have this "superior revelation". However, the shock of access to the truth of Being is an authentic revelation: the revelation of what we really are: a folly. There is nothing "superior" about this revelation. The choice of words here is significant: who does the one who "claims" to have been chosen for this "superior revelation" think he is? Such a "superior revelation", reserved for one or a few, is scandalous.

What is this revelation about? It is about all of us. It is about the possibility for each of us to access the truth of Being. The "in-itself of things", if it can be so called, is pure contradiction, the contradiction that the thing seen opposes to "nothing". This "superior revelation" of Being is the lot of everyone, each in his or her own time; it is the "mutation of human-being", it is birth, it is the unheard-of fact of being born, a birth that time has prevented us from seeing and experiencing through its "always already", and which it now restores to us through the sudden suspension of its logical effect, through the restoration of the initial. Who intervenes in this restoration? It is truth itself, unheard-of, eternal: Being.

Most contemporary philosophers reject the difference between Being and beings as an illusion – the illusion of birth! They reject it because they do not yet see it. These philosophers think from the inside of the logic in continuous motion – time and imagination. They are caught in logic, played by it. Their indefatigable discourse always defers to Reason and its logic, a Reason that is always looking for the best explanation, the best argument, the one that might allow the mind to rest for good – this is the logical objective, the objective of logic, that of time and imagination. Reason, in its search, sinks ever deeper into complexity because there is no definitive rest! Complexity produces in them both the feeling of getting to the heart of the difficulty of the problem posed to us, the excuse for still not finding the solution, and the motivation to keep going. Philosophers – most of them – want to be as scientific as possible. They tend to turn their philosophy, their metaphysics, into a science. They do not make the "difference" they talk about – because it has been brought to their attention.

The distance – the difference – between the initial "us", Being, and "all of us" is time, time without beginning.

If we have a common truth – the one that enables language and intersubjective communication between all men, the one that acts in the world, the one that makes the world and its politics – we do not all *currently* have the same truth, the same power of view, although we all *potentially* do. It is these differences – the differences in appearing, the differences in what shows itself to us, and *above all in the way it shows itself* – that constitute the theme of phenomenology.

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Section I

Introduction to Phenomenology

§1.- Definition of phenomenology.

The four fundamental facts that open up phenomenology.

Phenomenology is the study of the diverse ways in which phenomena appear to us.

The condition of possibility for this study is the perception of four fundamental facts, the first three of which are ordinary, i.e. perceived by all of us, according to the ways of appearing common to all living beings:

Fact 1: seeing.

We see. Something shows itself to us. We see things. Things show themselves to us, they appear to us, including ourselves. The primary thing is *appearing* itself, it is seeing, it is the fact of seeing, it is the sight of things, it is the power of seeing. "Seeing" is to be understood here in the sense of "perceiving", and therefore also of "feeling", "sensing", "conceiving", "thinking", "imagining". Every thing seen is a phenomenon. "Phenomenon" and "thing" say the same thing and are here considered strictly synonymous. By definition, that which is seen,

that which shows itself to us, "exists". Every thing – every phenomenon – exists. The fact that we can collectively associate a word with each thing seen indicates the intersubjectivity of seeing things: each word shows everyone the same thing, and this "same" is reinforced by the inter-coherence of discourses.

Fact 2: truths.

Phenomena do not all appear to us in the same way: there are many different ways in which things appear. Each mode of appearance corresponds to a particular truth, i.e. a particular way of seeing, a particular power of seeing, a particular visual field.

The two ordinary modes of appearance – ordinary because they are known to all, accessed by all, because the things they give us to see are transmissible to all through language – *are the continuous temporal mode* – which gives rise to scientific truth – *and the imaginary mode* – the truth that our imagination opens up and develops analogically from the temporal *déjà vu*. The imaginary mode is derived from the continuous temporal mode and constitutes its analogical complement. The two ordinary modes of appearing – temporal and imaginary – constitute the common truth.

Fact 3: evidence, logic.

What characterizes common truth is *the evidence* of things seen: things appear to us in evidence, and their sight is transmitted from one to another – by gesture or word – to all others, with the same evidence. "Evidence" means "without surprise", meaning that what appears to the common truth is either "always already" apparent to it in the temporal continuity of appearing, or is an anticipation by the imagination of what may appear in the temporal continuity of appearing. "Always already" means that there has never been a first appearance of things in temporal continuity, that every appearance is a reappearance in time.

The ordinariness of appearing shows us things as if they were expected, foreseen, normal, which is what the word "evidence" means.

Evidence comes from the beginningless continuity of the monstration of things in time for all of us. Time is the "always already" of the appearance of common truth. Imagination anticipates, by analogy, what time shows us, and reconducts, in what it shows us, the evidence produced by time.

Phenomenology calls *logic* what produces the evidence of what is shown – time – or what reconducts it – imagination. Time is the primary form of logic. *Our* logic, which is what common truth calls it, is the logic of our imagination, the logic that mimics temporal logic. Common truth is what logic shows us in evidence. The expression of common truth in language is *logos*. Logos, produced by logic, is comprehensible to us all.

Scientific truth is that part of common truth which is shown to us by the temporally continuous mode of appearing alone – it excludes from its truth the purely imaginary mode of appearing. The hypotheses we imagine must be validated by an experimental set-up before they can be accepted as scientific truths. The experimental set-up is designed to force the continuous temporal mode of appearing to pronounce itself, to validate or invalidate the thing predicted by the hypothesis.

Common truth is divided into scientific truth – what the continuous temporal mode of appearance shows us, i.e. "time" – and imaginary truth – what the imagination shows us based on what time shows us, by analogy. Scientific truth and imaginary truth are self-evident and transmitted to all through language. Imaginary truth – hypotheses – helps scientific truth to take shape.

Fact 4: the appearance of the appearance, the event.

Appearance itself, as a phenomenon, appears to us, during our lives, in two diverse ways.

First, it appears to us as a matter of course: for all of us, it is *normal, natural, ordinary, habitual, and unsurprising* that things should appear to us, including ourselves. Each of us appears to ourselves, and this

appearance is at first self-evident: as far back as we can remember, we were already there.

Then – and this is the major event of a lifetime, an event perceived as *birth* – the obviousness of the appearance suddenly disappears. Appearance, sight, oneself, being-there, are suddenly surprising, extraordinary, a-normal, stupefying, mad. Everything, including oneself, loses its obviousness. All things are absolutely surprising, and in particular the appearance itself, the appearance of oneself. Truth has suddenly changed. The obviousness of seeing is definitively replaced by the absolute surprise of seeing, the madness of being there, the madness of being. The absolute is there, and it is mad. "Mad" as opposed to "normal".

Why "absolute"? Why "mad"? Why "normal"? Because the emerging truth simultaneously reveals that there can be no question of giving a reason, a cause, an explanation, to appearing, to being. This truth is initial and violent. The absolute, the madness, the violence, are absolutely opposed to our usual way of looking for an explanation, a reason, a cause, a solution, an ordering, for everything that appears. In the common mode of appearance – continuous temporal mode or imaginary mode – every phenomenon has its obvious cause and is itself obvious: the chain of causes constitutes a circle, the circle of common understanding. Birth breaks the circle of causes.

This event – this shock, this trauma – is individual, personal, untransmissible. Each of us experiences it in his or her own time, while the world goes on as if nothing had happened. After this event, the person who experiences it can say: "I am no longer in the world. " If he agrees to live in the world, he is living another time, a formal time as opposed to natural time, the time before the event. Formal time is played out, freely, whereas natural time plays us out, unbeknownst to us. The truth of this person, which is potentially the truth of us all, is the truth of Being. Being is absolutely surprised by itself, it is birth, eternal birth. His first question is: how is it that, up until this moment, I have never been aware of anything?

§2.- The condition of possibility of phenomenology: the metaphysical event.

Phenomenology can only begin with the event it describes as fact 4; an event it calls "metaphysical". This is the *metaphysical event*, and it justifies this qualifier in this way: the event is an expulsion of the self from physis, from the time from which physis springs. The "self", unique and initial, re-emerges from the individual "I" caught up in time and physis. Its truth is now – an eternal "now" as Being is eternal, out of time – *meta*-physical. Its visual field extends beyond the world and its logos, beyond physis, beyond what time shows to living eyes, beyond nature. Physis is what time shows to living eyes, and what it shows is an alteration of the initial appearance. "World" here is another word for "physis", but a "physis" particular to each species. Every living species, animal, or vegetable has its own world.

The metaphysics in question here is quite different from the ontotheological metaphysics that reigns culturally in the world, the one that guided Husserl's phenomenology, the one that is certainly destined to reign for as long as humanity lasts. This other metaphysics is phenomenological, it is *phenomenological metaphysics*. It is, quite simply, metaphysics.

§3.- Phenomenological truth.

Phenomenological truth is phenomenology's power of view. This power of view, whose ambition is the analysis of all human powers of view and their differences, if it is to fulfil its mission, must necessarily have the widest human power of view. The broadest human power of view is the power of view that arises with the metaphysical event, the power of view of metaphysical truth, of the truth of Being, of initial truth.

How can phenomenology see that it has the broadest human power of sight? To see oneself as the widest view is characteristic of the truth of

Being. This truth can never show scientific truth – science – that its view is absolutely the widest, wider in particular than its own. If it could, it would immediately be absorbed by scientific truth, and would contradict itself. Faced with this assertion of phenomenology, science will be content to shrug its shoulders. However, it is a fact that the truth of Being knows itself, sees itself, broader than scientific truth, and sees that its seeing is the absolute of seeing. Seeing, here, is identified with Being.

The examination of different powers of seeing, of what differentiates one from the other, is not, cannot be, an objective of science. It does not even think about it. For it, there is only one power of view, and that is the power of logic, a power it does not even think of qualifying as such, since it cannot and will not say anything about it: logos is caught up in logic, played by logic. So, we should not expect science – or even university philosophical teaching – to accept, or recognize, the phenomenological point of view as offering the broadest truth. Any philosophy that claims to be a science will certainly say, among other things, that this phenomenology stems from thinking that "jumps over its shadow", in other words, thinking that is the victim of an illusion.

But can science invalidate what phenomenology says?

When phenomenology describes – as it will do here in Section II – the foundation of our logic, the foundation of our mathematical science, and, more generally, the common truth, the truth from which science springs, can science deny the truth – in the sense that science gives to the word "truth" – of these descriptions? To do so, it would have to be able to show that they are false – that is, invalidated by time, by any purely temporal experience –, something that phenomenology challenges it to do. Here we are at the limits of what science can see, at the foundations of its own view. These are the limits beyond which science cannot see.

The truth of Being – Being identified with its truth – is causeless, violent, unheard-of, initial: it is the initial. The initial contradicts all

Reason, all appeasement. What then is the Reason it contradicts? The initial sees Reason, since it sees that it is its surprising contradiction.

"Reason", with a capital "R", is the word used by logos to signify possible appeasement, possible justice, the possibility of eliminating tensions between us by justifying our differences, advocating tolerance, fundamental equality, the Common Good. Reason is, in principle, the guide of Politics.

The truth of Being does not see Reason as the logos, rightly political, sees it. It sees it as nothingness, or as the agent of nothingness. Reason is king in politics, i.e. when it comes to establishing the Law that enables us to live together in peace. When it claims to logically resolve all human problems, especially those posed by pure religious sentiment, born of anguish over finitude and the absence of meaning, it poses as the agent of nothingness.

The initial sees nothingness, of which it is the contradiction. It sees time and the purpose of time, its *raison d'être*: time is the nothingness that annihilates. The *raison d'être* of time is the "reasoning" of Being; to reason is to give back to Reason. The truth of Being sees the evidence produced by time. It sees the imagination and its analogical logic that mimics time. Through the work of being's annihilation – through the logic of which time is the first form – nothingness embraces Being and produces the natural truth, the common truth, the logical truth, that which, through multiple instances of seeing – the gaze of the living – sees things – including the gaze that sees – in evidence. Through the intermediary of Man and time, nothingness gives the world – always in the process of being annihilated, but never totally annihilated – to Being. This gift is received as such by human-being at the moment of the metaphysical event.

Access to the truth of Being – to the initial, to Being – is the condition of possibility of phenomenology.

If the initial contradicts nothingness, where does it see nothingness, and what is nothingness? Birth, Being, is the simultaneous appearance of nothingness and its contradiction; simultaneity which, for Being, is

eternity, outside time. For the human-being, at the moment of this double appearance, nothingness is the world.

Phenomenological truth knows how to see with common truth, knows how to see with scientific truth, knows how to see with imaginary truth, knows how to see with belief, just as it knows how to see with metaphysical truth. Scientific truth and imaginary truth are ordinary, common truth: they constitute the truth that prevails in logos and is expressed through it. Metaphysical truth is extraordinary in the sense that not all of us have access to it: each of us accesses it in his or her own time.

We must always remember that "truth" here means "visual field", "power of sight". "Seen" is a generic word for "perceived", "felt", "thought", "imagined". What is seen shows itself. Anything that shows itself is a thing or a phenomenon. Seeing – or showing itself – is the first of phenomena, the initial phenomenon. When the initial is seen as such, without cause, contrary to all Reason, it is reduced to an exclamation mark.

§4.- "To show" and "to show oneself".

Childhood. The absolute. Birth.

"Showing" is something other than "showing oneself".

Something *shows itself*. Phenomena, by definition, *show themselves*. Phenomenology is the study of what shows itself and how it shows itself.

Showing is, in particular, what we try to do through language, through proposition. Showing is the act of a living being who has seen something that shows itself, and wants to communicate it to others, to let them see it. This monstration to others does not always work. For it to work, one condition must be met. The other must already be able to see what is being shown. At present, we do not all have the same ability to see.

What is evident to all made language possible, and is the origin of the intersubjective meaning of words. The whole of what we all see and can

show to each other through language – words, propositions, discourses – is *logos*. Our life, everyone's life, begins with this single truth, which is the common truth, that which shows itself to all in evidence. Logos is the result of this commonality of view, bringing us together and keeping us together.

Suddenly, in the course of your life, to your greatest surprise – words fail here to express the intensity of this surprise, the shock it produces – you gain access to another truth, another power of view. You can only show what is now showing itself to you to the other person if he or she already sees it, if he or she has himself or herself lived his or her "experience par excellence"⁴ – the metaphysical event –, the access to the truth of Being, to the truth that sees things in a radically different way from the way they are seen in childhood. For phenomenology, *childhood* is that period of everyone's life whose beginning is immemorial, and which ends with this event. The beginning of childhood, like that of physis, has no date in time. It begins with time, which is itself without beginning. Who can remember the beginning of their own childhood? At the moment of our first recollection, we are there, already there.

The ability to see, the primary phenomenon of sight, is truth, the power of sight. We see and we see that we see. This seeing sees itself as self-evident since it has always seen itself as seeing. This "always seen seeing" is the effect of time, it is time. Seeing and seeing that we see are accessible to childhood, to all of us, it is common, it is ordinary. The extraordinary, the unheard-of, is the "seeing" that is surprised by itself, that sees itself differently, suddenly. The "seeing", thus seen, thus surprised, can have no explanation; it does not seek one; it knows, because it sees it, that there can be none. The name he gives to this situation, the name he gives himself, is "absolute". Absolute is also absolute surprise. With this seeing, another truth, another power of seeing, is accessed. The way in which this seeing shows itself is quite

⁴ This is what Wittgenstein calls this event in his *Lecture on Ethics*. An "experience par excellence" that he describes as: "I am amazed at the existence of the world. "

different from the way in which ordinary seeing, the seeing of the living gaze, shows itself in childhood.

The primary phenomenon, the primary object of phenomenology, is the phenomenon of *monstration*, which can be subdivided into "showing oneself" and "showing". It is both the phenomenon of "seeing" and that of "giving to see".

Seeing, showing oneself, the truth, is what happens to us. It happens first of all without our knowing it. This "first of all" is *childhood*, the beginningless time of childhood. The seeing of childhood comes to us through the intermediary of time, in the evidence. What happens to the human being, in the course of his life, is the end of childhood, the end of the evidence of seeing, the end of the logical effect of time, the authentic beginning, *birth*.

§5.- The real, the true.

Phenomenological "truth" and scientific "truth".

The phenomenological "false": belief.

Whatever falls within the scope of the truth of any of us is, by definition, true, real, existing. The imaginary is therefore as true, as real, as existing, as the purely temporal. The only domain of the imaginary that phenomenology considers *false*, or *non-phenomenological*, is *belief*.

Belief has its origins in speculative – i.e. imaginary – discourse, which takes advantage of the fact that the scientific truth of the hypotheses it advances cannot be verified experimentally to pretend that it describes a purely temporal reality, i.e. one that arises from time in its continuity, and is therefore scientifically true. To take the purely imaginary – considered at first as a speculative game, as a simple opening onto the possible – for the purely temporal, is to enter into belief, which is what phenomenology considers as error, as falsehood. The phenomenon of belief goes far beyond that of religious belief alone. The pitfall of philosophy is the speculative which presents itself as scientific truth and gives rise to the belief of those who allow themselves to be taken in.

When we say that a truth *is not phenomenological*, or that *it is phenomenologically "false"*, we mean that it is a belief. To present a thesis as properly scientific when it is both speculative – imaginary – and definitively unverifiable, is the temptation of philosophy, it is theology, it is ideology.

Contemporary philosophy, when it presents us with "scientific metaphysics" or "metaphysical fiction", cannot resist this temptation and generates the greatest confusion.

Metaphysical truth, scientific truth and purely imaginary truth are three different truths, three different fields of vision. Phenomenology moves within each of these truths, it knows how to see as each of these truths sees, it also knows how to detect belief. Phenomenological metaphysics is neither scientific nor imaginary, but it knows how to see as science sees and as pure imagination sees. On the other hand, it knows *how* to tell how science sees and *how* imagination sees.

For the sake of clarity, it is important to give a precise definition of science: science is only experimental. The experiment is a confrontation with time: it is time that answers yes or no to the scientific hypothesis. On the other hand, science requires that the experiment itself and its results be observed by all of us – the community of experts here represents "all of us". If the imaginary is necessary to science, the hypotheses it puts forward, by analogy with what has already been seen in the past, must be verified by the appropriate experimental set-up. Through this experiment, it is time – time in its continuity – that confirms the hypothesis. Scientific truth is purely temporal: it is time alone that shows it to be true.

The metaphysical event, the condition of possibility of metaphysics and phenomenology, although purely temporal – it corresponds to the sudden suspension, in us, of the logical effect of time – cannot be the object of an experimental montage, of a sharing by us all. It will never be recognized by science. It will always be the object of suspicion on the part of common truth, and in particular on the part of those philosophers whose thinking remains internal to the logos, and who

tend to turn metaphysics – what they call by that name – into a science. Suspicion of illusion, mysticism, belief.

Philosophers whose source of inspiration is the metaphysical event say little about the event itself. They act as if they have always known what they know, always seen what they see. Why this silence, if not because they fear suspicion? They are suspicious of themselves. They do not dare confront logos directly. They are afraid it will be said that they are jumping over their own shadow. Yet it is indeed a leap. A leap out of time, into the depths, into the heart of contradiction and its eternity. Only the human-being who reaches the truth of Being has a vision of the world that phenomenology can say is *sub specie æternitatis*: under the sign of eternity, "eternity" to be understood here as "outside time", or as "all logic suspended". However, he carefully avoids this expression, which is left to theology. Being, outside time, only sees the world and the temporal truth of living beings through the intermediary of human-being, and it sees them in absolute surprise, as it sees itself.

§6.- Belief.

The phenomenon of belief is ambivalent. Every belief plays a role – social, political, religious, artistic, ideological, philosophical – the temporal importance of which need not be stressed: it is a phenomenon whose concrete manifestations can be studied scientifically. But in its generation, it is a phenomenological malformation, an error – an error you have to live with, you have to deal with. We live with our own beliefs and with the beliefs of others. Thought is partly sustained, structured, by belief. Pure religious feeling – born of anguish over death, questioning the meaning of life, the need for eternity – finds its answers in religious belief – religion – already imagined by previous generations and already presented as the exact truth.

Phenomenology does not confuse religious belief with authentic faith. Authentic faith – rare compared to ordinary faith – is not born of belief. It is born of the metaphysical event, but with the difference that the

unheard-of view that emerges is immediately assimilated to that of the God of religion, the God of tradition, the God already anchored in oneself by tradition, by culture – it is here, in this misdirection, that it is tinged with belief. A reading of the great religious mystics – whatever religion they refer to – shows that the birth of their faith is linked to an event that is none other than the metaphysical event – the sudden suspension of the logical effect of time. This mysticism is the confusion of Being and God. This confusion tends to suspend phenomenological meditation, or to lead it astray: Being, surprised by itself, absolutely surprised to be, cannot be identified with the almighty God of theology. Authentic faith – like the metaphysical event – cannot be transmitted. Its transmission to the people – popular faith – benefits from the phenomenon of belief and its mimesis.

What makes cultures different is primarily their beliefs. The politics of nations must work towards the mutual tolerance of diverse cultures, and therefore of different beliefs. Belief is a natural phenomenon that plays a fundamental role in the world and its politics. When belief – be it religious or ideological – comes to be regarded, at the highest political level of a nation, as what it is, as a popular belief and no longer as a scientific or divine truth, it loses its aggressiveness, and it is then only a question of cultural diversity and of respectable traditions. When, on the other hand, popular belief becomes the pretext and instrument for territorial and economic ambitions, for the will to power and domination, then political horror arises.

§7.- Phenomenology is not a science.

Phenomenology does not present itself as scientific; it cannot properly be a science, and it says why. And yet, the event that excludes it from science is, like all scientific facts, purely temporal: it is the sudden suspension of the logical effect of time, and thus the disappearance for oneself of the evidence of things – at this instant, this "self" joins the initial, the Being untouched by any logical work. There is therefore nothing speculative about it: what grounds it is independent of

imagination. It is not a belief. If this purely temporal event, the metaphysical event, cannot be considered by science – it is as if ignored by it or treated by it as an illusion – it is because it is individual, untransmissible, because it is not common, because it is not visible and observable at the same time by all of us, as all scientific experience must be. Yet each and every one of us is likely to experience its impact one day. Man is that living thing, that animal, which has the capacity to access the truth of Being, the capacity to reach the initial "us", untouched by logic.

§8.- The beginning.

With the metaphysical event comes the question of what could have happened to bring about this radical change in the appearance of the appearance itself: from the evidence to absolute surprise. Why were we there before the event, as if it were normal to be there? Phenomenology begins here, with this question.

What it is all about, at its beginning – a datable beginning, since the event takes place in the course of our lives, in a memorable instant – is the *beginning*, the authentic and unique beginning. This beginning is not an ordinary, habitual beginning, datable in time; it is the initial. The metaphysical event, which is a datable event in a human lifetime, unforgettable, is the fusion with the beginning as initial, it is the birth, the unique birth. Being is birth, beginning, emergence, absolute surprise. This beginning is eternal, outside time. Time, in the service of nothingness, is an epiphenomenon of Being, internal to Being. The meta-physical event expels the human being from time, from the world, and is the reappearance of the initial. Of the human being remains here, in the world, in time, in physis, the body. What remains is "the Body of childhood"⁵.

⁵ This is the expression, strikingly true, that Spinoza uses in the last chapter of the *Ethics* (entitled *On the Freedom of Man*) in the Scolia of Proposition XXXIX: "In this life therefore we make an effort above all so that the Body of childhood changes, as much as its nature tolerates it and as it suits it, into another having a very large number of aptitudes and relating to a Soul conscious to the highest point of itself and of God

The problem then arises for the human-being of reconciliation with this Body, of reconciliation between Being and beings, for the time that remains for the Body of childhood to live.

§9.- Evidence. Time. Logic.

The important word in the description of the four facts that open phenomenology is "evidence", a word opposed by "absolute surprise". We are so used to seeing things in terms of evidence that it is not easy to explain what evidence is. What we ordinarily know about evidence – we who have decided to designate it by this word: "evidence" – is that what appears in evidence imposes itself incontestably on us all, with force of truth, in all logic, basically without surprise.

Where does this imposition of truth on us all come from, where does evidence come from?

The evidence of things comes from the habit of seeing them, an immemorial and common habit that comes to us from time without beginning: things, including ourselves, have, for all of us, *always already* been there. Who remembers their arrival in the world? We only imagine our own arrival in the world from the temporal view of our own children's arrival, or from what our parents tell us, as St. Augustine remarks⁶.

When time suddenly suspends its effect – the logical effect – the evidence disappears and is replaced by absolute surprise, the surprise of being here. Then, and only then, does the question of the why and how of the evidence arise: how have we been able to be here, we and

and of things, and such that everything which relates to his memory or his imagination is almost insignificant relatively to the understanding, as I said in the Scolia of the previous Proposition.”

⁶ St. Augustine, in *The Confessions*, Book One, Chapter VI, *The Early Years of Augustine*, makes this remark: “I glorify you, Lord of heaven and earth, and I praise you for the beginnings of my life and my childhood, which I have no memory of. But you wanted man to be able to conjecture about himself through others and to be able to rely on many points of his life on the testimony of humble women. Finally, I was, and I was already living, and already, towards the end of my early childhood, I was looking for signs to let others know what I was experiencing.”

things, up to this moment, while finding it normal, while being interested only in the details of things – Aristotle's categories – and not in the thing itself, in the appearance of things, in the appearance of oneself, in appearing? Phenomenology is the study of this question. The suspension of the logical effect of time is the condition of possibility of phenomenology. Now, each of us fulfils this condition in our own time, without knowing why this is happening now, why at this moment. This hour is that of the end, for oneself, of childhood, it is the hour of birth. Of the end for oneself only, for childhood continues – and with it, time and logic, the world –, continues without us, continues eternally in the sense of that eternity imagined by it as the infinite duration of time.

§10.- Husserl and the metaphysical event.

Husserl introduces his phenomenology with a point similar to our fact no. 4 – the key point. In his introduction to the *Ideen*, he writes:

"To exclude the totality of the habits of thought that have prevailed until now, to recognize and break down the spiritual barriers that these habits erect around the horizon of our thought, in order then to grasp with complete intellectual freedom the real problems of philosophy that demand to be totally renewed and that it will be possible to reach once the horizon has been cleared on all sides: these are considerable claims. The problem demands no less. In fact, if it is so difficult to grasp the essence of phenomenology, to understand the original way in which it poses problems and its relationship with other sciences (especially psychology), it is above all because it requires us to abandon the natural attitudes associated with our experience and thought, in short, *a radical change of attitude*. In addition, it will require special, arduous studies to move easily through this new universe of thought without ever falling back into the old attitudes, and to learn to see, distinguish and describe what is before our eyes."

Husserl certainly experienced the metaphysical event. His depressive state in the period of his life preceding the writing of *Ideen*, expressed here as "painful special studies", was certainly no stranger to the total upheaval, the trauma, that this event produced. With one important nuance, which will now be clarified, the *other* phenomenology could endorse these introductory lines. Unfortunately, from the very first section of the *Ideen*, devoted to essences, Husserl goes astray. He does more than attempt to link his new view with his old one; he tries to save some of his "old attitudes" and falls into the trap he says he must avoid, illustrating "the considerable difficulty".

What is this important nuance? It is a simple nuance in the writing, it is just one word for another, but it is really an abysmal difference. Phenomenology is not about *a radical change of attitude*. It is *a radical change of view*, of truth. Radical change is the result of sudden access to another point of view, another truth. But this change cannot be learned, it cannot be given from us to us in the same way as any new scientific truth. Phenomenology, even when correctly stated – even the *other* phenomenology introduced here – does not produce the radical change in the student that Husserl had in mind. Such a claim would be more than considerable, it would be illusory. This is why phenomenology cannot, strictly speaking, be a science. Radical change occurs in this or that one of us, each at his or her own time, that is all. It happens within us, and we cannot transmit it to others, no matter how hard we try. Perhaps it is fortunate that this is so. The truth that is now ours contradicts all Reason. A hard fight begins. Indeed, it takes "painful special studies" to tame the Body of Childhood and, with it, to posit phenomenology. Let us recall Kafka, who wrote in his diary on October 22, 1921:

"A connoisseur, a specialist, a man who knows what has fallen to him, a science, it is true, which cannot be communicated, but which, fortunately, seems to be of no use to anyone."

Kafka recounts the hard struggle in question in his *Description of a fight*. *Description of a fight* is to be read in conjunction with *A Season in Hell*. No more than Rimbaud, Kafka was unable to consent to the world, to consent to the Body, to tame the Body of childhood.

§11.- Before and now.

When radical change happens in oneself, apparently for oneself alone, we do not know why it is happening *now*. What did we do *before*? There is an abyss between "before" – time in its beginningless continuity, the time in which, first of all, we are all caught up – and "now" – time suspended in its logical effect, things showing themselves in their initial appearance, untouched by any annihilation, absolutely surprising.

Phenomenology may not give the truth of Being to those who take note of what it says, but it does know how and why there is this abyss between "before" and "now", between nature – physis – and Being. It says this without, however, being able to give the slightest reason for Being. But it is not looking for a reason: it sees that Being is absolute surprise, pure madness. It sees that Being is not only without reason, but that it contradicts all Reason. It remains to be seen what this Reason is that Being contradicts, where it comes from. For "before", there is a strong question of reasons, and of Reason, these leitmotifs of the logos. "Before" reigns Reason and the search for a reason for everything. What is the reason of Reason?

The reason of Reason is the *a priori* Idea at the heart of Being, the Idea whose contradiction is Being, the Idea of nothingness, the Idea that works within Being to restore its truth. This work is logic, it is time, it is our imagination.

Those of us who gain access to the truth of Being not only understand what phenomenology says, but also adhere to the essence of what it says.

§12.- Logos and translogos.

What does the logos say about what the translogos says?

The logic of phenomenology compared to *our* logic.

Common truth is the unique truth of the vast majority of us; it is the truth of childhood, in the sense that phenomenology gives to the word "childhood". Science is its rigorous expression, while logos, which includes science, is the general way in which common truth speaks of what it sees, including itself and the world. The word "logos" is phenomenologically justified by the fact that common truth, whose expression is *logos*, results from *logical* work – the work of time, complemented by that of the imagination.

The truth of Being, accessed by human-being, knows the common truth, since it is the truth of childhood, of the eternal childhood with which we all began our lives. What does the truth of Being say about common truth? How does it see it, describe it? When the truth of Being observes common truth and its logos and tells us what it sees, it is about us, all of us, here in the world, and it is about the world as we all live it and say it.

The two discourses, that of the common truth that says what it sees – the logos – and that of the truth of Being that says what the common truth sees, are different. In particular, the truth of Being does not see science as science sees itself.

Phenomenology calls this discourse of the truth of Being on common truth and its logos, on science, on imagination and its productions, the *translogos*⁷. Why the word "translogos"? What is the meaning of the prefix "trans"? The discourse of human-being, of the truth of Being on what common truth sees, is "translogical" because it compares the ideal logical space – nothingness, which the truth of Being sees – with the logical space of the world, which, under the action of logic – of time and imagination – is an attempt, always in progress, to restore the ideal logical space. Passing from one logical space to another, and evaluating,

⁷ On the word "translogos" and its construction, see also §38 (Section II).

showing, the work of time in this passage, discourse is *translogical*. Discourse is *translogical* for the same reason that an airplane flying from one continent to another is *transcontinental*.

Generally speaking, the truth of Being, accessed by human-being, sees beings, physis, nature, in a completely different way than the eyes of man's childhood see them. This other way of seeing beings, the uncovering of difference, is the subject of the second section of this book: *Phenomenology of Common Truth*.

The question arises as to how common truth can apprehend what phenomenology says about it. Can it understand? Can it go so far as to adhere?

One thing seems certain: *the common truth, science, the philosophy internal to logos* – a philosophy that includes the whole of analytic philosophy and all philosophy stemming from ontotheological metaphysics – *the logos, must not be able to contradict what phenomenology says about them*.

Scientists and philosophers can doubt, shrug their shoulders, turn their backs, feign indifference, even mock, but if it is true that phenomenology cannot demonstrate the scientific truth of what it says – there can be no question of it, it knows and says why – it is also true that it is not possible for science to demonstrate its falsity: nothing that happens to us overturns what phenomenology says, even though what it says is not self-evident.

Why is this necessarily so? Because the logic used by phenomenology starts from further, infinitely further, than the logic of common truth. With phenomenology, a more powerful logic, the most powerful possible, is at work. This logic includes time, something that the logic of common truth does not do, cannot do, as it is played out by time. On the other hand, phenomenology knows where this logic that includes time comes from, where it comes from and what it wants. Phenomenology sees how common truth uses its version of logic – *our* logic –, a quasi-sacralized version, necessary and unquestioned. It knows where common truth comes from, and what difficulties and

limits it faces. The logic of phenomenology is integral logic. And phenomenology dominates this integral logic, overhangs it, and plays it. Whereas *our* logic, that of common truth, is a by-product of integral logic, which appears to us as an indisputable absolute: it thinks us, and we – as "all of us" – cannot think it.

Phenomenology sees in diverse ways what we all see in only one way, the way of common truth.

It surpasses the conclusions of quantum physics: there are only things, stable and multiple, in the gaze of the living.

It sees *our* logic differently.

It sees our science differently.

It sees mathematics differently.

It sees, it says, and it shows that our mathematical science is the logical development of the two axioms that speak of the common thingness of external space, that space we all see at the same time, and in which every proper thing⁸ is made of proper things. These two axioms are one, the primitive axiom of common truth "There are things, there are only things", an axiom that states the *mathesis*, the totally stable foundation of physics, and the other, the specific axiom of external space "The proper things of external space are made of proper things". Our mathematical science is the science of the mathesis of external space. All these questions and the definitions they imply will be developed, in the greatest detail, in Section II: *Phenomenology of Common Truth*.

It sees and says that there can be no question of taking mathesis for the "being in itself" of realist philosophers, that real which would be independent of the living gaze.

It sees that mathematical science is the discourse on what, in common truth, is the totally stable and definitive achievement of time in external space.

⁸ The concept of "proper thing" will be defined in Section II, §49. In short, things are divided into properties and proper things.

It sees politics differently: politics is necessary and endless, always to be made and remade.

It sees art differently: it makes the difference between aesthetics – the "beautiful", vulnerable to fashion and imposture – and Great Art, whose mission it sets itself – to show, to "monstrate" – is, according to itself and its experience, an impossible mission, unless this monstration is addressed to those who already see what it shows.

The description of common truth is the major theme of phenomenology and will be the sole theme of section II.

§13.- The three discourses of phenomenology.

Phenomenology supports three different discourses, each discourse beginning by saying which truth speaks through it to say which truth:

- 1) The discourse of common truth about what common truth sees: logos.
- 2) The discourse of the truth of Being about common truth and what common truth sees: translogos.
- 3) The discourse of the truth of Being on the truth of Being and what it sees.

Discourse n°1 – the logos – known to all, practiced by all, is of phenomenological interest only in terms of its difference from discourse n°2 – the translogos.

The world, everyone, knows discourse n°1, and it knows it to the point of ignoring that there could be others, to the point of thinking it can say everything – through science, through philosophy, through politics, through art. The philosophy in question here is *the philosophy internal to logos*. The result of this determination to say everything is a multiplication of concepts and an increase in the complexity of discourse – complexity considered by the philosophy internal to logos as a symptom of the approach to the truth sought – "truth" always considered in the sense of "scientific truth". Philosophy internal to logos

– of which the analytical philosophy born in the twentieth century is a part – has neither windows nor doors: it feeds on itself, expanding and complexifying itself from within. By wanting to be a science – because it claims to be a science – it confesses to phenomenology that it belongs to the logos, that there can be no question of any other truth for us. The imaginary divine truth is considered by science as something apart, as an exception. This exception, which brings ontotheological metaphysics to a close, is belief. Belief is not only theological, but also ideological. The different ideologies, theology, belong to the philosophy internal to logos, despite this philosophy's desire to be scientific; all it admits is that these beliefs are apart; it says they belong to the realm of spirituality. "Spirituality" is more acceptable than "belief".

Discourse n°3 definitively escapes science and the internal philosophy of logos.

The phenomenological question this raises is: what do logos, science and logos-internal philosophy think of discourse n°2? This question only arises for phenomenology, not for logos, since logos knows no discourse other than itself; it has only one truth, and this truth does not suspect that there could be another truth: if it distinguishes different truths – scientific, imaginary, beliefs – they are all internal to logos. For the logos, there are only two kinds of discourse: discourse that makes sense – whether true or false, it is "understood" – and discourse that does not make sense – discourse deemed incomprehensible. Discourse n°3 will therefore be classified as nonsense. Discourse n°2, the translogos, stands at the limit of what the logos can understand, without being able to adhere to or refute it. This is what we now need to show.

§14.- How does the logos understand the translogos?

What does "understanding" mean?

What is "meaning"?

Discourse $n^{\circ}2$, translogos, is about logos, about discourse $n^{\circ}1$. It is about logos seen from elsewhere – seen objectively – and using a logic broader than the logic logos uses, broader because it includes time.

The question is: is it possible for logos, on the borderline between sense and nonsense, to see a certain clarity projected onto itself? In other words, can the arguments that logos employs to reject discourse no. 2 as nonsense be, for itself, fully convincing? How can a less powerful logic reject views coming from a logic that includes and exceeds it? It is one thing not to be able to arrive at the same views, but quite another to reject them as nonsense. This question arises at the limit, at the limit of what logic can see at work in logos, a limit shown to logos by phenomenology using the words of logos.

How can we characterize this limit?

It brings to mind that other limit, illustrated by one of Gödel's theorems, according to which, for any infinite theory of arithmetic, there are arithmetical formulas that the theory can neither validate nor invalidate: they are undecidable, neither true nor false for the theory. But Gödel goes further than his theorem. He exhibits an undecidable arithmetical formula, formula G, which he shows – though he does not *demonstrate* – to be true. It is true for the logos, for all of us, but not for the theory. This arithmetical truth of G is *metamathematical*, metatheoretical: it stems from a logic – the logic of logos – that is broader than the precise logic – the logic of first-order predicates – used by arithmetical theory.

What the two limits have in common is that they both involve a power struggle between two logics.

With Gödel, we remain within the logos, and the balance of power is between the logic of the logos – our own, undefined in its contours – and that of the theory, which is a logic internal to the logic of the logos, more precise, explicitly defined and therefore limited, less powerful.

With phenomenology, the more powerful logic is integral logic – which includes time, which includes knowledge of the initial situation – Being – and which includes knowledge of the objective to be reached by logic – nothingness. Integral logic encompasses the logic of logos, which is its mime, which mimes its effects. It sees and shows the differences between the productions of the two logics. Compared to the case of arithmetic theory, we are one leap further. A leap that crosses an abyss, the abyss that continuous, beginningless time makes us cross, unbeknownst to us.

However, arithmetic or phenomenology, we are still within logic. Narrower logic can never refute what broader logic sees. Just as arithmetical theory cannot refute the arithmetical truth of the formula G as seen by the logos, as shown to us by Gödel, the same logos must not be able to refute the truth of what phenomenology says about it. Narrower logic may well be able, in the limit, to make sense of what broader logic tells it, but it can in no way demonstrate or refute its truth.

Logos should be able to reach the conclusion that what phenomenology says about it is neither true nor false, and therefore undecidable, thus repeating, at another level, what arithmetic theory says about Gödel's G formula.

What is declared undecidable is nevertheless understood. What does it mean *to understand*? To understand is to be able to make sense of a discourse or a formula, to give it a meaning. What is meaning? Meaning is always the meaning of a word, an expression, a saying, a formula. A formula has meaning if and only if, through it, something is shown. To whom does this something show itself? It shows itself to the truth – to the power of sight – of the one who reads the formula. If the reader of the formula declares it undecidable – meaning that the logos cannot tell whether it is *scientifically* true or false – then at least the formula shows him something, something whose scientific truth or falsity he cannot assess.

What is a *true thing*, a *false thing*?

For phenomenology, all things are true, since what is shown is true, and, by definition of the thing, all things are shown. "True" here means, for a thing, that it belongs to my truth, that it enters my field of vision. For science – for the logos – only that which is shown by time alone, i.e. independently of our imagination, is true. "Undecidable" means that the logos cannot say whether what is shown to it is purely temporal or purely imaginary. In both cases, the undecidable is seen. To say that it is seen is to say that it has a meaning, is to say that the undecidable formula is nevertheless understood, is to say that it is considered as a *proposition*. A proposition is a formula that shows something, that makes sense.

Can we understand everything that a broader truth says? Yes, if it restricts what it says to what the narrower truth sees, in its own way. But what if it fully exercises its power of sight? What if this power of sight speaks to the power of sight of the lesser truth?

The limit in question is the one where the lesser truth still understands what is being said, but where it can neither adhere to nor refute. This situation corresponds to discourse n°2, the translogos, when read by the logos. The truths at stake remain what they are, even if, for a given individual, the passage takes place – the "mutation of human-being" – from one truth to another. For the logos, as eternal as childhood is, indecision – or undecidability – remains with regard to what the translogos tells it.

Of what phenomenology says, only the analysis it makes of the common appearance – an analysis it makes from the truth of Being – can be transmitted to all, only it can obtain, at the limit, the comprehension of all, without adhesion or refutation. We are here at the limit, not just of science, but of logos and its metalogical and metatheoretical extensions. This possibility of understanding by all of us what phenomenology says about what we see – understanding without adherence or refutation – is in the hands of the experts, scientific or philosophical, who are, among us all, the most qualified representatives.

This view of common truth through the truth of Being, a major theme of phenomenology, will be the subject of section II: *Phenomenology of Common Truth*.

§15.- An example of translogical discourse: *Being and Time*.

Logos is the expression of common truth. It says what common truth sees. It says what time, logic, mathematics, science, the imaginary, philosophy, metaphysics, ideology, death, the world, religion, politics, art, ethics, etc., are for common truth.

Translogos is the expression of the truth of Being accessed by human-being when this truth is exercised on what common truth sees, i.e. on its way of seeing time, logic, mathematics, science, philosophy, and so on.

Heidegger's famous *Being and Time* is a typical example of translogical discourse. In *Being and Time*, it is the truth of Being that speaks. And this truth tells us how it sees common truth, the truth of common "Dasein", common "Dasein's" way of being, in the world. In other words, to use Heidegger's words more explicitly, it is Da-sein that speaks of Dasein. The Da-sein is the Dasein that has made the mutation of human-being effective, the Dasein that accedes to the truth of Being.

On the whole, this book, *Being and Time*, has been well received, and therefore understood. Just look at its notoriety. Intellectuals, philosophers of all stripes, theologians and academics have appreciated it, and continue to appreciate and comment on it. The book aptly describes man's situation in the world and his preoccupation with it. For phenomenology, concern (*die Sorge*) is *pure religious feeling* - pure, because it has not yet been corrupted by religion, but prior to all religion.

But religion is *already there*, already providing the answer to concern, even before concern itself takes root. The speaker of *Being and Time* ignores, or pretends to ignore, any answer already given, any religion. He sets up for us, properly, worry, pure religious feeling, in principle prior to any answer, any religion, since it is worry that is in search of an

answer. In *Being and Time*, it is all about us, all of us in the world, natively – before any answer. It is not about the truth of Being, but about what the truth of Being can say about our common situation, before any answer, before any religion, before any decision, before any resolution.

The book has been adopted in the same way as the exposition of a natural science: it conforms to the experience of each and every one of us, and no one can contradict it. Yet *Being and Time* is not seen, or thought, by Heidegger, from the standpoint of common truth. It is not seen from the truth he describes. It is seen from the point of view of metaphysical truth, as it would itself be described a few years later in the lecture "*What is Metaphysics?*". *Being and Time* is metaphysical truth that speaks of common truth, the very type of translogical discourse (phenomenological discourse no. 2, according to the list in §13). The discourse of "*What is metaphysics?*" is metaphysical truth describing itself (phenomenological discourse no. 3). The assertion, "It is nothingness itself that annihilates", was explicitly rejected as nonsense by the philosophy internal to logos – first by the members of the Vienna Circle, beginning with Carnap, and then, following them, by analytic philosophy, especially by W. V. O. Quine (*Word and Object*).

In *Meditation* (GA, vol.66), at no. 92, Heidegger, who at the age of fifty is taking stock of his path of thought, writes:

"In *Being and Time*, right up to the threshold of the essay "*Vom Wesen des Grundes*", the language and exposition are metaphysical through and through, and yet *the thought is another thought*. But this thought is unable to reach the free space of the bottomless abyss in what is unique to it.

This is why the subject remains equivocal, but not so equivocal as to make it impossible to rethink what is at stake. The essence of the Da-sein belongs to the history of Being".

The *other thought* is that of the truth of Being. But the truth of Being is almost never mentioned in *Being and Time*. There is nothing to show

that the metaphysics expressed is not ontotheological metaphysics, nothing to show that it is another metaphysics: phenomenological metaphysics. It is in this sense that the statement remains "equivocal".

The metaphysical view that speaks in *Being and Time* eludes readers, the vast majority of readers, even philosophers and theologians. In the remainder of Heidegger's work – with the famous "turning point" – this view will essentially speak of itself, describing itself at length, repeatedly showing its difference from common truth, without ever feeling that it has reached the end of the road of describing *difference*. This continuation of the work is much less well understood than *Being and Time*. Most readers, even philosophers, have no idea what this sequel is about. After Heidegger, the philosophy internal to logos continues as if nothing had happened, as if its end had not been announced, this end meaning that it can no longer say anything other than what it has already said, and this endlessly, multiplying concepts, commentaries, useless complexities, in order to obtain *Reason*, a rational explanation of the whole of being. However, even if *Being and Time* is still considered Heidegger's major work, and remains the most widely commented upon, commentaries abound on the rest of his work. For many of these commentators, the truth of Being is certainly mysticism, esotericism, certainly an illusion. Yet it is the same thought, the same truth, as that expressed in *Being and Time* which speaks of us, of "all of us", of the common truth, and speaks of it so well according to "all of us" that the book – at least a large part of it, as long as it does not deal with "the resolution" or "the historicity of Being" – is received as a scientific work might be.

While Heidegger saw that it is nothingness itself that annihilates, he failed to see that the means of this annihilation is logic, and that time is the primary form of logic. He was suspicious of the sovereignty of *our* logic⁹, but failed to determine its origin, or to see its relationship with time. This shows that with the human-being's access to the truth of

⁹ In his conference *What is Metaphysics?*, regarding the question of nothingness, he asks: "But would it therefore be permissible to touch on the sovereignty of 'Logic'?"

Being, begins a work, still in progress, of meditation and deepening: as Heidegger puts it, this is *another* beginning for philosophy.

"*It is nothingness itself that annihilates*" is the first of the four axioms of phenomenological metaphysics.

That logic – that is, time and, mimicking time, imagination – is the means used by nothingness to annihilate is the second axiom of phenomenological metaphysics. The four axioms of phenomenological metaphysics are set out in the next paragraph.

§16.- The circle of common understanding.

Logos as self-reference.

Extension and complexification of logos as consequences of self-reference.

The generalized principle of contradiction.

The four axioms of phenomenological metaphysics.

The logic of logos starts from what time *always already* shows us and imitates temporal coherence in order to go further into evidence, to anticipate what time shows us. This imitation is governed, on the one hand, by the rules of formal logic, those of predicate logic, and, on the other, by the laws of physics. The logic of logos extends and perpetuates what time has always already done with logos. Logos starts from itself to speak of itself and to project itself in conformity with itself. It is self-referential. This self-reference is the circle of common understanding: as "all of us", we do not depart from the truth that is always already ours.

The question raised in the preceding paragraphs is that of the common truth's understanding of what the truth of Being says about itself, in other words, that of the logos' understanding of what the translogos says about logos. The logos is faced with an expressed truth – a human truth, even if not the truth of "all of us" – that it cannot see with its own means. What happens is that it cannot contradict the expression of this truth. This expression not only complements his own truth, but it also comes from the very source of his truth. When it comes to the experimental

sciences – which include, as the truth of Being sees and says, mathematical science – the truth of Being complements, but does not contradict, the common truth. When it comes to philosophy internal to logos, it sometimes contradicts what it says, especially when this philosophy gives free rein to its imagination – to speculation – or when it uses "special" – dubious – logic to give itself the illusion of stepping outside the circle of common understanding. If we can say that "truth does not contradict truth", we must understand that the truth of phenomenological metaphysics does not contradict scientific truth. However, it does contradict metaphysics that claim to be scientific, metaphysics of the "metaphysical-fiction" kind, and ontotheological metaphysics.

The result of time's work on the truth of Being, common truth strives to understand what time shows us, and to anticipate time: this permanent work of common truth is imagination, based on the memory of the *déjà-vu*. The rigorously logical work of the imagination produces science, science that must be experimental – in other words, obtain the validation of its hypotheses through time. With imagination, with science, time accelerates towards its goal: the ideal logical space, nothingness.

Science wants to know more and better. To the propositions of its imagination, time responds and validates – the "true" of science – or invalidates – the "false". The resulting extension of knowledge is always globally coherent. Time fully satisfies science's expectations of coherence. Scientific novelty – progress – always occurs by analogy with what time already shows us, and in its logical extension: our logic is analogical, and it is always time that shows it the way, the right way.

What is true now, according to the new science, was already true before, according to time. What we know always ends up finding a better explanation within what we discover, within the new theory. The classical theory of gravitation finds its explanation and its shortcomings within the theory of relativity. Science and logos expand and complexify in continuity and coherence. Apparent ruptures always end

up finding their logical explanation, fitting into continuity. As we move forward, overall coherence is always preserved. This coherence is time.

Philosophy internal to logos, that which claims to be a science, aims to find a logical answer to the questions it poses. This logical answer, sought and desired, must obey the requirements of *our* logic. *Our* logic is not questioned in its essence by this philosophy; it is considered by it as the absolute, continuous, smooth, necessary medium in which we are immersed, in which everything is enveloped. Here, unbeknownst to common truth and its logic, unbeknownst to this philosophy, logic and time merge. The questions this philosophy poses and the answers it proposes always have a logical exposition, at least in appearance: logic always overrides dialectics, and, in the end, it triumphs – it must triumph, that is the goal of the discourse that aims to be conclusive.

The fundamental principle of logic, of logical discourse, of logos, the one that defines it, is that all contradictions must be avoided: discourse must be globally non-contradictory. From the premises to the conclusion, everything must ultimately give the appearance of logical continuity, i.e. non-contradiction. As long as the premises are not called into question – by definition of the philosophy internal to logos, they cannot be, since these premises are the *a priori* of the common truth, of the logos – it is always a question of this philosophy internal to logos improving the answers already given to the same questions. It is also a matter of sanitizing the discourses that come from the truth of Being, those discourses that it hears, that it does not understand, and to which it must nevertheless give an explanation of their nonsense. This explanation either puts them back on the right track – by means of an adequate but misleading interpretation – or rejects them definitively as nonsense. For this philosophy, all novelty lies in the logical extension of discourses already held, already validated, but which must be capable of responding to any challenge, any demand for further explanation. The result, since we must move on, is the multiplication of concepts, the creation of a conceptual complexity specific to the academic elite, the illusion of depth of thought, and the obligation, if we want to keep

up, of an initiation to all this baggage that has become necessary, not only to keep up, but to move forward. The extension of "déjà vu" and the conceptual complexity required to maintain the coherence of the discourse, which are supposed to enhance the truth, are lures. Progress goes round in circles. The advance remains trapped in the circle of common understanding, a place whose contours appear infinite, as is time, as is space, as are numbers. These contours are the infinitely expandable walls of a doorless, windowless prison.

The principle common to science and philosophy internal to logos is *the generalized principle of contradiction*. For both science and philosophy, this principle is an *a priori*. In this sense, it is unthought of by them, even though it is the foundation of their thought and action. The principle is as follows: *what time shows to the living gaze is absolutely coherent*. In other words: with regard to the living gaze – with regard to what it shows to the gaze of all living beings – time never makes a mistake, overall coherence is always respected. This coherence is non-contradiction.

Science and philosophy internal to logos must remain consistent with what time, in its beginningless continuity, shows us. On the other hand, the discourse of science and philosophy internal to logos is intended to be non-contradictory, coherent. Time and our logic are one and the same, that which implements the "reasoning" of Being, the annihilation of Being.

The generalized principle of contradiction – time is never wrong in what it shows to the living gaze – is the third of the four axioms of phenomenological metaphysics.

Aristotle's principle of contradiction – that a proposition and its negation cannot both be true at the same time – is the foundation of our logic, while the generalized principle of contradiction is the foundation, unbeknownst to them, of science and philosophy internal to logos.

The fourth axiom of phenomenological metaphysics states that *the axioms of phenomenological metaphysics are seen only by the truth of*

Being and are not transmissible to the common truth: for the common truth, these statements have no meaning.

Only the generalized principle of contradiction is translogical and can be *understood* by common truth – by science – although it never states it. The other three axioms belong to discourse no. 3, the discourse of the truth of Being, which says what it sees.

The four axioms on which phenomenology is based can be stated as follows:

- 1) It is nothingness itself that annihilates.
- 2) The means by which nothingness annihilates is logic: time and, complementing time and mimicking time, imagination.
- 3) The generalized principle of contradiction – time is never mistaken in what it shows to the living eye, it is globally coherent – founds science and philosophy internal to logos.
- 4) The axioms of phenomenology cannot be transmitted to the common truth. Apart from the generalized principle of contradiction, which can be understood by common truth, the other three are regarded by it as nonsense.

§17.- The discourse of the truth of Being about itself is not self-referential.

Contradiction as "Being in-itself".

Physis and mathesis.

Mathematical truth as a phenomenological reduction of common truth.

Mathesis is the model of mathematical science.

Doesn't the self-referential truth of Being describing itself have the same shortcomings as logos? But is it really, in this particular case, self-referential?

The truth of Being speaks flawlessly of itself because it is initial, it is the initial, the birth. It does not refer to itself, since its only reference is "nothing", and it contradicts it, to its greatest surprise. This surprise is

the absolute itself, without reason, it is the only "thing-in-itself", it is the "Being-in-itself" if ever there was one.

The truth of Being speaks of itself in reference to "nothing". What it expresses is the *difference* that it is, the very opposite of self-reference.

Being itself, apart from the surprise of being, the surprise of "not nothing", has nothing else to say. Its expression can be summed up as follows: !

It exclaims: "Madness!".

It does not look for an explanation for the madness of being because it knows, because it sees, that there is not one, that there cannot be one: any explanation is necessarily a recovery through "nothing". Being sees itself as irretrievable from "nothing", and therefore, by definition, inexplicable, and irrational. Madness contradicts "nothing".

Being only has a history – and therefore something to say beyond pure and simple exclamation – through the intermediary of the human-being, the living being who, suddenly, putting an end to childhood and the world, emerges from "nothing" and is born. For the human-being who accesses the truth of Being, this "nothing", seen and immediately contradicted, is, at the instant of access, the world itself, the world of childhood, the world which, forged by time from Being, is a simulacrum of "nothing" – Hegel's becoming, according to Reason. Through man, Being sees what logic makes of it; it sees, in the instant, the fulfilment of becoming according to Reason. It sees that logic – time – is at the service of the idea of nothingness within it, which is its *a priori* idea, an idea that it contradicts.

Physis is what logic has made of Being in the eyes of "all of us", in the eyes of living beings. It is the visual field of common truth. In physis, movement is the index of logical work in progress. In the world – taken here as synonymous with physis – the only trace left of Being, of the madness of Being, is movement. Movement is what remains for logic to regulate.

In physis, movement reveals resistance to rational explanation, resistance to annihilation, to "reasoning".

The part of physis where the work of logic is complete, the totally stable part of physis, its immutable foundation, without movement, without resistance, is *mathesis*. Mathesis, thus defined, exists, in the scientific sense of existence – that is, it is shown by time alone, independently of our imagination.

Mathesis is the natural model of our mathematical sciences – although this model, thus defined, is not discerned by mathematicians themselves. Mathesis is the visual field of *mathematical truth*, a truth that is part of common truth and a phenomenological reduction of it. Mathesis is the common visual field where the logical ideal reigns: "nothing", or total stability.

In the human-being truth, mathematical truth is the extreme opposite of the truth of Being, its contradiction.

As soon as "nothing" is seen, as soon as the logical subterfuge is broken, the world, seen from "nothing", becomes, like everything else, the contradiction of "nothing". At the sight of human-being, the world passes, in an instant – the instant of access to the truth of Being – from "nothing" to its contradiction.

§18.- Husserl and the beginning.

Husserl saw his phenomenology as stemming from "true beginnings". Once again, we can say that he was off to a good start. Let us read what he wrote in paragraph 18 of the *Ideen* – entitled: *Introduction to Critical Discussions* – a paragraph that could be taken up in its entirety, always with one important nuance, by the other phenomenology:

"Now, all the steps in which principles are determined demand to be properly understood, so heavy are their consequences. We have not argued about them – and I emphasize this clearly – based on a prior philosophical position. We have not taken advantage of any received philosophy, even if it is commonly accepted; we have only clarified the principles in the strict sense of the word; by this we mean that we have only tried to give a faithful expression to distinctions that are

given to us directly in our intuition. We have taken them exactly as they are, without adding any hypothesis or interpretation, and without reading into them anything that might be suggested to us by this or that theory borrowed from ancient or modern authors. Findings that meet these requirements have the value of true "beginnings"; and if, like ours, they include a universality that embraces the regions of being in all their breadth, they certainly rise to the dignity of principles, in the philosophical sense of the word, and themselves belong to philosophy. However, we have no need to presuppose this latter patronage: all our previous analyses, as will all those that follow, enjoy total independence from a 'science' as questionable and as suspect as philosophy."

The nuance in question concerns the word "principle". The other phenomenology does not establish principles as does Reason or science in the service of common truth. Facts 1, 2, 3 and 4, listed in §1, which open phenomenology, as well as the four axioms of phenomenological metaphysics, are not principles; they speak of things seen in time, independently of our imagination, while *asserting* that, essentially, these things seen are not seen by all of us, are not self-evident, that they appear only on condition of the suspension of the logical effect of time. Let us briefly recall their wording.

The 4 facts that open phenomenology:

Fact 1: We see.

Fact 2: There are different truths – "truth" understood as "power of seeing".

Fact 3: Things are ordinarily self-evident, under the effect of logic.

Fact 4: The event of the disappearance of evidence.

The 4 axioms of phenomenological metaphysics:

Axiom 1: It is nothingness itself that annihilates.

Axiom 2: Nothingness annihilates by means of logic – time and, mimicking time, imagination. Logic produces and propagates evidence.

Axiom 3: What time shows to the living eye is coherent (generalized principle of contradiction, principle of science).

Axiom 4: The axioms of phenomenological metaphysics have no meaning for common truth.

Only axiom 3 – the generalized principle of contradiction – could be a principle in Husserl's sense, although it eluded Husserl.

Some would argue that principles are also things seen. Indeed, if they are stated, it is because, in a way, what they say is seen, and if everyone accepts them as such, it is because everyone not only understands what they say, and therefore gives them meaning, but also adheres to them. No doubt. So, what makes the difference between a principle and the statements of the *other* phenomenology?

The – abysmal – difference is that the principle presents itself to Reason as the foundation of common truth, as one of the true, indisputable propositions from which *our* logic works and deduces the other true propositions. With principles, common truth gives itself a foundation, a foundation derived from what we all see, and from which – in principle, it is the principle of the principle – the whole logos unfolds. Phenomenological truth, on the other hand, is without reason, contrary to Reason; it has no foundation and does not seek a foundation for itself; it knows it has none. It is the face-to-face encounter with the impossible, with the patently violent reality of the impossible. This patent reality, Being, is the only thing in itself, the pure initial – pure because untouched by any logical work, any work of Reason. The *other* phenomenology expresses itself from the impossible. To speak from the impossible, however, is the exact opposite of seeing and speaking in the obvious from the obvious, the exact opposite of immersion in the "normal", in scientific truth, in rational discourse from beginning to end – rational discourse without beginning, since its departure, whatever it may be, whatever the principles adopted as its basis, is always itself caught within what the continuous march of time without beginning shows us. All rational discourse, including its principles, is caught up in the march of time. The principle presupposes the Reason that posits

it, and the logic that deduces from it all that can be deduced – science, equipped with principles and imagination, can then substitute itself for time, subject to verification.

The *other* phenomenology knows where evidence comes from, where the normality of the ordinary comes from, how normality – Reason – has replaced the madness of the initial. Evidence comes from time, the primary form of logic. The *other* phenomenology also knows where time comes from. Time is the nothingness that annihilates. Then we will ask: where does this nothingness come from, and how can nothingness act, annihilate?

The nothingness in question here is not the one defined by our dictionary, it is not *the radical negation of everything*. This dictionary nothingness, which we are all capable of seeing, obtained from things by denying them, is a fiction, a pure product of our imagination. Phenomenological nothingness, the nothingness that annihilates, is something quite different, something seen without the intervention of the imagination, something that time delivers to us at the precise moment – the metaphysical instant, birth – when it withdraws, when its logical effect no longer acts, at the precise moment when the world itself is seen as nothingness, as the result of logical annihilation. The world before the moment, the world left behind, is suddenly seen as nothingness, while the emerging truth, the truth of Being, now sees the world as it sees everything, as absolute surprise. In this absolute surprise, the difference between Being and beings is suddenly revealed.

§19.- The diverse ways of appearing.

The truth of Being.

Primary fact 2 – described in §1, "There are different truths" – which, on first reading, should be universally accepted, requires further clarification. As regards the diverse ways in which things appear, we first distinguish, within the common truth, between *purely temporal appearances* and *purely imaginary appearances*.

Our imagination does indeed take place in time, as does everything that relates to living things and their actions. On the other hand, it is entirely dependent on purely temporal appearance: everything it imagines is based on *déjà-vu*, on the memory of *déjà-vu* in time. However, if it only logically prolongs what time shows us, it does so with a certain freedom – this experienced freedom is as much the origin of our pure fantasies as it is the origin of our scientific hypotheses, philosophical speculations, ideologies, and beliefs. This extension is *analogical*. The analogical logic of our imagination is not rigorous in the sense that it does not always rigorously follow the law of time: the rigorous logic is that of time, that which time shows us. If the logic of our imagination rigorously follows the law of time, it's either because it's tautological – it develops according to formal logic, a logic that mechanically, and therefore rigorously, follows the law of time by saying in another, equivalent way, what it has already said, with the same truth value – or because its analogy is verified and validated, *a posteriori*, by *purely temporal* experience, by scientific experimentation that relies solely on time. An analogy that is definitively unverifiable – because the conditions of experience are utopian – falls into the realm of the *purely imaginary* in the same way as that which is invalidated by experimental science.

The word "purely" in "purely temporal" means that imagination plays no part in what time shows us, in temporal appearances. In "purely imaginary", it means either that time disagrees with imagination – what it says is "false", scientifically false – or that it is unable to give us its agreement or disagreement – what imagination says is definitively unverifiable. "Imaginary" does not contradict "temporal". It is "purely imaginary" that contradicts "purely temporal". What is imagined can – after verification by scientific experiment – be purely temporal. The imaginary does not always contradict the temporal. Every proposition shows something in the imagination, something imaginary. What remains to be verified is the pure temporality of this thing.

Of the different modes of appearance brought about by fact 2, not all are ordinary, not all are accessed by all of us.

The modes of appearing accessed by all of us – *the continuous temporal mode* and the *imaginary mode* – are two sub-modes of *the continuous logical mode*. The first form of logic is time; the second form is imagination, which analogically extends what time shows us. What logic shows us, in its continuous, beginningless march, it shows to *all of us in evidence*, and this is what characterizes it: *to all of us, in evidence*, are the two inseparable characteristics of the continuous logical mode of appearance of things. What one of us imagines in this way, as an extension of what we have all already seen, we can transmit to all of us in the same self-evident way, through language. The imaginary is a common domain of truth.

There is, however, a mode of appearing for us that is only accessible to some of us, at a moment – the instant – that is specific to each of us, during an individual event that has been taking place in man for as long as there have been men. Those of us who today are unaware of this mode of appearing – and this is perhaps, indeed undoubtedly, the majority of us – do not yet have access to it, the moment has not yet come for them. This other mode does not come from logic in continuous motion, but, on the contrary, from logic stopped in its tracks, from logic suspended, at a standstill. This mode is *the mode of the truth of Being*, the mode of initial truth, proper to Being. This mode, when it comes to human-being accessing the truth of Being, is *the mode of translogical truth*. Being accesses translogical truth through human-being.

The translogical mode of truth arises in man with the event of the sudden halt in the march of logic: time suddenly loses its logical effect, evidence disappears. Being is the surprise of appearing. This surprise is eternal – an eternity unrelated to time, outside time. It is only through human-being and its translogical truth that Being knows temporality, knows the logical work of nothingness, knows physis, knows beings, knows the world.

Let us continue.

The *logical* mode and the *translogical* mode of appearing are diametrically opposed, as if contradictory.

The *logical mode*, continuous and without beginning, is specific to the living beings that populate the world. Time metamorphoses the initial gaze, Being, surprised by itself, into multiple living gazes that see themselves in evidence, just as they see all things. The logical mode of appearing belongs to all living beings from the moment of their biological birth, and is itself subdivided, as far as the human species is concerned, into several truths: mathematical, physical, political, aesthetic, moral, affective, philosophical – "philosophical" refers here to *the philosophy internal to logos*, including *ontotheological metaphysics* – and fictive. All these truths together constitute our common truth – our common homeland – expressed by the logos.

Every living species has its world – a world common to all its individuals. Together, these worlds constitute the logical world – primarily, the *biological* world.

The *translogical* mode, within the living world, seems to belong only to man. It emerges in the course of human life, and this emergence constitutes "the event par excellence" – to use Wittgenstein's expression in his *Lecture on Ethics*, an event par excellence whose consequences Wittgenstein was unable, or unwilling, to draw. Access to the translogical mode is sudden access to *the truth of Being*, to Being. "Truth of Being" is to be understood here as Heidegger understands it. Only those of us who access the truth of Being can know what it is: this truth cannot be imagined. This truth is not given from man to man. The person who accesses this truth, and then reads Heidegger, knows that this is what Heidegger means by "the truth of Being", although he also knows that there can be no question of *proving* this identity. Whose proof? To science? Science recognizes as true only that which is apparent to all.

Heidegger does not have a monopoly on this truth: it is, potentially, that of every man, it is that of Man. Heidegger is the one of us – us as Westerners, bearing in mind that many Eastern thinkers, less prolix in

their expression, long preceded him – who has devoted his long life as a philosopher to this truth, to accessing it, to saying what it sees, to its consequences. It would be a terrible failure – not only for Heidegger, but also for language, for speech – after so much work on the truth of Being to say itself, if this truth could not be recognized by those who already have access to it. Let there be no doubt, they recognize it. However, when it comes to recognition, we must not rely solely on Heidegger's notoriety, acquired through the worldwide reception of *Being and Time*. Heidegger knew it, he saw it, he said it: many of his numerous commentators, themselves philosophers or theologians, showed him that they did not understand the source of the truth that, in *Being and Time*, describes man's being-in-the-world and his concern for it.

Heidegger was not the first to think about the truth of Being. He is certainly the first Western philosopher to have identified and named it, and to have thematically demonstrated its difference from common truth. Spinoza was already on this path with his "knowledge of the third kind", although he failed to give a good description of it – except, perhaps, without naming it, in the fifth and final part of the *Ethics*, devoted to human freedom.

Heidegger's words, though born of the truth of Being, are not devoid of misdirection. These misdirections are purely imaginary in nature and constitute phenomenological errors. The "historicality" of being, the destiny-history of being, the transmission of the truth of Being, the people's decision in favor of the truth of Being, "das Ereignis" as preparation for this decision, the dialogue with the returned gods, Germany as the only possible home of the other beginning – these are all beliefs, these are all errors. These misguided beliefs are certainly the origin, or justification, of Heidegger's political misguidance – the only one publicly discussed. Heidegger believed that the new political order being established in Germany, National Socialism, could promote this historical *Ereignis* of the truth of Being and inaugurate *the other beginning* of the West, a beginning that would be "other" in relation to

the Greek beginning, considered to be the first beginning. More precisely, in his view, that part of humanity capable of the truth of Being, capable of a life in authenticity – namely, in particular, and perhaps only, the German people – had to defend itself, to guard against the aggression it was suffering from a humanity subject only to making and calculation. Heidegger saw Nazism as the German political movement that finally had this defence as its essential objective. This nationalistic, racist, anti-Semitic aspect of his words discredits the other. Whatever this manifest political error, Heidegger's thought is marred by a phenomenological error: there is no "*historiality*" of Being, there is no epoch of Being or people of Being, there is no future of Being. Common childhood and its eternal return erase all such considerations. Each human life confronts, afresh, the history of Being, which only takes place within its own life. The word "childhood" does not exist in Heidegger's work.

The *other beginning* only takes place within a man's life. It does not take place in the world, within human history, it plays no part in this history, in the history of the human world, in childhood. It is not to come; it is already here. It has been there since the emergence of man.

The translogical mode of truth belongs to the human-being who accesses the truth of Being. However, given the unity of Being, man's belonging to Being, it can be said that human-being brings the world to Being, and Being to the world. The world is logic's gift to Being through man. The word "translogical" means, with regard to the truth accessed by the human-being, that his view starts from one logical space – the ideal logical space, nothingness – and, crossing the contradiction with one leap, a leap *always already* made by beginningless time, ends up in that other logical space which is the world of man, the logos. The world is not an ideal logical space, since time is always working to make it ideal: the world is in the process of being annihilated and will remain so. The world is a space that human science assumes to be logical, according to the principle that guides it, the generalized principle of contradiction: time is never wrong.

The translogical view of the world, the translogical view of man's childhood, is the subject of Section II of this book: *Phenomenology of Common Truth*. Section II is a completely different way of writing *Being and Time*, one that makes clear which truth is speaking and what it sets out to describe: common truth and what it sees. But also, and above all, it is another way which sees, which knows, which says, that time, as the first form of logic, is the actor of the annihilation of Being.

For Being, contradiction is eternal – eternal as far as it is outside time. In the case of the man who accedes to the truth of Being, the world, seen from "nothing", suddenly appears as the opposite of "nothing", whereas up until that moment, it held this man, like all of us, inside the "nothing" of which it is the simulacrum, the simulacrum of the ideal logical space. The master worker of this simulacrum is time, time at the service of nothingness. Our imagination complements the annihilating work of time by diluting being in an infinity of things. Infinity, even mathematical and numerical infinity, is a figment of our imagination that time neither confirms nor invalidates. In the imagination of man, philosophers, and poets alike, infinity has become synonymous with eternity. This eternity, unlike that of Being, is tainted by ambiguity: infinity – that of time, that of space, that of numbers, that of our imagination – is a form of annihilation, an annihilation by dilution, by the dilution of Being, by the dilution of what remains, in the world, of the violence of Being.

§20.- Reconciling Being and the Body of childhood.

Receiving the world.

Man's biological body and common truth are perfectly adapted to each other – just as the biological body of every animal species and the truth proper to that species are perfectly adapted to each other. This adaptation is the result of time. Body and truth come into existence together and without beginning: they have *always already* been together. Common truth and body are inseparable: truth is that of the body, comes from the body, its senses, its organs, and it is inconceivable

to this truth that there could be truth without a body. The truth of the body is the common truth. This truth sees everything – including truth, the body, the communion of truth and body – in the evidence.

The truth of Being is not the truth of the body. The human-being who accedes to the truth of Being, if he wants to live, if he can live – this question is for him the object of a death struggle –, must live with the body, with the Body of childhood. To live, to live properly, therefore in continuous time, in the world, can only be done with a body and with the only truth that holds sway in the world: the common truth, the truth of the body, the truth of childhood. Neither the body, nor the world, nor life in the world, will adapt to the truth of Being, a truth whose very existence they ignore. How can the nascent truth of human-being accommodate the body, the world, and their truth? To begin with, it has to come to terms with its own individual body, before coming to terms with the world and its common truth.

This problem is one of *conciliation*. It is a struggle. The struggle pits the body, which continues to live and can only live with its own truth, against the emerging truth, which emerges with the event and finds itself entangled in a body and a world that do not recognize it and in which it feels alien. The radical solution is suicide, the end of time for the body. Before we reach this solution, as with any other – conciliation –, there is a period of time, the period of combat, of fighting to the death.

Spinoza, in the last part of the *Ethics*, devoted to *The Freedom of Man*, sets out the problem of conciliation very well, but reverses roles when it comes to the solution. He states:

"In this life, therefore, we strive above all for the Body of childhood to be changed, as far as its nature suffers and it suits it, into another having a very large number of aptitudes and relating to a Soul conscious to the highest degree of itself and of God and of things, and such that everything relating to its memory or imagination is almost insignificant in relation to the understanding".

Now, it is not the body that can adapt to the Soul, which has become fully aware of itself, God, and all things. It is the Soul, now conscious, that can make the effort to adapt to the body, to life, to the world, to the common truth. If the human-being, now conscious, wants to live, it is up to his or her emerging truth to know how to play with the truth of life and the world. He knows this truth: it is the truth of his childhood, the common truth. He knows he cannot change it. If he wants to live, it is up to his nascent truth to know how to bend to the body's truth, to know how to play it, to play the game of life and the world.

Accepting the body, playing the game of life and the world, playing continuous time, instead of being played, as in childhood, by time and the logic of the imagination, is called, as Spinoza tells us, "living in freedom".

Accepting the body, life, and the world for the human-being and his emerging truth is not so simple, not so immediate. Access to the truth of Being is a trauma for the body normally guided by common truth. There is an abyssal gap between the body and the truth that has taken root within it. Adapting to the body requires time, the body's time, life's time. During this time, we have to live all the same – awkwardly, clumsily, since automatisms have been lost, since spontaneity is out of the question, since we have to rebuild this lost spontaneity. This is a time of struggle, the struggle to reconcile Being and the world. The world, under the grip of logic, is seen by the common truth as self-evident, as if nothing had happened, whereas it is now seen, like everything else, as the contradiction of "nothing", of nothingness.

Rimbaud's work (post-1870), in *A Season in Hell* and *Illuminations*, is as much about this struggle as Kafka's, particularly in his first work, *Description of a fight*, and in one of his last writings, *A dog Search*.

A Season in Hell ends with: " – and it will be my pleasure to possess the truth in a soul and a body".

In *Description of a fight*, Kafka recalls a childhood memory, a dialogue between his mother and her neighbor:

" " What are you doing here, my dear? What heat!" From the garden, a woman replied, "You see, I'm tasting on the grass." They spoke without thinking, in a daze, as if this woman had expected the question and my mother the answer!"

Instead of the word "conciliation", Kafka uses the word "consent". The word "consent" is pronounced a few lines later, where we read:

"But come a day of fine weather, and who can prevent us from saying: "Ah! my God, what a beautiful day!" – settling down on our land and living by the mere fact of our consent!"

It did not seem possible to Kafka that the two women could have held such a dialogue without freely consenting to the world. They spoke naturally, spontaneously, like everyone else, something Kafka no longer knew how to do.

Kafka's struggle – like Rimbaud's – would not end until his death. He would never be able to consent to the world, which he reflected in his diary entry of January 28, 1922:

"... but in the meantime I have long since arrived in the desert, and these hopes are but the chimeras of despair, especially in times when, even in the desert, I am the most miserable of creatures, and when Chanaan must necessarily present itself to me as the only land of hope, for there is no third land for men."

Chanaan is the ordinary world, his father's world. The desert is the in-between time of the battle, during which he is nowhere. The third land would be that of consent, consent that is inaccessible to him.

Through the intermediary of human-being, Being learns to play the game of the world, the game of the evidence of things. It is a question of learning to play the body, life, and the world. What was automatic, natural, must now be consciously played. The world accepted and

played by the truth of Being is no longer the world of before. It is the gift that logic gives to Being, and that Being freely receives. It is "the wonder of wonders". The life of the human-being who plays the world's game is a translogical life: the human-being knows that the world is a simulation of the ideal logical space orchestrated by time and imagination, and plays the world's game in this sense, that of the evidence, but, at the same time, he sees the world and himself as the contradiction of the ideal logical space, as an absolutely surprising spectacle.

There are certainly few of us who freely receive the gift of the world. Spinoza is undoubtedly one of them. He concludes the *Ethics* thus:

"The wise man on the contrary, considered in this quality, hardly knows intimate turmoil, but having, by a certain eternal necessity consciousness of himself, God and things, never ceases to be and possesses true contentment. If the path I have shown that leads to it appears to be extremely arduous, it is still possible to enter it. And it certainly must be arduous that is so rarely found. How could it be, if salvation were at hand and could be reached without great difficulty, that it is neglected by almost everyone? But everything that is beautiful is difficult as well as rare."

Yet Spinoza makes several phenomenological errors here. The path he shows in *Ethics* does not lead to true contentment, no matter how hard the reader tries. It is not a question of effort. By presenting this path in the form of a mathematical demonstration, Spinoza acts as if access to true contentment were a simple matter of logic. On the other hand, Spinoza forgets that before he "never ceases to be", the wise man must have accessed Being, and it is this accession that is the condition for entering the path. In his *Treatise on the Reform of the Understanding* – where he insists, particularly in paragraph (29), that "truth makes itself known" even though "this never happens, or rarely happens" – he attempted to make this accession his starting point. The difficulty of

communicating truth, even though he set himself the task of making people "acquire by premeditated design what has not fallen to us by destiny", meant that the work remained unfinished. In the *Ethics*, Spinoza's starting point was not access to truth – access to "knowledge of the third kind" – but God, an "absolutely infinite" God. Finally, what is hard is not getting onto the path – we're not responsible for that, it happens in a totally unforeseen and unforeseeable way – but, once on the path, reconciling Being and the body, Being and life in the world, and gaining access to this wisdom, the result of a struggle.

The human-being who consents to life and the world never loses sight of the fact that life is endured through childhood. The human-being respects the rules, politics, difficulties of all kinds, needs, desires, beliefs, joys, and physical and moral suffering of this childhood which makes up the world and never ends. This respect is his ethic, an integral part of his free consent. He knows the ambition of science; he knows that science is endless. He knows the necessity of politics, and he knows that politics is endless. Conciliation is no escape from the human condition. It equips the human-being to live it.

The human-being who consents to the world knows that his own words are audible neither to childhood nor to the world. So, what is the point? Only those who reach the truth of Being know the price of this word. Because for them, the time of struggle has begun. This battle is to the death: the physical death of the body. Why let it live? What to do with the body? How do we tame the body that has become a stranger? How do we tame the world that has become a stranger? "I am no longer in the world", says Rimbaud in his *Saison in Hell*. Kierkegaard, who writes at the end of the preface to his *Treatise on Despair*: "although the very cure is to die, to die to the world", would have considered Rimbaud cured. The death in question here is that of childhood, a death that is both an end and a beginning. What this death cures is the anguish born of a purely religious sense of finitude.

The word of the combatants is there, available, in the planetary library. It is offered to those who emerge and begin their own struggle.

It emanates from a community other than the one brought together by logos. It emanates from the initial community, the initial unity, the initial madness of being.

To this bottomless madness, temporal logic offers the regulated spectacle of the world.

Childhood, birth, the struggle for conciliation, play and the spectacle of the world freely consented to or freely refused: this, through the intermediary of human-being, is the history of Being.

§21.- Husserl's struggle.

Husserl's ideal, the *Eidos*, is the idea whose contradiction is Being. Husserl reinforces the logical ideal.

It is certainly to this struggle for conciliation that Husserl refers when he writes in his introduction to the *Ideen*: "It will require, moreover, painful special studies to move easily in this new universe of thought without ever falling back into the old attitudes and to learn to see, to distinguish, to describe what lies before our eyes."

"Falling back into old attitudes" is indeed the danger lurking for the human-being who agrees to play the world's game. The danger is of being taken back into the world's womb, into logic, into time. This danger was Rimbaud's obsession. He describes it in the first of his *Illuminations*, entitled *After the Flood*. Feeling taken back by childhood, by boredom, Rimbaud called for the return of the flood. It is no coincidence that the next illumination is entitled *Childhood*. Childhood: "What a bore, the hour of the 'dear body' and 'dear heart'". This boredom is retrospective. Rimbaud was not bored during his childhood, any more than any other child. Compared to the truth of Being, the truth of childhood, the common truth, is a bore.

"Describing what is before our eyes" – that is describing how "the new universe of thought" sees what the common truth sees, showing the difference between the two views – is indeed one of the major themes of the *other* phenomenology. This theme is the subject of Section II: *Phenomenology of Common Truth*. Section II is one of the three

discourses of phenomenology, the one in which the truth of Being speaks of common truth and its logos. This discourse is the *translogos*. But Husserlian description has nothing to do with translogos. Husserl's discourse is not translogical. According to Husserl, logic does not work to dissolve a contradiction, nor does it produce evidence. On the contrary, it is evidence, already there as essence, as the first of essences, as "Eidos", that generates logic. What is initial for Husserl, and must remain so, is the impossibility of contradiction, what the *other* phenomenology calls "ideal logical space", or "nothing", or "*a priori* Idea", that which Being contradicts. Husserl's initial is also the *a priori* of science, the generalized principle of contradiction: time is never wrong. But for Husserl, it is not time that produces the "truth" of science, it is evidence. In Husserlian phenomenology, evidence plays the same role as time in the *other* phenomenology. In his *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl says that consciousness is always already immersed in experience, that it is without beginning. The word "time" is not used here, but the *other* phenomenology hears only "time", with its "always already" and "without beginning". Isn't it time he is talking about when, in the *Fourth Meditation*, he develops the theme of the "habituality" of evidence? Indeed, it is the immemorial habit of seeing things, there and then, without beginning, that makes them self-evident. Habit, continuity without beginning, is time. Basically, Husserl remains in time, unable to perform the *epoché* – the reduction – of time. In the *Ideen*, there is no question of an *epoché* of time, although there is a question of an *epoché* of logic. Husserl's ideal, the Eidos, is none other than the *a priori* Idea of Being, the idea that there can only be nothing, the Idea of which Being, surprised by itself, is the contradiction. Husserl's ideal is nothingness – the logical ideal, the ideal logical space.

§22.- The in-itself.

The "reasoning" of the in-itself.

The heart of reality, the in-itself, is us. In this assertion, "us" is the initial "us", Being. There is absolutely nothing obvious about the in-

itself. On the contrary, it is absolutely surprising, and its absoluteness – the only absolute there is – comes from its *a priori* impossibility, an impossibility of which it is the contradiction. What is this *a priori*, and what impossibility does it imply?

This *a priori* is also at the heart of the real; it is inseparable from us, whether we are talking about the initial "us" or the "us" as "all of us". It is the Idea that there is "nothing", "nothing" being the absolute simple, the ideal logical space, the logical ideal, the clarity of the purest crystal. Reason, our common Reason, seeks this limpidity, the resolution of every problem, total transparency, Peace. It does not see "nothing", even though it is at its service, even though it has unwittingly made this its ideal. Reason's ideal is "nothing".

Any description of "nothing" cannot give "nothing" to those who do not already see it. For the human-being who has reached the truth of Being, the surest description consists in saying that "nothing" is where the world goes, our common world, its direction. The world – physis – will never reach "nothing", since there is still movement in it, a work of time – a work that manifests itself for us in what we call "time" and which is, more originally, logic at work.

Logic works in Being to defend the *a priori* Idea that there is indeed "nothing", and thus to establish its reality. Between the initial "us" and "all of us", here in the world, logic intervenes: time and imagination. Time and imagination show us things and ourselves as self-evident. "Evident" means "without surprise, expected, foreseen, normal". Logic works to attenuate the surprise of being, the violence of being, it works to restore the ideal: "nothing". Its work consists in "reasoning" the absolutely surprising, absolutely violent in-itself. In place of the surprise of seeing – which is that of the initial, unique "us" – it substitutes the evidence of "seeing" in the gaze of "all of us", in the multiple gazes of the living. Its work, time, is without beginning or end, unfinished.

Physis – the world – is what logic has made of Being in the eyes of "all of us", in the eyes of living beings. In physis, movement is the index of work in progress.

At the heart of physis, mathesis is the totally stable domain of physis, the domain where time has completed its work. In the eyes of the living, mathesis is inert, made up of stable and multiple things, things with no other characteristics than stability and multiplicity. Mathematical science – which describes and logically extends, through the work of our imagination, this domain of physis that is the mathesis of external space – is the logical development of these two self-evident axioms: 1- *There are things, there are only things*, 2- *The things of external space are made of things*. The transition from these two axioms – posited by phenomenological truth – to the fundamental axioms of set theory, those of ZF theory – posited by common truth – will be shown, in the greatest detail, in Chapters IV, V and VI of Section II.

For "all of us", there is existence only in time. Among living beings, the initial "us" exists only through the intermediary of the human-being. Being, on the other hand, exists outside time. In this sense, it does not exist. For all of us, for science, for logos, to exist is to exist *in time*. If, for the human-being, Being exists, it is because it is seen, but it is seen against all logic, and therefore not in the continuity of time; it is seen in itself through the suspension of the logical effect of time, through the mutation of the human-being. Being exists and is madness itself, an exclamation mark.

Through the intermediary of human-being, the truth of Being includes the truth of "all of us". It sees this truth, it knows it. It sees logos as the expression of a simulacrum of "nothing". It knows logic, its origin, and its goal, it knows childhood, it knows, in particular, the childhood of man. The access of the truth of Being is the condition of possibility of phenomenology, the possibility of describing, let us say *objectively*, common truth.

§23.- Realism or Idealism?

Given its foundations, how does phenomenology view the ever-popular philosophical debate between realism and transcendental idealism or correlationism?

For phenomenology, the debate is not about realism; it is about truth versus belief.

Let us take a look.

Philosophical realism is the thesis that things and the world exist independently of us and our thinking, independently of the living eye. To give this thesis its full meaning, we need to clarify its terms. What does it mean to "exist"? What is a thing? What is the world? Who is this "us" on whom the existence of things does not depend? What does it mean to think?

If analytic philosophy can play a role in philosophy, it must be in the study of the terms of this kind of thesis. Generally speaking, discussions of this thesis and of the supposedly opposing thesis – that of transcendental idealism or correlationism – do not dwell on the definition of the terms used. The definitions are assumed to be known to all, and known in a univocal, undoubtedly intersubjective way. Intersubjectivity, itself unquestioned, would already seem to lean towards correlationism. But it may be that the realist does without intersubjectivity, since, according to him, things present themselves to each of us as they absolutely are.

It is all a question of analysing the terms and making them explicit in the context of the thesis. Then, the realist thesis can be read in a completely different way.

Let us ask ourselves: what is a thing?

For phenomenology, a thing is only something seen – perceived, felt, thought, imagined – by at least one of us, at any time in human history. "Thing" is synonymous with "phenomenon". What then is the meaning of a thing declared invisible by man? Nothing other than the sense of contradiction in terms, in other words, of idiocy. Truth and reality are identical. Reality is what our truth, our power of sight, shows us.

Phenomenological truth is the union of the powers of sight of each and every one of us, since there are men who see and say what they see. As each of us sees according to his or her own truth, there are different truths, and therefore different realities. Distinguishing between these different truths, and saying what makes them different, is what phenomenology does.

So, what must one of us think to whom we describe a field of truth that he himself does not see, at least not yet? He does not see it, but he is told about it, using the words of logos. Of what he is told, he understands nothing. He will say, for example: "This phenomenology makes no sense to me", or "What it is talking about is the fruit of an illusion or a sick brain". What is taken here to be an illusion, however, is nothing other than the phenomenon of sight, nothing other than "seeing", nothing other than the power of sight. For him, seeing is so normal, so self-evident, that he does not see it as the initial seeing sees it, i.e. as a contradiction of the *a priori* Idea. This contradiction is Being, it is the initial seeing, it is the initial "us". It is from here, from this absolute and crazy reality, from this unique thing-in-itself – *a thing-in-itself that is both "us" and independent of "all of us"* – that phenomenology begins.

Phenomenological realism does not deny correlationism: the two are not situated in the same truth. For phenomenological realism, the opposition between realism and correlationism, born of ordinary realism – we all have the native impression that space outside us is independent of us, this is ordinary realism – and its contradiction by Kantian transcendental idealism, is irrelevant. Correlationism – which is real – is logical, the result of time. The in-itself – which is real – is counter-logical, initial, absolute, mad. The phenomenological realism of the truth of Being is not opposed to the correlationism of common truth, it is opposed to the deviation of the pure imaginary by belief, it is opposed to belief.

The truth of Being says, because it sees it, that common truth is correlationist. The truth of Being says of itself, because it sees it, that it

is a realist in the sense of philosophical realism: what it sees exists in itself, absolutely, though absolutely surprising. It adds that, regarding itself, the question of correlationism does not arise, since it is itself the thing and its view.

Phenomenology can be neither more realistic nor more idealistic. With phenomenology, the real opposition between realism and idealism does not take place in the sense of a philosophical choice to be made, with arguments for or against. The in-itself is this very opposition, the contradiction between Being and its *a priori* Idea. The logical ideal constitutes Being – the reality of "seeing" – in the sense that Being is its contradiction. Being is there, in the reality of this contradiction that is "seeing". Not only is it the in-itself of which philosophers speak, but it is seen as such, it is "us", understood as the initial "us".

The realism of philosophy internal to logos – a philosophy which, by definition, is unsuited to phenomenology – betrays phenomenological realism and correlationism in two ways:

1) For this realism, the real, independent of us, is physis. Physis, constituted in time in conjunction with the living gaze that is part of it, is intimately linked to this gaze. Kant saw this in his *supreme principle of all synthetic judgements*. Quantum physics also shows that there are only things in physis that are seen or visible by all of us. This philosophical realism calls itself realist whereas phenomenology is correlationist.

2) Philosophical realists give free rein to the imagination. They imagine the real in the scientific sense of the term, i.e. the real that time would show if we were able to set up the appropriate experimental set-up. But for them, such an experimental set-up is out of the question. If they did, their enterprise would be identical to that of science. Science imagines and then verifies the validity of its hypotheses by confrontation with time. Realist philosophy imagines but does not verify. As soon as it takes

what it imagines to be scientifically true, it enters the realm of belief. It takes itself to believe that what it imagines is realizable, in time, and finally, it claims to be scientific: this situation is precisely that of belief. Metaphysics that claim to be realistic and scientific are enjoying a certain vogue – the mere prior definition of the words "metaphysical" and "scientific" should make these metaphysics suspect. Among them, speculative realism, a "metaphysical fiction", a new fad, is the gateway to just such a misdirection. Belief responds to a need: the need to hope, to dream. It is always successful.

§24.- The words of philosophy.

What is reality?

Philosophy has always been, and still is today, entangled in the confusion attached to the words "true", "truth", "real", "being", "appearing", "existing", "science", "metaphysics", "logic", "time", "logos", "belief". This list is not exhaustive.

Physical science prior to quantum physics always presupposed, as does ordinary common truth – called "ordinary" to distinguish it from properly scientific common truth – the existence of a real independent of us, a real whose basic, irreducible, and absolute components it sought. This search led to quantum physics. Quantum physics had to come to the unambiguous conclusion that there are no things except as seen.

What remains to be grasped is the significance of this scientific discovery.

If it is the sight of the living that brings things into being, then this sight is itself a thing. Things, and in particular the particular thing that is sight, the sight of living beings, do not come into being from nothing¹⁰! What is there before any perception by living organisms? Isn't this what is real, the primordial background from which things

¹⁰ Although nothingness plays the active role by annihilating Being and metamorphosing it into living gazes facing evident, multiple, stable, things.

emerge under the gaze of the living? Things and the sight of these things through the living eye are born together from the primordial background. Kant, in his *supreme principle of all synthetic judgements*, puts it this way¹¹: "The conditions of experience in general are at the same time those of the possibility of the objects of experience." The question becomes: what is this primordial background from which the possibility of the objects of experience and experience itself arise? Isn't it what we have always called "chaos"? How do we move from primordial chaos to the living and its view of things, evident, stable, and multiple? How do we move from primordial chaos to experience, an experience that presupposes both an observer – a view – and the objects seen?

What is the real for us? That is the first question. We need to define this word we all use. According to the question posed, the real is "for us". We are the ones who define it.

For phenomenology, the words "true" and "real" are strictly synonymous. *Is true, is real, what shows itself to us, whatever the way it shows itself, whatever the human individual to whom it shows itself, to whom it appears, whatever the historical time in which this individual's life is inscribed.* The thing is nothing other than what it appears to our truth, and there are no things other than those that appear. Every phenomenon – or every thing, "thing" and "phenomenon" are strictly synonymous – is true, is real. The imagined thing is as real as the purely temporal thing and can even play a key role in the world, in our lives – just think of the role of myths, gods and God. If science recognizes as scientifically true only the hypothesis that is verified by time, phenomenology is content to set aside and consider as non-phenomenological – as phenomenologically false – everything that is in the realm of belief: this realm is the speculative, the ideological, the purely imaginary, *when they are presented as validated by time* – and therefore as scientifically true – or when it is considered that they will be validated one day, perhaps in the "infinity of time".

¹¹ Cf. *Critique of pure reason*, III,145/IV,110.

The only thing that can be said to be the *thing-in-itself*, therefore independent of any living gaze, is the initial sight, it is the initial appearance, it is Being, it is the eternal and eternally surprised initial that doesn't need any of us to be, that *is*, without *all of us* and without reason. It is the Being of which *we are all* the temporal epiphenomenon subject to finitude and recommencement – the eternal temporal return of the same, eternal childhood, always renewed. We can speak of Being as if it were a thing because we have access to it, we see it – each of us in our own time. This access is the event of a lifetime, an event that makes Being a thing, but an unheard-of thing, absolutely surprised by itself, not only without reason, but contrary to all Reason. Phenomenology must know how to say, knows how to say, where this Reason that Being contradicts comes from: it is its *a priori* Idea.

Being, seen, is therefore not noumenal. Phenomenologically, the Kantian noumenon is an absurdity, a language game, a belief. The definition of the noumenon is in itself contradictory: it makes visible that which in no way shows itself.

§25.- Reason as ideal and the ideal of Reason.

Phenomenology starts from no *a priori*, with the exception of the idea of nothingness, which is constitutive of Being: Being contradicts its *a priori* idea. This initial *a priori* is the origin of logic and its work on Being.

This *a priori*, if it is constitutive of Being, is necessarily also ours. Logic works to eliminate contradiction, to restore the ideal logical space. The living gaze, the gaze of us all, is the result of time's annihilation of the gaze of Being, which is Being itself, surprised by itself. What our gaze sees is a simulacrum of the ideal logical space. We are immersed inside a logical space that tends towards the ideal logical space: this tension manifests itself in movement; movement is the mark of resistance to logic. Through this immersion in a logical space, both Being and its *a priori* idea, as well as nothingness, disappear from our view.

What is this unique *a priori*, common to Being and phenomenology? Is it an *a priori* in the ordinary sense of the term, in the sense given to it by the common truth, the logos?

For common truth, an *a priori* is always the *a priori* of another or of certain others among us. He who has an *a priori* does not know it. For him, it is not an *a priori*; he uses it as if it were a scientific truth. It is always possible for others to show him that he is wrong. Ordinary *a priori* is confused with belief. For the common truth, *a priori* is synonymous with belief.

Can we say that science is the common *a priori*?

Science is all that is held by all of us to be scientifically true, i.e. demonstrated by time. We all know that science progresses, that it is possible that what is held to be true today will be considered false tomorrow. The only science whose truths are indisputable, definitively true, is mathematics. The reason for this infallibility lies in the fact that mathematical science deals only with things that are totally stable, i.e. things that do not evolve over time, that remain what they are because time has finished its work on them in the eyes of us all. What mathematics is talking about, what constitutes its foundation, can be summed up in these few words, which show the total stability of what is seen and said: there are things, there are only things, and the things of external space are made of things. Physical science and the natural sciences in general, with the exception of mathematics – which is a natural science – constitute an *a priori* that is very conscious of the fact that it is only an *a priori*. The fact that physical science continues its work, its research, that it is always ready to question itself, shows that our imagination, which seeks to know, always submits to the verdict of time, shows that it knows it will always have questions to ask itself, to put to time, questions to which answers must always be proposed, answers that must always be verified, submitted to time. Science is on the lookout for all *a priori*, on the lookout for itself. Always ready to question itself, physical science cannot be considered as the common *a priori*.

Consequently, common truth knows no *a priori*. When it speaks of *a priori*, it always speaks of belief, the belief of others. Scientism, in particular, is a belief, an *a priori*.

In the end, the only *a priori* that reigns among us is the logical *a priori*, the sovereignty of logic. Common truth does not know that it is the victim of an *a priori*. It does not know that logic merges with time, and that time shows it things in such a way – the way that produces evidence – that the original, initial truth is lost. Common truth does not know that it is not the only truth. It does not know itself as a truth – as a power of view – because it does not know that there could be another. All it can do is distinguish, in what it sees, between scientific truth and purely imaginary truth. It sees this difference rather as the difference between the true and the false. All it knows is that what is false is what time does not show, what exists only in our imagination. Common truth is, without knowing it, its own *a priori*.

Who, then, among us can say that we are all victims of an *a priori*? Someone has to see it, unless it is just an illusion, born of our imagination, and this universal *a priori* is like Kant's noumenon.

Kant tells us that there is a pure, *a priori* idea in all of us, and that this idea is that of God, God as the ideal of pure Reason. Phenomenology tells us that the ideal of pure Reason is nothingness. It says this because it sees it, because some of us see it. They see it because Being sees it, and because they have access to the truth of Being, which is what Man is all about. But then, if this *a priori* is seen as such, it is no longer an *a priori*. It is a mistake. Indeed, the ideal of pure Reason is an error; it is contradicted. This contradiction, Being, is the initial. The initial is the contradiction of the Ideal, the idea of nothingness, which is within it. The madness is there.

How, then, is this *a priori* of Being experienced by all of us, here in the world? In the world, it is this *a priori* that reigns. It reigns through logic. It behaves like a universal *a priori*: "all of us" cannot see it, but it guides us. Phenomenology tells us this, but only those who reach the truth of Being understand what it says.

To see nothingness, you have to get out of it. Nothingness is seen – as a thing, as the particular thing it is, as a phenomenon – only with the event of access to the truth of Being, the event that takes us out of physis: the meta-physical event. The world, for its part, continues its logical, temporal course, its never-perfect, never-completed simulation of nothingness. This incompleteness is movement, it is life, it is childhood, it is politics, it is science. It is, for all of us, the work of Reason in what remains, and will always remain, of the initial madness, to continue to dissolve it, to normalize it.

§26.- Introduction to nothingness.

Phenomenology does not give birth.

Phenomenology belongs to no particular philosophical school and can be rejected by all of them. It can appear as idealist – it sees the *a priori* idea, nothingness, as constitutive of Being – or as realist – it sees the in-itself, the absolute, Being surprised by itself, as a contradiction of the ideal *a priori*. It sees that logic, internal to Being, metamorphoses it, in the eyes of the living, into living gazes and physis, into a simulacrum of ideal space, conforming to the Idea. The finitude of the living is the guarantee of the eternal reign of childhood in physis.

That the thing-in-itself appears as a pure contradiction immediately begs the question: what is it the contradiction of, what other thing? Where, when, and how do we see this thing, which the in-itself contradicts?

The contradiction itself is stated: there is! Absolute surprise lies in the exclamation mark. The statement says that it is absolutely surprising that something should show itself. For something to show itself is Being, it is the in-itself, it is Being. The thing-in-itself, Being, contradicts an *a priori*, nothingness. The *a priori* is therefore not at all surprising. Nothingness is therefore absolutely not surprising. But what does "surprising" mean? "Surprising" probably means "contradictory". But we are used to surprise, to contradiction: it is usually a problem to be solved, which science strives to solve, and we have no doubt that

science will manage to solve it, to dispel the contradiction – it always does. What we are talking about here is *absolute* surprise, *absolute* contradiction. What is the difference between contradiction and absolute contradiction? Absolute contradiction cannot be resolved. It remains. Science cannot dispel it. It is not accessible to science; science cannot see it. The fact that there is, absolutely contradicts nothingness. What is nothingness? Who sees it? Where do we see it?

We all do not see it. The reason we do not see it is because we are in it, because the ideal *a priori* reigns, or at least tends to reign. In childhood, it reigns. We ourselves participate in this reign, we reinforce it, through science, through politics, through our aspiration for peace and tranquillity. All our efforts are directed towards the ideal.

Nothingness is the standard, Reason, peace, simplicity, limpidity, purity. Here below, in the world, it is never definitively found, it is always sought. It is the ideal.

This ideal stands within Being, it is constitutive of Being.

The ideal, nothingness, is seen by the human-being at the moment of access to Being and its truth. Access to Being and sight of nothingness are simultaneous. The instant is that of the suspension of the logical effect of time, the suspension of the evidence of things. It is through the evidence of things and of ourselves that nothingness envelops us and escapes the sight of the living.

Phenomenology does not show "nothing" to those who do not already see it, i.e. to "all of us", to childhood. Phenomenology does not give birth.

Despite this impossibility of giving birth, phenomenology attempts – and this will be the subject of the next two paragraphs – to be, as far as possible, *monstrative* of what nothingness is. It will be sufficiently *monstrative* only as far as those who already see nothingness come to realize that it is indeed what it is.

Phenomenological nothingness is a thing, therefore seen, but a very particular thing. This thing is purely temporal, and therefore not the fruit of our imagination as is the nothingness defined by our dictionary, the

nothingness that phenomenology considers to be the false nothingness. In the person to whom nothingness appears, time suddenly loses its logical power. In the same instant, the in-itself appears as the contradiction of nothingness, as the initial, as madness.

Phenomenology does not have the power to suspend, in anyone, the logical effect of time, and it is fortunate that this is so. The instant of the event is a cataclysm. What follows is a fight to the death. It is about the death of childhood, death to the world, the strangeness of the body. In this struggle, it is a question of the human-being's possible reappropriation of the Body of childhood, of the possibility of another beginning of the body and its life in the world; it is a question, for the human-being, of freely receiving the gift of the world.

If, shown to the best of its ability, phenomenology cannot show nothingness to those who do not already see it, it can at least assure those who do see it that it is indeed the same thing, that we are in communion with the same truth, the truth of Being. This communion is a great help to those who are fighting, who believe themselves to be alone, who feel like strangers, like monsters. This communion is the ethics of phenomenology.

How can nothingness be something? Why, then, do we ask ourselves what is considered the fundamental question of metaphysics: "Why is there something rather than nothing? ". If "nothing" is something, this question makes no sense. Yet some of us ask it. The wording of the question shows that the questioner would find it more normal if there were "nothing" rather than something. The question is revealing. It deserves reflection, we understand why it is considered the fundamental question of metaphysics.

§27.- Witnesses to nothingness.

Being and nothingness are inseparable; nothingness is an integral part of Being, its *a priori* Idea. Those of us who reach nothingness, *ipso facto*, reach Being, its truth. Some of them have said so, written so. They all say that nothingness is "before"; before the moment of

emergence. They all say that nothingness is the world as it is, its destination, the world as the power of death, the time during which, immersed in nothingness, they did not see it. They all say that nothingness is the world, the world that the biological body of childhood must now continue to inhabit, even though its master has changed: the master of the body is no longer logic, no longer time and imagination, but the madness of Being. They all describe the battle they wage against their own bodies, which have become foreign to them, against the world, which has become foreign to them, the battle to reappropriate, freely, the body and the world, the battle to reconcile Being and beings, the battle for serenity in the world.

Literature bears witness. In each of these testimonies, we see the radical change between *before* – which now appears as nothingness – and *now* – birth, madness. This change is equated with death, death to the world, the death of childhood, immediately associated with resurrection, with birth itself, with another life in the world, a life for which the physical death of the body no longer has the same importance.

Phenomenology could anthologize these testimonies. Here, it will confine itself to citing a few. It will focus particularly on one of them, because this one is astonishing in more ways than one: astonishing for the phenomenological truth it reveals, astonishing for the substitution it consciously makes – it intends to substitute, provisionally, in each of us, the "believing" for the "seeing", in other words, it appeals to faith, to belief – and finally astonishing for its historical consequences. This testimony, which, in this context of phenomenology, will surprise many of us, Christians and atheists alike, is that of Paul of Tarsus, the founder of Christianity, whom we now call "St. Paul". The seven letters – the epistles – written by Paul are an authentic treatise on phenomenology. As we begin to read – reread – these letters, we need to place ourselves in the precise historical context that was Paul's at the time he wrote.

Paul had not known Jesus, he had only heard about him, he knew that it is said that he had died crucified and that it is said that he had risen

from the dead. In fact, it is because of these rumours that he travels to Damascus, sent by the Sanhedrin, in order to discourage these heretical voices. At the time of the famous revelation – on the road to Damascus – a revelation that is the sole trigger for his future action, Paul did not know Jesus' apostles either. He will meet them later, in Jerusalem, and it is he who, paradoxically, will revive them: he is surprised, as he says in chapter 2 of his letter to the Galatians, to see that they have returned to Jewish tradition, as if nothing had changed. Of course, but it is perhaps worth pointing out that Paul was not familiar with the Christian Gospels: the first Christian Gospels, by Mark or Matthew, were written some twenty years after his epistles. During the period in which he wrote his letters – from 51 to 56 AD – the gospel – the good news – was proclaimed by him. Paul's letters are the first documents relating to Christianity, the first historical documents to mention a certain Jesus Christ, to mention his death and resurrection. Let us just say that Paul, with his seven letters, founded Christianity, a primitive Christianity that is not easy to recognize from what it has become over the centuries. Christianity owes its worldwide success to the Roman emperor Constantine, who made it a state religion, perhaps more for political reasons than out of conviction. It also owes its success to Emperor Charlemagne, who spread it, by force if necessary, throughout Europe.

This brief reminder begs the question: what happened to Paul on the road to Damascus? The answer can only be found in the letters. What do they say that can answer this question?

Heidegger, the young Heidegger, in his lecture on the *Phenomenology of Religious Life* (Winter Semester 1920-1921), took a great interest in these letters. Commenting on the first chapter of the letter to the Galatians, paragraphs 11 and 12, he writes:

"Paul means, moreover, that he came to Christianity through an original experience, and not through historical tradition. This is linked to a controversial theory in Protestant theology. Paul would have had no historical awareness of Jesus of Nazareth, but would have founded

a new personal Christian religion, a new primitive Christianity, which dominates the future: the Pauline religion, not the religion of Jesus. There is no need to go back to a historical Jesus. The life of Jesus is totally irrelevant. Naturally, this cannot be derived from a single passage."

Only the penultimate sentence needs correction. If the life of Jesus is indifferent to Paul, it is with the exception of the crucifixion and the rumor of the resurrection. Paul relies on this rumor to justify his word and justify faith. The paragraphs in question say:

"(11) Brethren, I want you to know that the Gospel I have proclaimed is not a human invention.

(12) Nor did I receive or learn it from a man, but by revelation from Jesus Christ."

Paul claims to have experienced the death and resurrection of Jesus himself. Again, in chapter 2 of his letter to the Galatians, he writes:

"(19) Through the Law I died to the Law in order to live for God; with Christ I am crucified.

(20) I live, but it is no longer I, but Christ who lives in me. What I live today in the flesh, I live in faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me.

(21) There is no question of my rejecting God's grace. Indeed, if it were by the Law that one became just, then Christ would have died for nothing."

Paul did not need to believe, he saw. The difference between seeing and believing can be seen in the essential passage of his entire preaching, found in his letter to the Romans, chapter 8:

"(20) For creation was subjected to the power of nothingness, not of its own free will, but because of him who delivered it to that power. Yet it has kept the hope
(21) that it too will be freed from the slavery of degradation, to know the freedom of the glory given to the children of God.
(22) As we well know, the whole of creation is groaning, going through the pains of a childbirth that is still going on.
(23) And it is not alone. We too are groaning within ourselves; we have begun to receive the Holy Spirit, but we await our adoption and the redemption of our bodies.
(24) For we have been saved, but in hope; to see what we hope for is no longer to hope: what we see, how can we hope for?
(25) But we, who hope for what we do not see, wait for it with perseverance."

Paul does not include himself in this "we". "We" are those who have just been baptized, who have just received the Holy Spirit, and who must hope. He has seen. He knows what he is talking about. That is why he preaches with such conviction. The event gave him sight and also a passion – that remnant of human weakness –, the passion to pass on his sight through faith.

Could Paul's preaching show the whole of what he saw? He says repeatedly that he is obliged to use *human* expressions in his letters. For example, to the Galatians, chapter 3, he writes:

"(15) Brethren, I use human language here. When a man has made a will in due form, no one can annul it or add clauses to it."

Similarly, in Romans, chapter no. 6, he writes:

"(19) I use human language, adapted to your weakness."

Did Paul consider himself superhuman? What is the gap between his vision, his thinking, and the – human – images he conveys to us? What is it about his vision that is not properly human, so that there are no words to show it to us? What is the difference between the human and Paul's thinking, between the human view and Paul's view as a result of revelation? What is human according to Paul? In what sense can he say that his thinking is no longer human? Paul shared some of our weaknesses, being made of flesh and blood – is that *the thorn in his flesh?* –, but he no longer had to obey, he knew. What he knew, he could not pass on to everyone as he knew it: the words to say it to everyone do not exist. Nonetheless, given the importance, crucial in his eyes, of the consequences of what he knew, of what he saw, he chose to pass it on through the myth of Christ's resurrection, faith in God, obedience, religion. The human view is the ordinary view, the view of all of us in this world, the view we share because of our common childhood. Paul's view is quite different. He received it through revelation. How do we move from one to the other? It is not a question of him giving us his view. He knows that is not possible, that he does not have that power. It is just a question of making us believe it, and above all of making us believe in its consequences.

What is Paul telling us that is out of the ordinary? What should we believe when we know nothing about the possibility of seeing for ourselves?

The first letter to the Thessalonians is important because it is the first historical writing of Christianity, dated 51 AD. In this first, rather short letter, Paul tells the essentials to the small group of Thessalonian neo-Christians he has recently converted. He begins by setting out the three theological virtues, faith, charity, and hope:

"(3) Without ceasing, we remember that your faith is active, that your charity takes pains, that your hope holds fast in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the presence of God our Father."

But it appears that the purpose of the letter is to answer two specific questions posed by this group. These are important, especially the second. What are they about?

The first question is dealt with in chapter 4 of his letter. It concerns the dead, those who have not been able to experience the event of redemption and who will not experience the coming of the Lord, the Parousia. Is this injustice? Is it just a matter of luck? Paul reassures them, at little cost:

"(14) Jesus, we believe, died and rose again; so too, we believe, those who have fallen asleep, God, through Jesus, will take with him.

(15) For by the word of the Lord, we declare this to you: we who are still alive for the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep."

This is an appropriate response, in keeping with the fact that death and resurrection are events that can have happened to every human being, and that they can happen today just as before.

The second question is a major and more awkward one. It is dealt with in the last chapter of the letter, chapter 5. It concerns the Parousia, the imminent return of Jesus to consecrate the end of time and the beginning of the Kingdom of God. In other words, the Last Judgment. Let us not forget that the beginning of Christianity also corresponds to a period of widespread belief in the imminence of eschatological time. It was an idea that was gaining ground within Judaism and was amplified by the zealots of Jesus. The Thessalonians' question seems to be, quite simply: When will he come? Here's Paul's answer:

"(1) As for the times and seasons of the Lord's coming, you have no need, brethren, for me to tell you about them in my letter.

(2) You know very well that the day of the Lord is coming like a thief in the night.

(3) When people say: "What peace! What tranquillity!", then all of a sudden disaster will descend upon them, like pain upon a pregnant woman: they won't be able to escape it.

(4) But you, brothers, because you are not in darkness, that day will not surprise you like a thief.

(5) For you are all sons of the light, sons of the day; we do not belong to night and darkness.

(6) So let us not remain asleep like others, but let us be vigilant and sober."

How does Paul understand the Parousia? Strictly speaking, he does not understand it as the coming of the Lord in plain sight – that would only be a human image, adapted to our weakness – but as revelation as he himself experienced it. We all need to be vigilant about what is to come and, in the meantime, remain sober. He, Paul, has already experienced the Parousia. The others have been warned, they are not in darkness, they have hope. The moment will come "like a thief in the night", just as it came for him. This moment is not the same for everyone, each one his own, each one his own time. Peace and tranquillity are what is usually sought. But peace and tranquillity are like the culmination of the world's annihilation. The Parousia occurring in the midst of peace and tranquillity will be experienced as a catastrophe, because it will catch the worldlings off guard.

In his course on the phenomenology of religious life, Heidegger analyses this letter to the Thessalonians. His interpretation would be phenomenologically correct if it did not imply that Paul and his dear Thessalonian brothers were on the same level with regard to the Parousia. But Paul has knowledge – "knowledge" in the sense of "having seen" – while the Christians have faith, hope. Heidegger writes:

"He does not say: 'The Lord will return at such and such a time'; nor does he say: 'I don't know when he will return' – on the contrary, he says: 'You know perfectly well...'. This knowledge must be a special

kind of knowledge, for Paul refers the Thessalonians to themselves and to the knowledge they have of the Being they have become. This way of answering implies that the solution to the "question" depends on their own lives."

So far, the interpretation is phenomenologically correct. It is in the very lives of Christians that the Parousia can take place. Their knowledge lies in knowing that it will happen; their light is hope. They must remain vigilant. But Heidegger adds, speaking of those who seek peace and tranquillity in this world – that is, those who do not have the Christian faith – and who are surprised by the Parousia:

"A sudden perdition falls upon them. It catches them unawares, they don't expect it. Or rather: they find themselves in an expectation that conforms to a particular perspective; their expectation is absorbed by what life brings them. Because they live in this expectation, perdition reaches them in such a way that they cannot escape. They cannot save themselves, because they do not possess themselves, because they have forgotten their own self; because they do not possess themselves in the clarity of authentic knowledge."

You would think you were reading a passage from *Being and Time*. Do Christians – apart from Paul – possess themselves in the clarity of authentic knowledge? Heidegger, the young Heidegger, seems to think so. But this only happens with resolution, and resolution is precisely Parousia, grace. Paul would then be the only Christian. Heidegger acts as if faith were indeed worth grace, as if Christians, in this case the Thessalonians, were indeed already saved. This is exactly what Paul wants them to believe, and, after him, the Church. That is why the question is embarrassing for him – he knows exactly what it is all about: the Parousia "comes like a thief in the night". Once it has happened and been accepted, there can no longer be any question of faith, but of sight; there can no longer even be any question of the Law, for it is no longer

possible to sin; then life is no longer the same, time is no longer the same, there can no longer be any question of expectation or peace or tranquillity, it is all there, and it is unheard of, it is madness.

The Letter to the Romans is Paul's last letter, written in 56 AD. It was of particular interest to Luther. The Protestant Reformation was essentially concerned with the content of the letters, and this letter in particular. What else is there in this letter that is out of the ordinary? In chapter 6, Paul gives baptism its meaning:

"(3) Do you not know? All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death.

(4) If, then, through baptism, which unites us to his death, we have been buried with him, it is so that we too may lead a new life, like Christ who, by the omnipotence of the Father, has risen from the dead.

(5) For if we have been united to him by a death like his, we shall also be united to him by a resurrection like his.

(6) As we know, the old man in us was fixed to the cross with him, so that the body of sin might be reduced to nothing, and so that we would no longer be slaves to sin.

(7) For he who has died is freed from sin.

(8) And if we have passed through Christ's death, we believe that we shall also live with him.

(9) For we know that Christ, risen from the dead, dies no more; death has no more power over him."

Obviously, baptism in itself cannot achieve what Paul says it does. Baptism symbolizes birth but cannot give it. Remarkable is paragraph (9). It may seem pointless to insist on the fact that Jesus, assimilated to God himself, no longer dies after being resurrected. Indeed, this point will surprise no one. Death has no power over God, as everyone knows; it does not concern him, by definition of what he is. What is surprising, on the contrary, is that Paul feels the need to say so. What Paul means here is truly extraordinary. He is saying that our own birth, which

occurs in a human life – not the symbolic birth of baptism, but the real birth, the one he himself experienced, the one that comes like a thief in the night – gives us the same access to eternity as that obtained by Jesus. Here, Jesus seems suddenly to be reduced to a human dimension, the same dimension as Paul: "death has no more power over him". This is a surprising assertion, so unnecessary does it seem to say it if Jesus is God himself. Paul is telling us here that he himself is immortal, just as Jesus is immortal, in the same way and for the same reasons. This immortality, whether of Paul or Jesus, has nothing to do with time, and is invulnerable to biological death. Death to the world is already here for them. Symbolically, Paul identifies it with Christ's crucifixion. Paul does not care about the physical death that will come. In the meantime, he is already living behind his death.

Do you have to be a Christian – i.e. Paul – to live this same experience, whose symbol is baptism? Hasn't this same experience been lived by others than Paul, the only Christian, before and after him?

Let us look at a few other examples to show that the experience that phenomenology calls "metaphysical experience – or event" – is easily recognizable in the description given by some illustrious authors of their own "experience par excellence".

Kafka was brought up in the Jewish tradition, yet he is a Christian in the primitive sense, that of Paul. Here is what he wrote in one of his in-octavo notebooks, dated February 25, 1918:

"The cruel thing about death is that it brings the real pain of the end, but not the end. Deathbed lamentations are motivated by the fact that here, there has been no death in the true sense. We're content with this death, we're still playing the game."

The following day, February 26, Kafka adds:

"Human evolution – a growth in the power of death. Our salvation is death, but not this."

Master Eckhart, true to his correct reading of St. Paul's epistles, writes in his Sermon #104:

"God never reveals himself so extensively in this life as to be nothingness in comparison with what he is. Though truth remains deep down, it is veiled and hidden from the intellect."

It should be remembered that, paradoxically, Master Eckart was excommunicated shortly before his death in 1327 or 1328, for failing to observe orthodoxy.

Sören Kierkegaard, who at the end of his life considered himself the only Christian, writes in his preface to *Treatise on Despair*:

"As in Christian terminology, death expresses well also the worst spiritual misery, though the cure is to die, to die to the world."

Earlier, Kierkegaard, debating with Socrates, writes in Chapter I of his *Philosophical Fragments*, a chapter entitled *Fictional Hypothesis*:

"If we were in non-truth and now with the condition we receive truth, a change takes place in us as from non-being to being. But this passage from non-being to being is that of birth. However, he who exists cannot be born, and yet here he is born. Let us call this passage re-birth, by which he comes into the world a second time, just as at birth, an isolated individual who knows nothing yet of the world he enters, neither if it is inhabited, nor if there are other men in it; for we have already seen *mass* baptisms, but have we ever seen *mass* rebirths!
"

Stéphane Mallarmé wrote to his friend Cazalis on April 28, 1866:

"Unfortunately, in digging verse to this point, I have encountered two abysses, which despair me. One is Nothingness, to which I have arrived without knowing Buddhism, and I am still too sorry to be able to believe even in my poetry and get back to work, which this crushing thought has made me abandon. Yes, *I know*, we are but vain forms of matter, – but quite sublime for having invented God and our soul. So sublime, my friend! that I want to give myself this spectacle of matter, conscious of itself and yet forcibly rushing into the Dream it knows it is not, singing of the Soul and all the divine similar impressions that have amassed in us since the first ages, and proclaiming, before the Nothing that is truth, these glorious lies! Such is the plan of my Lyrical volume, and such perhaps will be its title, *The Glory of Lies*, or *The Glorious Lie*. I'll sing in despair!"

A few weeks later, Mallarmé wrote to his friend Théodore Aubanel on July 16, 1866:

"For me, I have worked more this summer than all my life, and I can say that I have worked for all my life. I have laid the foundations of a magnificent work. Every man has a secret within him; many die without having found it, and don't find it, because, dead, it will no longer exist, nor will they. I have died and risen again with the jewelled key to my last spiritual cassette".

On July 28, 1866, Mallarmé gave his puzzled friend a little more information, adding:

"I haven't yet been able to find a minute to tell you the enigmatic word of my letter, and I don't like to remain a logograph for my friends such as you, although I gladly employ this means of forcing others to think of me.

(I seem to have forgotten to light your lantern? – The one I used to hang myself from!) I wanted to tell you simply that I had just laid out

the plan for my entire work, after having found the key to myself, – keystone, or center, if you like, so as not to confuse us with metaphor, – center of myself, where I stand like a sacred spider, on the main threads already coming out of my mind, and with the help of which I will weave *at the meeting points* of marvellous lace, which I guess, and which already exists in the bosom of Beauty.

... That I foresee that it will take me twenty years for the five books of which the work will consist, and that I will wait, reading only to my friends like you, fragments, – and mocking glory as a worn-out nonsense. What is relative immortality, and often passing in the minds of fools, next to the joy of contemplating Eternity, and enjoying it, alive, in oneself?"

In his *Diary of a Madman*, Tolstoy writes:

"There's nothing in life, there's death, but it shouldn't exist.

I tried to think of what I had to take care of: the purchase, my wife. All this, far from cheering me up, appeared to be nothingness. I wanted to kill the anguish I felt at the thought of losing my life.

I had to sleep. I stretched out, but immediately jumped off the couch in fear. The anguish was there, a psychic anguish, an anguish like one has before vomiting, but psychic. Scary, terrible. We seem to fear death, but when we reflect and think about life, we realize that we only fear life as it dies. As if life and death were one and the same. Something was trying to split my soul into two parts, but couldn't."

The Diary of a Madman ends with these lines:

"Suddenly, something that had been torturing me all my life detached itself from me, as if a birth had taken place. My wife was angry, scolding me. And I was happy.

It was the beginning of my madness. But I did not go completely mad until a month later.

I was in church, attending mass, praying fervently, listening, and being moved. The host was brought to me, and then we went to the cross, jostling each other; there were beggars at the exit. And I understood very clearly that none of this was meant to be. And that is not all: not only was it not supposed to exist, but it does not exist at all. And if it does not exist, death does not exist either, and neither does fear; there is no longer any inner wrench in me, and I no longer fear anything.

So, the light came to me and I became what I am.

And if this nothing is not, then above all, it is not in me. Right outside the church, on the threshold, I handed out what I had – thirty-five roubles – to the beggars, and walked back home, talking to the people."

Fernando Pessoa, on February 21, 1930, writes in no. 39 of his *Book of Intranquillity*:

"It is so difficult to describe what one feels, when one feels that one really exists and that one's soul is a real entity – so difficult that I don't know with what human words I could define it. I do not know whether I have a fever, as it seems to me, or whether I have stopped suffering from this fever of being a sleeper of life. Yes, I repeat, I'm like a traveller who suddenly finds himself in an unfamiliar city, without knowing how he got there; and I think of those people who lose their memory and become another for a very long time. I have been another myself for a very long time – since birth, since consciousness – and I wake up today in the middle of a bridge, leaning over the river, and knowing that I exist more firmly than anything I've been until now. But the city is foreign to me, the streets are unknown to me, and the evil is without remedy. So, I wait, leaning over the bridge, for the truth to leave me, to leave me again null and fictitious, intelligent and natural."

In no. 166 of the same *Book of Intranquillity*, Pessoa writes:

"If I carefully consider the life that men live, I find nothing to differentiate it from the life that animals live. Both are thrown, unconsciously, into the midst of things and the world; both make the same organic journey every day; both think nothing beyond what they think and live nothing beyond what they live. The cat rolls in the sun and falls asleep there. Man rolls with life, with all its complexities, and falls asleep there. Neither escapes the inevitability of being what they are. Neither tries to lift the weight of being. The greatest among men love glory, not as an immortality of their own, but rather as an abstract immortality, in which they do not even participate. ...

The rest of us, all of us who live animally, but with varying degrees of complexity, walk across the stage like mute extras, content to parade with a pompous gait. All of us, men and dogs, cats and heroes, fleas, and genies, play at existing without really thinking about it (because the best only think about thinking) under the immense peace of the stars. The others – the mystics of the fatal hour and of sacrifice – at least feel, in their bodies and in their daily lives, the magical presence of mystery. They are liberated, because they deny the visible sun; they are full, because they are emptied of all the emptiness of the world."

In no. 178, Pessoa adds:

"We are made of the dead. This thing we consider to be life is the sleep of real life, the death of what we truly are. The dead are born, they do not die. The two worlds, for us, are inverted. While we believe we are living, we are dead; we begin to live when we are moribund.

There is the same relationship between sleep and life as between what we call life and what we call death. We are asleep, and this life is a dream, not in a metaphorical or poetic sense, but in a real sense.

Everything we consider superior in our activities is part of death, everything is death. What is the ideal, if not the admission that life is pointless?"

There are many written testimonies to the fact that "to die to the world" is to see, in the instant, the nothingness of the world, and to be immediately cured of it, free and mad. Dying to the world is an end and a beginning¹².

§28.- Phenomenology's answer to the fundamental question of metaphysics.

If "nothing" – or nothingness – is itself something, why then the fundamental question: "Why is there something rather than nothing? ".

There are three diverse ways of approaching the fundamental question of metaphysics.

The first is that of the person who, on discovering the question, is astonished that it should be asked: aren't things naturally there, obviously there? Isn't "nothing" just a fantasy, a figment of the imagination?

Then there is the one who really asks the question and tries to answer it, logically finding the reason for things rather than nothing.

Finally, there is the one who knows there is no answer to this why, because he sees that there cannot be, because he sees that this question does not arise. It is not that he remains indifferent to the fact that there are things; on the contrary, he is absolutely surprised by the fact that there is not "nothing", that there is something. So, he tries to understand the why, not of things, but of the two previous attitudes to the question. And this why, unlike the why of the question, can be uncovered, and its reason found: this reason is logic, logic in continuous, beginningless motion. In this uncovering lies the work of the most advanced metaphysical thought.

¹² On February 25, 1918, Kafka noted, in his fourth octavo notebook: "I am an end or a beginning".

The third attitude clearly stands out from the other two. It, and only it, can tell us something about our natural way of thinking, that which takes its place in common truth.

We need to ask ourselves how it is that we can see *that there can be no answer* to the question: the event of this view is access to Being, it is the metaphysical event *par excellence*, an event that occurs – or does not occur – unheard-of, in the course of life.

It is necessary to analyse the meaning of each word in the question – Why is there something rather than nothing? – in the context of the question¹³.

Why.

So, the question is in search of a reason, a cause. This quest reveals the whereabouts of the person for whom the question is being asked. For him, there *must* be a reason: everything, the very fact that there are things – and not nothing – must have its reason. This dwelling place is characterized by the endless sequence of cause and effect, i.e. by logic. This dwelling place, where logic reigns, is the logos. The question is posed from the logos, from our ordinary logical space, from the space we are naturally given from childhood onwards.

This introductory remark may seem either superfluous or downright strange. It suggests that for us, there are many places to stay, and that there is in any case a place where the logical chain of cause and effect no longer functions, and where something takes place without a cause. For the moment, let us content ourselves with noting that, for us, for the logos, everything must have a reason, and that it is for this reason that the question begins with "why?".

Let us suppose we find this reason of "something" instead of nothing. We will then be able to say: the reason for things is this. This immediately raises a new question: what is this? One of two things.

¹³ The answer to the fundamental question, given here as that of phenomenology – the *other* – is an essential example of an attempt consisting of showing, through language, what cannot be transmitted from man to man. What is thus given to see – nothing, nothingness, nil – can only be seen by the one who already sees it.

Either this is itself a thing, and then the answer does not advance us in any way, because we would still have to find the reason for this thing, and we would still be at the same point. Or this is not a thing. This alternative presents the only acceptable answer: the reason sought, to be acceptable, must not, cannot, be something. The question then is: what can this be – which we have identified as a cause and given a name to, which we know how to describe because we see it, because it shows itself – if it is not a thing? It could be that God is not something. So, we will necessarily have to question the validity of this answer, asking: What is God? Let us leave God aside for the moment – we will come back to this in the course of our analysis. More generally, we need to reflect on the question: what else is there but things? We may not all have the same conception of what a thing is. Is it possible for us all to agree on the answer to the question: what is a thing? Let us leave this crucial question for the moment. We will tackle it head-on when we analyse "something". That is also when we will analyse the validity of this answer to the reason for things: God.

Is there.

What does "is there" mean? The question presupposes that *there is* something since it asks *why* there is something. For the questioner, then, there are *a priori* things. But are there only things? This is what the formulation of the question presupposes, since for it, apart from things, there can be nothing. Things are precisely presented by the question as that which there is. "There is" is the expression we use to express the fact that, for us, to us, things manifest themselves, show themselves, in one way or another. Things are what there is. "There is" simply means the fact that, *for us, to us*, things show themselves. For us, to us, there is. Among what there is, there is us, for whom there is. "There is" means the existence for us of things, of something. The definition of a thing implicit in the question is therefore: a thing is that which manifests itself to us, which shows itself, whatever the manner of this manifestation.

Something.

What is this "something"? It is any thing, any thing at all. What is a thing? After the preceding analysis of "there is", it seems that there can be no possible dispute between us about this definition of a thing implicit in the question:

A thing, or something, is anything that shows itself to us in any way.

The thing is that which there is. For it to be there, it must show itself, in one way or another. Conversely, if it shows itself, there is it. "There is" is the perfect synonym for "to show itself to us". We all must, or should, have the same conception of what a thing is. That is certainly not where the difficulty lies.

For us, there is nothing other than a thing. The thing, so understood by all, includes the event – an event, in a certain way, shows itself, it can be named –, includes the fact, includes the state of things, includes the feeling, includes the sensation, includes everything that shows itself to us – not only what is substantial, the objects.

Would the only exception be God?

What is God? God is, by definition, the cause of everything, including himself. God is, by definition, the answer to the fundamental question of metaphysics¹⁴. Are we any further advanced by this invention of God, which costs us nothing?

The reason for everything is God. Who is God? He is the reason for things and for himself. God shows himself to us in no other way than by this purely imaginary and gratuitous definition. This definition goes against our logic: according to our logic, a cause cannot be its own cause, by definition of what a cause is. What lies behind this departure from logic in the definition of God is the rejection of the uncaused.

¹⁴ The metaphysics which thus answers the question is ontotheological metaphysics, that which is still current, in the world, culturally.

Reason – logic – needs a cause for everything. This need is met by God, who is, by definition, the answer to the unanswerable question.

How can we be satisfied with an answer that is not an answer? The believer is satisfied with this, because the answer – God – does not have the meaning I have just given, even though it is basically the same thing. It is belief in God, prior to meditation on the fundamental question of metaphysics, which makes the believer say that God is the creator of all things, and therefore the answer to the question. For him, this is not a definition of God, but a consequence of his existence. For him, the thing is a consequence of God's prior existence. For him, everything is caused by God, by a God whom he *believes* to have manifested himself to us in time, whom he believes to have manifested himself historically to the world through certain witnesses whom he trusts. God as the cause of things, as the answer to the question, is therefore not, for him, pure fiction: he has been seen, heard, historically, temporally.

Belief is an internal phenomenon of the imaginary, which consists in taking as temporal something – the object of belief – which is, *most certainly*, pure fiction.

Rather than.

"Rather than" presents the alternative to "there is", the alternative to the fact that things show themselves to us. What is important to note here is that the way the question is formulated indicates that what is being questioned is the "there is" of things, and not the alternative, which would seem more normal. The question is: why is there something, and not nothing? To the questioner, it would seem more normal – it would seem more logical – for there to be "nothing", that is, for there not to be. To him, "nothing", in place of things, would pose no question.

This brings us to another point. Has he who asks the question always asked himself the question? The answer is undoubtedly no. It is certain that children do not ask themselves the question. For them, it is natural that things and they themselves are there. If he does ask questions – and

we know that children do – it is to find out the reason for each particular thing, and there is no doubt in his mind that his parents know: logic reigns. But a child does not ask this question: "Why are there things and not nothing?" The alternative "nothing" does not exist for him. The other question this raises is: at what point does a child cease to be a child? Isn't the event corresponding to the emergence of the question a possible answer, the right answer, the only answer?

The question arises at the same time as "nothing" in the face of beings and all the things that make it up, including oneself, and even first of all in the face of oneself. From this point onwards, "nothing" seems more logical than something. Herein lies a crucial clue. If *everything* seemed logical before the question arose, and if this same *everything* suddenly seems less logical than "nothing", could it not be that this initial everything, this everything we call "natural", let us say nature itself, behaves in our eyes and our logic, at least in childhood – but when does childhood end? – as "nothing"? And then this other question: what does logic have to do with "nothing"?

Nothing.

"Nothing" is therefore the alternative that the question presents to the fact that something shows itself to us. An alternative that the question presents as the situation that would basically be the most normal, the most logical. For the questioner, things pose a question in relation to "nothing". To him, "nothing" would seem perfectly logical, whereas the fact that there is something is only logical if we can find a cause for it that is not itself something, which seems logically excluded. Indeed, for us to find this cause, it has to show itself, which means it has to be something, and the problem remains unresolved – it was to solve this problem that the god of monotheism had to show himself, in flesh and blood, or only in word, which is what the Jew, the Christian and the Muslim *believe* in. The thing, something, presents itself to the questioner as contrary to logic. This situation, embarrassing for logic, is what opens the door to the essence of logic itself.

In any case, it is clear that logic is the element around which this discussion revolves. It is not just about being impeccably logical; it is about understanding why we need a cause for everything, why the "there is" of things contradicts logic, why "nothing" appears to be the most logical situation. It is about understanding what it means to be logical. It is about understanding how and why logic works. The question that emerges at the end of this discussion of the fundamental question of metaphysics seems to be: what is logic? If logic is at the heart of metaphysics, we still need to understand why and how it works.

We need to go step by step.

What does "nothing" mean?

This is by far the most delicate and decisive question. This is the heart of the problem, the heart of phenomenological metaphysics.

The major question that arises as a prerequisite is: how is this "nothing" to be understood? If it has been possible for us all to agree on the meaning of "something", is it possible for us all to agree on the meaning of "nothing"? Talking about the meaning of "nothing" may seem absurd. And yet, we who use this word, "nothing", must give it a content, a meaning.

Let us understand this: *until we all agree on the meaning of this "nothing", there can be no scientific, or established, answer to the fundamental question of metaphysics.*

A scientifically acceptable – necessarily logical – answer to a question presupposes a possible common understanding of the meaning of the question. Here, we are talking about the common understanding of "nothing", which is necessary for the common understanding of the question. If we show that *there can be no agreement* between all of us on the meaning of the word "nothing" in the context of the fundamental question, we show at the same time that the question has no scientific or logical solution. It does not because the question itself simply does not make sense, scientifically speaking, because it uses an indefinite, indefinable word, because there are as many ways of understanding it as there are ways of understanding "nothing", because we cannot agree

on an established way of understanding the "nothing" of the question. For science, in this case, there is no answer because there is no question, because it is a false question. But is this the case?

The meaning of "nothing" seems clear to everyone. It is given in the dictionary, so all you have to do is look it up and the matter is closed. In the context of this question, the dictionary refers the meaning of "nothing" to "nothingness". Can we agree on the meaning of "nothingness"? Again, in the dictionary, the meaning of "nothingness" in relation to the question is unquestionably this: the radical negation of the totality of what exists, i.e. of all things. We all know how to conceive this radical negation: nothing everywhere, always, to such an extent that time, space, matter, and ourselves disappear.

Yet we see that there are things, time, space, us. This radical "nothing", which obviously does not exist and never will, is therefore purely imaginary, a fantasy, a view of the mind born of an imaginary use of the operation of negation, a use pushed to its extreme limit. There are *obviously* things, in the sense that they show themselves to us in the obvious, that is a given. If there is no "nothing", it is simply because this "nothing" that there is, is purely imaginary, a pure intellectual illusion conceived *from things* by eliminating them through the imaginary operation of negation – imaginary in the sense that the operation takes place in our imagination, and only there. There is no nothing, because there are things that are not imaginary, that are temporal, quite naturally, and consequently there cannot only be the absence of things, which is a purely imaginary thing that presupposes things prior to their negation. The question is irrelevant. It is a false question, or a trivial one. There are *both* things and the imaginary thing that is "nothing". There cannot be just this "nothing» because this "nothing" is a fictitious thing in the midst of things whose origin is always purely temporal, a fictitious thing born, by negation, of temporal things. This is why many of us are surprised that this question can be asked, can be asked at all.

Let us insist. Things are real, in the sense of temporal – they appear in time, in the time of our lives – whereas their absence – or their negation, which is "nothing" – is purely imaginary, a fiction. The question merely points to the difference between what is temporal – things, which appear to us in time – and what is merely fictitious – the negation of things, which we are able to make appear in our imagination from what shows itself temporally. What there is – things – is primitively temporal. The negation of the temporal – "nothing" – is a consequence of temporal things and exists only as a fictitious thing – but as a thing nonetheless, since it shows itself, through our action. To show oneself in the imaginary is always to show oneself. The imaginary, fictitious "nothing" is a thing, it is something.

However, to the questioner, "nothing" seems more logical, more normal, than something. He is astonished by the "there is" of things. According to him, logic would dictate that there should be nothing. On the other hand, "nothing" is purely imaginary, a fantasy, a fictitious thing.

Does the person asking this question have the same understanding of the word "nothing" as the one in the dictionary, the one we all have in principle?

Is there any other way of conceiving of "nothing" than through the radical negation of everything? Isn't there a problem – a problem of logic – in conceiving "nothing" from things, by denying them? If "nothing" has its origin in things, it is not really nothing, it is a consequence of things, resulting from our current use of the negation function: "nothing", a consequence of things, is indeed something, something that shows up in our imagination, something purely imaginary. If, in attempting to solve the logical problem posed by the fact that nothing is something, we conclude that "nothing" must not be conceived of from something, and in particular not from the negation of things, there remains only one other possibility, thus stated:

"Nothing" is seen in itself, independently of anything, it shows itself suddenly, in time, in an instant, in the midst of things and life.

Is this possible?

Even if it were possible for someone who saw this independent "nothing" among us – unbeknownst to all or almost all of us – to show it to those who had not yet seen it, it is not at all certain that this monstration would succeed. For the monstration to succeed, the person who does not see this "nothing" must end up seeing it at the end of the monstration. Let us not forget that science only accepts successful monstrations, on the understanding that they must be successful, in principle, for everyone. The least we can say is that this hypothetical "nothing", which shows itself independently of other things, which is a thing among things, which shows itself without the need to deny things, is not known to science – it would have its definition in the dictionary, a definition that would show it to everyone. The definition just given, considered as the only possible one, seems to science to be purely imaginary, and therefore unacceptable. At first glance, it would appear that there is no such thing as "nothing".

"Nothing" is among us, temporally, unnoticed. It cannot be said to be indiscernible: it eventually makes itself discernible, at least to some of us. It does not make itself noticed, even though it is, itself, the situation that is, for us, by far, the most usual. "Nothing" is so habitual that it does not stand out. "Nothing" is this situation:

"Nothing" is when things and ourselves appear self-evident, and no questions arise for us apart from those relating to our sustenance and the contingencies involved in continuing our life's journey.

Think animality, pure biology.

Someone stands up and says: but are we sure that there isn't "nothing", that the things that appear to us aren't purely illusory, that we ourselves aren't something other than a dream, a vapor, a nothing? In other words, things, us, and nothing are the same thing. There are things, but they are nothing. There is no need to ask why things are the way they are. In other words, the answer to "why" is that there are both things and "nothing", since things and ourselves are nothing.

This answer does not get much press. But isn't life sometimes exciting? Our collective tendency is to quickly dismiss this nihilistic view of things. Because there are noble things to achieve: equality, peace, freedom, health, fraternity, progress for all.

Illusion, the illusion of being, isn't that already unheard of? Isn't it nothing?

What difference can there be between the illusion of being and being itself?

Yet this answer of nihilism is also the natural answer to the question. By "natural answer", we do not mean an answer that comes naturally to us. It is an answer that comes from nature in its entirety, the nature to which we belong; an answer that comes from the totality of being in its natural unfolding, a natural unfolding whose general spirit, as we can analyse it from the inside, is the logos. Logos can be described and thought of by us as a unique logical space with its own mathematical, physical, biological, sociological, and psychological laws. This unspoken natural response to the question translates into a feeling, in the face of things and ourselves, that is called "evidence". Through this response, nature succeeds in making us, as stakeholders and witnesses, forget our difference from "nothing". The question of difference does not even arise. If this question does not arise, it is because everything happens for us as if there were no difference, simply because "nothing" does not let itself be seen. If "nothing" does not let itself be seen, there can be no question of a difference, of our difference, with it; it does not even make sense.

If "nothing" does not let itself be seen, how can we flush it out?

It is flushed out when, all of a sudden, something appears that has never appeared before: something, us. The thing was there, we were there, but the apparition had *always already* taken place, it was there in the obviousness of the "without question", in the continuity of the *déjà-vu*: strictly speaking, there was no apparition. The real apparition, the one that has never happened before, comes as a complete surprise. It appears in the midst of "nothing". This "nothing" is phenomenological: it is seen, in time. This "nothing" is the world, *the world before the instant of the emergence of the thing and of us*. As soon as it is seen, "nothing" disappears – it disappears for oneself, for the one who has seen it, although "nothing" remains in the world, for the world, unbeknownst to the world, it is the world: water does not see water in water. He who sees "nothing" is no longer in the world but sees the world – unheard of – from within Being, with the power of Being's sight, with the truth of Being.

There is no "nothing"! But this unheard-of fact does not raise any questions. It brings an exclamation. There is something, there is us, there is the world, it is unheard of, and the question of its cause does not arise: there can be no answer, there is no question, there is only surprise, only exclamation. No answer proposed to us could reduce the surprise, the exclamation: there is! There is not "nothing"!

Why didn't "nothing" let itself be seen before the unheard-of moment? How could we have been so annihilated when, manifestly and eternally, we are, and things with us and through us?

This is the question of logic, of the essence of logic. Natural annihilation results from the action of logic: it results from time and imagination.

The world, things and ourselves are naturally reduced to nothing. This reduction is first of all not a matter of realizing: it is the goal of annihilation not to realize. Let us call "childhood" the period – immemorial – that precedes the appearance of things and the self. Childhood is the reign of logic. For childhood, if something poses a question, that question must be answered by other things that do not

seem to pose a question. Things, including ourselves, *a priori*, do not raise questions: they are there in the evidence. "Evidence" means unsurprising, normal, foreseen, expected, known.

Where does the evidence come from? It comes from the fact that things, and ourselves, are always already there. Where does this impression of "always already" come from? It comes from time, time without beginning – who remembers his birth? When a question arises in the "always already there" – children ask lots of questions, they want to know – the imagination, our imagination, strives to find an answer – scientific or, if need be, religious, or purely imaginary – that will seem evident. Imagination extends, complements, the work of annihilating time.

Time and imagination are the two forms of logic. Our logic, the logic of our imagination, is what produces evidence from evidence that is *always already* due to the "beginninglessness" of time.

Logic attenuates the violence of Being. Being is precisely the vertiginous leap from "nothing" to something. The unheard-of surprise of Being comes from the fact that, *a priori*, it is "nothing" that there must be. This *a priori* is merely an idea. This idea is at the heart of Being. It is the *a priori* Idea. Logic serves the Idea. Through logic, nothingness itself annihilates at the heart of Being. Logic's annihilation is the origin of the world, of the multiplication of softened instances of seeing, the origin of "us" in the world. Being is the initial gaze, outside time, which goes from "nothing" to something, which makes the leap of contradiction. From the initial gaze to our own, there is all the time in the world, all the time of childhood, all the time of childhood that never begins, all the time that metamorphoses the initial "us" – the mad Being – into "all of us", fond of tranquillity.

Phenomenological "nothing" is indeed something, but something very particular, something exceptional, the singular thing of all. This thing does not show itself to us in logos, nor in nature, and that is why it is not, for all of us in the world, a thing. The whole of nature, including the world and the logos, is a simulation of it, unbeknownst to us: in

other words, we are immersed in it, this thing does not give itself to be seen. This thing shows itself to us temporally only in an instant, the instant of the metaphysical event – it is from this instant onwards that we can speak of meta-physics – and in this single instant it is the world itself, nature, logos. As soon as it is seen, it is immediately contradicted; it is no more than a pure, false idea at the heart of Being, the Idea that drives it mad.

The metaphysical event corresponds to the sudden, unforeseeable, personal suspension of the logical march of time and imagination. In the same instant, this suspension reveals nothingness, its contradiction, Being, the *a priori* Idea, logic, time, physis, childhood, logos, imagination, and the world. In the same instant, immanence and transcendence merge.

"Nothing" is the single, false idea at the heart of Being: it is the ideal logical space. The continuous march of logic ensures that this idea is true.

It is contradicted logic, the contradiction of the *a priori* idea, which provokes the unheard-of surprise of Being. Being itself is pure surprise, pure madness.

This phenomenological analysis has brought us to the essence of logic.

Let us continue.

It's clear that we don't all have, and can't all have, the same conception of "nothing": the purely imaginary "nothing" that arises from the negation of things, the "nothing" of logos and ontotheological metaphysics, is not the phenomenological "nothing" that, as soon as it is seen, gives access to Being and its truth. There is nothing imaginary about the annihilation – not to be confused with negation – effected by the phenomenological "nothing"; it is chronology itself, in motion, and does not allow itself to be seen as such.

To conclude.

"Nothing" has no common meaning other than that of the dictionary. But this purely imaginary meaning, that of the logos and its logic, leads

to the disqualification of the fundamental question of metaphysics, since there are obviously things in time, and not just this nothing which, in our imagination, negates things; this nothing, in all rigour, is a very ordinary fictitious thing, since it is defined from things as being their negation.

Let us be clear: scientifically, logically, the question makes no sense, or at least has no reason to arise, since science knows no other meaning for "nothing" than common sense, since there is obviously something – first temporal, then also imaginary – and not just its negation.

Faced with this question, it appears that we are divided into three groups.

There is the group of those who do not ask the question, because the world, things and themselves seem naturally self-evident to them: pure crystal. For them, the question has no meaning, does not exist. These people are naturally protected from the violence of Being: the annihilation effected by logic – by time and imagination – plays its role perfectly.

Then there is the group of people who ask the question why something rather than nothing, and accept the traditional answer: God, or the first principle, in other words, *causa sui*. These are the followers of the traditional ontotheological metaphysics. Among them are those whose first principle is logic itself – understood as the logic of our imagination, the logic of language, formal logic, mathematical logic. In this case, the first principle is not explicitly posited as such, but is *a priori*. In this case, logic, which is trying to answer the question, says it does not have to answer, since, for it, the question is ultimately meaningless, there are obviously things, including their imaginary negation, which is "nothing" – and we are back to the case of the first group.

Finally, there is the group of those who don't ask the question because they know – because they see – that this question cannot be answered; these are the ones who are definitively surprised by things, surprised by "not nothing", surprised to be; those who have seen "nothing" temporally, for the space of an instant, and never leave that instant;

those who have a battle to fight, one that leads to the free reception of the world and the biological body, of the gift that logic gives us from Being, from the miracle of being. This gift may be deemed superfluous or tempting – recall Rimbaud's dread of being taken back into the womb of the world, into nothingness, into childhood, into what, in retrospect, he calls "ennui".

§29.- If all that is seen is true, what is false?

Where does the false come from? When do we say that something – therefore true, real – is false? In this text, we have already said that a certain proposition is false. It is the one that expresses the Idea *a priori*, and which reads: "There is nothing." The initial, the Being, arises – an eternal arising, out of time –, contradicting the Idea within it. The proposition that states the Idea *a priori* is false!

Only the proposition, as hypothesis or assertion, can show something that we can say, by abuse of language, is false. It is false because it contradicts this other proposition, which is its negation. Why is it its negation that is true, and not the negation of this negation, i.e. itself? Who decides whether a proposition is true or false? Answer: time, and time alone.

What does it mean for a proposition to be false? It means that the thing it shows – the thing that appears in our imagination when we listen to what the proposition says – is contradicted by time. In this case, what time shows, independently of our imagination, contradicts what imagination proposes: what imagination proposes, its proposition, is false. Time decides what is true and what is false, what is real and what is unreal, and it always does so with regard to a proposition – a hypothesis or an assertion – made by one of us. It always decides on the subject of a thing – real, true, since all things are by definition so – that shows itself in our imaginary world through the intermediary of a proposition. Time sends into the false, into error, into fantasy, into falsehood, into fiction, that which shows itself only in our imagination, that is, the purely imaginary. This is as true in the case of scientific truth

as it is in the more general case of phenomenological truth – more general, since phenomenology includes science, phenomenological truth includes scientific truth. This is shown in the following paragraph.

§30.- The true and false of phenomenology.

The true and false of science.

Science considers as true only what is shown by time alone, independently of the imagination. The purpose of the experimental set-up is to force time to pronounce on the validity of a hypothesis. If phenomenology also considers as true what is shown by the imagination, it sets the purely imaginary apart: it sets it apart, because it is the origin of that misdirection which is belief. The difference between scientific truth and phenomenological truth lies not in this nuance concerning the treatment of the purely imaginary, but essentially elsewhere. Where is it?

Time shows phenomenological truth something that science does not see, even though imagination is not involved. Science does not see it because there is no experimental set-up that forces time to pronounce, for all to see, on the validity of the proposition that shows this something and that phenomenology considers to be temporally true. Time – which decides on the scientific truth and falsity of our propositions, which decides on our true *propositional things* in the scientific sense of the word "true" – can have a specific behaviour in us that science does not recognize, which constitutes the birth act of phenomenology, its condition of possibility. This is the key point, the point of *difference*.

There is a fundamental temporal circumstance – a purely temporal event – that eludes science and eludes it definitively: science will never recognize the scientific truth of the phenomenological proposition that describes this circumstance. This circumstance – *the sudden and individual suspension of the logical effect of time* – recognized as temporally true by phenomenology and rejected as belief by science, means that phenomenology cannot be a science. Phenomenology

knows that science will always regard the event of the suspension of the logical effect of time as an illusion, a belief.

Let us continue.

Phenomenology sets apart from propositional "truth", sets apart from "true" phenomenological knowledge, that which comes only from the imagination: the pure imaginary. The pure imaginary includes both the hypothesis that is contradicted by temporal experience and the thesis that clearly cannot and never will be justified by temporal experience. The pure imaginary is seen, shows itself. It is therefore phenomenologically true, real. Yet phenomenology must set it apart. By misuse of language, but also to make things clear, when phenomenology says that a phenomenon is not phenomenological, it means that it is purely imaginary: time does not show it, either in its logical continuity without beginning, or by the rupture of this continuity, by the rupture of its logical effect.

Phenomenology sets the purely imaginary apart because it is a domain of truth that contains all the dangers, all our misdirection. As long as the pure imaginary is thought of as what it is – a speculation conscious of being only a speculation, a fantasy – it remains inoffensive and of interest as stimulating gymnastics for the mind, or as a dream, a recreation of the spirit. The danger comes with belief. Belief consists in taking a purely imaginary truth as temporally verified, as true in the sense of science, and acting accordingly.

What phenomenology not only sets aside, but rejects, within the purely imaginary, is belief. In the world, belief – whether religious or ideological, or a mistake made by science – makes us act against temporal truth. The actions commanded by belief are "real" in the sense that science gives to the word "real". They are real, and we must take them into account temporally, sociologically, politically, and culturally.

The phenomenological falsehood is more restricted than that of science. Science rejects as "false" not only belief, but also the harmless purely imaginary – which phenomenology simply sets *aside*.

As for phenomenological metaphysics – the truth arising from the metaphysical event, from the suspension of the logical effect of time, the truth of Being –, science and philosophy internal to logos reject its expression as nonsense. When this expression relates to what common truth sees, to what science sees, to what philosophy internal to logos sees, a borderline case is reached. As shown in §14, the true propositions of the translogos are generally comprehensible by common truth, by science – they make sense – but remain undecidable for them: neither true nor false; neither demonstrable nor refutable.

§31.- The scandal.

The scandal for common truth, for science, for childhood, is the supposedly purely temporal circumstance on which phenomenology is founded. It is scandalous for childhood because childhood does not see it temporally, and above all because phenomenology tells it that it *cannot* see it. It is scandalous because, presented by phenomenology as an individual grace, it is felt by childhood as an injustice and by science as a fad. Science, which rigorously expresses what the common truth sees, the unique truth of childhood, rejects it as an illusion, a belief.

The expression of the particular temporal circumstance that founds phenomenology is seen by science – and more generally by logos – as purely imaginary, and even as a belief, since phenomenology insists that the event in question is purely temporal. Phenomenology can show science, through its discourse, the pure temporality of the event, but science will never see it, the monstration will never succeed. Why not? Because the difference between the initial "us" and "all of us" – the consequence of the temporal event on which phenomenology is based – is not only invisible to science, but also unbearable. This difference appears to science and logos – in particular to the "human sciences", to philosophy internal to logos – as a scandal, as an affront to democracy and justice, if not as a hallucination.

How does phenomenology describe this purely temporal circumstance, the one that causes scandal? It says:

Suddenly, the evidence – that of things, of oneself, of the world, the evidence of being – that had always prevailed, disappears. It gives way to shock, total surprise, the surprise of being there, the madness of Being.

Expressed in this way, soberly and precisely, the metaphysical event seems, at first glance, to be no more than the exaggeration of something banal. All of us, at various times in our lives, experience this sense of the mystery of being, which can merge with our wonder at nature and its unfathomable complexity, its beauty, its implacable law, a law in which we are caught up. This feeling is amplified by our inability to know everything about nature, and even, ultimately, by the realization that we know nothing about it. This common feeling is accompanied by the question of meaning, of the meaning of life, and then by anguish in the face of death and its nothingness: a set of questions that constitute *the religious feeling*, the one at the origin of religions. Religions come as an answer, an answer now already given to a feeling that precedes it in the history of mankind.

The question of the one who arises in Being is quite different from those that nourish religious sentiment. Being, unlike human being, asks no questions: it is, and it is crazy, it is without reason, it is contrary to Reason, it is violent, it is eternal. Whereas the man who emerges into Being through the intermediary of time asks himself this question: what happened so that during all this time, up to this moment, everything appeared to me in evidence, including myself, as if nothing had happened? This is the question of phenomenology, the question it answers, and the question that science has absolutely no intention of answering because it ignores it, because it cannot understand it as a question.

The scandal is that, for some of us, appearing has suddenly changed, the evidence of what shows itself has given way to absolute surprise, in particular the absolute surprise of being, Being. It is out of the question

for these people to say that others are wrong, or at fault. The others are in childhood – we all begin by being in childhood. If they are in childhood, it is either because they have never left it, or because they have been taken back by it. Only in the latter case can there be any question, in all phenomenological rigor, of fault. Indeed, he or her who is taken back by childhood, who succumbs to the temptations of the world after having had full knowledge of it, can be considered at fault "in front of Being".

In Book IV, Chapter I of his *Treatise on Despair*, Kierkegaard insists on this condition of sin: "In front of God". To have faith, to be a Christian, is, for him, what "accessing the truth of Being" is for phenomenology. "In front of Being" becomes "in front of God". The scandal, according to Kierkegaard, is the same as that raised by phenomenology for the common truth. In the appendix to this first chapter of Book IV, Kierkegaard writes:

"How often has it been said that we are scandalized by Christianity because of its gloom, its austerity, etc., is it not time at last to explain that, if men are scandalized by it, it is basically because it is too high, it is because its measure is not that of man, of which it wants to make an extraordinary being, which man can no longer understand."

Appearance, the different forms of appearance, the appearance of appearance, is the subject of phenomenology.

Science rejects anything purely imaginary and, even more so, all belief. Phenomenology rejects all belief. However, science, which represents "all of us", will say that the foundation of phenomenology – the one that makes the difference with it, the difference between "us" and "all of us" – is a belief. There is no way out of this situation. Phenomenology knows this and assumes it. It knows that it cannot be a science. It includes, in its truth, phenomenological metaphysics, which cannot be a science, which is a knowledge that is not, and never will be, accessible to "all of us". Phenomenological truth is broader than

scientific truth, which science will never recognize. This broader truth *is also given by time*, not by imagination. This is the fundamental point, the object of scandal. Time, by its suspension, by the annulment of its logical effect – this is the meta-physical event – restores us to the initial truth, to the truth of Being, it restores us to the initial, unique "us", outside time. It is time, through its continuous, beginningless march, which metamorphoses the initial "us" into "all of us". And it is time, through the suspension of its logical effect, that returns us to the initial – each of us in his own time. Time, as logic, produces the truth that is ours. This truth of ours is primarily a common one, into which we are all thrown: it is the truth produced in us by the march of time, continuous and without beginning. With this truth, everything appears to us in evidence, in the "always already" seen. Our imagination, which mimics what time shows us, analogously enlarges the field of our vision: this enlarged vision needs to be verified by time to be effective, to be scientifically "real". Like time, we have no beginning, we are here "naturally", we have no memory of our own coming into the world. The fundamental event of a life – the authentic beginning, the birth – occurs when the production of evidence is suddenly suspended. It is then the initial truth, untouched by any logical work, which becomes ours.

The work of time is cosmology, biology, sociology, psychology, it is subjectivity, it is life, it is the world, it is the language that says what we all see intersubjectively, it is imagination, it is logos, it is science. Then, for this or that one of us, each of us at his or her own time, time no longer acts, evidence disappears, logic is halted in its tracks.

In all cases, it is time that presides over our truth. Access to the truth of Being is in no way imaginary; it is not produced within the march of time by a purely human analogical extension, by an illusion; it is produced by the cessation of the logical effect of time, it is a purely temporal event. This temporal fact, however perfectly described, is not transmitted, but remains individual. Either we experience its shock – its trauma – or we have not yet, and it remains inconceivable. It cannot therefore be a fact that science recognizes, even though, like all

scientific facts, it is purely temporal. It lacks transmissibility, it lacks community, it lacks belonging to "all of us".

§32.- There is no history of Being other than that which is repeated in every human life.

Why is time, for living beings, the sole dispenser of truth, whether logical truth or initial, counter-logical truth? Because time, as logic, is, in Being, at the service of an ideal. This ideal – nothingness, Reason – at the heart of Being, is precisely what Being contradicts. Only nothingness is rational – it is the ideal, limpid, absolutely simple logical space – and the rational is *a priori*, it is the only pure, *a priori* idea at the heart of Being. Being contradicts its idea, its ideal. In this sense, it is pure madness. Seen from the point of view of the human-being – who accesses the truth of Being and knows time – Being is timeless, eternal, without History. History only exists in and through time. There is no history except that of the human being.

When, in the gaze of the living, the soothing logical effect of time ceases, then emerges the violence of Being, the initial appearance, eternal and without reason. This is what happened to Hölderlin, who wrote to his friend Böhlendorff in 1802:

"The violent element, the fire of the sky and the appeasement of the people, their life in nature, and their restraint and contentment, this has constantly seized me, and as is repeated of heroes, I can say that Apollo has struck me."

The letter ends as follows:

"..., the fact that all the sacred places of the earth are together around one place and the philosophical light around my window is now my joy, may I keep in mind how I came, so far! My dear! I don't think we're going to comment on the poets until our time, but that in general it's the mode of singing that will take on another character, and that

we don't take over for the reason that it's we who, since the Greeks, are beginning again to sing in a native and natural way, properly in an original way."

Heidegger was sensitive to the content of this letter, so much so that he claims to be himself, through his own song, the continuator of the song of his Swabian compatriot Hölderlin.

There is no other story of Being than this one, the one that unfolds within a man's life, the one that begins with childhood. Being itself is seen by the human being as without History, as eternal madness.

There is no "historiality of being". Heidegger's concept of historiality is not phenomenological, it is a matter of belief. It is the source of all Heidegger's philosophical, phenomenological, and political misdirections. The "mutation of human-being" is internal to the life of each and every one of us, always and forever: for all of us, there will always be childhood, followed by authentic, individual birth, each one born at his or her own time. The world, the world of us all, remains forever in childhood. Its history, the history of men in the world, the history recounted by historiography, is that of childhood. The power of sight of politics – politics understood as the art of living together in the world – is and remains that of logos, that of common truth, that of childhood. The truth of Being, though accessed by the human-being, has no effect on the world, on the politics still to be made, still at work.

The "Ereignis", which, according to Heidegger and his *Beiträge zur philosophie*, prepares for a decision to be taken by the people, a definitive mutation of all men, could only be the advent of a new religion, a new religious Middle Ages, a new spiritual and cultural era. Only this initial interpretation of "Ereignis" as a sudden, individual shock that jolts people awake is phenomenological. This primary interpretation of the word "Ereignis" – which in its everyday sense means "event" – is something quite different from the imaginary transition period that leads people to make a decision. According to Heidegger, this transition, the "Ereignis" as described in *Beiträge zur*

philosophie, is brought about by those who, like Hölderlin or himself, have truly experienced the event – the initial meaning of "Ereignis". However, and this is where Heidegger – unlike Hölderlin – is at fault phenomenologically, they can do nothing for the people, except lead them to a new belief, a new religion, as Paul of Tarsus did – relayed, it is true, by the emperor Constantine.

Another phenomenological error committed by Heidegger is that those who, like Hölderlin and himself, prepare the transition, are necessarily German! The "other beginning" will be German, just as the "first beginning" was Greek. These considerations follow on from Heidegger's main error, that of believing in the "historiality" of being, in the "destiny-history of being", in the "Ereignis" as man's mutation to come – whereas the mutation in question is already here. The German – and, more specifically, the Swabian – is said to carry within him the mutation to come! For example, in *Reflexions XIV* (one of the Black Notebooks), page [171], Heidegger writes:

"In two centuries' time, the first Germans may awaken, letting that which has long been held in reserve come to them, by being that which is coming. We, the thinkers of transition, must prepare these first and few."

Heidegger has changed the meaning of the event to that of a preparation, led by a few of us, for the "other beginning", the one that will make Man – by which he means all men, "all of us" – come to the truth of Being. In this preparation, "the intervention of the returning gods", "the replica between gods and men", "the dispute between Earth and the world", "the God in the extreme", if they lead to the greatest confusion, at least have the merit of confirming that this can only be the birth of a new religion. The truth of Being can only have an impact on the world through the intermediary of a new religion that it succeeds in arousing. The religion in question, as in the case of Paul of Tarsus, will have little to do with the truth of Being: faith, the ordinary faith of the

believer who hopes in eternity because preaching promises it, does not replace the initial view. The so-called "great mystics", such as Master Eckhart, Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Pascal, Kierkegaard, Simone Weil, all had access to this initial view, which was also that of Paul of Tarsus. The difference between this mysticism and phenomenological truth is that, for the latter, there is no question of the all-powerful, infinitely good God, creator of everything and of himself, but of Being, absolutely surprised by itself. The great mystics, culturally raised in religion and its theology, equated the metaphysical event with the encounter with God. Phenomenology has nothing to do with theology.

The world is the metamorphosis, always in progress, of Being into nothingness by logic, by time, by imagination, by Reason. The metamorphosis will never be complete. If logic is always at work, it is because there is still, and always will be, some Being in life: movement, turbulence, residual violence, madness, charm, suffering, resurgence, the incomprehensible, the irrational – everything that gives rise to religious feeling, the need for hope and religion.

Life is the gift that logic gives to Being through man. This gift is received by human-being at the end of a struggle for conciliation between Being and beings, between the truth of Being and the truth of the biological body, the common truth, the truth expressed by logos. Free conciliation is also free from the cessation of the Body and its life, deemed superfluous. The instant is enough.

§33.- Appearance according to the *other* phenomenology compared to appearance according to Husserlian phenomenology.

The *other* phenomenology distinguishes between phenomena according to their mode of appearance. What it detects, studies, and delivers to us are the diverse ways in which phenomena, including ourselves, appear to us. The same thing seen – pointed to by a word whose common meaning is given by logos, i.e. by the common truth and the mode of appearance that is proper to it – is seen differently

according to the way in which it appears, according to the gaze that sees it. Each way of seeing or appearing corresponds to a particular truth – the word "truth" here has nothing to do with "true" and "false", scientific, or phenomenological, but means "power of sight" or "visual field".

Logic plays a fundamental role in the way phenomena appear. Logic is primarily time, and it is also imagination, mimicking the way time shows us things. Time shows us things in three diverse ways:

1- Time shows through the "always already" – the generator of evidence – that its continuous, beginningless march imprints on us, a march in which we are all first caught up, like all living things.

2- Time shows through the complement to its continuous, beginningless march that our imagination operates in parallel, mimicking it.

3- Time shows through the individual suspension of the logical effect of its continuous, beginningless march, through the rupture of the continuity of this effect in us, through the disappearance of the evidence imprinted in us by its "always already".

Ordinary appearance, that of "all of us", tends to confuse cases 1 and 2 in the same appearance – that of evidence. Within ordinary appearances, it is science that distinguishes between purely temporal appearances and imaginary appearances, and it is science that distinguishes between ordinary subjective appearances and ordinary objective appearances. Within science, scientific truth distinguishes between that which shows itself in a *totally stable* way – mathesis, the theme of mathematical science – and that which shows itself in a *simply stable* way – physis, of which mathesis is a particular domain. The difference between "totally stable" and "simply stable" will be shown in §49 and §50 of section II. The diverse ways of appearing that are

internal to common truth will be shown, phenomenologically, in section II.

For us, there are only phenomena. Whatever appears to us, however "it" appears to us, is a phenomenon. Since we can say exactly the same thing about the thing – there are only things – the two words "phenomena" and "things" are considered here as strictly synonymous: things or phenomena are what there is for us, in other words what, for at least one of us, is seen, perceived, conceived, felt, thought of, named or nameable, i.e. exists. Whenever we speak of "seeing" here, it is a generic word for "seeing" as well as "perceiving", "feeling", "sensing", "thinking", "conceiving". We ourselves are things or phenomena. We are part of those particular things – which constitute the living – to which things appear, which have a view, a power of seeing, in other words, a truth. In physis, in time, appearing symmetrically brings into play the "showing oneself" of the thing and the "seeing" of those who have a gaze, the "seeing" of the living, the "seeing" of those for whom there are things, stable and multiple.

The first, initial phenomenon is sight, is seeing, indissociable from "showing oneself". Sight sees itself seeing. The study of the single phenomenon of sight, of the diverse ways in which sight sees and sees itself, provides the essence of phenomenology, of the *other* phenomenology.

This brief reminder is intended as a comparison with Husserlian phenomenology and its treatment of the phenomenon of appearing.

Among things, there is appearing itself in the ordinary, common sense of the word "appear", the sense given to it by common truth. This common, ordinary thing, the appearance of things, is what Husserlian phenomenology is interested in. But appearing does not have the same meaning according to the way in which appearing appears to us. This is the central point of phenomenology – of the *other* phenomenology – and the reason why it cannot be a science in the strict sense of "the science of nature", in the sense of science, which demands that the phenomena it studies appear to us all, that is, that we are all equally

capable of seeing them as soon as they are experimentally given to us to see – in the scientific, and therefore common, sense of experience, of experimentation. For science, there is only one appearance, that of all of us, the one that makes things appear to us in evidence, the one that Husserl analyses, the only one he recognizes. The difference between the two fundamental ways in which appearances appear to us – between case 1 and case 3 – is also the difference between "all of us" and the initial "us" – the difference that causes a scandal. Reaching the initial "us" is the event of a lifetime.

Back to Husserl.

Isn't it precisely how things appear to us that Husserl's phenomenology analyses? Yes, Husserl analyses how and, ultimately, why phenomena appear, without distinguishing between different modes of appearing.

According to Husserl (*Ideen*, no. 81), the answer to the "why" lies in God's gift to us: it is God who makes things and the world evident to us. A God about whom the question "Why God, where does he come from?" vanishes into *causa sui*.

According to Husserl, the "how" takes its general answer from the path and successive metamorphoses of the divine gift within the human body, up to the concept, to the phenomenon as it appears to us in everyday life. This approach, whose bias is obvious – it is clearly in line with ontotheological metaphysics, and is very popular with theologians and, more generally, with religious philosophers – is not interested in the diverse ways in which things appear to us, in the theme proper to the "other" phenomenology. It is concerned solely with the transfer of appearances from the initial divine gift to the superficial, terminal biological layers of our senses and understanding. In §21 above, it was shown that Husserl's ideal, the Eidos, was the apodictic evidence with which things are shown. The initial divine gift is thus that of evidence, of the limpidity of the monstration of the world and things to us all. The divine gift is thus what, for the other phenomenology, is the gift that logic – time – makes to Being through the intermediary of human-

being, a gift that results from the annihilation, or "reasoning", that nothingness – the *a priori* idea, inseparable from Being – effects in Being.

In the *Ideen*, Husserl conducts the transfer of appearing in the opposite direction. He starts from the everydayness of common seeing and, after many delicate twists and turns, many *epochés*, arrives at the initial divine gift. He proceeds by successive reductions of the properly human, biological faculties, until, as "the residue of the annihilation of the world", he retains only "pure, anonymous consciousness and pure, originally giving intuition", until he shows the initial appearance as a gift from God. Husserl *believes* he is making this reverse transfer, and *believes* he can draw us into this belief, which, in his view, far from being a belief, is the fruit of a science, the highest of sciences.

With phenomenology – the other – it is not the biological and psychological mechanism of appearing from the so-called initial gift that's in question, it's the different types of appearing, the different ways things appear to us, including that of the initial appearing – the appearing of appearing – since we have access to it. This unprecedented access is certainly what distinguishes Man from other living beings. The initial appearance emerges in the course of life, at its own time – a different time for each of us. This access is the major phenomenon, the "experience par excellence", it is Being, Being merging with access: Being is only access, only emergence, only birth, a birth synonymous with eternity, an eternity that has nothing to do with the continuous march of time, with duration.

The initial, the initial appearance, Being, has no explanation, it is the initial phenomenon, beyond any background, beyond time, unheard of, the phenomenon absolutely surprised by itself, the absolute – the in-itself – finding its only description here. There can be no question of *causa sui*.

Phenomenology does not seek an explanation for Being, for itself, for appearance; it knows that there is none, that there can be none, because *we see that there can be none*. This view is Being itself, the madness of

being. How do we see it, how does it appear to us? This question is the first to be answered by phenomenology. It is precisely this answer that makes it impossible for it to be a science in the sense that science defines itself: science studies phenomena that we can all observe, that we can all experience at the same time.

If phenomenology says why it cannot be a science, science itself is part of its discourse. Science is one of our fields of truth, one of our ways of seeing: science is phenomenological. The other field of truth is the metaphysical field: that of phenomenological metaphysics. Phenomenological metaphysics knows common truth, knows logos, knows science, and its discourse on them is translogos.

Science and metaphysics are the two discourses of phenomenology, corresponding to the two fundamental ways of appearing. Science corresponds to logical appearances – "natural" appearances – that generate common truths, that make us see things in evidence. Metaphysics corresponds to the initial, counter-logical appearance – that which arises, in the human-being, from the contradiction between the ideal logical space, unique and *a priori*, and the logical space of the world, physis, oneself, now seen as an absolutely surprising thing, a thing now emerging from the "nothing" in which it was held by the time that worked to make it the ideal logical space.

The effect of the absolute surprise of the initial appearance, of the appearance of Being to itself, is violent. The words "absolute", "surprise", "violent" are very ordinary, commonly used words. While they seem perfectly appropriate here, they cannot convey the idea of the intensity in question. Why say "surprise" if not because what emerges is unexpected, unforeseen, unpredictable, crazy? This surprise has nothing to do with the ordinary surprise, the one that, in the end, always finds its cause, its explanation, scientifically, experimentally, the one that always ends up being reclaimed by the obvious. The same word, "surprise", says two different things depending on whether it is said by the truth of Being or by common truth. Here, however, the word "surprise" is essential. Let us see why it does. *It imposes itself in*

relation to the place from which we suddenly emerge, in the instant of our initial appearance. This place is the world before, the world left behind, now seen as the place of the evidence, now seen as nothingness. We emerge from nothingness, from a simulacrum of nothingness, from nothingness now seen as a thing is seen, since the world from which we emerge is its figure.

The question then becomes: what has made the world and ourselves the nothingness itself, now contradicted? The answer is obvious: it is time, time without beginning, the beginningless continuity of time. This beginningless continuity produces the "déjà vu" of things, their evidence. Complementing the work of time is our imagination, mimicking time's way of showing us things, which is also in continuous motion, a process parallel to time. Time and imagination constitute logic. *Our* logic, the logic of our imagination – whether we call it formal logic, predicate logic, mathematical logic, or analogical logic – stems from the more fundamental, primordial logic of time.

Where were we before we had access to the initial appearance, to the appearance of the appearance? By abysmal difference, we were in the world, in a place where everything that appears is expected, *always already* seen, ordinary, normal. What is normal? Where does it come from? It seems to have no origin in time; it has always been there; we cannot date it. Who produces this "déjà vu" effect? It is time, the time that has no beginning and makes all appearances obvious, because they have always already appeared. The beginning of time can only be the fruit of our imagination. The time of childhood cannot be seen to begin, except in the human imagination.

In life, the daily appearance of living things in general does not raise any questions. It just appears, and this appearance is natural, normal. It is inconceivable that it should not be, so the question does not arise at first. Things are there very naturally, as we ourselves are, we who see them, as is our view of things, as is everything that shows itself to us.

How does this everyday appearance – which is primarily that of all of us, and which is first and foremost, in a lifetime, the only appearance –

relate to the initial appearance, to Being? This is what the *other* phenomenology studies and shows. It does not do this in the same way as Husserl, and its conclusions are quite different, even though it also gives a key role to the pure, *a priori* Idea. For Husserl, this Idea is apodictic truth, *Eidos*, apodicticity understood as *the absolute necessity of the existence of things and their evidence*. Compared to the other phenomenology, Husserl sees logic in reverse. Instead of being what, in the service of the ideal, transforms for us the initial surprise – Being, there is! – into evidence, it is, for him, the consequence of the initial evidence of things, evidence that must, in all circumstances, be restored by logic.

Throughout his work, Husserl presents himself as a very ordinary nihilist. And this despite having lived through the metaphysical event. His work, in the wake of this event, consisted in erasing its effect, in outbidding the natural work of annihilation. The ordinary nihilist is unable to see himself as such: Husserl saw himself as an idealist and a believer, and even as a God-watcher. Instead of being an objective, the objective of logic, evidence is for him the primary essence of things, an essence that must be preserved. But if there is a first essence, it is the idea of nothingness – the logical ideal – and this idea is false: Being contradicts it. Being is the contradiction of the *a priori* Idea within it, hence its absolute surprise, which, phenomenologically, is also ours.

In the course of a man's life, in an instant, the logical effect is suddenly suspended, the obvious disappears, the initial surprise is restored and, with it, the madness of Being. Husserl, the laborious author of the *Logical Investigations*, failed to think time, failed to think evidence and, ultimately, failed to think logic.

Logic works in the service of the false idea, the idea of nothingness. Who among us does not aspire to peace, to normality, to the absence of any problem apart from the problems we create for ourselves and make a point of solving, for fun, for pleasure, for entertainment, for passion? Being, as contradiction, is abysmal surprise, absolute violence, madness, intransquillity. In Being, logic tends to restore calm, peace,

neutrality, normality, the evidence of what shows itself. Normal is basically "nothing". "Evident" is to be understood as "devoid of surprise", as "expected", as "normal".

How does logic go about installing the evidence in Being? How has it installed it in all of us? In us, the evidence is generated by habit. In the eyes of living beings – who are what logic transforms Being into – things have "always already" been there. This "always already" is the effect of time, time without beginning. Only Being begins. Being is beginning, birth, eternal birth, eternal birth because it is outside time. In Being, time, in the service of the idea of nothingness, erases the effect of birth and the violence associated with it. Here, the words "beginning", "birth", "surprise", do not have their ordinary meaning: ordinarily, all our beginnings, all our births, are expected, predictable, datable in time, and all our surprises are relative.

It is given to Man to begin: it is the event of a lifetime.

In this passage from the unheard-of initial to the ordinary of our lives, there is no need, as Husserl does, to go through the formation of the view of things inside the human body, in successive layers. This passage is made by time, time without beginning. Time is the source of cosmology, biology, and psychology. The course and formation of the evident view of things, inside the human body, is a subject that certainly interests science, medical science in particular. In a man's life, if there is a passage, it takes place in the opposite direction, from the ordinary to the initial. It is a brutal, sudden event, a shock, a trauma. Husserl, who lived through this shock, metamorphoses it, in his *Ideen*, into a long series of discursive meanders whose logic, from one meander to the next, is dubious. The course of the meanderings leads back to the initial divine gift. What he does not realize is that he is attempting to do the work of time in reverse, a work that has neither beginning nor end.

Husserl's phenomenology is his self-therapy, his personal way of overcoming shock. He believes he has overcome it, and he passes on his method to us – a method which, by its outcome, has seduced

theologians and believers alike. But it is not a question of overcoming it. It is insurmountable, and the question does not even arise.

The question facing the human-being who has reached the truth of Being is that of consent to live, that of reconciling the truth of Being and the truth of the body, in the time that remains to live.

§34.- Meaning of words and meaning of things.

Phenomenological definition of meaning.

Logical meaning, chronological meaning, eidological meaning, purely temporal meaning, purely imaginary meaning, subjective meaning, counter-logical meaning.

Ordinary and extraordinary meanings of words.

What is meaning? Meaning is always the meaning of something. What, for phenomenology, is the meaning of something?

We must first distinguish the meaning of words, the meaning of expressions, the meaning of language formulas, the meaning of propositions, from the meaning of the things they represent or say.

The meaning of a word, the meaning of a proposition, is the thing they represent, that they show, in our imagination. A language formula that shows something in our imagination is a proposition. Otherwise, it is an empty formula.

Our language, the logos, is born of the association of a word or proposition with a thing seen. At the origin of the "thing/word" association, there is a common agreement. Language exists only through the existence of a common truth: we are convinced that we all see the same things. The thing to which we associate a word or a proposition that says it is, in principle, a thing seen by us all. Words, propositions, and discourse constitute logos, the expression of common truth.

The fact that we all see the same things is due first to time, then to intersubjectivity.

Primitive language was formed from the things that time shows to us all. Phenomenology calls these things, shown to us all by time,

chronothings. The primitive association of a word with a chronothing is made through the intermediary of the index finger pointed at the thing seen, while the word, sounded, is pronounced so that everyone around hears it and associates it, in their memory, with the thing. Together, these chronothings constitute the *chronologos*.

The primitive logos is the chronologos.

The meaning of common things is primarily *chronological*: it is time that shows them to us, that imposes them on us all as a matter of course.

Words – first aural, then written – represent things in our imagination. All we have to do is say the word, and the thing presents itself to our imagination, to the imagination of us all.

From chronologos, imagination generates *eidologos*. The eidologos is the whole of what shows itself to us all by imaginary analogical extension of the initially chronological meaning. The eidologos first derives, by analogy, from the chronologos, then it also derives from itself, recursively. *Eidological* monstration points to an *eidothing*. The typical eidothing is the *proposition*. Every proposition shows something in the common imagination. The logic at work in analogical extension is *our* logic. Our logic acts parallel to time, mimicking time. The more faithful our logic is to time – the more faithfully it conforms to what time shows us, while at the same time anticipating it – the more rigorous it is. What a proposition shows, an eidothing, is not necessarily a chronothing but can be; it is primarily a hypothesis or a fiction.

Logos is the union of chronologos and eidologos.

Our common understanding is based on what time shows us, and on our imagination.

Common truth attributes two different meanings to things, depending on the logical origin of the monstration that makes them appear to us: common things are either purely temporal – chronological – or imaginary – eidological. Imaginary – eidological – things, after verification by time – experimental verification – are either *purely temporal* or *purely imaginary*.

The meaning of the thing the word represents is always and above all the meaning given to it by common truth. In other words, everyone gives words and things the same meaning, a meaning that is either chronological or eidological, a meaning that is, in all cases, logical.

In addition to this logical, chronological or eidological meaning, the common truth attributes to things a *subjective* meaning, a meaning that depends on the subjective way in which it is felt: this meaning is linked to the intimate affect that each of us associates with the thing. The subjective meaning of a thing is the particular way in which the subject – the living gaze – feels or sees it. This sense can be, for example, repulsion, or on the contrary, attraction, or even indifference.

The most fundamental subjective sense, the one that unites all living species, is the *vital* sense. According to this sense, a thing is vital. In other words, it is necessary for survival. If there is a set of basic things for us, we can say that *the basic things* are those that we all recognize as vital. Apart from the human species, animals seem to give only one subjective meaning to things, the vital one – whether it is to feed, protect or reproduce. The other subjective meanings we humans give to things are derived from the vital sense. Apart from the vital sense, man gives things many other subjective senses: aesthetic, ethical, playful, affective, comic, tragic, scientific, artistic, political, amorous.

In the ordinary world, the predominant meaning is subjective. In the ordinary world, it is almost exclusively subjective. The logical sense is so obvious that it's usually overlooked; unless it's a question of debating truth or falsehood; unless it's a question of science, of scientific truth; unless it's a question of whether the thing is chronological – purely temporal – or eidological and purely imaginary.

Science takes no account of subjective meaning – it remains objective – and considers as "true" only that which is shown by time alone – the chronologos –, thus eliminating the purely imaginary. Scientific hypotheses are initially imaginary – eidological – before being classified, after verification, as purely temporal or purely imaginary.

Phenomenology would thus be finished with the meaning of things, if human-being did not have access to a completely different truth than common truth: metaphysical truth, the truth of Being.

However, for phenomenology, whatever the truth in question, the meaning of a word or proposition is always the thing associated with it by common truth, the thing of the logos, chronological or eidological, seen objectively or subjectively. The other truth taken into consideration by phenomenology – the truth of Being, counter-logical – sees the things of the logos, the same things, in a completely different way: instead of seeing them in evidence, it sees them in absolute surprise. Certain formulas of language are not propositions for common truth: they are empty of meaning. They can be propositions for the truth of Being; in this case, they are metaphysical propositions; their meaning is not logical, it is counter-logical.

Phenomenologically, the meaning of a thing depends on how it is seen. To give a thing its meaning is to say how it is seen, to say the truth in which it is engaged. Basically, every thing is engaged by the human being in two different truths:

1- Common truth – or logical truth, or ordinary truth. The meaning of a thing is that given to it by the logos, i.e. by the dictionary, through the word that represents it. Within common truth, we distinguish between scientific truth and imaginary truth. Within scientific truth, we distinguish, in particular, mathematical truth, physical truth and historical truth.

2- The truth of Being – or counter-logical truth, or extraordinary truth, or metaphysical truth. Everything seen through this lens has the same meaning: that of absolute surprise.

For phenomenology, everything fundamentally has two meanings: a logical meaning (a purely temporal or imaginary logical meaning, which is then declined according to the different subjective meanings,

depending on the intimate way in which it is experienced) and a counter-logical meaning. The logical sense is the ordinary sense of things, that of all of us, given in the evidence. The counter-logical meaning of things is their extraordinary meaning, with ordinary evidence giving way to surprise, the surprise of "not nothing!".

Words take on the meaning of the things they represent and, depending on the context, must be understood either logically – ordinarily – or counter-logically – extraordinarily. The words "ordinary" and "extraordinary" are to be understood here in their counter-logical sense, not in their ordinary or logical sense.

Translogos and *translogical discourse* were introduced above in §12, and again in §13, 14, 15. *Translogos* is the description of common truth by the truth of Being. Only the truth of Being can speak of the *ordinary* or *extraordinary* meaning of words. Indeed, for the common truth, there is only one meaning of words, it ignores their extraordinary meaning, and any proposition of phenomenological metaphysics will be considered by it as meaningless. The object of *translogos*, the field of vision on which it focuses, is the ordinary. It is the ordinary seen from the truth of Being. The ordinary seen and said from the truth of Being – the *translogos* – differs from the ordinary seen and said from itself – the *logos*. *Translogos* has more hindsight – an indescribable hindsight – than science, which has only the hindsight of the purely temporal objectivity of experimental set-up. In other words, the objectivity of *translogos* is superior to that of science, which is nevertheless the most objective and rigorous of the *logos*.

The two fundamental truths, common truth, and metaphysical truth are thus joined by *translogical truth*, which is metaphysical truth applied to the observation of common truth. The description resulting from this observation is the *translogos*. The words of the *translogos* have the same meaning as the words of the *logos*, with the difference that the logic that gives this meaning starts from further back, from the origin: this logic includes time. In other words, *translogos* is an "improved" *logos*, brought from further away, seen from elsewhere,

more "objective". In its description of common truth and its logos, of their origin, translogos also necessarily uses words in their counter-logical sense – so that translogos encroaches on properly metaphysical discourse, and phenomenology speaks, indistinctly, of the *counter-logical* or *translogical sense* of words. Common truth's understanding of translogos is therefore problematic. If the vast majority of words used by the translogos are to be read in their ordinary sense, the properly translogical propositions cannot be demonstrated true by science. Common truth manages to make sense of most translogical texts but can find no way to validate them scientifically.

The propositions of phenomenology – which juggle with the ordinary and extraordinary meanings of words – are often meaningless to those of us who know no other meaning than the common, ordinary, logical one. These empty propositions are those of metaphysical truth, those that involve our ordinary things in both their logical and counter-logical senses.

The ordinary subject of sight is "all of us", who give the word its primary meaning, that of the logos thing it represents. The extraordinary subject of sight is the initial "us", the impersonal, unique, mad in-itself. Given these two fundamentally diverse ways of seeing, which nevertheless use the same words to express themselves, how can we recognize the truth that speaks in a text? Is it the ordinary, logical truth, is it the extraordinary, counter-logical truth, or is it the translogical truth? What meaning should we give to the text? A *logical*, ordinary, common meaning, a *counter-logical*, extraordinary, metaphysical meaning, or a *translogical* meaning?

The phenomenological method consists in first reading the text as if it emanated from common truth. If, read by the common truth, the text presents no difficulties of meaning, we must admit that this is how it should be read. If, on the other hand, the common truth fails to make sense of it, we must attempt a second reading, giving certain words not their ordinary meaning, but their extraordinary meaning – by implication, giving the things these words represent their extraordinary

meaning. If the text takes on its full meaning here, this is how it should be read. Of course, we cannot exclude the case of the text which, however it is read, makes no sense at all.

Not everyone has the actual ability to reread the text and change the meaning of certain words. The condition for doing so is access to the truth of Being, i.e. to the counter-logical view of things. Anyone who fails to meet this condition will conclude that the text is meaningless. A famous example of this is the statement: "Das Nichts selbst nichtet"¹⁵, translated as "It is nothingness itself that annihilates". Heidegger's phrase makes no sense to Carnap¹⁶, to the members of the Vienna Circle, or to the proponents of analytic philosophy. Yet Heidegger's sentence says nothing less than the essence of logic, the logic that reigns over common truth and is the sacrosanct, unthought-of guide of analytic philosophy.

It is possible for phenomenology to develop a method of analysis that can decide whether a text is logical, counter-logical, translogical or meaningless. The other meaning of words, the extraordinary meaning added to their ordinary meaning, is always the same: it is always the same thing. This thing is the contradiction of "nothing", the absolute surprise, the beginning, the birth, the exclamation, the madness. No thing, however, is less extraordinary than another. The extraordinary is everywhere, it is the closest. It is so close, so habitual, that we do not see it. What prevents us from seeing it is the ongoing logical process, time, and imagination. The use of words that explicitly say contradiction, or surprise, or beginning, or birth, or madness, or their opposite, such as ennui, continuity, habit, nothing, nothingness, childhood, are a strong incentive to read the text in its metaphysical sense. Phenomenology calls all these words that evoke, in one way or another, birth or its opposite, boredom, "counter-logical grammatical signs". If a text has no logical meaning, the presence in it of at least one

¹⁵ Cf. Heidegger, *What is Metaphysics?*, lecture given in 1929.

¹⁶ Cf. Rudolph Carnap, *The overcoming of metaphysics through the logical analysis of language*, 1932.

counter-logical grammatical sign may suffice to give it a metaphysical meaning.

The reading of a translogical text – such as *Being and Time*, as shown in §15 – is a special case. Common truth manages to make sense of the text and may even find it illuminating. However, science can neither confirm nor deny what it says. As shown in §14, the text seems scientifically true, but science does not know where the logic behind this truth comes from.

**§35.- To say, whatever we say, we only have the words of the logos.
Why does not metaphysics create new words?**

For all of us, things are identified by words. The words of logos represent the things seen by the common truth, i.e. the things visible and recognizable, intersubjectively, by us all. Our dictionary gives a universally understandable definition for each of them. Each word is defined by a series of other words whose meaning is assumed to be known. The dictionary's need to define words by other words shows us that words define each other in a circle. On the other hand, it suggests the existence of a list of *basic things* – things that are undoubtedly vital to the species – and therefore of a list of *basic words*, words that are actually known to everyone, words that could do without definition and that can be used to define others, all the others. Such a construction of language, from a list of basic words, would mean that logos is built, recursively, from what is vital to us.

Why are there no words other than those of the logos, those of the dictionary? How can metaphysics say something that doesn't fit into the common truth, that doesn't already have a word for it?

Strangely enough, this problem does not arise. The truth of Being, spoken by the human-being, needs no new words to express itself. It uses only the words in the dictionary, everyone's words, and does not create new ones. However, it does use everyone's words to make propositions that have no meaning for the common truth. The words used make sense, but the proposition they form is only a proposition for

metaphysical truth. If, for example, someone says: "I see with the truth of Being", every word of this formula of language is known to all, but this formula is a proposition, has a meaning, shows something, only for those who also see with the truth of Being and know that this is how this truth is called, and also for those who know that the expression "truth of Being" has been given a meaning, a definition – which they do not grasp –, by some of us, those who say they see with the truth of Being. Thus, philosophers speak of "ontological difference", or "the difference between Being and beings", although many of them do not see this difference, have only heard of it.

Some words, when spoken by metaphysical truth, do not always have the meaning our dictionary gives them. This is particularly true of the words "truth" and "being", as well as "nothingness". Why use words that are already familiar to everyone, but give them a different meaning that not everyone can understand? Why not create new words, the words of metaphysics?

The explanation – which will not be one for everyone – is that everything is a thing seen. All things result from the sight that sees them. What essentially matters in a thing is the way it is seen. The only thing that can be said to be the thing-in-itself is sight itself, surprised at seeing, outside of time; this sight, surprised at itself, is Being; it contradicts nothingness. In time, there are only things dependent on the sight of the living, things and the sight of the living being jointly generated by time – this is another way of stating the Kant's *supreme principle of all synthetic judgments*. Finally, the question is reversed, and becomes: why are these words, "truth", "being", "nothingness" – which are used to designate the in-itself accessible by human-being, which are words peculiar to metaphysics –, words known to everyone, and therefore corresponding to things seen by us all, things that are logical, evident things, words that our dictionary defines?

Let us develop this explanation. We must start from childhood, which is our common origin in time. The view that we all share is the initial view annihilated by nothingness, i.e. by the *a priori* Idea through the

intermediary of time. It is nothingness that, starting from Being and by means of time, presides over ordinary things, those of everyone. As soon as the logical effect of nothingness ceases, the ordinary thing does not disappear into human-being, it is still there, but it becomes extraordinary, it contradicts "nothing" as does Being, it joins Being, it joins the in-itself, the initial. Every common thing is the annihilated Being, and every common thing is restored to the initial Being as soon as the logical effect is suspended. The difference between the common thing – annihilated – and the same thing seen from the nothingness it contradicts – the same thing therefore said by the same word – is the same as the difference between beings and Being. The common truth is the annihilated truth of Being. In both cases, it is about the same thing, about the truth, about the power of seeing, but seen differently – seen with, or without, the intervention of the logical effect of time.

We would not see the ordinary, and we could not talk about it, if it were all there was. The trap to avoid is imagining that what is juxtaposed with the ordinary, while opposing it, is what we ordinarily call extraordinary.

However, the word "extraordinary" is indeed the one which says the place from which the ordinary is revealed to our eyes. Of course, this ordinary is not the one which is opposed, in common parlance, to what is commonly referred to as "extraordinary".

So, there are two meanings of the word "ordinary", just as there are two meanings of the word "extraordinary"?

All words have two meanings! They have an ordinary meaning, the one we all know and find in the dictionary, and an extraordinary meaning, to which we are given access one day. The only exception to this rule is the word "nothing" and its synonyms, such as "void" and "boredom". This word does have two meanings, like all other words, but its second, metaphysical, meaning is not extraordinary in the extraordinary sense of the word. Indeed, the metaphysical meaning of "nothing" cannot be counter-logical, extraordinary, since "nothing" is itself the origin of logic, being the ideal logical space. The second

meaning of the word "nothing" is this: the pure, *a priori* Idea. This idea is the Idea that gives rise to the ordinary, the Idea that serves as a model for the ordinary, the Idea that, through its logical work, is the origin of the world, of logos, of evidence, of common truth. The metaphysical sense of the word "nothing" is that of the "ideal ordinary", in the extraordinary sense of the word "ordinary".

How does this ideally ordinary metaphysical "nothing" relate to the ordinary "nothing", to the radical negation of everything?

Metaphysical "nothing" is the *a priori* idea of Being, of which Being is the contradiction. Ordinary "nothing" is also an idea, an idea that arises in everyone's imagination and does not hold our attention, since we all see that there is no "nothing", that this "nothing" is only imaginary. The idea of ordinary "nothing" is immediately contradicted. The situations seem identical, the two "nothings" seem to derive from the same definition. What is the difference? On the ordinary side, the contradiction is obvious: there are things. On the metaphysical side, it is an absolute surprise: there is! Such a surprise – such a violence – that it has had to be erased by time, by logic, by that simulacrum of ideal logical space, of "nothing", which is the world.

For each of us, the ordinary is the time that precedes the event of access to the extraordinary. This event is necessary for the ordinary to appear.

Let us call this time of the ordinary "childhood".

Let us call this event "birth".

Of course, this childhood and this birth are not childhood and birth in the ordinary sense of the words. It takes this event, the birth, to bring out the extraordinary meaning of things, and therefore of words, to bring out the ordinary and the extraordinary.

Prior to this event, the ordinary is that unique, beginningless space within which things have always been self-evident to us all. Without beginning, that is without birth. All the beginnings and births in this space – and God knows there are many! – are ordinary beginnings and births. Ordinary, i.e. logical, ideally logical, without surprise.

§36.- The proposition and its meaning.

The meaning of a proposition is the thing that, necessarily, in order to be a proposition, it shows us. A proposition may not be a proposition for "all of us". To some of us, a proposition may seem meaningless: it shows them nothing, it is just a well-formed formula of language.

The proposition – language – is the means we have at our disposal to show others something, to make visible something we see. However, this "giving to see" is not, strictly speaking, a donation; it only gives to see what it shows to those who already see it – or who are already capable of seeing it. This thing that the proposition shows has, like all things, a phenomenological meaning – logical or counter-logical – and a subjective meaning. On the other hand, it has a truth value: it is either true or false. This truth value is attributed by both science and phenomenology. If it is a proposition whose meaning "we all" understand, it is science – and therefore also phenomenology, since it includes scientific truth – that decides its truth value. If it is a proposition that only makes sense to some of us, it is phenomenology alone that can decide on its truth value. A proposition can be phenomenologically true or false, even though it makes no sense to science or common sense. Thus, when Heidegger, in his lecture "*What is metaphysics?*", says that "Being itself is *finite* in its essence", this statement makes no sense for science and is, on the other hand, a phenomenological error. Being, outside time, cannot be characterized in this way. Being does not need human-being to be. Being has no reason to be. The reason for Being is not human-being's access to Being. It is not because the human-being has access to Being that this access is necessary to Being. Being is, without reason, contrary to all Reason. We, all of us, are annihilated Being. How can the truth of Being, accessed by Heidegger, deceive itself? Because what is finite is not the essence of Being, but the human faculty of constantly, over time, holding on to this access. There are failures. Heidegger – or any of us – is not spared.

Since phenomenological truth includes scientific truth, we need to distinguish that area of phenomenological truth that science is unable to recognize. This domain is that of metaphysical truth – the metaphysics in question being phenomenological metaphysics, founded on the metaphysical event, founded on access to the truth of Being.

What the proposition shows, it shows in our imagination, using words. Ordinarily, we all see the thing it shows as soon as we hear what it says. For example, if someone says, "The sun is blue", everyone imagines, and therefore sees, the sun as blue, irrespective of the scientific truth of this blueness. There are also propositions that some of us – even most of us – doubt are actually propositions at all. According to them, they show nothing, they are empty of meaning.

The meaning of a proposition is the thing it shows – not to be confused with the meaning of the thing it shows. By definition, a proposition is a well-formed formula in language that shows something. A problem arises – a problem that divides us – with those propositions that are not propositions for everyone, that only make sense to some of us. For example, if someone says, after Heidegger, that "It is nothingness itself that annihilates", great minds will rise up to say that this sentence makes no sense. It is the logical analysis of language that reveals to them that this sentence cannot make sense. The whole question here, which no science is able to answer, is that of the essence of logic, an essence which is expressed precisely by this sentence which, for *our* logic, has no meaning. But it does make sense for logic, for the integral logic that includes time and our logic. This is the difference between Science and Phenomenology. Phenomenology considers *at least one* phenomenon that science cannot recognize as such, because it cannot see it: phenomenology calls this phenomenon "birth". Science recognizes as phenomena only those that are seen by all of us.

Everything is true because it is seen. When, by abuse of language, we speak of a "false thing", we mean a thing shown by a false proposition. The proposition is said to be "false" because the thing it shows is not validated by time; time does not show it, only the imagination does. It

is time that determines the phenomenological – scientific or metaphysical – truth value of a proposition. If it is experience in the scientific sense – the experimental set-up, visible to us all – that decides the truth value of something said by a proposition, then the proposition is a scientific hypothesis and belongs to the common truth, to the logos. If it is the "experience par excellence", the metaphysical experience, the one that corresponds to the sudden cessation of the logical effect of time, that decides this truth value, then the proposition belongs to metaphysical truth. Phenomenological truth is thus divided into scientific truth and metaphysical truth. In all cases, it is time that decides what is true or false.

Phenomenological truth includes scientific truth, imaginary truth, and metaphysical truth. Scientific truth and imaginary truth belong to all of us and are expressed by logos. Metaphysical truth is that of the initial "us" and is only potentially that of all of us. When metaphysical truth speaks of all of us, of common truth, of logos, its discourse is translogos.

No human discourse – whether scientific, metaphysical, or phenomenological – is immune to error. This is well known!

§37.- The four "incomprehensible statements" that describe metaphysical truth.

Metaphysical truth describes itself through four assertions that science accepts as incomprehensible. In addition to the three fundamental statements of phenomenological metaphysics, there is the principle that founds experimental science, a principle that only metaphysical truth can see, and which founds science without science stating it: this is *the generalized principle of contradiction*, the principle that says that time is never wrong, that the coherence of what it shows to the eyes of the living is total. Although this principle is the *a priori* of science, or rather because of this fact, science does not enunciate it, it cannot enunciate it; it is phenomenology that enunciates it for science.

These four assertions are propositions that are phenomenologically, metaphysically, temporally, seen to be true, and there is no better demonstration of the phenomenological truth of something than its purely temporal view, even if the latter, in this case, arises through the suspension of the logical effect of time. These propositions – with the exception of the generalized principle of contradiction, which is a translogical statement, therefore comprehensible "at the limit"¹⁷ by science – are meaningless for science, for common truth, for logos.

The four "incomprehensible assertions" of phenomenological metaphysics can be stated as follows:

1) It is nothingness itself that annihilates – Heidegger (1929, *What is metaphysics?*).

2) Nothingness annihilates by means of logic.

Logic is time, complemented in us by imagination.

3) Metaphysical truth, that which states the fundamental assertions of phenomenology, is not transferable. For the common truth, what it says makes no sense.

Each person accesses this truth in his or her own time, alone and independently of others. Access corresponds to the sudden cessation of the logical effect of time. Before access, every proposition that emanates from metaphysical truth is meaningless. Another way of putting it is: the expression of the truth of Being does not give birth. Birth, here, is access to the truth of Being.

¹⁷ Let us remember that a translogical discourse is a discourse arising from the truth of Being and which speaks of what the common truth sees. As shown in §14, this discourse is a "borderline" discourse for science in the sense that it is undecidable for it: it cannot demonstrate either the truth or the falsity.

4) The translogical principle on which scientific research is based, *the generalized principle of contradiction*, can be stated as follows:

In the course of its continuous and beginningless logical march, what time shows to living beings is coherent.

It is always possible for experimental science to show or demonstrate this coherence, however complex this monstration may be, and whatever the date, in the history of the universe, of the thing shown. For example, the further we advance in time, the more events and signs emerge from the distant past and are offered to our observation: coherence is always preserved. The possibility of demonstrating the coherence of everything we see scientifically is the generalized principle of contradiction.

In other words, in the eyes of living beings, time is never wrong, it never contradicts itself, and it is always possible for human science to demonstrate this. If many events seem to be the result of chance – the famous contingency – this chance is relative: any event occurring in time respects the overall coherence of what is happening and never constitutes a contradiction, as science can always verify. For us, time is implacably logical.

Aristotle's principle of contradiction, which states that *it is not possible for a proposition and its negation to be true at the same time*, underpins *our* logic. The generalized principle of contradiction underpins science and its research. It founds science without science knowing. Phenomenology enunciates this principle for science. The metaphysical assertion that states the fundamental principle of science is a translogical principle.

Phenomenological metaphysics – the *other* metaphysics, the one that differs from ontotheological metaphysics – or, simply, metaphysics, is the discourse free of all *a priori*, except the *a priori* Idea that Being contradicts. It knows the Idea, but it is not free of it, since it is itself

born of the view of the realization of the Idea that is physis, that is the world. It is born of the contradiction of the Idea, since as soon as the realization of the Idea is seen, it is immediately contradicted, and this contradiction is its very sight, that of Being, the truth of Being. Phenomenological metaphysics is the discourse of the truth of Being.

Phenomenology, born of phenomenological metaphysics and its truth, comprises not only the discourse of phenomenological metaphysics itself – the counter-logical discourse – but also the discourse of metaphysics on common truth – the translogical discourse – and also the discourse of common truth on itself, the logos – the logical discourse – a logical discourse that is subdivided into scientific and purely imaginary discourses.

Section II

Phenomenology of Common Truth

CHAPTER I

Introduction to the translogical truth of common truth

§38.- Common truth and its two phenomenological descriptions: logos and translogos.

Logos is the discourse of common truth, which says what it sees. It includes science. It also includes the discourse resulting from the reflection of common truth on itself and on its logos, *the philosophy internal to logos*, to which analytic philosophy and ontotheological metaphysics belong.

Translogos is the discourse of the truth of Being on common truth and on what common truth sees and says, on logos. This discourse can only come from the human-being who accesses the truth of Being.

In both these discourses, what is at stake is common truth, the truth that phenomenology describes as *the truth of childhood*, in the sense in which it understands the word "childhood": childhood is that continuous, beginningless time that precedes the individual moment of access to the truth of Being.

Among the living, what characterizes man is his capacity to access, in the course of his life, a mode of appearing other than logical appearing: this other mode is the mode of appearing proper to the truth of Being. When this mode of appearing, accessed by human-being, recalls the logical mode of appearing – that of man's childhood, the one expressed by logos – then what it says about the appearing of the logical mode of appearing and its expression is *translogos*. *Translogos* is the expression,

proper to human-being, of the truth of Being when this truth relates to what the common truth, the logos, sees and says.

We need to explain the choice of these words, "translogic" and "translogos", and their construction. If logos is the discourse that says what the logical mode of appearing sees, that of common truth, why call "translogos" the discourse of the truth of Being on logos? Why the prefix "trans"?

This other mode of appearing, which is the mode of the truth of Being, accessed by human-being, sees the logical mode of appearing and what it shows us all. It sees it because it is the mode of childhood, of childhood that has been lived as such and kept in the memory of the Body of childhood: it remembers it, it knows how to play it, knowing that it was played by it in childhood. As a result, it knows how to describe this logical mode in its entirety – with all its ins and outs – because it sees it objectively, with its view from a point outside physis, outside childhood. This view – or truth – is called "translogical" because, in order to see childhood as it is lived, to see the world as it is, it makes the leap – over contradiction, over Being itself, the same leap made by the beginningless time of childhood – from a logical space – the ideal logical space, nothingness, outside time – to another logical space – the logical space of childhood, caught up in continuous, beginningless time, which tends towards the ideal logical space, but which is always moving towards this ideal space, a movement aided by science, by the imagination. Passing from one logical space to another, the view is *translogical* – in the same way that an airplane flight is said to be *transcontinental*. In this passage, translogical truth takes the place of time – it sees the work in which time engages, and remakes, in an instant, what time has always done: continuous, beginningless time erases the initial contradiction and gives the living gaze the evidence of itself and of what it sees.

Translogical truth is that of the human-being who gains access to the truth of Being when this truth focuses on common truth and what it says. It sees the work of time and carries it out in its place. It sees how

Being is transformed by nothingness into a living, multiplied gaze that sees things, including itself, in evidence, and expresses this common view through logos.

The expression of the translogical truth proper to human-being is the translogos. The translogos describes the logos by observing it from the ideal logical space, while immediately making the unheard-of leap that erases contradiction, the leap from "nothing" to the thing, from "nothing" to physis, to the world. This leap, which erases contradiction, is "naturally" made by beginningless time. This contradiction is Being, the unheard-of truth of Being.

In man's infancy, the logical mode of appearing describes what it sees, and it also describes himself, self-referentially. The self-description of the logical mode of appearing is the science and philosophy internal to logos. The whole of description, in all its forms, is the logos.

Science is part of the logos, its most rigorous, most logical expression, most faithful to what time shows to the living eye. Science considers as "true" only what time shows us.

The self-referential, circular description that is logos is limited: common truth knows neither where it starts from, if not from itself, nor where it is going and why. However far it goes, it always returns to its starting point, to the same observations, the same questions. These unknowns, which it questions, and which distress it, are left to its imagination. This questioning and the anguish it generates, particularly in relation to finitude and death, is what phenomenology calls "pure religious feeling". From the earliest times of man, the imagination of common truth has responded to pure religious sentiment through religion, through religious belief: it gives an answer, an answer that gives hope, the hope of eternity. In relation to this need for hope, religious belief is replaced both by ideological belief and, more simply or more radically, by total subordination to logic, to Reason. Logic – Reason – is the last bastion, the last god.

Phenomenology knows logos. It considers logos to be one of its discourses. Logos is phenomenological because it says what appears to

all of us, in time. Phenomenology, in presenting the logos, also presents the truth that produces it: it is the truth of man's infancy, it is the common truth, that of "all of us", it is the initial truth metamorphosed by logical action, by time and imagination, in the service of nothingness.

Phenomenology, when it describes logical appearance from the truth of Being, sees the limits of logos and goes beyond them, *while remaining within logical appearance*: it steps back from the explicit axioms of our sciences, from the principles of our philosophies internal to logos, it proposes other axioms, other principles, more general, it widens the field of logical truth since it sees where its logos starts from and where it's going, its direction. The logic used by phenomenology to discuss our logical appearance is broader than *our* logic: it includes time. As a field of truth, translogos is broader than logos, although it is always the field of common, logical truth that it sees.

Phenomenology thus has two diverse ways of describing each of our sciences – including the internal philosophy of logos, which generally sees itself as a science, the science of science:

– the common way, that of man's childhood, which produces a discourse that belongs to the logos. This description is familiar to us all: we need only refer to our textbooks, novels, dictionaries, and encyclopaedias. It is the one handed down to us by our parents, the one we learn at school and university, and which is passed down from generation to generation, trying to be ever more faithful, complete, and imaginative in relation to what time shows us,

– the translogical way, which completes the logical way and says what the logos and its science cannot say, being caught up in the course of logic without knowing what logic is in its entirety. The logic of translogical discourse is the integral logic, the one that includes time and imagination, while the logic of

logos is only that of our imagination, made up of formal logic and analogical logic.

It is on the phenomenological difference between these two ways of describing the same thing – common truth and what it sees, the truth of man's childhood – that we will now focus. This is the *quasi-scientific* contribution of phenomenology to science. "Quasi" because science, on principle, will never accept this contribution: it is impossible for it to recognize its validity. Nonetheless, it is "scientific" because, as we saw in §14 of Section I, science is also unable to demonstrate its falsity. Beyond this double incapacity, it can only recognize the permanence of this situation. The leap it would make, by adopting, without seeing them scientifically, these other axioms proposed by phenomenology, is however out of all proportion to the abyssal leap that separates beings from Being, common truth from the truth of Being.

§39.- What common truth says about what it sees: logos.

There is no need to describe it here. We all know it. It is what we learn in childhood, at school, at university, and what we use throughout our lives, whether as students, professionals, or private individuals. You are referred here to textbooks on vocabulary, grammar, mathematics, natural science, geography, history, physics, biology, medicine, geology, psychology, sociology, law, morality, political science, aesthetics, literature, etc. Included in this "etc." are novels and philosophy, all the philosophy known and catalogued by the planetary academic institution.

But isn't there a philosophy other than the philosophy internal to logos? Yes, certainly, but the academic establishment does not distinguish between what comes from common truth and what comes from the truth of Being. It is on this point alone that phenomenology must insist.

There is indeed a literature – which does not necessarily present itself as philosophical – that presents a truth other than the common truth. In

§27, section I, we quote a number of well-known authors who show a power of view other than that of philosophy internal to logos. These authors have one thing in common: they all allude to an event – the sudden sight of nothingness – that turned their lives upside down, radically changing their truth. This literature is also taught. It is taught because it comes from authors whom the university recognizes as great writers. It is the university that consecrates "great authors". Where does this detection come from if it does not explicitly originate from the difference in truth? Quite apart from the authors' own erudition, which alone may be sufficient, it comes above all from the strangeness of what they say and the aesthetics that emerge from it. This strangeness is made up of a mysterious aura projected onto their work by the truth from which it emanates. We see a novelty in their style, but also and above all a novelty in the polemics they engage in. Against what, against whom? This is where hermeneutics – theses, commentaries, exegesis – comes into its own. All this explanatory academic activity around the work tends to reintegrate it into the logos, to trivialize it, to make it fit into a historiographical, biographical, psychological, anthropological, ultimately normalized path. A path that is ultimately commonplace, even though it remains said that this path is "out of the ordinary". This "out of the ordinary" is a variation on the common, just as the extraordinary is a variation on the ordinary. Precisely, what the work stands up against is this ongoing trivialization, from which it knows it cannot escape. The polemic it engages in is directed against logos, against the world as it is, against "reasoning", against annihilation.

University teaching of what the truth of Being tells us does not present it as coming from a truth that is not the truth of all of us, that is only *potentially* the truth of all of us, that is not *currently* the truth of all of us. How can we transmit what cannot be transmitted? We – the university – can only make it known to everyone. To "know" is not to "understand". The inevitable hermeneutic work of recuperation is part of this process.

Who is to say that the understanding of the text studied is conditioned by the metaphysical event? Authentic – as opposed to academic – discovery of this literature and its truth can only be personal. This literature is waiting for us. It is waiting for us to be ready to see what it shows us, so that it can help us in the fight ahead, in the fight that has already become our own. This is how it plays its ethical role.

In matters of philosophy as in science, the university does not leave the logos – it cannot do so, since the transmission of knowledge, knowledge as "having seen", for which it is responsible, is impossible as soon as this knowledge is outside the logos. The teaching institution knows only logos, ignores the existence of another saying, emanating from another truth.

Heidegger's lectures, although their strangeness may have aroused great interest, were generally not understood by the students who attended them. It is certainly easier to approach Heidegger through the courses that are given, all over the world, on his courses, his lectures, his writings. In these courses, trivialization is the order of the day.

How can you teach Rimbaud, Kafka, Pessoa? Yet they are taught; certainly not as thinkers or philosophers, but rather as poets, original, strange writers. It is literature that is simply more beautiful, new, and strange than any other.

Hegel's philosophy, complex as it is, based on Reason, is self-explanatory. Dialectically, it always falls back on its presuppositions. It is the pinnacle of philosophy internal to logos. In accordance with the logos, it says that at the beginning is the end, that being and nothingness are the same thing, that it is time, becoming, that joins the two ends, confuses them, and keeps us in this circle.

Driven by imagination, logos expands and becomes more complex. Analytical philosophy, born in the twentieth century, has as its implicit principle not to leave the logos, and as its avowed aim to purify it through the logical analysis to which it subjects it. The result of this analysis is the rejection into nonsense of everything that does not seem to make logical sense, everything that defies the evidence. What is

preserved as meaning contributes to the extension of the same from the same: a circular ratiocination. Analytical work consists in evacuating all contradictions. But contradictions always arise. There are always objections to contradictions that have supposedly been resolved. So, we have to get back to work. The spectacle offered is that of the endless search for the absolutely limpid discourse, evident from beginning to end, that of an attempt to achieve the logical ideal. In this philosophy, every departure comes back on itself, provided that it remains logical in its course. Any breakthrough is illusory, and the illusion is lifted when one of the analysts shows that the discourse contains a contradiction, an aporia, and that we must start again. Consensus on total limpidity is never reached, except by saying "It's raining" when, in fact, it is starting to rain. The spectacle offered is pure boredom since there is no result and there cannot be.

To ward off boredom, science fiction, metaphysical fiction, metaphysical-scientific-fiction are all the rage: we invent *possible worlds* by imagining different variations on the logic of our imagination. It is always a question of imaginary extension of what already exists for all of us. This extension has no limits; it goes on to infinity, and infinity is what dreams are made of.

Numerical infinities, large cardinals, so-called "inaccessible" cardinals derived from the generic extensions of axiomatic set theory, are typical examples of this imaginary extension of logos. Generally speaking, infinity is the paradigm of the extensional power of logos, often confused with a form of access to eternity, to divinity. This power is merely that of the imaginary, continuous, endless extension of the same, of the same that is *always already* given to us, definitively, by time.

§40.- What translogical truth says about common truth and logos: the translogos.

Translogos describes how metaphysical truth sees our common truth and its expression, logos. Since common truth can be broken down into

scientific truth and imaginary truth, we are talking about how metaphysics sees our sciences – logic, mathematics, physics, biology, politics, humanities, etc. – our imaginary productions – literary, philosophical, mathematical, ideological – and the beliefs that result from these imaginary productions.

In this description, a large place will be given to mathematical science. Mathematical science has not yet clearly identified its own natural theme. It does not precisely know its relationship to mathesis, since mathesis is not itself clearly identified by common truth. Metaphysical truth sees mathesis not as an absolute – as the in-itself of the realists or of Platonism – but as the immutable foundation, in physis, of the truth of the living. Remember that, for phenomenology, physis is what logic – time – has made of Being in the gaze of the living, whereas mathesis is, in physis, the *completed* work of time, and therefore the best representation of nothingness – here, the success of the work of annihilation accomplished by time is total, definitive. It remains to identify this mathesis precisely, to name the things it contains and that we all see, always – this is one of the contributions of phenomenology. It will be shown that mathesis is a totally stable structure, and that this structure is the common thingness. It will be shown that, in external space, the elements of this structure are mathematical sets, the same sets defined by axiomatic set theory. It will be shown that numbers, our familiar numbers, are those of mathematical sets that are purely temporal and not purely imaginary. Numbers are the only things in common truth that are both purely temporal and totally stable.

Beyond mathesis, the fixed, inert structure of physis, time and imagination continue the logical work of nothingness in Being. Symmetrically, or dialectically, this work shows what remains of Being in physis, in life, in us. This work, always in progress, manifests itself to us through movement, through change.

In Being, mathesis is the achievement of nothingness offered up to the gaze of the living; mathesis is the inert foundation of physis. Movement, on the other hand, is the trace, in this same gaze, of what

remains of Being in beings, a movement for which science – "in the terrible evenings of study" – seeks the unique, total, and definitive law¹⁸.

The following chapters describe the different truths internal to the common truth, and the phenomenological reductions that enable us to move from one truth to another.

In all cases, the aim is to show how and in what way translogical truth broadens the scope of these different components of common truth. It is about showing the contribution of metaphysical truth – objective because external – to common truth – self-referential, subjective. The aim is to show that metaphysical truth sees differently, more widely, what common truth sees. This "other" view being logical, integrally logical – and therefore including the work of time, its departure, and its goal – science must not be able to refute what is shown here. The translogical view shows the limits of common truth, of its logos, of its science, and, at the same time, its power of infinite imaginary extension, its power of infinite dilution of what remains of Being in life.

¹⁸ It is in this sense that Rimbaud's poem *Movement* should be read and reread – a movement which, like the youthful couple isolated on the ark, is that "ancient savagery we forgive".

CHAPTER II

The translogical truth of time

Translogical truth of our logic

§41.- Translogical truth of time.

Physis and mathesis.

Logos, understood as the expression of common truth, talks a lot about time. Yet, deep down, it knows nothing about it. For it, time is essentially the succession of past, present and future. Logos time is confused with dating and duration, with the measurement of time. Having realized the relativity of time measurement, modern physical science now replaces the variable "time" in its equations with the variable "entropy". Time or entropy, it is always a question of measuring what passes, of movement, of change, of the regularity of change, of the measurement of change.

Time is not a theme of science. Strictly speaking, there is no science of time, only a science of its measurement and the relativity of this measurement. Let us just say that time – that which passes, that which causes "things to change", time or entropy – is implicitly considered by science as the fundamental, primary, indisputable, and therefore necessary, datum: time is implicitly considered as the in-itself. Beyond this given, this necessary container – this train that transports us at a speed that seems constant – time is still considered by science, by

philosophy, by logos, as an enigma. We are left with the same contradiction that Saint Augustine expressed so well in his *Confessions*¹⁹:

"What then is time? If no one asks me, I know; but if I am asked and want to explain it, I no longer know."

When it comes to the relationship between logos and time, phenomenology sees that logos is caught up in time, in logic, and that, as the expression of the truth of "all of us", it cannot escape it. The logos knows it is caught up in the movement from past to future. Caught up in it, it sees it in its own way, not as the model of its own logic. For him, time is what passes, and what he says about what happens in passing time is science.

Metaphysical truth knows what time is because it sees it. Metaphysical truth knows that what we call "time" is the manifestation within us of the annihilation, always in progress, of Being. Armed with this metaphysical knowledge, what can translogical truth bring to our science?

The annihilation of Being consists, for the ideal of pure Reason – nothingness – in transforming the absolute surprise of the "There is!" of the truth of Being into the evidence of everything that shows itself to the truth of living eyes, into the evidence of the things that there are for all of us. The initial, dazzling view of a single thing that shows itself, in absolute surprise, Being, is transformed into multiple views of obvious things. It is this transformation, always in progress, that phenomenology describes as the work of logic, a logic that manifests itself in us through time and imagination. The logic of time seeks out for us, and delivers to us, the evidence of what shows itself, while the logic of our imagination propagates this evidence. "Evident" means "without surprise", "foreseen", "expected". Physis presents itself to us as "the eternal return of the same", as déjà vu all over again. Another

¹⁹ [Book eleven, chapter XIV.](#)

way of saying "the same" is "the stable". Stability refers more to time than sameness. "Stable" implies "stable in time". Time passes, things change, but ultimately nothing changes: changes are regular, predictable, foreseen, physis is globally stable, identical to itself. Science strives to ensure that all the changes we see are predictable, foreseeable and within the law. In our view, things are stable and, intersubjectively, the same for all of us. How could we identify them, give them a name, if they were not both stable and the same for all of us?

From a single, mad thing that merges with its own sight, Being, time has made a multitude of stable things, seen in evidence by a multitude of isomorphic and ever-renewed gazes – renewed through procreation and finitude (Eros and Thanatos). Procreation and finitude make childhood eternal.

Time and science continue their work, as we all know. So not everything is definitively stabilized. Total stability, total inertia, would mean the definitive victory of logic and nothingness: with total stability, time would have finished its work and would no longer need to exist. Total stability is nothingness. But metaphysical truth knows – because it sees – that total stability is out of reach, because nothingness is contradicted, because it is madness that there is, because it is absolute surprise that there is. Time continues its work and will never cease its search for the coherence of everything that appears to the living eye. Science will always follow in its footsteps. Our imagination will always continue to invent new things from those it already knows. Time and science must always strive to ensure that changes, movements, are coherent, that they fit into a law that makes them predictable, foreseen, expected. This ever-renewed continuity of time, imagination and science is life. Renewal is the fact of infancy, the fact that infancy follows infancy, the fact of the finitude of living things and their constant intention to perpetuate themselves.

In physis, the stability of things is relative, since things move, change, and die. However, they move within a fixed framework, a framework

that serves as a reference point for change – enabling it to be measured – and from which the overall coherence of these changes can be apprehended. Logos and science know this framework. They know it because it is, unbeknownst to them, the theme of the science that underpins all sciences, that is useful to all sciences: mathematical science. They know it, even though they do not know how to situate it in relation to physis, even though they do not speak of it as a particular domain of physis, even though they do not know how to distinguish it from all that common truth gives us to see. Modern mathematical science presents itself to us as a system of axioms obtained by trial and error, which now seems faithful and complete. Experience shows that this system of axioms – that of Zermelo-Fränkel's set theory, with or without the axiom of choice – is sufficient for the logical development of mathematics. The whole mathematical edifice can be deduced logically, using *our* logic, represented by first-order predicate logic. The theme of the mathematical sciences is hidden behind this system of axioms, and common truth does not see it.

For phenomenology, the fixed framework, or fixed structure, of physis is mathesis. Mathesis is, by definition, the definitive achievement of time in physis, it is the totally stable part of it, the part where time has completed its work and is no longer at play, the part that serves as the structure of the living part, of physis. Phenomenology shows – and this will be the subject of Chapters IV, V and VI – that the theme of mathematical science is the mathesis of external space, that the mathesis of external space is that totally stable structure which is the common thingness of external space, and that this structure is entirely said by: 1- There are things, 2- The proper things of external space are made of proper things.

"Mathesis" is a word of the logos. However, the identification of the thing it says, its concept, remains vague. The relationship of mathesis to the natural theme of mathematical science is equally vague. The logos does not say that mathematical science is the science of the mathesis of external space, that its theme or model is the mathesis of

that space. Nor does it say that mathesis is, in physis, the definitive achievement of time. Phenomenology does.

The saying of the logos about mathesis and mathematics comes from Plato. According to Plato, the theme of mathematical science is the ideal acquisition of the mind, recovered in us through the reminiscence of ideas: mathematics is the cognition of what we *already* know, and what we already know is mathesis. Plato's view is shared by phenomenology. Indeed, time is at the service of the Idea, and it ensures that what appears to us always seems to have *always already* appeared. But this idea, the idea of nothingness – which is indeed what reigns in the field of mathematics, despite the charm that the search for and discovery of the demonstration holds for the mathematician – is unique, and the identification of nothingness with the Good would be the height of nihilism. But isn't this the case? Isn't what logos takes to be the Good, Reason, conformity to the logical ideal? If, in the world, Reason has its full justification in Politics – as the search for peace and justice between us all, a search that is always ongoing and never-ending – it does not have it in Philosophy. The "sophia" of philosophy is acquired by the human-being only at the end of a struggle between the truth of Being and the truth of the Body of childhood. The truth of the body of childhood is spoken by the logos. It is caught – imprisoned – in time, in logic, guided by it. The end of the struggle is free consent to the world and its logic. The end is the reception by Being, through the intermediary of human-being, of the gift that is the world; it is serenity in the world – it is "sophia". The end of the struggle is also respect, through the truth of Being, for the truth of the world, for common truth; respect for childhood, its rules, and laws, for what it has to love and endure; voluntary withdrawal from the madness of Being; participation in political work. Free consent is playing in the world instead of being played in it, it is the enchantment of the world by the truth of Being – a truth that is set back, but always there, illuminating things and the world – it is the world received as a gift.

If change and movement are identified with time by physical science, it is only *the regularity of change* that is in question, i.e., a change that is *reasoned* – whereas the initial, eternal, unnoticed change is the initial madness, the initial chaos, the initial contradiction, Being. Physical science is itself made possible by the regularity and coherence of change in the living gaze, a coherence which, after total mathematical stability, is the other success of the logical work of annihilation brought about by time. The generalized principle of contradiction – *time is never wrong in what it shows to the living eye, the coherence of what it shows us is infallible* – is the implicit principle of science, a principle that phenomenology brings to light for it.

Time is the work of reasoning Being by the logical ideal, by nothingness. The result of time is the metamorphosis, in the multiple living gazes, of the lightning of Being into the evidence of things and the regularity, the coherence, of their movements and changes. Through beginningless time, the coherence of all that shows itself to the living eye replaces the madness of Being.

The regular movement is that of multiple things, which, in order to be seen as multiple, have necessarily acquired a certain stability in our gaze. The multiplicity of things seen by the living gaze presupposes the stability of each of these things in that same gaze – there is no multiplicity of things without stability of things.

All common things are not shown to us in the same way by time: annihilation, for most of them, is in progress, not definitively accomplished. This difference leads phenomenology to distinguish, on the one hand, between things that are *properties* and things that are *proper things*, and, on the other hand, between *totally stable* proper things, those that remain permanently the things they are, and proper things that are stable only through the intermediary of the concepts under which they are classified, those that it says are *simply stable*. The totally stable proper things are, in physis, the proper things of mathesis, while all the other proper things of physis are simply stable. In the

following chapters, we will show that numbers, our familiar numbers, are the only purely temporal and totally stable proper things.

The fundamental definitive achievement of time in physis is the totally stable structure of the things of common truth, a structure that constitutes common thingness and is expressed by: there are things. "There are things", the primitive axiom of common truth, says common thingness, says the stability and multiplicity of things, says mathesis.

In external space, every proper thing is made of proper things. This particular structure, the common thingness of external space, is the mathematical structure of external space, defining the mathesis of external space. The phenomenological reduction of common truth which consists in seeing the proper things of external space only as "ones" made of "ones" produces *mathematical truth*. Mathematical truth, that which sees the mathesis of external space, not only exhibits a totally stable structure – the "ones" made of "ones" – it also gives us to see totally stable, purely temporal proper things: numbers.

All these questions, definitions and monstrations, relating to things, thingness, stability, multiplicity, temporality, the imaginary, exteriority, properties, concepts, proper things, external space, and numbers, will be dealt with in the following chapters, and in particular in Chapter IV: *Phenomenology of the thing*. Here, let us note that the primitive axiom of common truth – there are things – states the purely temporal and totally stable fact that is both that of the multiplicity of things and that of the stable "one" that each thing is in this multiplicity. The primitive axiom of common truth speaks of mathesis as the totally stable structure of physis: the common thingness.

Common truth does not see the direct relationship between imagination and time. It defines imagination as "the faculty of producing and simulating new objects, sensations and ideas in the mind without the immediate input of the senses", as Wikipedia, the modern, constantly updated repository of common thought, puts it. And yet, it is indeed through the senses that things show themselves to us over time. Memory stores what is seen and felt. What has been stored in memory

can be seen and seen again, at leisure, in the imagination. The temporal regularity of what is stored in this way, of what is ceaselessly reviewed and compared, appears to the eye, it is noted. This observed regularity of what is happening enables us to anticipate, to precede time, to substitute ourselves for it, to complement it in its logical action: this anticipation based on what is already seen – by the senses – is the work of the imagination. Imagination, which mimics time, is logical. This logic is *our* logic. It is first and foremost *analogical*: it does as time does, it shows according to the coherence that time shows us, it shows in the manner of time. It is also *tautological*, that is, formally logical, according to the rules of the immediate reconduction of evidence from proposition to proposition. Our science of logic, that of correct reasoning, is that of the reconduction of evidence from one proposition to the next which says otherwise the same thing: it is tautological.

Evidence, that which is immediately reconducted by formal logic or the logic of predicates, comes to us first of all from time. The origin of evidence is the "always already" of time, time that has no beginning. *Our* logic does not produce evidence, it reconducts it, analogically or tautologically. Evidence itself comes from time, and only from time. The analogical reconduction of evidence by the imagination needs to be verified by the experimental set-up that confronts it with time: it is time that validates or rejects the analogy proposed by the imagination. This validation is required by scientific truth, by science.

It is because common truth ignores the essence of time, the essence of imagination and its logic, that it is overtaken by what the translogical truth, equally human, says about it, which looks at it and tells it where what it sees comes from.

§42.- The translogical truth of our logic.

Logic of things and logic of propositions.

It is the sudden cessation, in itself, of the logical effect of time that is the condition of possibility of phenomenology. Here, we ask: from this cessation of the logical effect of time, from the initial truth, from the

truth of Being, how does phenomenology see *our* logic? What does it say about our logic that the logos does not say because common truth does not see it, because it cannot see the integral logic? How do *our* logic as seen by translogical truth and *our* logic as seen by common truth compare?

Phenomenology sums up this comparison by saying that *our* logic is seen by common truth as *the logic of propositions*, while translogical truth sees it as the by-product – the mime – of a larger logic that is *the logic of things*, a logic whose manifestation, in us and for us as living beings, is time.

From the logic of things result, jointly, the common, evident things, and, among them, that particular thing which is the living gaze, multiple, which sees things in evidence. It also gives rise to *our* logic, the logic of propositions.

Time is the logic of things: it shows us things, stable and multiple, obviously there because they are always already there. Common truth and science implicitly recognize this fact by defining the "true" as being exclusively what is shown by time and time alone – without the use of our imagination. The scientific experiment consists of an experimental montage set up by our imagination which anticipates what time will show us. The result of the experiment, the verdict, is given by time. It is time that gives the imagination the answer to the question it has set itself, and for which it has devised the means – the experiment – of forcing time to respond. Time's answer is the "true", the scientifically "true". This "true" is opposed to the "false". The "false" of science is that which is shown by propositions – hypotheses – and which is not shown in time. The false are the imaginary things that propositions show us and that time does not validate. These things are then said to be "purely imaginary", as opposed to scientifically true things, which are "purely temporal". Imagination proposes and time disposes. Here we see that time and imagination move along the same continuum. Imagination anticipates based on what has already happened in time, and on the regularity and coherence of this *déjà-vu*. It is then validated,

invalidated, or corrected by time. Phenomenology calls this continuum of time and imagination "logic". Time and imagination are two forms of the same logic. The imaginary form is the living being's mime of the temporal form. It enables living beings to project themselves into the future, to foresee. It enables human beings not only to build their science, not only to dream, to romanticize, but also to draw up and implement policies that, in the test of time, can enable us to live together, as much as possible, for as long as possible, in peace and justice.

Our logic is the logic of propositions: it is the logic of those particular things that are shown in our imagination by propositions. This logic, ours, ignores the temporal truth or falsity of a proposition. It ignores it because, as far as this truth is concerned, it has absolutely nothing to do with it, truth plays no role, and the establishment of this truth is not its concern – it is the concern of the physical and mathematical sciences, not that of the science of logic. The truth of the thing shown by the proposition is given by time, it is the domain of time. The domain of *our* logic, the one over which it exercises its sovereignty, is twofold: the domain of *analogical logic* – the imaginary proper – and the domain of *tautological logic* – the science of logic proper, the science of correct reasoning, the science of the reconduction of the "true" from one proposition to the next.

Before we can reason correctly, we need to start from a sound base, i.e. a base made up of propositions that have been made self-evident by time alone – without the help of imagination – or scientifically verified. The starting point for correct reasoning is time alone, which must provide the evidence, the scientific truth.

In the case of scientific discourse, the starting point is a set of scientifically true propositions. Before being recognized as true, these propositions are *hypotheses*. The establishment of a hypothesis results from the work of our analogical logic. Based on what we have already seen and its regularity, our logic anticipates what time will do next and formulates a proposition – a proposition of law – that enables us to

predict. After experimental verification, i.e. after confrontation with time, the proposition of law is validated, is true. It is our analogical logic that enables us to establish temporal laws.

In the case of a novel, the beginning and sequence of events must be described in such a way as to be comprehensible to us all. To be comprehensible in this way, they must necessarily be part of the déjà-vu or be logically close enough to the déjà-vu. Whether the novel is realistic or fantastic, what makes it intelligible is the analogical logic employed by the author, and the analogy in question is always the analogy in relation to what time shows us.

Whether it is a scientific discourse or a novel, what the listener will not accept is incorrect reasoning. Incorrect reasoning shows a lack of logical rigor, a fault committed against the science of logic, against tautology. A tautological error consists in an error in the propagation of evidence from one proposition to another. It is a bad deduction. Tautology says: if this proposition – or this set of propositions – is true, then so is this one. Passing from one proposition to another, the rules of tautology must be respected, so that the evidence of one leads to the evidence of the other. All these rules constitute the science of logic, in other words, the science of deduction, or demonstration. Time *monstrates* – shows –, our logic *demonstrates*, and it does so based on propositions whose truth is assumed to have already been shown by time. To reason is to deduce, to generate true propositions from propositions already recognized as true. It is a matter of remaining true, of propagating scientific truth.

The first rule of our science of logic – the fundamental rule – is *the principle of contradiction*: the negation of a proposition cannot be true at the same time as that proposition. The "at the same time" is crucial here, and this is how Aristotle formulated the principle. He writes (Metaphysics, gamma, 3):

"It is impossible for the same attribute to belong and not belong, at the same time, to the same subject and in the same respect, ...".

The principle states that it is time that gives and takes away a proposition's truth – the word "truth" being understood here in the sense of true and false as defined by science. As we can all see, the truth of a proposition changes over time. What a proposition shows to be true today may be false tomorrow. If, as is the case in mathematics, the thing in question, shown by a proposition, is fixed, inert, invariable in time – such as $1 + 1 = 2$ – then the "at the same time" is useless. In mathesis, the "at the same time" is useless; this could take the place of a definition of mathesis. It is useless, not because mathesis is independent of time, outside time, but because it is the finished work of time, time having achieved its objective and no longer changing anything: in the eyes of the living, the things of mathesis, the mathematical things, are *totally stable*. This "totally", which qualifies the stability of mathematical things and mathematical propositions, distinguishes them from the other proper things of the logos, which are only stable, are only *simply stable*, sufficiently stable, in their kind, to be seen by us all and identified, named: they are stable although changing, appearing, and disappearing, but always identifiable under the same name. This simple, or relative, stability is that of the *concept* – what is stable is the concept of a tree, not this tree, which is never the same over time, but which remains identified as a tree before becoming dust. In physics, where time continues its work, the "at the same time" is indispensable in the statement of the principle of contradiction: time will eventually produce a scientific truth other than the one now being stated. Mathesis is, in physics, the domain where time has achieved its objective, where things are totally stable.

When Kant (*Critique of Pure Reason*, III,141/IV,106), in his *Analytic of Principles*, states the principle of contradiction, he does not see the necessity of "at the same time", and he says why. He writes:

"Now the principle of contradiction, as a purely logical principle, must not limit its assertions to time relationships; such a formula is therefore quite contrary to its purpose."

What does it mean for Kant that this principle is "purely logical"?

It means that Kant is not dealing here with *transcendental logic*, the kind of logic he intuited but did not identify with time – even though his *transcendental scheme of understanding* is remarkably close to it²⁰ –, but with formal logic, the logic of correct reasoning, tautological logic. This logic is, in fact, an immutable achievement of time, in which time no longer plays a role: correct reasoning is evaluated without any "time relationship". Formal logic is a mathematical achievement of temporal logic.

Yet it is the "at the same time" that gives generality to the principle which, as formulated by Aristotle, is as much a mathematical principle – although the "at the same time" is not necessary – as a physical one. The principle is best expressed as: *If time is fixed, or if, as is the case in mathematics and formal logic, the truth value of propositions is immutable in time, then if a proposition is true, its negation is false.* Time can change the truth value of a proposition unless it is a proposition of mathematics or the science of *our* logic.

To show that formal logic is an achievement of time, we can analyse the use of negation made by Kant's "purely logical" principle of contradiction. Where does negation come from? Who, or what, shows

²⁰ Cf. E. Kant, *Critique of pure reason*, volume III, Chapter I, *On the schematism of pure concepts of the understanding*, pages 133 to 138: "Now, it is obvious that there must be a third term which is homogeneous, on the one hand, to the category, and on the other, to the phenomenon, and which makes possible the application of the first to the second. This intermediate representation must be pure (without any empirical element), and yet it must be on one side, *intellectual*, and on the other *sensitive*. This is the *transcendental scheme*. ... This formal and pure condition of sensitivity, to which the concept of the understanding is restricted in its use, we will call the schema of this concept of the understanding, and the method that the understanding follows with regard to of these schematisms, the *schematism* of pure understanding. ... Schemas are therefore nothing other than a priori *determinations of time*, made according to certain rules; and these determinations, following the order of the categories, concern *the series of time, the content of time, the order of time, finally the whole of time*, in relation to all possible objects. »

it to us? It is time. It is, for example, the succession of day and night, night as the negation of day, day as the negation of night. Time shows us things, and among things, it shows us that particular thing called negation – the appearance, the disappearance, one thing, and the next day, its opposite – it shows us the total coherence of what is shown to us, it shows us the principles of our logic that say this coherence, that say that a thing cannot, at the same time, be so and not be so.

When we see, through phenomenology, that science only considers as true what time shows us, that science never ceases to prove, in the form of precise laws that are intended to be definitive, the total coherence of what time shows us, then Aristotle's principle of contradiction is generalized and becomes *the generalized principle of contradiction*:

What time shows living beings – past, present, and future – is intersubjectively absolutely coherent, and therefore devoid of any contradiction.

If Aristotle's principle of contradiction is the foundation of *our* logic, the generalized principle of contradiction is the foundation of science, our science, which is, above all, experimental – including, whatever Kant may say, mathematical science.

This generalized principle basically says nothing other than: time is the primary form of logic. Our logic, whether formal – reconducting in another form the definitive achievement of time – or analogical – imagination – mimics the coherence of what time shows us. Our logic is a by-product of the primary form of logic that is time.

Note that Aristotle's principle of contradiction is not just about non-contradiction. It also states the partition of things into "subject" and "attribute". This partition, which appears to be merely syntactic or grammatical, is in fact much deeper. Our science of predicate logic, although it does not speak of subjects and attributes, makes the same partition. Instead of subjects and attributes, it speaks of *elements* and

properties – or *relations*. Elements have properties just as subjects have attributes.

What, phenomenologically, is a property? What, phenomenologically, is an element?

In answering these questions, we will, for pedagogical reasons, anticipate what will be shown phenomenologically, in the greatest detail, in the following chapters.

Properties are particular things of physis that are, in themselves, both time-invariant and indecomposable. The elements – which phenomenology prefers to call "proper things" – are the things of physis that can be classified under concepts. A concept is a thing that is a set of properties. Purely temporal proper things change over time; they are always another proper thing at every moment: they are *simply stable*, obtaining their stability only through the fact that they are arranged, stably over time, under the same concept. There is, however, an exception to this simple stability of purely temporal proper things. These are the proper things, *totally stable*, that belong to that part of physis that is mathesis: numbers, our familiar numbers, are purely temporal and *totally stable* proper things. Time has no effect on them, and every number remains, definitively, the proper thing that it is.

Modern logic, taking up the partition already observed by Aristotle, says that its *model* – reality, physis – is made up of *elements* and *properties* – or *relations* between these elements. Phenomenologically, it is properties that form the basis of the constitution of "elements" in our view. Elements are distinguished from one another by the properties they possess. As constituents of the *nature* of things, the elements of physical science are classified under *concepts*: they are things that have in common the possession of a particular set of properties, and that are designated by a common noun, the noun of the concept. As constituents of the *structure* of things in external physical space – a structure whose name is "*multiplicity*" – the elements of modern mathematical science come under a single concept, the concept of set, a concept that adds a sole property to multiplicity, sets being linked to each other by a single

relation: *the set membership relation*. The set membership relation is a structural relation between the proper things of the physis of external space: every proper thing of external space is made of proper things.

Physical science deals with the nature of things; mathematical science deals with the structure of things in external space. This structure is *multiplicity*, and its constituents are *sets* to which sets – at least one set – *belong*, unless we are talking about the empty set.

Any fact in which time does not intervene in any way – because it has completed its work – is a mathematical fact, a constituent of mathesis. Not only is such a fact totally stable, as is, in principle, a law of physics, but no variable physical quantity intervenes in it. The view of a set as defined by mathematical science, which involves only the living gaze and the membership structure of proper things of external space, is such a fact. While this fact is purely temporal, as is every fact stated by common truth, the mathematical set, unless it is a number, is a purely imaginary thing.

The *sets* of mathematical science are particular elements of the science of logic – recall that predicate logic partitions things into elements and properties. Sets are made of sets, whereas the elements of the science of logic are not necessarily made of elements. For the science of logic, every element is an element of the vastest set – in the intuitive sense of the word: the Universe –, or Reality, or physis. The sets of mathematical science are those particular elements of the science of logic that have no other properties than multiplicity and the fact of being linked together by the sole membership relation, the relation that characterizes the multiplicity of things in *external space*. External space is that part of physis which has the particularity of being seen by all of us at the same time, as will be shown in §44 and §45.

Let us conclude metaphysically.

The *initial metaphysical property*, initial as is Being that contradicts it, the one in search of which time works, is that which characterizes the ideal logical space: total stability, nothingness. For the living being, the *initial physical property*, which is the metamorphosis by the work of

time of the initial metaphysical property, is to be *vital*: the things considered by the living being are first and foremost those that are necessary for the preservation of self and species, necessary for the eternal return of the same, of childhood. In humans, the imagination branches out from the vital into different properties: from the "vital", the properties sought become the "useful", then the "efficient", then the "gratifying", the "playful", the "aesthetic", and so on.

Phenomenology – the other – is all about this essential point, which must always be considered: if time shows us things in evidence, the initial phenomenon of monstration, monstration itself, is not the fact of time; it is only monstration in evidence that is the fact of time. Time does not give to see, it gives the evidence of seeing, it gives to see in evidence. Seeing is initial, seeing is Being. Seeing is without reason, against all Reason, against the *a priori* Idea. Time has nothing to do with the unheard-of, initial fact of seeing. What it does is transform the unique, mad initial seeing into a multitude of gazes that see, quietly, in evidence, stable and multiple things, including the gaze itself. This transformation is the annihilation effected by the *a priori* Idea within Being. Whereas *our* logic does not create the evidence, but propagates it in language and the imaginary, time does not create sight, but has "always already" generated the evidence in the sight of the living gaze, until the subterfuge of this generation suddenly ceases in man's gaze, which has returned to the initial. Maintaining evidence and coherence in all that is shown to the living eye is what time achieves, and this is what, step by step, our science observes, the principle of which is that *it must* succeed in observing, in evidence, this coherence and fixing it by a law. From the moment of the birth of the human-being, this temporal truth, founded on evidence, becomes the truth of childhood and of the world, and becomes a spectacle that logic offers to the human-being – a spectacle in which the human-being is invited to participate as an actor.

CHAPTER III

Phenomenology of the living being

§43.- The living being and its origin.

To discuss the living being in general, to be able to do so – we do, "we" as "all of us", as logos, as science – presupposes that we, who speak, who are living beings, have the certainty that living beings have the same general characteristics and that they live, globally, the same thing, a same thing that makes it possible to classify them under this concept of the living being.

However, we who speak also know that each living being has its own destiny: it is born with certain genetic and biological characteristics, on a certain date, in a certain place, under certain family and social conditions, and its life is subject to general contingency. We also know that each living being has its own perceptions, feelings, and thoughts, and that it is impossible for other living beings to know exactly what it perceives, feels, or thinks. All we know of these perceptions is what they tell us, using the language specific to their species, a language that can only tell us, as far as it is comprehensible, common things, things we are already able to see: the logos of the living gather the living. We know that each living being is alone with its sight. What is unique to living beings is their *interior space*.

Yet living beings do not doubt their power to know what other living beings perceive in general – by analogy with what they themselves perceive. This phenomenon is even more obvious when limited to a particular species. Ants know exactly how other ants live. This knowledge has been inscribed in them over time. There is a species being that leaves no room for the being of each living instance of that species. Only general contingency, external hazards, particularize the destiny of each individual, the essential being already determined by the species, and this within what is already determined for the whole of living beings, all species taken together.

According to the science of man, general contingency does not escape the total coherence of what time shows to the living gaze: science presupposes that everything that time shows to the living – which it describes through the laws of physics – is absolutely coherent. According to science, time makes no mistakes, and nothing contradicts it. Contingency is very relative, it is just that we do not have the means to foresee everything, down to the smallest detail. These unforeseen yet predictable events are contingency.

So, everything seems already determined, in time, by time. The interior space and life of each living being appears to be nothing more than the identical replication of a single model of interior space and life. Variations from one species to another seem to be no more than variations in the ability to imagine, i.e. to foresee what time has in store for us, and to act accordingly. With anticipation, with science, the human species can, more than any other species, influence the course of things. Anticipation does not change the course of time, the coherence of everything it shows to the living eye, but it can enable living beings to be better equipped to face time, and thus to facilitate the conservation of the species and its access to vitality. Imagination, itself a product of time, facilitates conservation and stability, reinforcing time in its work of reasoning, of annihilation.

Man talks about living beings. Through this discourse, he demonstrates his claim to know everything about living beings, about

every species of living being, and in particular about himself. This knowledge, this claim to know, is Science. When it comes to his own species, man builds "human sciences". Our human sciences presuppose that we all experience the same things, and that only general contingency – itself regulated by temporal coherence – introduces differences into our destinies. For every difference, logos knows how to say, claims to know how to say, where it comes from, what is its cause – genetic, biographical, social. There is this tenacious presupposition of a total homogeneity of perception between us all. Logos, in all the sciences, is there to express this perception. If it says, for example, that man is free, it means that we are all free according to this freedom. Our imagination is the primary source of this human sense of freedom.

The presupposition of a total homogeneity of perception between us all is "natural" – let us say innate, biological, just as the ant's knowledge of other ants is innate. Individual truth – truth in the sense of power of sight, field of perception – is primarily the truth of the living, and more specifically, it is the truth of the species. It is a truth worked by time without beginning. The truth of the human species is what phenomenology – the other phenomenology, the one speaking here – calls "common truth".

The truth of living beings has a common origin: the initial truth, the truth of Being. In living beings, initial truth is metamorphosed by the struggle waged in Being, against it and its violence, by the *a priori* Idea that is consubstantial with Being: the idea of nothingness. This struggle manifests itself in us through time and *our* logic, the logic of our imagination. Time and *our* logic produce the evidence of everything we perceive – the ideal objective being to show us that, deep down, there is nothing, that everything is normal, that everything happens according to the Idea.

Yet the initial structure of Being is there, in every living being, in us, in each one of us: it is the structure of sight. There is no sight, no truth, unless there is *difference*. The difference is between the point of view –

the starting point, the *a priori* – and the viewed point – the thing. The initial departure, the *a priori*, is that there is "nothing", it is nothingness, it is the idea of nothingness, it is the normal, it is pure crystal, it is Reason, it is rigorously logical discourse from beginning to end, absolutely limpid. The initial thing is seeing, the fact of seeing, sight itself. In the initial view – Being – the difference is abysmal, absolute, absolutely astonishing: it absolutely contradicts the *a priori*. For us, as living beings, this difference is attenuated, negated, by the transcendental²¹ action of logic, time, and imagination. Time is the source of the stability, multiplicity, and self-evidence of things, including the living gaze, the instances of seeing, the instances that see the same things, stable, multiple, and self-evident.

In each of us, the center is the unique view. Through temporal metamorphosis, this center is the demultiplied and trivialized center of a view itself trivialized by multiple, trivialized, self-evident things.

Time is always at work, it has no beginning and no end, and trivialization is ongoing. There remains a violence and a charm – a violence and a charm in life, sometimes violent, sometimes charming. There will always remain a violence, a charm, a difference – even if veiled by time – since the *a priori* Idea is false.

§44.- External space.

Subject and object.

To every living gaze, *external space* appears.

²¹ For phenomenology, the transcendent is Being, the initial, incredible, violent, beyond substance, contrary to all Reason – "Reason" being understood here as conformity to the logical ideal, namely "nothingness". It describes as "transcendental" everything which is likely to obscure, in the eyes of the living, the initial transcendence. Thus, it says that childhood is transcendental, that time is transcendental, that logic is transcendental. The *a priori* idea of nothingness, although constitutive of transcendence, of *difference*, plays its transcendental role through logic, the primary form of which is time. On closer inspection, this definition of the adjective "transcendental" corresponds exactly to Kant's definition, which justifies the use, by phenomenology, of this word. It is the transcendental which allows the living to know, knowledge, science.

External to what? External to the living gaze itself, the gaze that sees itself as the center, as the center of sight, as the center of the world, as the point of view on the world. But this gaze knows itself to be made up of multiple gazes and has no doubt that all these gazes see the same external space. For the logos, for the discourse of truth that knows itself to be common to all human gazes, the gaze of each of us – the gaze of "all of us" – is "the subject", while external space is "the object". For the subject – for "all of us" – external space, the object, has the following characteristics:

1) It appears to be the same for all living eyes. External space is made up of things that living eyes can all see *at the same time*. In other words, the things of external space are, immediately, the things of all. It does not matter that we cannot be sure that what one sees is the same as what the other sees. It does not even make sense. What is important is that it is *as if* we all see the same things: there is an intersubjective isomorphism of the views of external things.

2) It appears to be independent of the subject and its view. It is this appearance of independence that leads realist philosophers to make external space the in-itself, the real, the absolute – "the great outside".

3) It includes living bodies themselves, in their materiality. For me, living beings other than myself are things of external space. I know that these things are special in that, like me, they have a truth, and I know that, outside, they see the same things as I do. My own body belongs to external space, it is something other than myself, and this something other than myself is seen by everyone else. What binds me personally to my body is that what it feels, what happens to it – that pain, for example, following a blow it receives, or an illness it contracts, or the loss

of a loved one – I alone feel it, I have exclusivity over it. The question arises: what, of the body, is me, is "I"? Where is the "I", the particular subject, in the body? Who is the "I" if not the body itself? Since the body is external, where is the center of the world in the body, the center that sees the body and shares its own sensations? Science knows that the center of sensations is the brain, but the brain is part of the body, part of external space. Where is the "I" in the brain?

For phenomenology, the "I" is seeing, it is what time has done to the initial "seeing", it is the annihilated "seeing", it is the annihilated Being. Time has multiplied the initial "seeing" into multiple views, multiple "I"s, multiple living bodies. Through the body, sight is associated with memory, imagination, and language – in other words, a continuity internal to the body, parallel to that of time. The body offers sight a target that time has rendered stable, made up of an intimate, interior space – memory, imagination, feeling, language – and an external, interior space – interior to each of us, external to the intimate space – which appears immediately common. Intimate space and external space make up the interior space specific to each of us. It may seem contradictory to say that external space is part of interior space. It is important to understand that external space is considered by the living being to be independent of it and is therefore perceived not only as external to the living being's gaze, but also as independent of it. Interior space, on the other hand, is what physis is for each of us, physis of which external space is a part. What differentiates interior spaces, it is the intimate space, personal experience, that which cannot be immediately shared. External space is seen as immediately common and as belonging to all interior spaces.

For science, seeing seems to be a virtue of the body, i.e. of biology, along with memory and imagination. Everyone sees and sees alike. The question of seeing is trivialized and placed

by logos and its science in the realm of biology: sight is a biological phenomenon. For logos, the living, biological body appears as the boundary between itself – itself as "all of us", as subject – and the independent external space – the object. It is at this boundary that the independent external space is transformed into common things and words, into things delivered to the needs of the living body, delivered to language and imagination. The social life of living beings is regulated by common external space.

Nothing indicates to the subject that the object has been constructed, over time, in conjunction with himself, and that there can only be objects, things and subjects that are seen. Nothing indicates to the subject – to the common truth, to the logos, to all of us – that sight is the initial and that it is without reason, surprised by itself. Nothing indicates to the subject that his sight is the initial sight annihilated by time, that is, demultiplied and trivialized as an evident thing, seen among evident things. Nothing tells the subject that it is time that gives sight, and everything it sees, its evidence. Nothing tells the subject that seeing is the initial, the in-itself. Nothing indicates to the subject that the initial is, in itself, for itself, the absolute surprise.

§45.- Interior space.

Physis.

Physis is my interior space.

External space.

Intimate space.

The world.

There is only one space. It is *mine*, it is the one that opens up to *my* view. This space is the field of *my* truth. It is physis, there is only one physis, and that is *me*. Why *mine*? Why *my*? Why *me*?

In the field of *my* truth, there are others, those whom I know from experience to be of the same species as me, to be my fellow creatures.

The others are things, things among all the things that enter the field of truth, the only field of truth there is, the field of my truth. These things, the others, have the particularity, since they are my fellow creatures, of certainly having a field of truth too. But I do not have access to this field, at least not directly. I imagine, and this enters into my field of truth, that others have a field of truth and that their field of truth is similar to mine. I also imagine that others imagine, as I do, that we all have a field of truth and that these fields of truth are similar. The experience of living together, a life together that is only made possible by an isomorphism of truth fields, confirms what we imagine.

The field of truth of each of us is *interior space*. *Physis is my interior space*. What synchronizes interior spaces and confirms their multiplicity and similarity is external space, which appears to be the same for all of us, unique, common, and independent of us. If external space seems to be independent of me – and therefore of us – it nonetheless includes all living bodies, including my own. Who is the "me" in question, yet sheltered by the body?

While my body, in its materiality, is part of the common external space, my interior space is not. Indeed, no one but me can know what is going on there temporally, in its intimacy; others can only imagine it by analogy with what is going on inside themselves. Conversely, external space is part of my interior space. Experience shows me that external space is common to the interior space of each and every one of us.

Although things in external space appear to be the same for all of us, their impact and repercussion in interior space belong only to interior space and constitute its intimate part. Interior space is made up of external space, which is common, and *intimate space*.

Interior space is my field of truth, the totality of what I see, feel, and think. Within this field of truth is external space, whose life, including that of my own body, seems totally independent of the life of my intimate space.

There is apparently only one external space, common to all living bodies, and as many interior spaces, as many intimate spaces, as many centers of the world, as many physis, as there are living bodies. Interior spaces share a common space: external space. They have their own space: intimate space. Under the impersonal name of "physis", it is implicitly accepted that we all experience the same thing, that there is only one common truth, that the multiple interior spaces are isomorphic.

Even if communication between us about what we experience in the intimate field of truth is less direct than communication about what we experience in external space, it is still based on the presupposition that we all experience the same things, and that we can always agree on a common description of these experiences. This is also the presupposition of the human sciences. The human sciences do not always have the advantage that have the natural sciences, whether physical or mathematical, of being able to prove the – scientific – truth of what they say through direct confrontation, observable by all, with time. It is at this precise point that the division between the natural sciences and the humanities can be made. However, there is a strong tendency to integrate the humanities, including philosophy, into the natural sciences wherever possible. This is why the term "scientific realist metaphysics" is still used today. This strong tendency confirms the participation of the imagination – of speculation – in the work of annihilation wrought by time. Even philosophy is being brought to heel.

Intimate spaces, which appear independent of one another and isolated – each of them eventually discovers solitude –, which life makes dependent on one another, also appear independent of external space, even though life clearly shows the dependence of living bodies on external space.

Independence and dependence are difficult to separate. The independence of interior spaces from each other, the independence of external space from the interior space that contains it, the independence of the intimate "I" from the body that carries it, the interdependence of all these spaces necessitated by life, by the vital needs of living bodies

– all this is the result of the ongoing work of temporal logic, starting from the initial view. The first element of annihilation is the multiplication of the gaze and of things, multiplicity; the multiplicity of things presupposes the stability of things. Multiplicity, the general interdependence of the elements of the multiple, the evidence of what is shown to the living gaze, play in favor of a dilution of the initial seeing, its homogenization, normalization, and trivialization.

The confusion between independence and interdependence has become even more radical since the suspicion came to us, first with Kant, then with quantum physics, that our view of things in external space is formed jointly, synthetically, with the things in this space, and that these things exist, as such, only in the living eyes that see them. Hence the ever-popular debate between realists, correlationists and idealists. Mingled independence and interdependence is one of the difficulties – the other being the impossibility of thinking logic and time – that the logos, as a common intelligence, encounters in expressing its own situation.

The result of this confusion is what logos calls "complexity". The word "complexity" is understood by logos as the difficulty made necessary by the approach to truth, giving the word "truth" the meaning of "scientific truth". In other words, logos understands complexity both as a sign of the approach to scientific truth and as a sign of the difficulty associated with this approach. This encourages it to push complexity ever further. Complexity manifests itself in logos through the definition of new concepts, through the piling up of concepts needed to describe phenomena. We may come to believe that the depth of philosophical-scientific thought is measured by the thickness of this stacking.

The singularity and madness of the initial center fade into the community of centers, the multitude and intersubjectivity of centers. Centers, views, things, merge into *a world*, a single space for us all, whose name is "common truth", the truth spoken by logos and its growing scientific complexity.

§46.- Phenomenology of space.

Phenomenological definition of the emptiness.

Chronometric space (intimate) and geometric space (external).

Space is interior space, physis. It is divided into intimate space and external space.

In external space, others, fellow human beings, appear. Space, through external space, appears to be a common space, independent of us. Space, for all of us, for the logos, is above all common external space, the space in which living bodies are immersed.

Logos associates space – the immensity of space, the cosmos – with emptiness, the emptiness of space. What, for the logos, is the emptiness? How is the emptiness associated with space? For logos, there is primarily the emptiness of space, and it is in the emptiness that things are found. For logos, things are in space, in the void of space. For logos, space is the emptiness where things are dispersed.

For phenomenology, space is only between things. It is the multiplicity of things – which, in order to be seen as multiple, are stable and distinct – that creates the sensation of space. Things appear to us in space. But it is space that is born of things. Space arises from the distance, the difference, between things. It arises from the fact that things are multiple, i.e. stable, distinct, unique, separate.

The distance between things in common external space is geometric, while the distance between things in intimate space is chronometric.

The things of intimate space have a duration and are separated by a duration: I see, within myself, only one thing at a time and for a certain time, until it reappears, later, possibly recognized because it has marked my memory. Between an intimate thing and its reappearance in the form of another thing that reminds me of it, therefore of the same kind, there is time, and this time, in relation to this thing, is empty, is an empty space of this thing. But, in the meantime, other intimate things have appeared, and the emptiness in question is relative. There is, at all times, something that is there, inside me. Within me, there is a temporal sequence of intimate things. It's the repetition of a thing, a thing that

insists, that seems to be always the same, that takes on importance, that creates both the sensation of intimate space and the sensation of intimate emptiness. Between these things that insist in me because they seem to be the same, there is a temporal emptiness, a relative emptiness, a temporal distance, an emptiness relative to what, in me, for the moment, counts as "one", makes "one": what counts as "one" is each reappearance of this thing that insists, that is there, and seems to be always the same – a thing to which I associate a mark in my memory, as is done for all things that, by their insistence, take on importance. To this memory mark – through our exchanges, through our descriptions that use metaphors borrowed from the common external space, through intersubjectivity – is associated a common noun, a word from the logos, a word that says a kind of thing, a concept.

The things of external space are visible to all of us at the same time. At the same time, what distances two things are things, other things. In external space, as in intimate space, there are things, there are only things, but here, unlike the things of intimate space, every thing is made of things, decomposed into things. What is more, here, instead of following one another in time, they follow one another in geometry. Wherever we look geographically, there is something – just as there is always something in the intimate space at a chronological place. Here, in external space, on the one hand, every thing is made of things – it is composed of things – and, on the other, every set of things seen is a thing. There is a geometric continuum of interlocking things. So where do the sensation of space and the sensation of emptiness come from? If, of all the things we see, we consider only those that are of a certain kind, i.e. that have at least one particular property in common, the things thus considered are geometrically separated from one another. By this selection according to kind or property, only those things thus selected count as "one" in our view. However, between them, between the "ones" and geometrically connecting them, there is necessarily something else, other things, things that do not count because they are not part of those that count as "one".

For example, if we consider only trees among the things we see, only trees count as "one", although between the trees there are necessarily something else, other things. What separates the "ones" is emptiness, emptiness relative to the community of trees: there is no "one" in this emptiness. This emptiness shows the absence of what counts as "one". The emptiness itself shows itself; it is a thing. Whatever the kind of thing considered, or the particular property considered, the selected "ones" are as if immersed in emptiness, always the same emptiness, emptiness considered as the empty space they fill with their more or less sparse presence.

In external space, everything is made of other things, and this, it seems, without end. If a thing has found favor in our eyes to deserve to be seen as something that counts as "one", it is because in itself it counts for us, it is useful to us, perhaps even vital. Between all these remarkable things that are of the same kind or have a particular property in common, there is emptiness. The emptiness is part of any set of things of the same kind or with a particular property in common: it fills the space between the "ones" that make up the set. If the kind of thing considered is no more precise than that of thing, or if the property considered is that of being a thing, then there can no longer be any question of emptiness – that is, the relative absence of things – since there are things everywhere, since there are only things. As soon as we turn our attention to a particular kind of thing in external space, the "ones" appear, and the emptiness that separates them. Things are not in the emptiness, but any set made up of things of the same kind, whatever the properties that define that kind of thing, shows the emptiness between them.

In both intimate and external space, albeit in diverse ways – the chronometric way, the geometric way – things that count as "one" seem plunged into emptiness. Observation of these "ones" reveals, between the "ones", the absence of these "ones", an emptiness relative to the "ones", an emptiness that is either chronometric – intimate space – or geometric – external space. The identification of "ones" by their

common characteristics – an identification that cannot be made simply by "the things that belong to intimate space or to external space", the general relation of belonging to the common truth is a property of things that leaves no emptiness between things – is inseparable from the emptiness that separates instances of "one". The fact that there are things, and that things are identified as "one" by the properties they possess and which group them into things of the same kind, is inseparable from the emptiness that separates the "ones".

This relative emptiness that separates things that count as "one", which presupposes things and their multiplicity, we will show in Chapter IV, §59, that it is a number, a number as phenomenologically defined in Chapter IV, §56. In Chapter IV, §61, we will show that the phenomenologically defined emptiness is none other than the empty set revealed by axiomatic set theory.

The division of both intimate and external space into things that count as "one", separated by emptiness relative to these "ones", gives the overall sensation of space, the sensation that things are immersed in empty space, whereas space arises from the multiplicity of things, from the uniqueness of things. The emptiness shows itself purely temporally, the emptiness is a purely temporal thing: it shows the absence of a kind of thing when this kind has been selected, by our gaze, as that of things that, for the moment, count as "one".

Emptiness is not peculiar to external space. If it is theoretically, axiomatically, mathematically demonstrated only in this space, it is because there is no mathematical, chronometric science of the thingness of intimate space.

What makes a thing – in particular, the thing we will later call the "proper thing" – is repetition: repetition of the same kind of thing, repetition of a particular common property. Between each repetition, between each instance of "one", there is a relative emptiness, an emptiness, always the same, always there, which creates the sensation of space. If the Sun is unique in its kind, it is not unique as a celestial object. It is in space.

In his *Transcendental Aesthetics*²², Kant makes space and time the two forms of pure intuition. Now, space, whether it appears geometrically – externally – or chronometrically – intimately – results from time as the primary form of logic, as a transcendental effect produced by the *a priori* Idea. For phenomenology – the other – the adjective "transcendental" is applied to everything that tends to erase the transcendence of Being, thus substituting the initial seeing, absolutely surprised by itself, with the seeing of the living, which sees things, including itself, in evidence. This meaning of the word "transcendental", though more precise, is in line with the meaning given to it by Kant. Science, from which knowledge is derived, is transcendental. Knowledge, which is scientific, is made possible by the transcendental work of logic – and therefore of time and imagination.

Space is an optical effect produced by the multiplicity of things. It is this optical effect that makes us say "intimate space" and "external space". There are always only situations, intimate situations, or external situations.

§47.- The situation.

Ordinary sight, the sight of common truth, belongs to beings, and is at all times engaged in beings; it sees, temporally, only one domain of beings, a domain that constitutes *the situation*. The situation is a thing, it is something. We always see only within a thing shown by time – the situation – and not within space. Space, when seen as the container of things, of all things, is an imaginary thing, if not a belief. Space is between things, and the things seen are always seen within a thing among things, a thing that is the situation: the actual field of vision, the limited domain of our current truth. It is the multiplicity of things belonging to the situation that shows the space – the space between the things that belong to this thing that is the situation – and not the things that are in the space: the space, thus understood, cannot be a situation.

²² *Critique of pure reason, Transcendental Theory of the Elements*, first part (III, 47/IV, 27)

The situation is relatively unstable, it is a region of beings, a region of intimate space or a region of external space, a region that changes according to the direction of our gaze, *it is the current field of vision*. Every distinguished thing is distinguished as belonging to that thing, changing, moving, which is the situation.

Every precise view is a choice of the gaze within a situation. Sight lingers on a thing within the thing that is the situation. This thing, on which the view lingers, can be the situation itself, it can be any thing in the situation, a thing that can, itself, serve as a situation for other things within itself – situations fit together like Russian dolls. This thing, on which sight lingers in the situation, can also be a property of a thing – for example, a color – which can or cannot be seen in the situation. Any external situation can be shared by all of us: we can all place ourselves in front of the same external situation. But that does not mean that the same external situation produces the same repercussions, the same affects, the same intimate situation in intimate spaces.

A situation is always purely temporal, whether intimate or external. In this purely temporal thing that is the situation, there are things, purely temporal or purely imaginary. By way of an abuse of language, we will call a "purely temporal situation" one that shows only purely temporal things, and an "imaginary situation" one that includes purely imaginary things.

To define a set of things in a situation, we need to start by specifying what, for us, at this moment, counts as "one" in the situation. We therefore need to specify the nature – and therefore the properties – of the things that count as "one" and that make up this set. This choice of the nature of the "ones" is necessary, since everything is defined by its properties: it is its properties that make it the thing it is, the "one" it is. For example, we might be interested only in the trees, or only in the leaves on the trees, or only in the colors, those that predominate, those that are missing. Once the choice has been made – it depends on what we are interested in, so it is subjective – the "ones" are determined, the structure of each of the "ones" no longer comes into play, and we have

before us a set of things of the same nature, the set of things that matter to us, at this moment.

In the set seen as a thing chosen from the situation, the set structure of each of the elements of the set disappears and gives way to the temporality of the "one" that it is, with no further consideration for the properties that make it the "one" that it is. From the situation, we extract what counts.

I am contemplating a garden. The garden is the situation. If I am interested in the trees in the garden, I define a set of things in the garden. If I am interested in the plants, whatever their nature, I define another set of things in the situation. If I say that what counts as "one" in the garden is the garden itself, no particular thing stands out in it; it is, at that moment, my universe. If I say that what counts as "one" in the garden is a thing, without specifying its nature any further, I've got a set that puts me in an awkward position, the kind of awkwardness associated with the vertigo of the "endless": all things are made of things, and this without end.

The property of being a thing allows no choice among all the things that a situation can contain: the "endlessness" of the structure that is common thingness allows no grasp, gives vertigo, the vertigo of the free imaginary. The property of being a thing is not a property of *nature*, linked to the vital, it is a property of *structure*, considered *a posteriori* to the generation of things by properties.

This structure, which is common thingness, is stated as follows: *there are things, there are only things, any union of things, whatever the reason for this union, is a thing, the things of external space are made of things*. The property of membership between things is a property of structure relative to the living gaze and its *a posteriori* view – *a posteriori* of the generation of things by the properties that make them the things they are. The fact of being a thing does not allow for any selection of the things that there may be within a situation, does not allow for the constitution of a set, does not allow for the distinction of a particular thing among the things of the situation.

The vertigo of the "endless" composition of things by things is an embarrassment only for physical truth, i.e. the truth of things in external space, in common space. Physical science has always sought this end: think about Democritus' atom, the inseparable thing that would be the basis of all things. This search led science to quantum physics and its conclusion: there are only things temporally seen by the living eye. What the living eye sees in external space – it would be better to say "in any external situation" – is always things made of things. The end in question is the end of the possibility of seeing without disturbing the result of observation. The end is when we can no longer see what is going on.

Mathematical truth does not know the embarrassment of "endless". It is not concerned with the nature of the "ones" that make up a set. It is concerned only with the "ones" structure of any set, the "ones" structure of each of those "ones", and so on. For the mathematical truth, every situation is a set of ones, each of these ones being itself a set of ones, and so on. This structural way of seeing external space enables our imagination to discover those sets whose *measure it says is infinite*. Infinite measurement presupposes the existence of infinite numbers. Phenomenology must see and say how mathematical science sees and says. The truth of mathematical science – mathematical truth – is part of common truth. It is a phenomenological reduction of it. This phenomenological study will be the subject of Chapters V and VI.

CHAPTER IV

Phenomenology of the thing

Mathematical sets

§48.- Thingness. Initial thingness. Common thingness.

The circle of common understanding.

Translogical philosophy and philosophy internal to logos.

What we have in common are things, the same things seen, and among these things, sight itself. The trivialization of sight is achieved through things. How can we all see the same things? What in the world is a thing?

Let us recall phenomenology's definition of a thing: a thing is anything that shows itself, no matter how it shows itself, no matter to whom it shows itself, and no matter when, in human history – and more generally in the history of living things – this monstration takes place. Here, in this section II devoted to common truth, we are talking about the things of "all of us", those we share, those to which we have given a name, a proper noun, or a common noun, those spoken of in language, in our discourses, in logos. We are talking here about *the common thingness*, different from *the initial thingness*, which is the absolutely surprising thingness of Being. What makes a thing a thing – and therefore a thingness – is that it shows itself. The thing does not show itself in the same way to all of us. Hence, in particular, the distinction between initial thingness and common thingness. Only translogical

truth – that is, translogical philosophy, phenomenology, metaphysics – makes the distinction between initial thingness and common thingness.

In speaking of our common things, the translogos never loses sight of either the definition of the thing or *the primitive axiom of common truth: there are things, there are only things*. This axiom, which speaks of the common thingness, which speaks of the stability and multiplicity of the things of common truth, is so obvious to "all of us" that it is never stated by the logos. In this axiom, the withdrawal of Being – its annihilation – is held in the trivialization of "there is", in the trivialization of "to show oneself". The axiom of common truth, so self-evident that it is never stated, speaks of the reasoning of Being, speaks of the result of the metamorphosis, through the work of time, of the initial thingness into common thingness. It is the result of the metamorphosis of "there is!" into "there are things". Stability and multiplicity trivialize the thing, including the view of things, itself stabilized and demultiplied. The primitive axiom of common truth shows the common thingness; it shows essentially the multiplicity of things that show themselves to us in evidence, a multiplicity that itself presupposes their stability.

Any philosophical discourse that starts from anything other than the phenomenological definition of the thing and the primitive axiom of common truth, and applies *our* logic to this other thing without interruption, is doomed to go round in circles: everything is already held in the understanding of this thing taken as a starting point, a supposedly common understanding. No analysis made by *our* logic based on this thing and its agreement will enable us to go back to the source of the common agreement. At best, if *our* logic is well respected, the conclusions of the analysis will be based on the same presuppositions as those that founded the starting point. This is how we must understand "the circle of common understanding".

Any philosophical discourse which, because it does not have them in view, does not start from the phenomenological definition of the thing and the primitive axiom of common truth, is part of *the philosophy internal to logos*. The logical analysis it then makes, which starts from

any point of view internal to physis, can at best only find the presuppositions of that point of view at the end. This circular analysis is what philosophy internal to logos – of which analytic philosophy is a part – engages in. In the worst case, instead of circularity, the discourse sinks into a self-congratulatory complexity, complexity – the overabundance of concepts – being seen as the sign of an approach to truth, in the scientific sense of the word "truth".

§49.- Properties and proper things.

Total stability and simple stability of proper things.

Natural properties.

Structural properties.

The intention of the living gaze.

That there is, it is lightning, it is absolutely crazy, it is Being. The truth of Being says: "There is!", whereas the rest of us do not even think of saying: "There are things", let alone "There is", because it is so obvious, because there are things everywhere, and there always have been.

It is temporal logic, time, which transforms for us the initial, thundering "There is!" into the "There are things". That there are things is an obvious, permanent, purely temporal fact, a totally stable fact. This fact, multiplicity, which affects all things, is *structural*; it states a *structural property* of the things of common truth. Each thing is a unique "one", a unique, stable component of the multiplicity of things.

But the stability of things, implied by their multiplicity, is not the same for all things. It is this difference in stability that introduces the difference between the mathematical – structural – truth of things and their physical – natural – truth. This is what we are going to show, phenomenologically, throughout this chapter devoted to *the thing*.

"There is!" expresses the thing itself, the thing *par excellence*, initial, unheard-of.

The things that there are for all of us are multiple, as indicated by the grammar of the primitive axiom of common truth: there are things. For

Being, there is only one thing: itself as the contradiction of "nothing", as absolute surprise. "Nothing" is part of Being as its only idea, pure and *a priori*.

For things to be seen as multiple by the living eye, they must already be *stable*. What does "stable" mean?

For all of us, "stable" means "stable in time"; "in time" is always implied. "Stable" means that the thing in question remains the thing it is, over time. In time, things change, we see that they change, and it is precisely because they change that we can speak of stability. Despite the permanent change that time shows us, things, our common things, remain the things they are for us, they are stable. To what extent are they stable, and to what extent are they not, as they change? This is what we need to analyse.

For Being, outside time, stability is not stability in time, it is absolute stability, that of nothingness, nothingness itself, the nothingness of which it has the idea and of which it is the contradiction. Absolute stability is the *a priori* idea of Being. The word of the logos that opposes the word "stability" is the word "chaos". In relation to its *a priori* idea, Being is chaos.

In time, we do not speak of absolute stability, but of *total stability* and *simple stability*.

All things are characterized by their properties, which are themselves things. Properties are those things that relate to something, that qualify something. On the one hand, there are *properties*, which are things, and on the other hand, there are things that have properties, *proper things*. A property distinguishes things from things. There are only things. "Being a thing" is not a property of a thing.

Properties, which in themselves are invariable, apply in different modes to proper things. In this sense, they themselves have properties. The properties of a property are relative to its impact on proper things. The different properties, as seen, as they must be seen by common truth, by science, are the subject of §51. The different properties, as seen by phenomenology, are the subject of §52.

Proper things are either simply stable, or totally stable. Like all things, they are either purely temporal or purely imaginary. Phenomenologically, it will be shown that the only totally stable and purely temporal proper things are numbers, our familiar numbers, the very numbers – ordinal sets – that are defined by axiomatic set theory.

Let us take a closer look at this difference between *property* and *proper thing*, and this other difference between *total stability* and *simple stability* of proper things. Then, we will ask ourselves: are there purely temporal proper things that are totally stable?

For things to be seen as multiple, for each of them to be named, they must already be distinguished from one another, and the possibility of this distinction requires their stability in time. What is this stability *in time*? Stability in time means that time introduces into the common view of all things an "already", a déjà-vu, a continuity, hence a familiarity with the thing that allows it to be distinguished, identified, remembered, and finally, through the intersubjectivity of gazes, the possibility of associating a name to it that designates it in the memory of all. Distinguishing anything makes it a unique "one" among the "many" that make up multiplicity. The sight of multiplicity presupposes stability, which alone enables us to distinguish and identify each thing, to make it a "one" among the "some", its incrustation in memory. Without stability in time, there can be no multiplicity of things in the living gaze. But what is stable in the thing, since, as we all see, things change? It is its properties, some of its properties, those that constitute the concepts under which the thing itself is classified and named.

Stability and multiplicity are the two fundamental characteristics of the thing in the living gaze; they are the definitive achievement of time. What characterizes common thingness is multiplicity, a multiplicity that presupposes stability. *The universal structural property of things of common truth is multiplicity, a multiplicity that presupposes stability.*

If the multiplicity of things presupposes the stability of things, why not make multiplicity the only fundamental characteristic? The reason is that, while things are stable in the living gaze because they are

multiple, they are nonetheless variously stable. Things are distinguished from one another by their level of stability: some are *totally stable*; others are *simply stable*. Simply stable things are stable enough to be distinguished, to participate in multiplicity.

Anything that is simply stable is detected by the living eye because it possesses certain *properties* that are important to the living being. Properties are what make proper things. But properties are also things! Phenomenologically, then, we need to consider this partition of things: *properties* on the one hand, and *proper things* on the other. A property is something that relates to something, to things. Proper things are things that are not seen as properties, and which require properties to be the things they are.

Aristotle's categories result from an analysis of the diverse types of property of proper things. This analysis of properties is not phenomenological; it is strictly internal to common truth and its logos. Aristotle lists the different predicative types available to us, in language, to describe things, to tell us how they are, what they do, what they have. It is an inventory of the diverse ways we can qualify things, distinguish between them, describe them. The ten predicative types listed by Aristotle are essence (living or mineral), quantity (how much?), quality (manual or intellectual), relation (bigger or smaller), place (here or there), time (yesterday, today, or tomorrow), position (sitting or lying down), possession (material goods, legal powers), action (doing this or doing that), passion (emotion, feeling, intimate affect). It is the "how it is for all of us" of the thing that exclusively interests Aristotle in this inventory. Phenomenology, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with the "how things appear" to the living eye, and with the teleological role that properties – certain properties – play in this appearance.

The properties that characterize a proper thing, that make it a proper thing of a known kind, a kind to which we have given a common noun, constitute a *concept*. A concept is a set of properties. Every proper thing falls under one or more concepts.

We need to show why proper things are, in general, *simply stable*. We also need to show that there are *purely temporal proper things* that are *totally stable*: numbers, our familiar numbers.

Let us take a closer look.

Phenomenologically, the stability of things, whether simple or total, results from the work of time. Initially, therefore, outside time, there is only one thing: the madness of being. This thing – indescribable, except by logos words such as "madness", "contradiction", "unheard of", "exclamation", "chaos", which can only communicate the sight of it to the one who already sees it – is anything but stable. For us, for our gaze, always already there, what stabilizes things, what simply makes them stable and multiple, what fixes them in time, are their properties. Properties are things, and these things, invariable in themselves and therefore totally stable, give stability – simple or total stability – to things. Things are things only because they possess at least one property. The thing itself is fixed in our gaze only by the properties it possesses. Properties are subdivided into *natural properties*, those that form the basis of proper things, and *structural properties*, those that form the basis of common thingness. The structure of common thingness is the result of the work of the prime natural property – the property of being vital – in the "there is".

The time which, from Being, from the initial "seeing", jointly constructs things and the living gaze which sees things, shows us only properties and concepts of things – a concept is a set of properties. Every proper thing exists only through the concept – or concepts – under which it falls. First, there are things that are properties, and then there are things that are stabilized in the gaze by these properties.

Structural properties appear *a posteriori* to the work of natural properties. Natural properties are detected in the "there is" by *the intention* of the living gaze. The intention of the living – which is to preserve itself, which is to perpetuate itself, which is its conservation – is the living metamorphosis, the living avatar, of the logical intention, of the intention of logical work: the reasoning of Being, its stabilization.

The intention of the living gaze is above all to preserve itself, to find what is *vital* for it: to be vital is the first natural property. The phenomenological study of these particular things that are natural properties, of their origin, will be the subject of §52.

As natural properties appear in the living gaze, we build simply stable proper things that have these properties. From the first natural property, the vital, and with the help of imagination, the common truth generates new properties and thus new proper things, temporal or imaginary. The logos is extensive.

§50.- Monstration of simple stability.

Purely imaginary concept. Purely temporal concept. Natural concept.

Common noun. Proper noun.

Let's show that every purely temporal proper thing – with the exception of numbers, whose phenomenological monstration will be the subject of §56 – is, at every moment, another thing.

Consider, for example, that tree up ahead. It is one thing among the other things in external space, unique like all things, unique because, like all things, it is distinct from all other things. Of this thing, we know and say that it is *a* tree. "Tree" is not the word that says the thing. It is the word that says the *kind* of thing about the thing I have got right here in front of me. There are many kinds of trees. This one is special. It has all the characteristics that are common to trees, but it has others that are unique to it. The word "tree" represents a set of characteristics that are necessary and sufficient for a thing to possess to be a tree. In the "there is", our gaze has detected those things that are trees, those that are distinguished in the "there is" by these characteristics, which they alone possess. The word "tree" designates not a single thing, but a subset of all things, a subset defined by a precise list of invariable properties. These properties define the *concept* of a tree.

Any set of properties defines a concept, a concept that is at first purely imaginary. Every concept, like every proposition, is first *imaginary*. It

remains to be seen whether there are *purely temporal* things in nature – in physics – that fall under this concept.

The concept of a tree, under which purely temporal things fall, is itself, therefore, purely temporal. Not only is it purely temporal, but it is also *natural*. Natural, for a concept or a property, means that its pure temporality does not have to be verified, it imposes itself on us; it is naturally that the concept of tree has imposed itself on us in time.

Initially *abstract*, the concept becomes *concrete* once its pure temporality has been verified. The concept of a tree is more than concrete, it is *natural*, its pure temporality imposing itself on us. An *abstract concept* is one that does not – yet – have a representative instance in nature, except in our imagination. A purely imaginary concept is definitively abstract, with no possible temporal realization. For phenomenology, concepts are either purely temporal or imaginary, and in the latter case, a concept remains imaginary as long as the pure temporality of at least one thing that falls under this concept is not shown.

There is nothing stopping me from associating a word with this tree in front of me, a word that represents it and says it. I call it "My-tree". My-tree is the *proper noun* of this tree. What I want to talk about now is this proper, common, purely temporal thing, belonging to external space, which everyone can therefore see at the same time, called "My-tree". Note that the vast majority of proper things have not been given proper nouns. We generally designate a proper thing by a word that expresses a concept under which it falls – by a *common noun* – and by specifying a characteristic that is proper to it: the tree that's there in front of me – I could also have said: the plant that's there in front of me, or again: the living being that's there in front of me.

A proper thing can be designated by a proposition that specifies its uniqueness – for example: the proper thing that is there, in front of me. It is sometimes designated by a proper noun. "Sun" is a proper noun. Only things that are particularly important to us have proper nouns. The Sun is a vital proper thing – now subsumed under the concept of star –

perhaps the vital proper thing par excellence, a thing that alone possesses multiple properties of primary importance for living terrestrial beings.

My-tree is stable. In fact, it is particularly stable. Stability is a relative notion. My-tree is relatively more stable, for example, than that pain, always the same, which assails me from time to time and to which I can also give a proper noun. From day to day, I see My-Tree in front of me, faithful, it is always there. But is it *totally stable*? The answer is obviously no. Its leaves move. From time to time, it loses its leaves, and then new ones arrive. It grows. From day to day, it is never quite the same. It lives. Like all living things, it eventually dies, disappears. It is not just living things that disappear. The things we make are ephemeral, but so are the things nature presents to us: day, night, a lake, a river, a sea, an island, a mountain, a planet, a star, a feeling, a pleasure, a pain, a taste. Each of these things not only changes, but can disappear, and then another of the same kind can appear: with *simple stability*, we witness the eternal return of the same. In the case of My-tree, the only thing that is totally stable as far as it is concerned, apart from the concepts it falls under – living being, plant, tree, oak, white oak – seems to be its name. The same proper noun, My-tree, designates a thing that is a tree, but which is, at every moment, another thing, another tree.

Common nouns and proper nouns always designate a concept. The concept, as a description of proper things, is totally stable, like any property. Proper things as described by their concept, are simply stable. Mathematical sets, phenomenologically defined in §60, are the imaginary proper things that are an exception to this rule: they are totally stable. Among mathematical sets, only numbers are purely temporal proper things, as will be shown in §56. It will be shown that mathematical sets are the proper things whose properties are structural: this is the reason for their total stability. Proper things that possess at least one natural property are simply stable.

The *simple stability* of a thing is the stability of the concept under which it is classified, a concept to which we have given a name. The

thing itself, the proper thing, is unstable. What remains of it from one moment to the next is the set of concepts under which it is arranged, under which we have arranged it: it is, each time it is seen, another thing, seen under the same concepts.

There are, however, purely temporal things that are totally stable. We see them without our imagination intervening, and time has no effect on them. By definition of mathesis, they belong to mathesis, the totally stable domain of physis. These purely temporal, totally stable proper things are numbers – the phenomenological monstration of numbers will be the subject of §56. Numbers belong to both intimate and external space.

A natural concept is a set of natural properties. Where do natural properties come from, those things that give rise to proper things in the living gaze? Are they things before things? The origin of natural properties will be the subject of §52. First, let us look at how properties are seen by science, i.e. *a posteriori* to the constitution of proper things by natural properties.

§51.- The properties of things as seen by science.

Affects – relative to things – and pure affects – relative to oneself.

The analysis of properties by science is made *a posteriori* to the constitution of proper things in and by the living gaze. This constitution, made in and by time, is born of the intention of the living being who seeks, in what there is, what is necessary for its conservation. The constitutive properties of things, the *natural properties*, which are *a priori*, escape science. They are phenomenologically fundamental.

The properties of things themselves have properties, properties that science analyzes.

For science, a property can be:

- *structural and universal* if it always relates to all things. The only structural and universal property is *multiplicity* – which

presupposes *stability*. Multiplicity is the totally stable structure of common thingness.

- *structural, but specific to external space*, if it is a relation that links together all the proper things of external space. The only specific structural property of external space is the *membership relation*: every proper thing in external space belongs to some other proper things in external space, and some proper things in external space belong to it, unless it is the empty thing, the emptiness, the empty space between proper things of the same kind, the interchase emptiness, that which gives the sensation that proper things are in space.

- *purely temporal*, if there is at least one purely temporal proper thing that possesses this property.

- *purely imaginary* if there is no purely temporal proper thing that possesses this property.

- *physical*, if it is a purely temporal property – a physical quantity – possessed by all non-mathematical proper things in external space at a level of intensity that varies with time. It is the variations in their physical properties that mean that proper things are not totally stable. Some physical properties are intrinsic to the proper thing – mass, temperature – while others are relative to other proper things – distance, speed, acceleration, duration, force, energy. For each physical property, the question arises of how to measure it. There are purely temporal proper things to which no physical magnitude, and therefore no variable magnitude, is associated, and which themselves serve as a standard for measuring physical magnitudes: numbers. Numbers are the only totally stable

purely temporal things. The phenomenological monstration of numbers will be the subject of §56.

- *subjective*, if it is an affect originating in intimate space and relative to a thing, constituting the repercussion of that thing. We are not talking here about the *general subjectivity* of things, which means that things, to be things, must be seen, but about *intimate, individual subjectivity*, relative to the things of interior space.

We need to distinguish between affects relative to things – which are subjective properties of things, their repercussions – and *pure affects*, which are affects relative to oneself, to that particular thing which is oneself, affects which reveal the self to itself: thoughts, ideas, pure pain, pure joy, serenity, anguish, everything that makes up pure intimate life – pure intimate life which is parallel to the life which is linked to external space, and which knows this external life, influences it. Pure affect par excellence is the initial contradiction, birth, Being. From it flow – unconsciously, before birth, then consciously, with birth – all pure affects. Science ignores pure affects; they are seen as such only by phenomenological truth.

Nor does this list include the particular property of being *natural*, in the sense of *constitutive* of things in the living gaze, of imposing itself on us because it is alive, active, in us, active as is time. The effect of natural properties – in particular, that of being vital – is to create things in their nature, as we see them, *a posteriori* to their work.

When common truth focuses solely on the universal, totally stable structure of things in external space – a structure seen *a posteriori* to the work of natural properties – it is reduced to mathematical truth. This reduction of common truth is a phenomenological reduction. Mathematical truth, which adds to universal multiplicity the membership structure proper to external space, is the truth of our mathematical science. Our mathematical science is concerned only with

the totally stable structure that is the thingness of external space. At the heart of this structure are purely temporal things that have no physical properties of their own, whose only properties are the structural properties of multiplicity and membership: numbers. Numbers also belong to intimate space.

Our physical science, based on the mathematical structure of things, studies the proper things of external space in terms of their temporal variations *a posteriori* – always *a posteriori* to the work of natural properties, the work already accomplished by time. The temporal variations of proper things of external space originate in the variations in intensity of their physical properties. Now, these physical properties are dependent on one another: they are relative. What we are concerned with in the work of time, with these physical properties whose intensity is relative and variable over time, is the overall coherence of what is shown to the living eye: things change, but these changes are, in our eyes, coherent. Our physical science, which presupposes this coherence, looks for its laws, the laws of nature, the laws of the nature of proper things in external space. Every proper thing, in terms of its nature – as opposed to its mathematical structure – poses two questions. These are the questions that physical science seeks to answer:

1- Since every proper thing in external space is made up of proper things, how far can this breakdown into proper things go? What are the basic constituents of a proper thing? Is there one – or more, or none – basic, unbreakable constituent present in every proper thing? Is there such a thing as an *atom*?

2- Since every proper thing is simply stable, what presides over its changes, what changes in it, and what are the laws of these changes since these changes appear regular to us?

The nature of proper things is therefore, on the one hand, their *material* composition, and on the other, the laws of their temporal

changes. Beyond these questions of nature, there is the *a priori* of the total coherence of what is shown to us, an *a priori* that time never denies, nor should it.

In mathesis, which is the totally stable structure of the common thingness, time has already settled any problem of coherence. Since time is only concerned with the change it regulates, it no longer appears in the mathematical view of things. Mathematical truth unfolds in an ideal logical space. The questions of coherence that arise in axiomatic theories of mathematics relate to the system of axioms put in place to express the totally stable structure. A system of axioms shown to be incoherent will be corrected until it is no longer incoherent: it shows an error, a contradiction. Any mathematical incoherence seen, finds its axiomatic correction. However, no infinite mathematical theory can prove, by itself, its own coherence. Basically, this means that the question of coherence is quickly settled in mathematics: *there can be no incoherence*. Any inconsistency reveals an error in the common truth regarding the choice of axioms. Any inconsistency must find its solution, and it always does. Mathematical truth is fully expressed by:

- 1- There are things, there are only things.
- 2- The proper things of external space are made of proper things.

These axioms, laid down by phenomenology, which pose no problem of coherence, are obvious to the common truth as soon as it is shown what a thing is, what a proper thing is, and what external space is. Their equivalence with the axioms of axiomatic set theory, posited by the common truth, will be shown in Chapter VI. They are true because the living eye sees them as temporally true. It sees them as temporally true up to a certain point since the constitution of proper things by proper things is left endless. The truth of the "endless" is imaginary, it is established by extrapolation from the purely temporal, it cannot be temporal. The mathematical view, which begins in the purely temporal,

flows structurally into the purely imaginary of the "endless". Physical science takes over to see, as far as possible, where the purely temporal ends in the composition of the proper thing by other proper things. The purely temporal ends when the living eye can no longer see the result of physical experience without changing the result of experience, without influencing it. When the living eye can no longer see temporally, it no longer knows. At this precise point, we see the total dependence of things on the gaze that sees them. Things only exist – temporally – when seen.

Changing nature poses the permanent problem of the coherence of what it shows to living eyes. Once the regularity of what happens has been observed by the living eye, and total coherence has been presupposed, it remains to find the laws that express this coherence and regularity – the laws of nature, the laws of physics.

In addition to mathematical and physical properties, there are also subjective properties. Intimate space associates a resonance with everything. Thus, each of us can say of a thing that it is important, indifferent, useful, pleasant, amusing, beautiful, ugly, painful, sad, dangerous, and so on.

The modern scientific way of classifying properties in this way prepares us for phenomenological analysis and is already clearly distinguishable from Aristotle's inventory of ten categories.

This scientific way of classifying properties is that of common truth. For the common truth, external space appears independent of us, and it is all at once that we discover, *a posteriori*, the proper things of external space and their properties. For phenomenology, not only do common thingness and common things exist only in the living gaze, but these things are subjectively generated by the living gaze. The subjectivity in question here is not individual, intimate, but universal, the same for every living being. It is the property of a thing of being vital that distinguishes it in what there is, in the "there is", that makes it a proper thing. Natural properties, in particular the property of being vital, from which all other natural properties derive, are the first of things. The

property of being vital is the translation through time, for the living eye, of the ideal property, that of ideal logical space: absolute stability.

§52.- Phenomenology of properties.

The prime property: being vital.

Initial intention, initial property.

Initial intentionality and the intentionality of the living.

The *primary property* of the living gaze is that of being *vital*. This property results from the metamorphosis, through time, of the initial intention, that of the *a priori* Idea, into the intention of the living. What we, *a posteriori*, perceive as a vital need, conservation need, is initially a need for reasoning, stabilization, and neutralization, stemming from The *a priori* Idea of Being.

The initial "us", untouched by any logical work, is Being. The living being, born of Being, reasoned by time, seeks to perpetuate this reasoning, seeks what is vital for it: it works to preserve and perpetuate itself. The intention of the living, conservation, from which the primary property sought – vitality – is derived, is a form of the logical intention of time.

From the prime property – vitality – appear, in time, second properties, all derived from the prime property. From vitality, we move on to usefulness, from usefulness to performance, from performance to gratification, then to playfulness, aesthetics and so on. The first proper things, those of every animal, are the things that are vital. For the primitive living being, the vital proper things are few in number, a number perhaps reduced to unity. Then, as species evolve, the things themselves multiply and become more complex, like properties and concepts.

Properties – which for us are indecomposable, totally stable things – are the ramification of a single initial property, which is not a property of things, but a constitutive property of things, which constructs things according to the initial intention: to establish peace, stability, continuity, uniformity, normality, neutrality, evidence as a total absence

of surprise. This description of the initial intention can only imperfectly describe it: each word would have to be taken in a radical sense; a sense that is not the one given to it by the logos. These words, which belong to the logos, have, in the logos, a relative meaning, relative to the natural violence of the world. In the world where these words are generated, the sought-after peace does not totally reign; there is peace only because there is also its opposite. The same applies to stability, uniformity, and neutrality. In this world, every surprise is ordinary, relative; every surprise could probably have been avoided. The words that describe the initial intention and the initial property must be understood in their extraordinary sense, the one given to them by the truth of Being. The initial intention of logic, whose primary form is time, is to force the initial property of absolute stability into Being.

For phenomenology, properties, all properties, including the physical properties of things, including mathematical structural properties, are derived from the primary property sought by the living gaze, the vital, itself derived from the ideal property: absolute stability, nothingness. Consequently, all the properties whose names belong to the logos are subjective, derived from the living gaze.

Keep in mind that the initial is absolute violence: Being. We must bear in mind the intention of the *a priori* Idea at the heart of Being: peace, stability.

For the common truth, the property of a thing of being vital does not appear to generate the common thingness. As external space is perceived by it as independent of the living gaze, the order in which it arranges the properties of things is not that of phenomenology. For common truth, for science, there are first structural, mathematical properties: multiplicity and membership; then there are physical properties, those stated by the laws of physics; and finally, the subjective properties of things, dependent on each of us, those that differentiate us. For phenomenology, structural, mathematical properties are the consequence of the reification of Being by the initial

intention, by the intention of the living gaze, by the primary natural property: being vital.

From the outset, we divide things into properties and proper things. The science of our logic, aware of this partition, gives the name "element" to what phenomenology calls "proper thing": the proper things of phenomenology are the *elements* of our science of logic. The concept of property is expanded, by our logic, into that of *relation* – any property can be considered as a relation, possibly unary. For our science of logic, there are, jointly and independently, elements and relations between these elements: the intentional, seeing gaze disappears.

Here we see the gap between phenomenology and our science of logic. For this science, there are the elements, and these elements exist independently of any properties and relations; it simply happens that the elements possess such and such properties, properties that are themselves there, together with the elements. For phenomenology, it is the properties that constitute the elements, and these properties have a common origin: the initial intention, that of logic at the service of the *a priori* Idea. For our science, whether logical or mathematical, the elements are there, always already there, existing for all to see, in time, independently of their properties and the relations between them, which are themselves there, existing for all to see, in time.

The philosophy of knowledge, and Husserlian phenomenology in particular, attributes a privileged role to *intentionality* in the constitution of objects. How does intentionality relate to property?

Intentionality is defined in our dictionaries as the mind's active relation to any object, adapted to a near future, to a project. What is problematic for Husserl is "the possibility, for knowledge, of reaching an object which is in itself what it is"²³.

Is the object "in itself" what it is? This is the question of philosophical realism. For the *other* phenomenology, as for quantum physics, when it comes to things of common truth, there is no such thing as a *thing-in-itself*; there are only things seen. But the sight of the living is not free

²³ In his *Idea of Phenomenology* (1907).

of intention. What is the intention of the living gaze? Who or what governs the intention of the living gaze? What is this "active relation of the mind" that determines the thing?

To answer these questions, we need to return to the fundamentals of phenomenology – the other phenomenology.

The active relationship of the living gaze to the thing is governed by time, by that primary form of logic that is time. The initial intentionality is that of time. It is then that of our imagination, which tends to anticipate what time shows us – which is what science does – and ignores the intention of time. The intentionality of our imagination is validated or rejected by time, by the experimental set-up. As a result, there is only one intentionality, that of time. What is the intention of time?

The active intention of time is the reasoning of Being: it is, properly speaking, to bring Being back to Reason. The result of this activity is the metamorphosis of Being and its violence into the multiplicity of living gazes and the coherence of all that is evident to living gazes. As for the living itself, the only objective given to it by time is the *vital* objective: the preservation of oneself, one's family, one's species, the living. The intention of the living being, derived from that of time, is its own preservation, the eternal return of the same. The particular living being that is man adds to this original intention the intention to understand. The difficulty of understanding, and in particular of understanding individual death, gives rise to religious feeling. The intention to understand manifests itself in science. The activity of science is an extension of the activity of time, contributing to the reasoning of nature already effected by time, and reinforcing the original intention. Religious feeling stems precisely from the fact that man, although unaware of the original intention, realizes that he is floating in a void, merely proving to himself the evidences already shown by time. Man finds no meaning in life and death, except that the nothingness of death confirms the nothingness of life. The anguish linked to religious feeling has always found its relief in the imaginary,

in the idea of the all-powerful god as creator of everything and of himself, in religion and its theology. Husserlian phenomenology does not depart from this pattern: in §81 of the *Ideen*, it arrives at the original gift, God's gift to us of the evidence of things, and joins ontotheological metaphysics. It satisfies faith in God; it satisfies believers and theologians. We understand nothing, but he, God, understands everything. His serenity is total and awaits us in eternity.

§53.- The structural property of membership.

Mathematical truth and physical truth.

The structure of proper things of external space is permanently present to us. This structure is *the common thingness of external space*, a thingness that has the particularity – compared to the proper things of intimate space – of being doubly multiple: we will speak of external multiplicity and internal multiplicity. Like all things, each proper thing in external space is a "one" among the "ones" that make up the general multiplicity of things – external multiplicity – and is itself made up of a multiplicity of "ones" – internal multiplicity – each of these "ones" being itself a proper thing made up of "ones", and this without end. All of us, all the time, effectively see every proper thing from external space in this way. In this *a posteriori* way of seeing things, only *the relation of membership* between proper things stands out: every proper thing belongs, as "one", to a multiplicity of proper things, to a situation, and is itself a multiplicity to which proper things belong that count as "one" within this multiplicity. Every proper thing in external space can be seen as a "one" made up of "ones". The properties proper to each "one", those that have made it the "one" that it is, do not enter this way of seeing: this view – of the "one" among the "ones", which is made of "ones", and which contributes to the constitution of "ones" – is situated *a posteriori* to the generation of things by natural properties. *The property of internal membership is a structural property of external space*, in addition to the fundamental structural property of common

thingness which is multiplicity. It results from the work of time, through the intermediary of natural properties.

Internal membership between proper things in external space is a property – a relation – that is effective for all proper things in external space and is definitively acquired. Alongside the general property that qualifies the thingness of common truth – multiplicity – it is the only structural property of proper things of external space. This *a posteriori* structure – the work of time – is independent of time, and totally stable. It is the mathesis of external space.

A "one" may or may not belong to another "one", but it is itself made up of "ones". This way of seeing the proper things of external space is the *mathematical* way: it is *mathematical truth*. For this way of seeing, which is mathematical truth, nature – the generation of proper things by properties – gives way to the resulting structure: the structure of membership. Mathematical truth is a reduction of common truth: everyone can see things this way. This truth arises from a *phenomenological reduction* of common truth.

Mathematical truth is that reduction of common truth which sees the things of an external situation only as "ones" made of "ones", i.e. which sees the proper things of a situation only as constituents of the double multiple structure – internal and external. This truth is shown a posteriori to the generation of proper things by natural properties – in particular, by the property of being vital. The nature of the "ones" – the properties that made each "one" the "one" that it is – is obscured here. Only the "one" structure of the "ones" among the "ones" of the external situation is considered. Mathematical truth sees only this membership structure. This never-ending structure of the common thingness of external space, whose temporal realization is totally stable, is the mathesis of external space.

If the model of our mathematical science must be strictly what mathematical truth sees, then this science must need no other axioms than these four axioms of common truth:

- 1- There are things, there are only things,
- 2- Things are divided into properties and proper things,
- 3- The proper things of external space are made of things,
- 4- The principle of contradiction – the fundamental axiom of *our* logic.

The equivalence between the axiomatics of mathematical science thus presented by phenomenology and the axiomatics presented by axiomatic set theory will be shown in Chapter VI: *the mathematical sets of phenomenology are the sets of axiomatic set theory*. With axiomatic set theory now the sole foundation of the entire mathematical edifice, it will thus be shown that this foundation is entirely given by the axioms of common truth – the primitive axiom of common truth and the axiom specific to the thingness of external space – and by the principle of contradiction.

The mathematical membership structure is not only a purely temporal and totally stable property of the things of external space, but it is universal in that it affects, definitively, all the proper things of external space. Now, each "one", seen *physically*, has its own life as a simply stable proper thing: it changes in time.

The study of the temporal variations of simply stable proper things in external space is one of the two fundamental themes of *physical science*, the science that accounts for *physical truth*. This theme gives rise to the laws of physics. The other fundamental theme of physical science is the composition of proper things by proper things, with the question: is there a basic proper thing, an unbreakable proper thing, a unique constituent of proper things?

When our physical science looks at a proper thing in order to study its characteristics and behaviour over time, it is always interested in a particular kind of thing, a kind defined by a concept: it is interested in the *purely temporal* proper things of external space as defined by their nature – and not, like mathematical science, in the *imaginary* proper

things defined by the sole structure constituted by the common thingness of external space.

Purely temporal proper things are constantly changing, are never quite the same, and it is precisely the laws of this change that interest physical science. The laws of change of simply stable proper things involve the characteristics of proper things, which are *variable and often relative physical quantities*: these are relative motion, i.e. relative distance, duration, i.e. relative time, force, energy, entropy, mass, and temperature. Experience shows that these physical quantities are dependent on each other. This interdependence is referred to as the laws of physics. The laws of physics relate the measurements of physical quantities. The question of *the measurement of physical quantities* will be addressed in §57.

When, under the effect of the experimental set-up, the proper thing disappears – can no longer be classified under the concept under which it was observed – it gives rise to other proper things, classified under other concepts. This experimental process of transforming proper things into other proper things – with the aim of finding the basic, unbreakable component of all proper things – has its limit. The limit is that of the possibility of the experiment itself. Scientific experience presupposes seeing, looking at things, observing, whatever the means of observation. When the living gaze can no longer rest on the result of an experiment without changing that result, then it no longer knows what it is seeing, then the scientific, physical study of common thingness is finished.

The structure of "ones" made of "ones" knows its physical limit. This limit is not *structural* – it is not mathematical – it is *natural* – it is physical. Mathematical science, which is concerned only with the general structure of things in external space, does not know this limit, which is an important theme of research in physical science. The physical study of this limit led physical science, over the twentieth century, to quantum physics. Over the same twentieth century, the absence of a limit to the structure of "ones" made of "ones" enabled

mathematical science, following in the footsteps of the pioneering Cantor, to explore numerical infinities, and, at the same time, to develop the axiomatic theory of sets.

Physical truth is the result of a phenomenological reduction of common truth. This reduction, which aims for objectivity, eliminates the subjective affects of intimate space. Mathematical truth is itself the result of a phenomenological reduction of physical truth: it eliminates nature, leaving only the structure that is the common thingness of external space.

§54.- The set – or the multiple.

In the following paragraphs, the *proper multiple*, the *number*, and the *mathematical set* will be defined phenomenologically one after the other. The point here is to recall the ordinary meaning of the words "set" and "multiple" – considered here as synonyms, whereas "mathematical set" and "proper multiple" are not synonyms, even though a number is at once a multiple, a proper multiple and a mathematical set. The aim is to show, on the one hand, the difference between the ordinary set – which mathematicians call "intuitive" – and the mathematical set, and, on the other, the specificity of numbers. Chapter VI shows that mathematical sets and numbers as defined by phenomenology are sets and numbers – ordinal sets – as defined by axiomatic set theory.

There is the same difference in generality between the intuitive set and the mathematical set as between the thing – whose concept is the most general there is – and the proper thing of external space seen as made of proper things of external space, thus showing the particular thingness of this space, a thingness that is an *a posteriori* structure (*a posteriori* of the constitution of things in the living gaze through natural properties).

The set is a thing of ordinary common truth, while *the mathematical set* is a thing of *mathematical truth*. Mathematical truth is a phenomenological reduction of common truth – phenomenological reductions of common truth will be studied thematically in Chapter

VIII. Phenomenological reductions of common truth are particular truth fields within the truth field of common truth, a field whose expression is logos. Mathematical discourse, for example, belongs to the logos, is a field of the logos.

A *set* – or *multiple* – is a group of things constituting a whole, and therefore a thing. In other words, the set is a "one" made up of "ones", each of these "ones" being a thing. The "ones" of the thing that is the set are its elements. What is important here is that the element of a set – or of a multiple – is a thing of any kind: it can be a property, a proper thing, imaginary or temporal, of external space or of intimate space; it can itself be a set. *The set – the multiple – is a thing made of things.*

There is certainly a reason why these things constitute, for the common truth, a set, a thing. Most certainly, these things have at least one common property that distinguishes them among things. For example, their names may have been drawn at random from a lexicon. Another example: the set of things to which we have given a name. In any case, the things of a set are the things that are so and so. This common property cannot be that of being a thing, for there are only things, and being a thing is not a property – a property distinguishes things among things. The "whole of things" or "the set of things" is another way of saying what we represent by the word "universe" or by the word "physis": what time shows to the living eye. What time shows us is things, the whole of things, physis, the universe, "my" interior space.

When Cantor, the pioneer of multiplicity and its infinities, introduced the notion of set into mathematics, he did not deviate from the intuitive notion. He wrote: "By set, we mean a grouping into a whole of objects quite distinct from our intuition or thought." Over the twentieth century, mathematicians were gradually obliged, for the sake of consistency, to give the set another definition, an axiomatic one. Phenomenology, however, defines these same mathematical sets differently. It defines them more originally, more fundamentally, based on the axioms of common truth alone:

- 1- There are things,
- 2- The proper things of external space are made of things.

These proper things of external space, seen solely in terms of their structure – multiplicity and membership – and thus seen through the lens of mathematical truth, are called "mathematical sets". *Mathematical sets* will be defined in §60, after the phenomenological definition of *proper multiples* and *numbers*.

§55.- The proper multiple.

A proper multiple is a set in which each of its elements – each of its "ones" – is a proper thing. A proper multiple is therefore a proper thing.

There are proper multiples in both intimate and external space. A proper multiple can be purely temporal or purely imaginary.

For example, during the day, there was the multiple occurrences in intimate space of this well-known pain; on this table, therefore in external space, there is the multiple occurrences of fruits or vegetables. The multiples in question are proper multiples. They are purely temporal and simply stable.

The set of proper things is a proper multiple. This proper multiple is doubly purely imaginary. On the one hand, it includes all imaginary proper things; on the other, no situation in which only purely temporal proper things are shown will show us all purely temporal proper things, only part of them.

§56.- What is a number?

Phenomenological monstration of numbers.

Numbers are purely temporal, *totally stable* proper multiples. They belong to both intimate and external space. Any totally stable purely temporal proper multiple is either a number, or a set of numbers, or a set of sets of numbers, and so on.

The phenomenological monstration of numbers lies in this descriptive proposition:

A number is the proper noun of a proper multiple, and it is itself, as a proper noun, the purely temporal and totally stable proper thing that is the thing it says: it is itself, as a proper noun, the proper multiple it says.

What is this proper multiple of which a number is the proper noun?

The pronunciation of the proper noun that is a number – the temporal sequence of sound syllables that make up the proper noun – is itself the proper multiple of which that number is the proper noun. The proper noun – as pronounced or as written – of this proper multiple is the proper multiple itself. The purely temporal thing that the proper noun exhibits every time it is spoken or written is invariable in time: like every proper noun, it always says and shows the same thing, but in the case of number, this thing is invariable in time, it is totally stable. With number, there is a purely temporal, material identity between the proper multiple and its proper noun. In the case of the proper multiples that are numbers, their proper noun not only represents the multiple in our memory and imagination in a totally stable way, like any proper noun, it is the multiple itself. To say the number, this is to show temporally, *once again*, the purely temporal totally stable proper multiple that it is.

If the noun that is the number is spoken aloud or written down, it is shown for all to see temporally, it is externalized.

A number is a totally stable, purely temporal proper thing because it is itself, as the proper noun of a proper multiple, the temporal realization – oral or written, intimate or external – of the multiple it says.

§57.- Number as a measure of multiples.

Any multiple – which is not necessarily a proper multiple, and which can therefore be a set, in the intuitive sense of the word – can be associated, in a unique way, with a number which is, by definition, its

measure. The association is made vocally. The sound phrase, which is uttered by emitting a sound for every "one" of the multiple, shows us all the number that is the measure of this multiple. This process is called "counting".

Consider any multiple, such as this one:

A A A H A A M A A B A A M

Its measure is

1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1

Where 1 represents a spoken sound, which is always the same, whatever it may be, or a written sign – in this case, the sign 1 – which is always the same, whatever it may be.

The use of a *numbering system* makes it possible to condense the statement or writing of the proper noun – the number – which expresses the measure of the multiple. With the binary system, the measure becomes 1101. With the decimal system, the measure is 13. The initial phenomenological statement of the number, uncondensed, corresponds to the unary system.

In all cases, it is the temporal succession of sounds – or words – that shows the measure of the multiple. Numbers are the purely temporal and totally stable proper multiples that serve as the yardstick for measuring multiples. To say the number that is the measure of a multiple is to produce, temporally, the purely temporal and totally stable proper multiple that corresponds to this multiple through the operation of counting.

§58.- What are the "ones" that constitute a number?

Numbers are, among things, purely temporal and totally stable proper things of intimate or external space.

Since a number is a proper multiple, i.e. a set made up of "ones" that are proper things, what is the "one" of a number?

The "one" of a number is itself a number. A number, as a proper noun, is a succession of signs. Each element – each sign – in this succession corresponds both to a new proper multiple and to the pronunciation of a new number as the proper noun of that proper multiple. The end of the pronunciation of a number is shown by a prolonged silence – a prolonged absence of sign. A number is always the end of a sequence of pronounced numbers. The term is shown by silence. A number shows all the numbers that precede it – temporally or geometrically – in its pronunciation or writing. These numbers, which precede it, are the "ones" that constitute the proper multiple that it is.

What of the sign, whatever it may be, which is pronounced at every stage of the pronunciation process? Pronounced on its own – surrounded by silence – this sign is a number, the first of numbers, the one to which it is agreed to attribute the proper noun "one" or "1". Pronounced after other signs, it says, with these other signs, another proper noun, another totally stable proper multiple, which in its pronunciation, from sign to sign, reviews all the numbers that precede it in this pronunciation. In itself, this sign is any kind of proper thing, simply stable. Considered as a constituent of a proper noun, it is indissociable from the signs, the syllables, which precede and follow it in pronunciation.

We must not confuse the sign as a simply stable constituent of the proper noun that is a number – every proper noun is totally stable – with the sign as a simply stable thing. Yet they are the same sign. What distinguishes them? Context, situation.

If one of us points to a number and says its noun, everyone sees what he is pointing to. On the other hand, every multiple shows, in its own way, the number that measures it. All we have to do is associate the pronunciation of the numerical "one" with every "one" in the multiple. The measurement is then said, and everyone can hear or see it. We count multiples so naturally, so habitually, that we forget that numbers are the

most concrete things there are. They have always imposed themselves on all of us and form the basis of our community. Kafka phenomenologically illustrated this imposition of numbers on us all in a little text he entitled *Community*. Here it is in its entirety:

"We are five friends. One day we were leaving a house, one after the other; on the way out, the first had placed himself next to the entrance, then the second had gone out, or rather had slipped across the threshold as quickly as a drop of quicksilver to place himself next to the first, then the third, then the fourth, then the fifth. Finally, all five of us were in a row. Passers-by would spot us, point, and say, "The five of us just walked out of this house." Since then, we have been living together, and it would be a peaceful life if a sixth had not constantly interfered. He does not do us any harm, he just bothers us, and that is enough. – Why impose yourself where you are not wanted? We do not know him, and we do not want him among us. The five of us, it is true, do not know each other much better these days, but what is possible and tolerable among the five of us is impossible and intolerable for six. Besides, there are five of us, and we do not want to be six. After all, what sense would it make to be constantly together? For the five of us, it does not make much sense either, but since we are here together, we will just have to stay that way – but a new member never! We do not want any. Precisely because of the experience of living together. But how can we make the sixth member understand this; long explanations would almost be tantamount to admitting him to our company. Better to explain nothing and not admit him. Let him pout all he wants, we'll elbow him out! But, no matter how brutally we push him away, he always comes back."

Whether we like it or not, if another joins the five of us, there are six of us and everyone sees it.

Unbeknownst to the living, numbers are the restoration, in physis, of the ideal logical space: they are there, always available to the living

gaze, identical to themselves, totally stable, unaffected by time. They are the definitive, completed result of the work of time in Being. They constitute, within common truth, a closed space, limpid in its evidence, inert, neutral: the logical space of arithmetic. This definitive result is the totally stable realization – through time and natural properties – of the common proper thingness. The universal structure of the common truth that is multiplicity is totally and definitively accomplished in the purely temporal and totally stable proper things that are numbers.

§59.- Emptiness is a number.

Contextual silence.

The point here is to demonstrate that emptiness, as shown and defined phenomenologically – in §46 – is a number, as just shown and defined phenomenologically in the preceding paragraphs: §56, §57, §58.

In particular, §46 shows that emptiness is a purely temporal thing. The emptiness shows the absence of proper things of a certain kind, *k*, in the space between things of kind *k* that are in a purely temporal field of view, i.e. in a purely temporal situation, when this kind of thing, *k*, has been chosen by our gaze as that of the things that count as "one" in this situation. The absence shown by the emptiness is always relative to a concept and a situation. In the situation, between the proper things that count as "one" for our gaze, there is none of these things, there is, for our gaze, this thing that is the emptiness, the thing that shows absence. If the absence shown by the emptiness is always relative to a concept and a situation, the emptiness itself is always the same: it is the space that separates proper things of the same kind.

If the thing that counts as "one" is unique in the situation, then it is as if immersed in the emptiness. The absence shown by the emptiness is always relative to a situation, and to the choice made by our gaze of what counts as "one" in that situation. The emptiness is linked to the existence of things themselves and the concepts under which they fall. There are only things, but between the proper things of the same kind and separating them, there is this proper thing that is the emptiness

which shows the relative absence of this kind of thing in the space between things of the same kind.

Every proper multiple exhibits the emptiness that separates the things that belong to it: between these things, there are no things that count as "one" in this multiple. Any selection of proper things among proper things shows the emptiness relative to this selection.

There is no general emptiness in which things are immersed. There are spaces between things of the same kind. These spaces constitute the emptiness, the only purely temporal emptiness we see. This emptiness is totally stable, because it is always the same and is present in every situation, in every proper multiple. It is linked only to the common thingness, only to the structural fact of the existence of proper things and of the distance – chronological or geometric – between proper things of the same kind, and thus only to the fact of the existence of proper multiples.

What the living eye sees is always a proper multiple in a situation, or the situation itself. All things of a proper multiple are, as it were, bordered by emptiness, by the empty space between things.

We need to distinguish the phenomenologically shown emptiness, which is a purely temporal and totally stable thing, from the adjective "empty", which qualifies a thing and is a property. We say that a glass is empty, that a house is empty. This property of being empty indicates the generally temporary absence of something specific that is normally linked to the thing, but which does not prevent it from being the thing it is. On the other hand, the emptiness displayed by any proper multiple is structural, always present, and inseparable from the multiplicity of things.

The emptiness is the difference between things, the difference that founds multiplicity. It is structural, necessitated by common thingness. The multiplicity of kinds of things implies their difference, and thus the space – geometric or chronological – that separates them.

Every proper thing can be seen as the proper multiple constituted by the unique "one" that it is. This "one", isolated in the situation, is in the

emptiness. This emptiness, relative to any "one", is always the same emptiness, filled with things that do not count.

Any proper thing in external space can be seen in multiple ways as a proper multiple: there are different possible choices in the list of proper things that make up a proper thing.

The emptiness is a purely temporal, totally stable proper thing, in which the multiple structure of the common thingness is shown, and in which only this structure is shown. The multiplicity of things presupposes their stability and uniqueness, and it presupposes a distance between the things of a proper multiple. This distance, which runs through empty space, is made up of things that do not count. The emptiness is as rich in things as the universe. The multiplicity of things requires the emptiness. *The emptiness shows the structure of common thingness and is indispensable to this structure.*

A number is also a totally stable, purely temporal proper thing, whether in intimate or external space.

Is the emptiness a number?

Is there another way of saying the emptiness, one that uses a word other than "emptiness", a word that already exists and says the same thing?

The emptiness speaks of the absence of what counts as "one" in the space which separates things of a proper multiple. The set of what counts as "one" in the situation is a proper multiple whose measure is a number. What is the number that measures the total absence, in a situation, of what counts as one?

That number is silence.

Silence says nothing. It says the "nothing" that there is. But it is not just any silence. It is a contextual silence. It is a silence that speaks of the absence of something in a situation, a silence that comes in response to a search. The gaze searches for things of a certain kind in a situation, and when it comes to saying the number that measures the multiple found, nothing can be said, because the result is the absence shown by

the emptiness. Silence is the measure of emptiness. Silence is a number, the proper noun that says emptiness.

Silence, like all numbers, is itself, as a proper noun, the thing it says; it says nothing. It says "nothing". It says emptiness. Such silence, contextual, is a number that is the emptiness, the emptiness of the space *between things of the same kind*. In this space, there is no proper thing chosen by the gaze, and the number that speaks of this absence is silence, a silence that is itself the space between those proper things that are the "ones" of a number.

Since we still need to *talk* about silence as a number – numbers being themselves seen as proper "standard" multiples that give any multiple its measure – we have chosen to call it "zero", or "0", or " \emptyset ". The empty space between things is the number zero, or 0, or \emptyset .

Silence, as emptiness, is its own measure, a number noted "0".

The emptiness, filled with things that do not count – according to a choice made by the living gaze – is both absence and the measure of absence.

The structure which is common thingness requires emptiness, requires absence.

To describe emptiness is not only to describe the *a posteriori* structure which is the common thingness, but also to show the constitution of proper multiples through natural and structural properties.

§60.- Phenomenological definition of the mathematical set.

Every purely temporal proper thing in external space – and therefore also every external situation – can be seen, structurally, as a "one" among "ones", every "one" itself being made of "ones". This fact reflects the two structural properties of the thingness of external space: multiplicity and internal membership.

Whatever happens to each purely temporal thing in external space – what happens to it is its life, physically, in time – we all see, always, before us, in external space, "ones" made of "ones". Numbers aside, each of these "ones" is simply stable.

Phenomenologically, what interests us here is not the temporal life of the "ones" in external space – which is a subject of physical science – but the structure of the space that these "ones" constitute: this structure is the common thingness of external space, made up of two structural, and therefore universal and permanent, properties: multiplicity and double membership, external and internal. Membership, though it affects all common things – external membership – particularly affects the proper things of external space: in external space, every proper thing, apart from emptiness, is made up of proper things – this is internal membership. In intimate space, a proper thing can belong to a set of things, but any affect is made of nothing but itself.

Every "one" in external space reproduces, within itself, the structure of external space, a structure that can be *imagined* endlessly. Each "one" is itself a situation that is, in many ways, a multiplicity made of "ones" that are themselves made of "ones". These "ones" chosen from among all the "ones" that belong to the situation, these "ones" that are themselves situations in which a choice is made of the "ones" that make it up, and this without end, constitute a particular kind – a concept – of proper thing to which the name "*mathematical set*" is given.

A mathematical set is an imaginary proper situation of external space whose chosen things, which constitute it as a proper multiple, have as their only property, in addition to belonging to the situation, that of being a "one", of participating as a "one" in the multiplicity of things in the situation, each of these "ones" itself being a mathematical set, thus made up of chosen "ones" that are themselves mathematical sets, and this without end.

The "endless" constitution of "ones" into "ones" makes the mathematical set imaginary, an imaginary situation.

Common truth is capable of seeing every proper thing in external space in this way: this is the mathematical way of seeing external space, the way that sees every proper thing as a situation – like the field of vision – and sees things in this situation only as selected "ones" made of "ones", i.e. by considering among the properties of the selected

proper "ones" only the universal structural properties of external space, namely multiplicity and internal membership.

The two structural properties of multiplicity and double membership – external and internal – constitute the concept of the thingness of external space. This concept is universal: all temporal or imaginary proper things of external space – external space being considered here as any external situation, temporal or imaginary – fall under this concept. Universal, this concept is structural. It describes the totally stable structure that is the common thingness of external space.

More generally, the common thingness is a concept that is a totally stable relationship between the living gaze and what it sees. This universal relation, the common thingness, arises *a posteriori* to the work of time, and is constitutive of mathesis, that domain of physis where time has already completed its work. The mathesis of external space adds a particular property to the concept of common thingness: every thing is made of things – internal membership.

Whatever the nature of each of the chosen "ones" of an external situation, whatever its life in time, it is always visible as a "one" made of chosen "ones", as a mathematical set. This way of seeing proper things of external space is what we have already defined – in §53 – as *mathematical truth*.

Mathematical sets, apart from numbers, are *purely imaginary* proper things of external space – and this for two reasons:

- 1) The "endlessness" of the constitution of a set by sets exists only in our imagination.

Numbers – whose special case as mathematical sets we shall see – and sets of numbers, are the only mathematical sets whose constitution has an end. Numbers are the only mathematical sets that are purely temporal and totally stable. Numbers are the only proper things whose mathematical truth coincides with their physical truth. Numbers are the only proper things that belong to both intimate and external space.

2) We all know, because we all see it, that the composition of a purely temporal proper thing of external space by other proper things is variable in time – a tree loses its leaves. Our imagination knows how to fix time. The mathematical set is this imaginary thing that represents the *instantaneous*, and endless structure of external space.

Numbers are the only *totally stable*, purely temporal proper things of external space.

Any proper "one" of external space, depending on how it is viewed mathematically, conceals multiple mathematical sets.

It is important to see that any purely temporal proper thing of external space can be seen in multiple imaginary ways as a "one" made of "ones". In other words, multiple mathematical sets can be defined based on the same purely temporal proper thing of external space – which phenomenologically we will call the "situation" or "field of vision" – and thus based on the same temporal situation. Each mathematical set corresponds to a choice of what constitutes a "one" in the situation, and also to a choice of the "ones" that constitute each of these "ones", and so on. It is this "and so on", and also the temporal fixity of the composition into "ones", that takes us out of the realm of physical truth – purely temporal – and into that of mathematical truth – structural and imaginary. If the choice of what counts as "one" in the situation is the situation itself, the corresponding mathematical set is made up of just one "one" – it is what mathematicians call a "singleton".

It is important to see that the giving of a mathematical set presupposes the giving of the exact composition of its elements, the elements of its elements, and so on, endlessly. *For each "one" of a mathematical set, its composition in "ones" is determined; it is also determined for each of these "ones", and so on, endlessly.* The complete composition of a mathematical set, apart from that of numbers, cannot therefore be given temporally: it is imaginary. From this definition and identification of

the mathematical set follows the fact – expressed in axiomatic set theory by *the axiom of extensionality* – that no two distinct mathematical sets have the same elements.

What the mathematical set shows is the structure, *totally stable*, that is the thingness of external space. Mathematical truth is the truth of the thingness of external space. Any representative of this structure and only of the structure, i.e. any mathematical set – except for numbers – is a *purely imaginary* proper thing of external space. Leaving *structure* alone, our truth returns to *nature*: from mathematical, it becomes physical. The truth of numbers is the same structurally and physically. Numbers are the only purely temporal representatives of the thingness of external space. Numbers are those things whose mathematical truth coincides with their physical truth, whose structure is also their nature.

As the composition of mathematical sets, apart from numbers, is fixed in time by our imagination, the question of their total stability does not arise. What is totally stable, what belongs to mathesis, is the structure they represent, a structure that is the thingness of external space. Numbers, as purely temporal, totally stable things, belong to the mathesis.

Are there any other purely temporal mathematical sets than numbers? In the case of a purely temporal mathematical set, on the one hand, there is necessarily an end to the composition into "ones" of each of its "ones", and, on the other, this composition into one must be totally stable, not by imaginary fixation of time, but temporally. Since the structural rule of external space is that every "one" is made of "ones", the end in question can only take place if there is no "one" in the "one", i.e. if the "one" is empty.

The temporal existence of the empty "one" was shown phenomenologically in §59. The empty "one" is a purely temporal proper thing that is totally stable in external space. It has been shown that the empty "one" is a number, the number zero. There is therefore an empty mathematical set, *the empty set*, the number *zero*, which is, phonetically, contextual silence.

A mathematical set is purely temporal if, and only if, on the one hand, the composition of each of its "ones" ends with the empty mathematical set, with the empty number, and on the other hand, this composition is totally stable. This is the description of numbers. The mathematical set must therefore be made up of numbers. Purely temporal mathematical sets are mathematical sets that are numbers, or whose elements are numbers, or sets of numbers, or sets of sets of numbers, and so on.

All mathematical sets whose "ones" are numbers, or whose "ones" are mathematical sets whose "ones" are numbers, etc., are also purely temporal: the composition into "ones" of "ones" always ends in the empty set. Purely temporal, totally stable mathematical sets are based on numbers and numbers only.

The phenomenological definition of mathematical sets rests entirely on these two axioms of common truth:

1- There are things, there are only things (the primitive axiom of common truth, the one that states the multiplicity of things and therefore also their stability),

2- Things in external space are made of things (the axiom of common truth specific to external space, that which states the multiplicity proper to external space).

Things, the multiplicity of things, the external and internal belonging of things by things, are the only things used in the definition of mathematical sets. The membership structure proper to external space is *purely temporal*, totally stable, universal, while the things that obey this structure, the mathematical sets, are, apart from numbers, *purely imaginary* proper things.

§61.- Numbers as mathematical sets.

Identity of numbers defined by phenomenology and numbers – ordinal sets – defined by axiomatic set theory.

Let us consider the situation that is a number. Since every number coincides with its proper noun as it is pronounced, this number is made up of all the numbers that precede it in the temporal pronunciation of the number. In the case of the purely temporal, totally stable proper thing that is a number, there are only two possible mathematical choices of composition in "ones", and therefore only two mathematical sets that can be seen, mathematically, from it. Either the number is seen as the singleton that it is as a situation that sees itself as the only thing to be seen, or it is seen as composed of the numbers whose pronunciation is necessary for its own pronunciation to take place. In the case of the proper thing that is a number, composition in "ones" always begins in the same way, for it is always the same numbers that begin the pronunciation of a number, whatever that number may be. For example: the composition always begins with contextual silence, which is the first number, the empty space, interrupted by the pronunciation of a sound that gives rise to a new number, then by the pronunciation of the next sound that composes with the preceding numbers a new number – a new proper noun – and so on, until the prolonged contextual silence that says that the pronunciation of the number is complete.

The mathematical view of a number is no different from its ordinary common truth. The ordinary view – the physical truth – of the purely temporal, totally stable thing that is a number coincides with its mathematical truth as a mathematical set. This is because, on the one hand, the composition into "one" of a number and each of its "ones", etc., is finite – it always has an end, the same end, the empty number – and, on the other hand, this composition is immutable, unchanged by time. Consequently, numbers are *purely temporal mathematical sets that are totally stable.*

As mathematical sets, numbers are representatives of the totally stable structure that is the common thingness of external space, but they are

also purely temporal and totally stable proper things: they are the most accomplished result of the work of time. As proper things, they are the purely temporal and totally stable core of mathematics.

When the axiomatic theory of sets says: "A set exists", it must be implied – implied only, since it is never explicitly stated by the theory – that this existence is purely temporal, as is explicitly the case for all things considered by physical science, physical science which makes unrestricted use of mathematical science. The purely temporal existence of numbers – which, in theory, are *ordinal sets* – justifies this implication. But mathematical sets, apart from numbers and sets of numbers, are purely imaginary. We must therefore understand that the existence of mathematical sets is scientific – in the sense of physical science – only for numbers and sets of numbers. For mathematical sets in general, existence is to be understood in a phenomenological sense, not just a scientific one. For phenomenology, everything that shows itself is a thing, whether this monstration takes place in time alone or in our imagination.

It will be shown in Chapter V, §67, that the existence of the set defined by axiomatic theory, an existence decreed by logicians and mathematicians, can only be an existence in the sense of phenomenology and not in the sense of physical science. Yet the distinction between "purely temporal" and "purely imaginary" exists neither in logic nor in mathematics. No mathematician thinks that the objects he manipulates – sets, including numbers – are physical objects. This is one of the reasons why mathematicians themselves recognize, like Bertrand Russell, that with sets, they do not know what they are talking about, or whether what they are saying is true – "true" meaning here "scientifically true". Phenomenology tells them what it is all about: it is about the totally stable structure of the common thingness of external space, it is about the mathesis of external space.

If numbers are, according to phenomenology, purely temporal, can we not consider that infinite numbers – whose existence is decreed by the axiom of infinity – are also purely temporal? We can always, it

seems, pronounce the noun of the number that follows the one we have just pronounced, leaving us to await the eventual continuation of the noun – the end of the pronunciation of the noun of a number is announced by a prolonged contextual silence. In other words, there seems to be no last number, no end to the sequence of numbers. Phenomenologically speaking, since a number is a proper noun pronounced by a living being, what limits the duration of its pronunciation, as well as that of its hearing, is the duration of a life, of life, which we know to be finite. We can imagine an endless pronunciation, an endless life. The infinity of numbers is imaginary. However, if time does not show it to us, time does not contradict the infinity of numbers; it will never say that such and such a number is the last number. Through the axiom of infinity, the axiomatic theory of sets decrees – implicitly, since there is never any question of pure temporality or the imaginary in mathematics – the pure temporality of infinite numbers. The infinity of numbers – transfinite numbers – opens axiomatic set theory to other infinities, to infinities of infinities, to infinities whose pure temporality is ever more hypothetical, but never contradicted by time. The phenomenology of the generic extensions of set theory will be one of the subjects of the chapter devoted to the imaginary and belief, Chapter XI.

Every number is a mathematical set on which the membership relation is *a relation of total order*. What is an order relation and what is a total order relation?

According to the science of logic, R is an *order relation* if it is transitive and antireflexive, i.e.:

- Transitive: $R(a, b)$ and $R(b, c) \rightarrow R(a, c)$,
- Antireflexive: we cannot have $R(a, a)$.

The order relation R is a *total order relation* on the mathematical set X , or a good order on X , if for any distinct x, y belonging to X , we have $R(x, y)$ or $R(y, x)$.

It is easy to show that the membership relation – denoted \in – is a relation of total order on any number. A non-empty number shows all

the numbers that precede it – that belong to it – in its pronunciation. These numbers, which precede it, are also numbers to which the numbers preceding them belong, and so on. If x and y are two of these numbers, either $x \in y$ or $y \in x$.

The membership relation is a relation of total order on any number seen as a mathematical set.

A mathematical set b is, by definition, a subset of another set a , if all its elements also belong to a . For any number, each of the numbers that precede it in its pronunciation is a subset.

Consequently, numbers, as defined by phenomenology, have the same properties among mathematical sets as ordinal sets have among the sets of axiomatic theory. For mathematicians, there can be no doubt that ordinal sets are nothing other than our familiar numbers: ordinals are numbers, the arithmetic numbers of shopkeepers. But these are also the numbers defined by phenomenology.

When mathematicians say that the sets $\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}\},$ etc., are ordinals, phenomenology immediately recognizes in this graphical representation of ordinals a physical representation of numbers as it defines them. The finite ordinals of theory are the numbers of phenomenology. Phenomenology's empty number may well be denoted \emptyset . The number 1 of phenomenology or arithmetic may well be denoted $\{\emptyset\}$.

Only phenomenology says that infinite numbers are purely imaginary and that integer numbers – finite numbers – are purely temporal and totally stable. Mathematical science ignores the concepts of pure temporality and total stability.

§62.- Phenomenological mathematical sets and sets as defined by axiomatic set theory.

Chapter VI will show that all the axioms of axiomatic set theory are satisfied by the mathematical sets defined by phenomenology, thus demonstrating that mathematical sets are exactly the sets defined, based

on logos and common truth, by the theory. *Mathematical truth as defined by phenomenology is the truth of mathematical science.* Consequently, the entire mathematical edifice is entirely founded, phenomenologically and mathematically, by the two axioms that speak of the thingness of external space:

- 1- There are things,
- 2- Things in external space are made of things.

If this is so, why not replace the axiom system of ZF set theory with these two axioms alone?

Pedagogically, it would be an innovative idea to do so as an introduction to the theory. The advantage of the axioms of ZF set theory is that they make explicit the rules for constructing sets from a set – from the empty set – and thus make it possible to construct sets indefinitely, to define infinite numerical sets, to study infinities of numerical infinities – which was Cantor's aim. These rules of construction, as will be shown in Chapter VI, are satisfied by mathematical sets as defined by phenomenology.

In a word, the axioms of ZF theory can be said to be theorems of phenomenology, theorems demonstrated based on the structure that is the common thingness of external space.

To demonstrate the differences between the truths at stake – the difference between mathematical truth, which is a way of seeing that belongs to common truth, and phenomenological truth – we need to recall the account given by common truth and its logos of this axiomatic theory of sets, and to show the way in which common truth must read its axioms. This is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

Phenomenological study of the axiomatic theory of sets

§63.- The axiomatic theory of sets.

Our mathematical science is now entirely founded on the axiomatic theory of sets. This theory takes the form of a list of axioms or axiom schemes. Its prerequisite is the theory of first-order predicate logic, in other words, *our* logic as the science of correct reasoning. Over the twentieth century, it was laid down by common truth, by mathematicians – we can all be mathematicians – refining the pioneering work of Cantor. It was modified several times, essentially for reasons of consistency, before finding its current stable form. The current stable form is the ZF – Zermelo-Fränkel – theory, to which mathematicians may add – depending on the objective of their exploration of infinite sets – other axioms, supposedly consistent with the ZF axioms.

Let us start by listing the twelve axioms that have historically been posited. We will then see how some of them can be deduced from the others and can be considered not as axioms, but as theorems. The theories Z, ZF, ZFC – Zermelo-Fränkel theory with the Axiom of Choice – use only some of these 12 axioms.

1) **Existence axiom:**

A set exists.

2) Extensionality axiom:

No two distinct sets in the Universe have the same elements.

3) Pair axiom:

Given two sets a and b , there is one and only one set whose only elements are a and b .

Note that $\{a, a\}$, according to the axiom of extensionality, has only one element, which is the set a . This is the singleton whose element is a . A singleton is a set with exactly one element. The singleton of a is denoted $\{a\}$. There are also $\{\{a\}\}$, $\{\{\{a\}\}\}$, etc.

4) Reunion axiom:

For any set a , there exists a set b whose elements are the elements of the elements of a .

5) Axiom of the set of subsets:

For any set a , there exists a set b whose elements are the objects of the Universe that are subsets of a .

This axiom requires the prior definition of a set that is a subset of another set: A set is a subset of another set if all its elements are elements of that other set.

6) Restricted axiom scheme of understanding:

Given a property, for any set, there exists the subset consisting of those of its elements that possess that property.

7) Axiom scheme of replacement – or substitution:

For any set A and any functional relation P , formally defined as a proposition $P(x,y)$ and such that $P(x,y)$ and $P(x,z)$ imply that $y=z$, there exists a set containing precisely the images by P of the elements of the original set A .

8) Empty set axiom:

There exists a set with no elements.

This is denoted by \emptyset or $\{\}$.

9) Axiom of infinity:

There exists a non-finite ordinal.

Before stating this axiom, it is necessary to define the finite ordinal set. To do this, we must first define the order relation, the total order relation, and the ordinal set.

R is an order relation if it is transitive and antireflexive, i.e.:

- Transitive: $R(a, b)$ and $R(b, c) \rightarrow R(a, c)$,
- Antireflexive: we cannot have $R(a, a)$.

The order relation R is a total order relation on X, or a good order on X, if for any distinct x, y belonging to X, we have $R(x, y)$ or $R(y, x)$.

Definition of an ordinal: A set a is said to be an ordinal if it has the following two properties:

- The membership relation on a, $x \in y$, is a total order relation on a.
- All elements of a are subsets of a.

Definition of a finite ordinal: An ordinal is finite if every ordinal less than or equal to it has a predecessor, unless it is the empty set.

It remains to show that there are such ordinal sets.

It can be shown that the sets

\emptyset ,

$\{\emptyset\}$,

$\{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}$,

$\{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}\}$,

$\{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}, \{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}\}\}$,

etc., exist and are ordinals.

10) Foundation axiom:

Every non-empty set has an element that has no elements in common with that set.

11) **Axiom of choice:**

For every set a , whose elements are non-empty and disjoint two by two, there exists a set whose intersection with every element of a is a single-element set.

12) **Continuum hypothesis:**

There is no set whose cardinal is strictly between the cardinal of the set of natural integers and the cardinal of the set of real numbers.

Definition of the cardinal of a set: the cardinal of a set a is the smallest ordinal that is equipotent with a . Two sets a and b are equipotent if there is a bijection of a on b . According to the axiom of choice, any set a is equipotent to an ordinal.

The complete axiomatic theory – complete if we disregard the generic extensions of the theory that lead to large cardinals, studied phenomenologically in Chapter XI – and not redundant is generally presented, by mathematicians, by the list:

(2), (4), (5), (7), (9), (10), (11), (12),

in which the foundation axiom (10), the axiom of choice (11) and the continuum hypothesis (12) are generally not part of the ZF – Zermelo-Fränkel – axioms, the list of which is reduced to these five axioms:

(2), (4), (5), (7), (9).

The ZF (Zermelo-Fränkel) theory differs from the Z (Zermelo) theory by introducing the replacement axiom scheme (7), from which the restricted comprehension axiom scheme (6) is deduced.

The existence axiom (1) – that a set exists – is considered by mathematicians to be one of the axioms of the theory of predicate logic. It is not considered a mathematical axiom, but a logical one. It is therefore not included in the list of Z, ZF or ZFC axioms. However, this axiom is of major phenomenological importance and will be dealt with specifically in §67.

§64.- Initial phenomenological considerations on the axioms of the set theory.

The axiom of the empty set (8) is considered by the consensus of mathematicians to be deduced from the axiom of existence of a set (1) and the restricted scheme of understanding (6). It becomes a theorem. It will be shown in §68 that the demonstration of this theorem, as proposed by mathematicians, is not phenomenologically acceptable: it is equivalent to considering *the set of things that are not things* and concluding from this absurdity that this set is empty.

According to the consensus of mathematicians, the pair axiom (3) is a consequence of the axiom of the set of subsets (5), the replacement axiom scheme (7), and the existence of the empty set. It becomes a theorem. This theorem is not phenomenologically acceptable. Phenomenologically, the pair axiom must be regarded as one of the fundamental axioms of the theory. In §70, it will be shown that the existence of the empty set can be deduced from the existence axiom (1), the extensionality axiom (2), the pair axiom (3) and the restricted scheme of understanding (6). It is this demonstration that shows the structure of the empty set, a structure that is the common thingness and is the very foundation of mathematical science, its natural theme, its natural model.

Axiom no. 1 – there exists a set – is not present in the list of axioms of Z, ZF or ZFC. Mathematicians consider it as already stated by the axiomatics of predicate logic, which is the prerequisite of set theory. What does "exist" mean for the science of logic? This phenomenologically important question is addressed in §67, where all the terms used in the axioms are analysed. Essentially, what emerges is that, for mathematical-logical science, existence is, *implicitly*, existence in the phenomenological sense of the term: that which shows itself exists, regardless of the way in which it shows itself. Consequently, the distinction between an imaginary thing and a temporal thing is not part of the preoccupations of logico-mathematical science (although it is fundamental, albeit still implicit, for physical science). Consequently,

any coherent definition based on existing things gives rise to something that exists – even if it is only in our imagination. If the coherence of the axiomatic definition of sets is not provable (as stated in one of Gödel's theorems), neither has this definition been shown to be incoherent. Mathematicians are only interested in the coherence of axioms. The question of the pure temporality of sets, i.e. their existence in the sense of physical science, does not concern them. Mathematicians do not know exactly what mathematics is about, they do not know what its natural model is, they do not know in what sense what they say is true. Phenomenology says it all: the mathematical "truth" is not the "truth" of physical science, it is the "truth" that says "it's coherent", i.e. a "truth" that does not question the physical, purely temporal truth of the premises. The premises – the words or things that appear without definition in the axioms' statement – are implicitly assumed to be "true" in the phenomenological sense of "true": they are things, they show themselves to us, no matter how they show themselves. Mathematicians do not say, because they do not know, that the model of their science is the common thingness of external space, and that the sets they define are the *imaginary* representatives of this *structure* that is the common thingness of external space. They do not say, they do not know, that, among the sets, numbers – ordinal sets – are the only *purely temporal* representatives of this structure and that, as the purely temporal proper things of the mathesis, they are totally stable and belong to both external and intimate space.

The concepts of stability – simple or total – of temporality – pure or imaginary – of space – external or intimate – are absent from mathematics and absent from our science of logic. If physical science is so intimately interwoven with mathematical science, it is through numbers, through the measurement of physical properties of things that are purely temporal, simply stable, and through the relationships between these measurements, between these numbers, that the laws of physics are made.

The five axioms of ZF theory are, along with *our* logic (first-order predicate logic, essentially based on the principle of contradiction and the partition of things into *properties* and *elements*), the only premises considered indispensable by mathematicians in that science considered the queen of sciences: mathematical science. As such, as a science, axioms are *implicitly* considered to be true in the scientific sense of the word "true", i.e. they are *implicitly* considered to be purely temporal, shown by time alone – i.e. shown without recourse to our imagination. This presupposition seems to find its justification *a posteriori* in the fact that, on the one hand, all established mathematics can be demonstrated based on set theory, and, on the other hand, all experimental sciences make unrestricted use of mathematics. But mathematicians are not concerned with the temporality of axioms, neither with the pure temporality of the proper thing that is mathematical set. Phenomenology shows that mathematical sets, apart from numbers, are purely imaginary. It sees and says that what the axiomatics of sets shows us, and which is not only purely temporal, but also totally stable, is, on the one hand, the structure of the thing that is the common thingness of external space, and on the other hand, endowed with this structure, among the sets, the numbers. What the experimental sciences, the physical sciences, use from among what mathematical science offers them is the science of numbers, the science of the multiple and the measurement of the multiple by numbers. The science reduced in this way – the science of the multiple and its measurement by that particular, purely temporal, totally stable multiple itself, which is the number – is part of physical science. It is properly scientific, since science is phenomenologically experimental: everything it affirms is verified by time.

The science of the multiple and its measurement by numbers is the temporal core of a freer, purely imaginary science, open to infinity through the endless extrapolation of the structure that is the common thingness of external space, axiomatized by the axiomatic theory of sets, now the foundation of all mathematical sciences.

The axiom of infinity – (9) – is, *implicitly*, mathematicians' declaration of the pure temporality of numerical infinity, of infinite number. However, infinite ordinal sets are only revealed to us through our imagination: it is imagination that takes the extra step – the + 1 –, always renewed, of reasoning by recurrence. It is through this axiom of infinity that the mathematics of numbers – purely physical mathematics – also enters the imaginary. The infinity axiom and its imaginary mathematical consequences will be the subject of §77 (Chapter VI) and Chapter XI. We shall see that the axiom of infinity and its consequences are *at the limit of truth* – in the scientific sense of the word "truth" – at the limit, since if time does not show them, it does not contradict them either.

**§65.- For phenomenology, there are only two mathematical axioms:
1- There are things, 2- The proper things of external space are made of things.**

The phenomenological project at work in Chapters V and VI is to show that *the mathematical sets* defined in Chapter IV – in §60 – are *the sets defined by axiomatic theory*. As a consequence of this monstration, the axioms of set theory say nothing else – nothing more, nothing less – than what is said by the two axioms that describe the structure, totally stable, that is the common thingness of external space:

- There are things, there are only things – the primitive axiom of common truth.
- The proper things of external space are made of things – the axiom of common truth specific to external space.

From these two axioms of common truth is deduced, as shown in §60, the definition of mathematical sets, and thus also, as will be shown, that of the sets of theory.

The point is to show that the mathematical sets of phenomenology satisfy all the axioms of the theory. This demonstration will be the subject of Chapter VI.

Phenomenology simplifies the definition of mathematics and explicitly states what it is about, what its natural model is: *the totally stable structure that is the common thingness of external space*.

Phenomenology thus shows that the ordinal sets of theory – which are the numbers defined by phenomenology – are purely temporal and totally stable proper things of both external and intimate space.

Ordinal sets – numbers – are proper things that are always immediately available to us, in both external and intimate space, and such that none of their properties – which are only stability, multiplicity, membership, pure temporality – are subject to time. They constitute, in physis, the fully completed proper domain of mathesis, the core made of purely temporal and totally stable proper things on which the science of physis, physical science, is based.

§66.- How should common truth read the axioms of ZF theory?

The aim of the system of axioms that is the ZF theory is to define what a set is and what the relation that links sets – *the membership relation* – is.

Why choose this word, "set", to designate this specific thing that is the set of mathematical theory? We are all familiar with the word, and it usually designates something that groups together, in a whole, things that have one or more properties in common. It is these properties, once specified, that make it possible to consider the things that possess them as separate from other things, that make it possible to consider them together, as a whole, as a thing. Although the set of the theory bears a certain resemblance to the set of common truths we call "intuitive", it is preferable, and even necessary, to forget this common definition of the word "set" when entering the theory: it is not the same thing. French professor and mathematician Jean-Louis Krivine begins his *Set Theory*, republished in 2007, with:

"We all have an intuitive idea of what a set is, and it is on this intuition that we rely on to find the axioms of set theory".

This is not good advice. In fact, it has far-reaching consequences, as it leads to misinterpretations that are difficult to overcome. While there is indeed a similarity between the two concepts of set, there are also, and above all, major differences: the intuitive set is not the model of the mathematical set. On the contrary, teachers should warn their students of these differences and advise them not to refer to the intuitive set when approaching theory. It is the axioms of the theory that define what a set is in the sense of mathematical science, and nothing else.

If the word "set" is understood in its intuitive sense, we know that anything can be seen, in many ways, as a set. It can be seen as a single-element set, if we consider that it is the only thing to be the thing that it is, to bring together all the properties that are its own and that make it unique. It can also be seen, in a variety of ways, as a set of proper things that make it what it is. Conversely, any intuitive set of things – whether these things are proper things or properties – is a thing.

The intuitive set is the set – or the multiple – as defined by phenomenology in §54, different from the mathematical set as defined by phenomenology in §60. The phenomenological project developed here is to show that the mathematical set of phenomenology is none other than the set of axiomatic theory.

The theoretical set is defined by axioms. The axioms are its definition. They say what a set is, what the relation of membership between sets is, and they say that sets defined in this way *exist*. The existence in question is, *implicitly*, existence in the scientific sense of the term, i.e. a purely temporal existence, shown to all by time alone, without the help of imagination. However, and this is where the scientific ambiguity of this theory lies, sets defined in this way, with the exception of finite ordinal sets, are purely imaginary: on the one hand, there is no end to membership – the sets fit indefinitely into each other like Russian dolls

– on the other hand, the composition of the sets is assumed to be fixed in time, and therefore presupposes an imaginary stopping of time; finally, the axiom of infinity explicitly introduces the need for the help of the imagination to carry out the reasoning by recurrence that allows us to see the infinite ordinal set. What is purely temporal in relation to sets is their structure, and this structure, totally stable, well known to us all – too obvious to be seen for what it is – is the common thingness of external space.

Before being sets, the sets of theory are first things. What kind of thing is the set of the theory? Can anything be seen as a set of the theory?

There can be no identity between the thing and the theory set. We all grasp the phenomenological definition of the thing – the thing shows itself to us, and everything that shows itself to us, however this monstration is carried out, is a thing – and we all understand that axioms serve to define, among things, particular things, things of a particular kind. What characterizes this thing among things, the theory set? The phenomenological study of axioms should enable us to answer this question.

Let us take an initial look at the axioms.

The existence axiom does not appear explicitly in ZF but is considered by mathematicians to have already been established by the prior theory of first-order predicate logic. This axiom asserts, in principle – a fundamental scientific principle – that the set as defined by the other 5 axioms exists *in time*: it is not a figment of our imagination; time shows us that at least one copy of it exists. For science, to "exist" is to appear in time to the eyes of the living, and this without the intervention of the imagination. For science, it is time alone that shows, that gives existence in the sense that science gives to the word "existence". Yet this scientific principle – that the existence in question must be exclusively temporal – is not accepted by either logical or mathematical science and is implicit only in physical science. This difference between

the temporal and the imaginary is never thematically addressed in science. It is generally accepted by common truth²⁴ that:

Mathematics is not an empirical science, it is a body of abstract knowledge resulting from logical reasoning applied to abstract objects such as sets, numbers, etc., and that it is distinguished from other sciences by a particular relationship to reality, since mathematical observation and experience do not concern physical objects.

Consequently, it is generally accepted that numbers are not "physical objects", that they are, like all mathematical objects, "abstract". Phenomenology substitutes the word "imaginary" for the word "abstract", while specifying that the imaginary is always situated in the analogical extension of the temporal, i.e. the empirical. For us, there is primarily the purely temporal, and it is on this that our imagination relies on to show us the "abstract". For science, the "real" is the empirical, the physical, the purely temporal. Mathematics' "special relationship with reality" is the relationship between the imaginary and the temporal. Seeing why and how what is *always, and necessarily, purely temporal* at the outset becomes analogously purely imaginary – "abstract" – is precisely what science, whether logical, mathematical, or physical, fails to see. There is nothing more empirical than the purely temporal, totally stable structure that is the common thingness of external space – the mathesis of external space, the totally stable core of physis. And this structure is the natural model of mathematical science.

The axiom of extensionality states that what distinguishes sets from each other are the sets that belong to them. This introduces a binary relation – *the membership relation* – between sets. A set belongs, or

²⁴ What the common truth says here comes from the Wikipedia article that deals with mathematics. Such an article aims to be representative of the common, scientific truth.

does not belong, to another set. What distinguishes a set from all other sets are the sets that belong to it – its *elements*. For a set, "being an element of" means "belonging to" another set.

The following four axioms are *the axioms of set construction*. Given a set – the axiom of existence says there is at least one – they tell us how to construct other sets. In other words, given any set, mathematical axioms enable us to construct others, recursively, indefinitely. But the only set explicitly revealed by the theory is the empty set. As a result, all the sets that the theory can explicitly exhibit are the sets constructed from the empty set using the construction axioms. Sets that are not constructible from the empty set remain and will remain hypothetical sets, sets whose existence – i.e. the fact that they satisfy all the axioms of ZF theory – is not demonstrable. The theory of non-constructible sets is that of "generic extensions of set theory". This will be discussed in Chapter XI, the chapter devoted to the phenomenology of imagination and belief. Some "constructivist" mathematicians consider that only sets constructed from the empty set exist. This speaks volumes about the truth of mathematical science: it is not interested in the *nature* of things in external space – what they are – but in their *structure* – how they relate to each other.

§67.- Phenomenological analysis of the wording of the axioms of set theory and their understanding by common truth.

What does it mean for sets to "exist"? What does it mean to "exist"?

The six fundamental axioms are supposed to describe mathematics as precisely, succinctly, and completely as possible. All the further development that results from this axiomatic foundation is only a matter of formal logic – to reason correctly from the axioms – and of imagination, i.e. of analogical logic – to imagine the properties and relationships that may exist between the sets thus defined. In both fields, logic and analogy, a huge amount of work has been done and continues to be done, and this mathematical work is never-ending.

Apart from the words that need to be defined – the words "set" and "membership" –, axioms use words in their definitions that are assumed to be *already* defined, *already* known to everyone. How could they do otherwise? Axioms base mathematics – and thus sets and membership between sets – on what is *already known* to everyone, and this work is that of common truth.

The words "stability", "multiplicity" and "multiple" are not used in the axioms, although "one" and "plural" are present. The axioms are implicitly based on the common thingness – stability and multiplicity. If phenomenological truth sees the common thingness and describes it as characterized by multiplicity, a multiplicity that presupposes stability, the question arises for phenomenology as to whether the axioms of set theory are not the means that common truth and its logos have found to define the common thingness *of external space* based on the common thingness, itself *implicitly* said by the words used in this definition – without, however, being able to think the common thingness as such, in its difference from the initial thingness. In other words, the axioms of the theory would simply add the axiom of common truth proper to external space – which says that things in external space are made of things – to the primitive axiom of common truth – which says that there are things.

The axioms of the theory all make sense – they are propositions – since all mathematicians understand them and understand them all in the same way. The logical development of what they say shows no inconsistencies, no contradictions between them. They therefore seem coherent. One question that remains – for phenomenology only – is whether the particular concept they define, called "set", is purely temporal or purely imaginary. More precisely, the question is whether there are purely temporal sets among all sets. If so, what are these sets that we all see without the aid of our imagination?

Let us look at the terms used in the statements of these six fundamental axioms.

The term "set" is defined by the axioms themselves; it is their purpose. The same applies to the binary relation of membership between sets, which, in these statements, is said by the equivalent locutions: "to be an element of" – meaning "to belong to" – or "to be constituted by" – meaning "to have in membership" or "to have as an element".

Let us admit that some terms are already axiomatically defined – or simply already used as "self-evident" – by the prior theory of predicate logic, a logic which, of course, we retain as a prerequisite for our own phenomenological reflection on common truth. This is the case, in particular, for the word "property" since predicate logic partitions things into properties and elements. This is especially true of the word "existence". The sets of the theory "exist". According to mathematicians, they exist because predicate logic affirms the existence of things, and these things are partitioned into elements and properties. These elements include the sets defined by the axioms.

Is it enough to say that there are elements – as the theory of logic says axiomatically – to conclude, as mathematicians do, that there are sets? Does the general existence of proper things – affirmed by logical theory, with the "elements" of logic corresponding to the "proper things" of phenomenology – entail the existence of those proper things that are sets?

The question that immediately arises here is that of the meaning, for our logical science, of the word "existence". By omitting the axiom of the existence of a set, ZF theory acts as if the existence of the elements of logical theory necessarily entails the existence of sets. What does this imply about the meaning, for logic and mathematics, of the word "existence"?

The things whose existence is assumed by logic are any things, temporal or imaginary, external, or intimate. Logic places all things in the same universe, whether they are temporal or imaginary, external or intimate; the only distinction it makes between things is this partition of things into elements and properties. The existence of things according to logic – said by: there are things, things are partitioned into

elements and properties, elements have properties – is exactly the existence of things in the phenomenological sense of the word "existence": *a thing exists if and only if it shows itself, no matter how it shows itself*. Consequently, any coherent definition of things from things shows a thing – necessarily existing according to this definition of existence. The only thing that matters in this definition of a thing from things is its coherence, its non-contradiction. The same applies to the definition of sets: *the general existence of things decreed by logic entails the existence of sets, on the sole condition that the axioms which define sets are consistent. In these logical-mathematical considerations, the distinction between temporal and imaginary existence disappears. We are not asking sets to be purely temporal; we are just asking them to have a coherent definition based on things*.

Science, our physical science, holds as true only what is temporal. Every assertion is primarily a hypothesis. The truth value of the hypothesis is given by time, through an experimental set-up that forces time to give its decision: purely temporal or purely imaginary. Logic and mathematics are considered not only as sciences, but as the foundation of all sciences. But what these sciences – logic and mathematics – guarantee is coherence, not temporality. Logic says "if this is true, then this is true too", as long as the rules that preserve coherence – the rules of formal logic – are respected. This "true" here is, *implicitly*, the "true" that says "purely temporal". What is true in science is purely temporal. It is not the rules of formal logic that decide what is true, but they do tell us how truth propagates. Where do axioms come from, whether in logical theory or mathematical theory? They are *assumed* to be true. This "true", *implicitly*, is the true of science, it says "purely temporal". *Implicitly*, every axiom, logical or mathematical, is supposed to speak a purely temporal truth.

The conception of existence that is that of logical-mathematical theory is thus, again *implicitly*, different from the conception of existence that is that of science, of science that is essentially a physical science. Phenomenology makes this difference explicit. Logos, on the

other hand, makes no mention of it. For mathematical-logical theory, existence is existence in the sense of phenomenology, not existence in the sense of physical science. For mathematical-logical science, it is enough for the axioms to be consistent for the sets to exist.

The axiom of existence affirms the coherence of axioms. It does not assert the pure temporality of sets.

As for the coherence of the theory's definition of sets, while it cannot be demonstrated – this is one of Gödel's theorems – neither has it been faulted – let us just say that whenever it has been faulted, the axiomatics have been modified in such a way as to make the problem disappear. In its current state, the theory appears coherent.

It can be deduced from the axioms of the theory – it is a theorem – that there necessarily exists that particular set which is the empty set, the set that contains no set. The empty set is the only explicitly determined set outside any construction. All explicitly determined sets are therefore constructed from the empty set and the axioms of construction: these are the *phenomenologically constructible* sets. Non-phenomenologically constructible sets are those whose existence cannot be demonstrated.

Phenomenology then poses two questions:

- 1) Is the empty set of the theory a purely temporal proper thing, or is it a purely imaginary proper thing?

- 2) If it is a purely temporal proper thing, to what extent do the construction axioms preserve pure temporality?

Mathematical science asks neither of these questions.

What phenomenology shows here is the ambiguity of the meaning of the word "existence" in both logical and mathematical science, particularly in relation to its use in physical science. Here, the imaginary is not separated from the temporal, so that any coherent description based on things seen – no matter how they are seen, how they exist –

gives rise to something that exists. Neither logic nor mathematics distinguishes between what is purely temporal – scientifically true in the sense of physical science – and what is purely imaginary. Mathematical science does not ask itself the question of the temporality of the empty set. Phenomenology does.

What phenomenology also shows is that what axiomatic set theory attempts to do is to define the specific thingness of external space based on common thingness – common thingness already seen is said by logical theory, which is the prerequisite of mathematical theory. This definition introduces the structure of internal membership into the thingness. For common truth, it is a matter of introducing into logos what phenomenology states to be the second axiom of common truth, that relating to external space: things in external space are made of things.

Our logic is based, implicitly, on the primitive axiom of common truth: there are things, there are only things. Mathematical science is founded on logic and, implicitly, on the axiom that expresses the specific thingness of external space: things are made of things.

In logical-mathematical truth, the distinction between temporal and imaginary disappears. In phenomenological truth, things are primarily purely temporal, and imaginary things are always based, by analogy, on purely temporal things. Consequently, for phenomenology, sets, whether imaginary or temporal, are necessarily founded on something that is purely temporal.

On what purely temporal things are sets founded? Only one purely temporal thing: the empty set. The question of whether the empty set is temporal or imaginary is not explicitly raised in mathematics: we don't know how to judge it. The ambiguity remains. This is certainly what led the mathematician Bertrand Russell to say that "mathematics is a science in which you don't know what you're talking about, or whether what you're saying is true." It is important to understand that the word "true" used here means, implicitly, "scientifically true", i.e. "purely temporal".

What exactly does the theoretical set look like to us, and what is it to us all? Mathematicians themselves do not know. It is phenomenology that says that the mathematical set represents for us that totally stable structure that is the common thingness proper to external space. It is phenomenology that says that, among sets, only numbers are true, in the sense of "scientifically true", in the sense of "purely temporal".

The equivalence between the mathematical sets defined by phenomenology and the sets defined by axiomatic theory will be shown in Chapter VI. The empty set of the theory is the emptiness shown by phenomenology in §46, which is also a number as shown in §59. The empty set is a proper thing, purely temporal and totally stable, like all numbers.

Existence, the thing, total stability, simple stability, space, intimate space, external space, temporal things, imaginary things, properties, truth, falsity, emptiness, mathesis, time, logic – none of these concepts receives, in logos, in science, a definition that is meaningful for phenomenology. Either no definition is given by the logos, or the definition given is circular, or this definition rests on another definition that is itself absent or implicit.

We have just been talking about the word "existence", which is at the heart of phenomenological questioning, but what about these terms used by the axioms:

- "one" (in the axiom of existence)?
- "universe", "two" (in the axiom of extension)?
- object" and "universe" (in the axiom of the set of parts)?

To define what a set is, axiomatics uses things called "one" and "two", which are assumed to be already known to everyone. "One" and "two" turn out to be, *a posteriori*, particular sets, ordinal sets, in other words numbers: all mathematicians say, know, that ordinal sets are numbers, our familiar numbers, the numbers of arithmetic. Theory starts with numbers to define what a number is! You need to know the numbers

"one" and "two" to define what a number is. We all know numbers. Men did not wait for the slightest theory before they knew how to count, i.e. before they knew how to give a measure to a multiple, i.e. before they knew how to distinguish one multiplicity from another, i.e. before they knew what multiplicity is, independently of the nature of the things whose multiplicity they observe. To be "one" among "some" is the very structure of the thing of common truth: a structure whose name is "multiplicity". Multiplicity is the structure of the common thingness, a structure that presupposes stability.

The constitution of "ones" is primarily the result of the intentionality of the living – the search for the *vital*, the vital that is at the origin of all natural concepts – and then it is also the result of our imagination, which knows how to define concepts. Without a definition of what makes "one", there can be no two, no three, and so on. What is this constitutive intention, without which there is no "one", without which there is no common thingness? Phenomenologically, the intentionality of the living derives from the intentionality of time: intention is always the preservation of the same, stability, stabilization. For the living being, what guarantees the preservation of the same, the preservation of itself, is what is vital.

For us, when we read these axioms, "one" and "two" are already numbers. Numbers, for us, before any theory, are names given to quantities. For a long time now, we human beings have associated any multiple of things with a number that is its measure, that expresses its *quantity*. We have long known that the measure of a multiple of things is independent of the nature of the things that make up that multiple. To count is to give a multiple of things the number that measures its multiplicity. In particular, the number "one" is that with which counting begins, that is, with which the temporal, sonorous monstration of the number that tells the measure of the multiple counted begins.

According to mathematical theory, and therefore *a posteriori* to their use in the axioms of set theory, "one" and "two" are the proper nouns given to two ordinal sets:

- "one" is: $\{\emptyset\}$
- "two" is: $\{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}$

\emptyset here refers to *the empty set*. Numbers, and more generally the sets of the theory, if they are to be explicitly shown as the proper things that they are, are necessarily constructed from this particular set that is the empty set, since it is the only explicit set whose existence is imposed by the axioms and is therefore the only set that can be used to construct other explicit sets. The empty set is the simplest possible set, a set to which no set belongs. Now, the empty set is itself a number, a number in both the phenomenological and theoretical sense – an ordinal – as we showed in §61. The empty set is, like all numbers, a purely temporal and totally stable proper thing, in both external and intimate space.

Fundamental to numericity is the fact that what serves as the standard of measurement is a purely temporal and totally stable thing, visible to all of us and whenever we want. This "one", which begins the measurement statement by breaking the contextual silence – contextual silence noted \emptyset – must phenomenologically be such a thing – its phonic or graphic constitution is phenomenologically irrelevant.

The requirement of pure temporality and total stability is phenomenological, not logical-mathematical: although necessary, it totally escapes this science.

Starting with the empty set, the axioms of the theory and the definition of ordinals leave no choice for the expression of the "one" that begins the count: it is $\{\emptyset\}$, it is the singleton $\{\emptyset\}$. For phenomenology, the essential thing about this thing that counts as "one" is that it is a purely temporal "one", possibly a sound, a sound that can be repeated as many times as necessary to count, to pronounce the proper noun of the number that says the measure of the multiple counted. This sound can very well be written as $\{\emptyset\}$, which is the only ordinal set that can be constructed from \emptyset . The ordinal sets of the theory are a phenomenologically acceptable way of expressing the numbers of phenomenology.

Let us conclude.

Phenomenology wants to get at this: to be comprehensible – ZF's axioms are comprehensible, since mathematicians understand them all in the same way – these axioms presuppose other axioms that have remained implicit, too obvious to be stated, axioms that necessarily impose themselves on all of us. These implicit axioms are the *a priori* of the theory. However, they are in us *a posteriori* of the constitution of things – in and through the living gaze – by properties and in particular by the primary property: the vital. Without our common *a priori*, which are the outcome of a common constitution, no common departure is possible.

What does this "*a priori*" mean? It means our common constitution, the basis of our common view, what we are all made of, our truth, what has always imposed itself on us all. It is this "since always", the absence of the beginning of what is in motion, that imposes on us the self-evidence of this truth, so self-evident, so all-encompassing, that there can be no question of explicitly laying it before us.

When presenting the axiomatic theory of sets, in the few sentences that always come by way of introduction, mathematicians, in place of any common *a priori*, say that the theory is *intuitive*. Their task is then to substitute this common intuition with a few statements – axioms – that faithfully and unambiguously express it to everyone.

What is this common intuition? If this intuition is common, it is because it emanates from common truth, it is because it is a thing of common truth, and therefore self-evident. Although it is self-evident, it does not know where it comes from. The axiomatic of a theory is what we manage to posit explicitly and operationally, through propositions, about a particular theme – the one we theorize about – of our common truth. What we posit in this way must be capable of taking the place of truth, of perfectly playing the same role as it in everything that concerns this precise theme of our common field of vision. To be comprehensible and usable by all, this position requires a common background. This prerequisite is the basis of common truth, our *a priori*, expressed in

words known to all, even if they are undefined. Ordinary arithmetic, the arithmetic of shopkeepers – itself theorized by set theory – is an *a priori* version of what we have managed to axiomatize. But axiomatics uses – how could it do otherwise? – what it theorizes, i.e. the arithmetic of merchants: here, we see the circle of common understanding. In the same way, and for the same reason, certain words in the dictionary are indefinable and are ultimately defined only by themselves, in a circle: they constitute the root of common meaning.

Theory does not start from nothing. It creates nothing. It works because we all already see what it shows us. What mathematical theory shows us, by defining it as cleanly as possible, is in particular numericity, the measure we associate with any multiple of things to express its magnitude, the method of quantifying the multiple. We are already familiar with the quantification of multiples, and human beings have always needed to quantify multiples of things. In theory, the measure of a multiple is an ordinal set. Ordinal sets are those used to give any multiple – and particularly any set in the theory – its measure. They are what we use to count. We have always been able to count. Counting is, in fact, a series of sounds considered as a single thing, as a multiple, a multiple that speaks, a multiple whose proper noun is itself the multiple it speaks.

If the theory does not bother to specify the meaning of the word "universe" that it uses in axioms no. 2 and no. 4, it is because it considers that this meaning is known to all, and that it is with this known meaning that the axioms should be read.

What does the word "universe" mean to us all? It means "the set of everything there is", the word "set" being taken here in its intuitive sense. The universe is everything. Anything in the universe is *an object of the universe*, in other words, something, a thing. The universe is all the things there are. With *the universe and the objects of the universe*, the science of logic and the science of mathematics presuppose – discreetly, *naturally* – what phenomenology states as the primitive axiom of common truth: there are things. The primitive axiom is

presented in the form of *the universe* – the there is – and *the objects of the universe* – the things there are. What precedes the start of logical-mathematical axiomatics, and its statements is that for all of us there are things and that there are only things.

§68.- The demonstration of the existence of the empty set proposed by mathematicians is phenomenologically unacceptable.

Mathematical science deduces the existence of the empty set from the axiom of existence – there exists a set – and from the axiom scheme of restricted understanding. The property used by mathematicians to demonstrate this existence is the property for a set *not to be identical to itself*. Given a set – the axiom of existence says there is at least one – there exists, according to the axiom of understanding scheme, a set whose elements are those of this set that have the property of not being identical to themselves. This set obviously has no elements. It is, by definition, *the empty set*. The empty set shows itself to us explicitly, since it contains no set at all. This does not mean that it is temporal; it may be purely imaginary. From this explicitly given set, all explicitly given sets can be deduced, based on the construction axioms, all those that can be explicitly described using the symbol that represents the empty set. This symbolic representation, which is graphically purely temporal, does not mean that the sets thus constructed are purely temporal.

Two conclusions follow.

The first is that mathematical science, in its concrete applications, must be extremely simple: it is the extension, with the help of the axioms of construction and our logic, of the only reality – purely imaginary or purely temporal, there is nothing to determine this – represented by the empty set.

The second – if mathematics is to be, strictly speaking, a science, a science that is part of physical science, a science whose model is natural – is that the empty set must be a temporal reality, seen by all of us without any use of our imagination. If the empty set is indeed purely

temporal, and if the axioms of construction preserve pure temporality, then the sets constructed from the empty set are themselves purely temporal – which means we need to determine to what extent these axioms of construction preserve pure temporality.

The question raised here by phenomenology is that of the pure temporality of the empty set as demonstrated by mathematical science. At stake is the possibility of this mathematical science being an authentic science, an experimental science, dealing with concrete, purely temporal problems, as are all the problems dealt with by physical science. The question is: to what extent is mathematical science a domain of physical science?

Translated into the language of phenomenology, what mathematicians are telling us with this theorem that demonstrates the existence of the empty set is that the empty set is the set of things in the situation *that are not identical with themselves*. Does this show us a temporal thing, a thing seen without the intervention of our imagination? The empty set, thus shown, is rather a pure product of our imagination, and even, and above all, pure and simple nonsense.

Let us look.

A thing of common truth, whatever it may be – a set is one – is necessarily identical to itself: this identity expresses the fundamental characteristic of common thingness, which is stability, a stability necessary to multiplicity. Each thing of common truth is unique among things. This is how each thing shows itself to us. It is therefore absurd to speak of things that are not identical with themselves. It is equivalent to speaking of things that do not show themselves to us in any way, and therefore *of things that are not things*. But there are only things. We can only talk about something. What is a thing that is not a thing, or a set that is not a set? The empty set is shown to us by mathematicians as the set of things in a situation that have the property of not being things! Or, if we assume, as mathematicians do, that there are only sets, it is shown to us as the set of sets belonging to a set that are not sets! The

empty set is a set of things that are not things, or a set of sets that are not sets.

The emptiness shown to us by mathematicians is nothing but the emptiness of stupidity, born of contradiction and incoherence, of what our logic absolutely rejects. Certainly, this absurdity does not show itself to us as anything other than an absurdity, as a pure and simple contradiction. An absurdity is always something, but it is something that only appears in our imagination, and which our imagination declares to be meaningless.

The emptiness shown by mathematicians is the emptiness of meaning. Mathematicians would thus have demonstrated that the model of mathematics that is the empty set – the model on which all sets whose symbolic representation is explicit, and particularly all numbers, are built – is not only purely imaginary, but also empty of meaning, i.e. absurdity. It is perhaps this absurdity that led Bertrand Russell to say that "mathematics is a science in which you don't know what you're talking about, or whether what you're saying is true".

Phenomenologically speaking, the mathematicians' demonstration of the mathematical existence of the empty set is not acceptable. We need a theoretical demonstration that shows us the temporal reality of the empty set, and that shows us the structure of which it is the model. We need a theoretical demonstration that shows us the purely temporal reality of mathematics or, at least, of a part of mathematics, of certain sets, in particular ordinal sets, numbers.

If everything results from a property – originally, that of being vital – we must ask ourselves what is the property that gives rise to the empty set. As phenomenology shows us the empty set, the property in question is structural, the very foundation of the proper multiple: membership. Given a proper multiple of intimate space or external space – which may be a proper thing of external space – phenomenology's empty set shows the distance that separates the things that make up this multiple. This distance is made up of the proper things that do not belong to the proper multiple, it is made up of the absence, among these things, of a

certain kind of thing, the kind of thing that defines the proper multiple. Phenomenology's empty set is always the absence of certain things – those with certain properties – in a situation, this absence showing non-membership. It will be shown that the empty set of theory, correctly demonstrated, is the empty set of phenomenology.

The phenomenologically correct demonstration, by set theory, of the existence of the empty set requires the rehabilitation of the pair axiom. This is the subject of the next two paragraphs.

§69.- Rehabilitation of the pair axiom.

Mathematicians demonstrate the pair axiom – by making it a ZF theorem – using the existence of the empty set, the axiom of the set of subsets and the replacement axiom scheme. This demonstration is therefore phenomenologically unacceptable.

The prerequisite for a theoretically correct demonstration of the existence of the empty set is the rehabilitation of the pair axiom. This involves making it a genuine axiom, independent of the others. We then demonstrate the existence of the empty set from the pair axiom – showing that the empty set is inseparable from the membership structure, that it is a model of this structure, that it is its simplest model. This demonstration is the subject of the next paragraph.

Let us show the temporal self-evidence of the pair axiom.

The primitive axiom of common truth – that there are things and there are only things – implies that any set – in the intuitive sense – of things, whatever those things may be, is a thing. Consequently, two things constitute one thing, the thing made up of these two things. Consequently, the common truth says that two theoretical sets put together constitute a thing, the thing made of these two theoretical sets. What the axiom of the pair says is that this thing is the theoretical set made up of these two theoretical sets. Phenomenologically, to pass from the thing to the mathematical set that this thing constitutes when we see it made up of the two mathematical sets that constitute it, is to pass from an ordinary view of the thing to one of its mathematical views – it is

anticipated here that the sets of theory are the mathematical sets of phenomenology (as will be demonstrated in chapter VI). The pair axiom is a comprehensible axiom that is easy to accept.

The pair axiom says exactly: if a and b are two sets, then there exists a set, denoted $\{a, b\}$, whose elements are a and b . Note that the axiom includes the case where a and b are not distinct. In this case, the axiom refers to the existence of the set $\{a, a\}$. According to the axiom of extension, the set $\{a, a\}$ is identical to the set $\{a\}$ because both sets have the same elements, namely a single element which is a . Given a set, a , the pair axiom says that there also exists the set consisting of the single element a , denoted $\{a\}$.

Phenomenologically, how do we go from seeing thing a , which is a mathematical set, to seeing this other mathematical set which is $\{a\}$? Let us remember that any proper thing in external space, a , can be seen in multiple ways as a mathematical set, i.e. as different mathematical sets, depending on the composition we are considering. Among these multiple mathematical ways of seeing a , there is always the one that consists in seeing the mathematical set as a proper thing made up of a single proper thing, the thing a , thus as the mathematical set that has only one element, which is therefore a *singleton*, noted $\{a\}$. Phenomenology thus shows that any mathematical set a – which, by definition, is a proper thing of external space – entails the existence of the mathematical set $\{a\}$ and justifies the pair axiom when the pair is made up of identical sets.

Note that the pair $\{\{a\}, \{a\}\}$ gives existence to the set $\{\{a\}\}$, and therefore also to the set $\{\{\{a\}\}\}$, and so on. The pair axiom states that the existence of a set entails the existence of an infinite number of sets.

If we have a good phenomenological grasp of the passage from a to $\{a\}$, the difference between the sets a and $\{a\}$, how are we to see the difference between $\{a\}$ and $\{\{a\}\}$, since they are different theoretical sets? When it comes to sets, whether according to phenomenology or theory, we are always talking about a proper thing according to its composition in proper things – that is what the axiom of extension says.

A different composition gives rise to a distinct set. It is a question of *structure*, not *nature*. The composition of the set $\{a\}$, made up of a single element which is a , itself made up of a given number of elements, is different from the composition of the set $\{\{a\}\}$, made up of a single element which is $\{a\}$, itself made up of a single element.

Another, simpler and more direct way of phenomenologically understanding the difference between $\{a\}$ and $\{\{a\}\}$ is to consider that the $\{\}$ graphic represents a situation, a context. In a situation, a situation is shown, which shows a situation, etc., which shows a situation that is a proper thing of the external space a according to one of its compositions in proper things, thus as a mathematical set. In the common truth, every proper thing of external space can be seen as situated within a sequence of situations – or contexts – nested within one another like Russian dolls.

§70.- Demonstration of the existence of the empty set from the pair axiom.

By virtue of the pair axiom, the existence of the set $\{a, a\}$ follows from the set a . By virtue of the axiom of extension, the set $\{a, a\}$ is none other than the set $\{a\}$, a set composed of a single element, a set that is, by definition, a "singleton".

If we consider the intersection of these two sets a and $\{a\}$, i.e. the set of elements that are common to both the singleton $\{a\}$ and the set a , this intersection is a set that can have either only one element – in the case where the set a belongs to itself – or no element at all, i.e. an empty set. *It is therefore sufficient for a single set not to belong to itself for the empty set to exist.*

The six fundamental axioms of the theory – the ZF theory without the foundation axiom – do not imply that every set necessarily belongs to itself, but they do leave open the possibility that a set might belong to itself. The foundation axiom, FA, – which states that "every non-empty set has an element that has no element in common with that set" – which is not generally considered to be part of the ZF axioms, and which does

not contradict the ZF axioms, has the immediate consequence that a set *cannot* belong to itself. Consequently, there are necessarily sets – at least one – that are not elements of themselves. Indeed, if there were no such sets, the foundation axiom would not be compatible with the other axioms of ZF. But it is: there is a so-called "relative consistency" demonstration of the consistency of the ZF+FA system – saying that if ZF is consistent, then ZF+FA is consistent. This leads to the existence of the empty set.

The intersection operation implemented by this demonstration results from the use of the restricted comprehension scheme for the set $\{a, \{a\}\}$. The property used is that of belonging to both the singleton $\{a\}$ and the set a ; the result, if a does not belong to itself, is a set that has no elements. Since there is necessarily at least one set that does not belong to itself, the empty set is a set of the theory.

The empty set is thus shown to be the total difference between two sets: two sets can have no set in common, they are totally different. This emptiness is the absence of community, the negation of any community, between two sets: it shows both multiplicity and, in negative form, the membership relation between multiples. The empty set of theory is, like the empty set of phenomenology, intrinsically linked to the multiplicity of things and to the membership relation between things. It shows both multiplicity and membership between multiples – through its negation, the absence of sets in common.

CHAPTER VI

**The mathematical sets defined by phenomenology are
the sets of axiomatic theory.**

**Consequently, mathematics is entirely founded on the
two axioms of common truth:**

1 - There are things

**2 - The proper things of external space are made of
things**

Phenomenologically constructible sets

§71.- Mathematical sets satisfy the axioms of ZF.

The aim is to show that the axioms of the theory – existence, extensionality, pair, understanding, reunion, subsets, infinity – are satisfied by mathematical sets as defined by phenomenology.

As a consequence of this monstration, the mathematical sets are the sets of the theory. Consequently, the two axioms of common truth that suffice to define mathematical sets, namely:

- 1- There are things, there are only things,
- 2- Things in external space are made of things,

are also sufficient to define the sets of the theory. These two axioms can be described as "mathematical". They express the mathesis of external space.

Let us compare the mathematical sets, as phenomenologically defined in §60, with the axioms of the theory as set out in §63. To do this, we need to keep in constant view not only the definition of mathematical sets, but also the structural provenance of this definition:

Since the purely temporal proper things of external space are made of proper things, any proper thing of external space can be seen, in imagination, as consisting of "ones" made of "ones", and this without end. The mathematical set is this imaginary proper thing of external space, whose constituent things have no property other than that of being "one", of participating as "one" in the multiplicity of things, each of these "ones" itself being a mathematical set. Every single thing in external space can be seen in a multitude of ways as a mathematical set, depending on the choice made of its composition in "ones", the choice made of the composition in "ones" of these "ones", and so on. The mathematical set shows the structure of proper things of external space, not their nature.

A mathematical set is an *imaginary* proper thing in external space. It is imaginary, on the one hand, because of the "endlessness" of the constitution of "ones" into "ones", and on the other hand, because of the fixation, in time, of this composition. Remember that imaginary does not contradict temporal. It is "purely imaginary" that contradicts "purely temporal". An imagined thing can also be purely temporal: in this case, it is not purely imaginary. As defined, mathematical sets are imaginary. This does not rule out the possibility that at least some of them are purely temporal. Numbers, as phenomenologically defined in §56, are purely temporal and totally stable mathematical sets.

§72.- Mathematical sets verify the axiom of existence.

Phenomenology, unlike our theory of logic – our logic's theory of itself – is unambiguous about existence. What does it mean to "exist"?

To "exist" is to "show oneself to us". That which shows itself to at least one of us, however and whenever it shows itself, does exist. "Thing" – or phenomenon – is the common noun given to what exists. In the definition of existence, the indefinable but universally known primitive is "showing up". The primary phenomenon, trivialized in common truth, is "to show oneself"; it is sight, it is seeing.

It is clear that, phenomenologically, mathematical sets exist; they show themselves through their definition. What is required of a definition, in terms of the monstration it operates in our imagination, is that it be coherent, i.e. that it does not show, at the same time, something and its negation. In mathematics, time is not a factor. The definition of a proper thing of mathesis is consistent if it is not possible for the definition to say that such and such a proper thing satisfies the definition and also that it does not. In the case of the definition of mathematical sets, the definition, if it is coherent, must not be able to say that such and such a proper thing is, and is not, a mathematical set. A coherent definition does not contradict itself.

The question here is whether existence in the sense of phenomenology entails existence in the sense of mathematical-logical science.

Let us be clear: mathematical-logical science does not define existence. Phenomenological analysis of this science's use of the word "existence" indicates that its implicit definition is exactly that of phenomenology: what is shown exists, everything that is shown is a thing, things are partitioned into elements and properties – phenomenology says "proper thing" instead of "element".

Consequently, the mathematical set verifies the axiom of existence of the theory.

It is here, in this word "existence", undefined by the science of logic and mathematics, that all the ambiguity of this science lies, and certainly the reason why, according to Bertrand Russell, we do not know what we are talking about, or whether what we are saying is true, when we are doing mathematics. What this science is about, however, is phenomenologically clear.

Let us try to shed some light on what, for the common truth, remains in the shadows.

To say, as the science of logic puts it, that there is a set is to say that among things, there is at least one that shows itself to "all of us" and verifies all the axioms of the theory. For there to be something, at least one thing, that verifies all the axioms of the theory, it is necessary and sufficient that the axioms be coherent, that they entail no contradiction: the principle of contradiction is the only law of our logic. To say that a set exists is to affirm the coherence of the theory's axioms, since their role is to define what a set is, what kind of thing a set is. If there is such a thing as a set – which is what our logic affirms – then necessarily the definition of sets is coherent.

What is phenomenologically astonishing about mathematicians' presentation of theory is that the existence of sets is assumed to be an axiom of logical theory. For mathematicians, the existence of a set is not a mathematical axiom, it is a logical axiom. In other words, this existence is assumed even before the mathematical axioms are laid down, even before the set is defined. It is as if logicians were saying: there are sets, there are only sets, but they must be properly defined, so it is up to you, mathematicians. Now, any definition is made based on things that are supposedly defined, known to all, seen purely temporally, in the evidence. If there are only sets, what sense does it make to define sets based on sets? To prove the logicians right, sets can only be defined based on things that are purely temporal, seen by everyone, and which, *a posteriori*, also happen to be sets. Is this the case? This question was addressed in §67. Sets are defined, in particular, based on numbers – one, two – which happen to be sets. But they are also defined from something called a "universe", and another thing called an "object". We all have some idea of what an object is, and what the universe is. The object and the universe exist. Everyone will agree that the universe is the set – in the intuitive sense – of everything that exists, of all objects, making the object anything that is seen. It is from the universe, from objects, from numbers, that common

truth elaborates mathematical science, elaborates the definition of the theoretical set. Intuitively, the universe is a set. But are all objects in the universe sets in the sense of logical-mathematical theory?

The mathematicians who work on axiomatic theory, i.e. the definition of sets, are essentially concerned to ensure that the consistency of the axioms is respected. Consistency of axioms is their primary concern: sets only exist at the price of consistency of axioms. As Gödel demonstrated, ZF theory cannot prove its own consistency. The theory holds, the sets exist because the theory shows no inconsistency, no contradiction. The appearance of an inconsistency would lead to a recasting of the theory. Inconsistencies have arisen, and axioms have been modified. For the time being, the theory stands firm, and we can assume that it will no longer be necessary to change it.

Phenomenologically, logical theory starts by saying that there are things, and that these things are divided into elements and properties: elements have properties. It cannot decree the existence, among these elements, of sets, without knowing the definition of these sets. Sets only exist if this definition is coherent. Ensuring the coherence of axioms, and therefore the existence of these particular elements that are sets, is the job of mathematicians. And yet, it seems, there are only sets; the elements are the sets!

For phenomenology, mathematical sets are proper things among proper things, and it is a question of correctly defining the kind of thing they are, the concept under which they fall. If the element of logic is the proper thing of phenomenology, the proper thing itself receives its phenomenological definition from the common things, the common thing being anything that shows itself to all. The element of logical science, on the other hand, has no other definition than that of the sets of theory. And these sets of the theory are defined based on certain things that must be sets! This is the circle of common understanding, the circle of self-reference.

The existence of mathematical sets, those defined by phenomenology, rests on just two axioms, the truth of which shows

itself to us in a purely temporal way. One is the primitive axiom of common truth, *implicitly* taken up by the theory of logic: there are things, there are only things. The other is the axiom of common truth proper to external space: the proper things of external space – in fact, of any external situation – are made of proper things. External space – in reality, external situation – and proper thing are things phenomenologically defined from the things of common truth. The coherence of these two axioms of common truth is beyond doubt: time does not deceive us, and we all see, purely temporally, what it shows us and what is said by these two axioms. The second axiom involves two particular things: the proper thing – i.e. the partition of things into properties and proper things – and the external situation.

The proper thing corresponds to what the theory of logic calls an "element". The proper thing is distinguished, among things, from those other things that are properties. On this point, on this distinction made between the things of common truth, logical theory joins phenomenology.

External space is defined by phenomenology as the set – in the intuitive sense of the word "set" – of the things we all see at the same time – see §44. It is the set of things that appear independent of us. This distinction between things in external space and things in intimate space exists neither in logical theory nor in mathematics. Yet it is only in external space that things are made of things. Mathematical sets are proper things of external space, things that are made of proper things and are only defined as such. The axiom of phenomenology that defines, among proper things, mathematical sets, is: mathematical sets are proper things that are made of mathematical sets. External space is singular in that its proper things are made of proper things. This is a physical observation. The proper things of common truth that are defined, among proper things, only by this property of being made of proper things, are mathematical sets. In this definition, the composition of proper things by proper things is left endless. This "endlessness" means that things thus simply defined are imaginary. Purely temporally,

we do not know how to see this "endlessness" of the composition of things by things.

Physicists know that there is a limit to how far we can observe this endless composition of the imagination. They know the role that observation plays in the existence of things: things only exist when seen, and sight influences existence. Outside of a possible view, we do not know what things are really made of.

The mathematical set, thus defined, is imaginary. On the other hand, if it is true that the proper things of external space are made of proper things, this composition of things by things is not stable: it varies over time. The axiom is always true, yet the composition of things by things varies. The mathematical set, which is that proper thing made up of proper things and which is only defined as such, remains in time a proper thing made up of proper things, but it is not always the same set: it is simply stable. To determine the exact composition of this imaginary thing that is the set, it is necessary to fix time: this is the composition at a given moment. Determining a mathematical set requires two imaginative interventions:

- 1) that of seeing its endless composition,
- 2) that of fixing time, i.e. acting as if the set were a totally stable thing.

Phenomenology says that what we are talking about with sets is the structure of things in external space, not their nature. The totally stable structure of things is mathesis, the object of the mathematical sciences. The simply stable nature of things is physis, the object of the physical sciences. The question immediately arises of the link between the two sciences. There is necessarily a link since physical science is founded on mathematical science. The link is numbers, numbers defined by phenomenology and shown by phenomenology to be those of mathematical sets that are purely temporal and totally stable. Whether time is fixed or not, numbers remain what they are. On the other hand, the composition of numbers by numbers has an end, and numbers are seen purely temporally. As numbers are seen purely temporally, the

coherence of the set of numbers – which is itself a mathematical set – is ensured by time: it is time that dispenses scientific truth.

It is the axiom of infinity, the one that introduces infinite numbers, that calls into question the coherence of numerical sets, that calls into question the coherence of the theory's definition of sets. The coherence of ZF theory cannot be proven. This is due to the axiom of infinity. No infinite theory can demonstrate its own coherence. Is nature coherent? The question does not arise. Nature is implicitly the model of coherence, coherence itself: time does not deceive us. This is the scientific credo.

Our theories, logical and mathematical, ignore the concepts attached to the words "temporal", "imaginary", "purely imaginary", "stable", "totally stable", "external space", "proper thing", "thing". Yet we all know what temporal, imaginary, stable, external space, and thing are.

Only mathematical sets such as numbers exist in the scientific sense of existence: for science, without explicitly saying so, to exist is to exist purely temporally. The purely temporal existence of the numbers defined by phenomenology was shown in §56. The identity of these numbers with the finite ordinal sets of the theory was shown in §61.

For phenomenology, the indefinable primitive, that from which existence derives, is "showing itself". For the truth of Being, the "showing itself" is the absolutely surprising in-itself, madness itself. For the common truth, "showing oneself" is self-evident, unsurprising, things show themselves to all in the evidence.

The only difference between the phenomenological definition of existence and the implicit definition given by logical-mathematical science is that for the latter, as for common truth in general, what is shown – elements or properties – is shown to all.

Phenomenology's distinction between temporal and imaginary existence among things that exist and show themselves to all does not exist in logic or mathematics. As a result, every coherent definition shows something that exists based on some other supposedly existing thing, regardless of the way in which these supposedly existing things

show themselves to everyone. It is therefore sufficient that the axioms that define sets are consistent – that is, do not contradict each other – for sets to exist. To affirm the existence of sets, as logicians and mathematicians do, is to affirm, on the one hand, the coherence of axioms, and on the other, the common evidence of the few words – the few things – that axioms use in their statements, without defining them – see §67 on this subject.

When mathematicians present their system of axioms, the coherence of the axioms is assumed to be verified. Sets exist, simply because things exist, and the definition of sets from things that exist is necessarily consistent: axioms do not contradict each other because the truth of each of them is evident to everyone and, by implication, because time cannot show us contradictory things: time is not wrong. The axiom of logical theory, that which affirms the existence of things, is none other than the primitive axiom of common truth: there are things, there are only things. Logical theory adds to this axiom of existence only the principle of contradiction and the partition of things into elements and properties.

Sets are particular things. The additional axiom that logic lacks, so that among things there are sets, is the axiom that states the structure that is the specific thingness of external space, an axiom that phenomenology states as: the proper things of external space are made of proper things.

The distinction between intimate and external space does not exist in logic any more than it does in mathematics; whether it exists in the human sciences is open to question. Phenomenology sees that the common thingness in these two spaces is not the same. The proper things of logic – the elements – are as much those of intimate space as those of external space, they are as much temporal as imaginary. The proper things of mathematics, the sets, apart from the empty set, are specific to external space. The aim of the axiomatics of sets is, *implicitly*, to introduce this characteristic of things in external space – that they are made of things – into the common thingness. The

axiomatics of sets is the description, by the logos, by the common truth, of this structure that is the common thingness proper to external space. Mathematicians do not say this, they do not know it; it is phenomenology that sees it and says it. They only say that axioms define a relation, called "membership" between things that are sets, an internal and external relation that affects all sets, that characterizes sets among things. They do not say that this relation, as defined, is specific to external space. Nor do they say that the sets they define, apart from ordinal sets, are purely imaginary. They do not say that finite ordinal sets are the only purely temporal proper things of external space that are totally stable. They do not say that the axiom of infinity is tantamount to decreeing the pure temporality of infinite numbers.

Existence, thing, property, intimate space, external space, temporal things, imaginary things, true, false – none of these concepts has a definition in the logos that can satisfy phenomenology. The only explicit principle of logic is non-contradiction: if a proposition is true, its negation is false. Respecting coherence means ensuring that a proposition assumed to be true does not contradict other propositions, which are also assumed to be true.

Neither logic nor mathematics says that time alone shows what is true, while science presupposes that time is never wrong.

Whatever the theory, the axioms posited are posited, in principle, because they are seen to be true by all of us. Since time is not mistaken in what it shows us, the only possibility of error can only come from our imagination: in this case, we all make the same mistake, imagination deceives us all. Any problem of consistency is a problem caused by our imagination. The coherence of axioms is not provable: it is a necessity. Consistency is verified *a posteriori* because no logical consequence of the axioms contradicts them. If a contradiction arises, it is because we have made a mistake, it is because we have imagined something that time doesn't show us, it is because the analogical logic of our imagination doesn't conform to the logic of time, it is because we need to make a correction to the system of axioms.

For physical science, according to its way of operating, to exist is to exist in time alone, to be shown to us all by time. What is this domain of mathematical science that belongs to physical science? What is this mathematics that physical science uses because it is implicitly convinced that it does not betray pure temporality? It is the science of numbers, the science of measuring physical quantities using numbers.

Mathematical sets exist in the sense of logical science, but phenomenology adds that they exist only in our imagination, as proper things showing the totally stable structure of external space, as stated by this single axiom: the proper things of external space are made of proper things. Phenomenology also adds that among mathematical sets, only numbers exist purely temporally: they are the purely temporal, totally stable proper things of external space.

§73.- Mathematical sets satisfy the axiom of extensionality.

It was shown in §60 that mathematical sets satisfy the axiom of extensionality. Let us recall this monstration.

Given a mathematical set implies given the exact composition of its elements, the elements of its elements, and so on, without end. *For each "one" of a mathematical set, its composition in "ones" is determined; it is also determined for each of these "ones", and so on, endlessly.* The complete composition of a mathematical set, apart from that of numbers, cannot therefore be given temporally: it is imaginary. From this definition and identification of the mathematical set, it immediately follows that *no two distinct mathematical sets have the same elements.* This fact is the axiom of extensionality as posited by theory.

§74.- Mathematical sets satisfy the pair axiom.

Two proper things of external space, a and b , constitute a single proper multiple which is a proper thing c . Among the mathematical sets that can be seen from c , there is the mathematical set γ consisting of that "one" which is any mathematical set seen from a and that "one" which

is any mathematical set seen from b . The pair axiom, true for proper things, is also true for mathematical sets: indeed, proper things α and β , which are arbitrary mathematical sets derived from proper things a and b , are the only two elements of a unique mathematical set γ .

§75.- Mathematical sets satisfy axioms of construction.

Any proper thing in external space – thus including mathematical sets – can be seen in many ways as a mathematical set. Any set can therefore give rise to the monstration of multiple other sets. The axioms of construction show how other sets can be seen from one or more sets.

The definition of mathematical sets immediately shows that it satisfies the axiom of reunion, the axiom of set of subsets, the restricted comprehension scheme, the replacement axiom scheme.

What is special about the replacement axiom scheme is that it does not, as the comprehension scheme does, select the elements of a given mathematical set to construct a mathematical set, but says that *the image by a functional relation of this mathematical set is a mathematical set*. Such an image preserves the structure, is a mathematical set.

§76.- Mathematical sets and the infinity axiom.

We showed in §61 that the ordinals of axiomatic theory are the numbers of phenomenology. Every phenomenological number, except for the emptiness, necessarily has a predecessor: it arises, physically, from this predecessor. A number is a proper thing, purely temporal and totally stable, just like all its predecessors. Certainly, we can imagine continuing indefinitely to pronounce something that remains a number, albeit always a new number, known to all.

The axiom of infinity states that there is a number that has no predecessor. This contradicts the phenomenological definition of number. This axiom, thus worded, seems phenomenologically unacceptable. However, we know how to *imagine* the "endless".

"Endless" is one of the two reasons why mathematical sets are imaginary, the other being that each proper "one" belonging to a mathematical set is assumed to be totally stable, which presupposes either fixing time – which our imagination knows how to do – or considering that each of these "ones" is a number or a set of numbers or a set of sets of numbers, and so on.

We know how to imagine the "endless" pronunciation of a number, the "endless" that corresponds to reasoning by recurrence.

The non-finite number is the number whose pronunciation is endless; it is purely imaginary. However, along the endless path of its pronunciation, it remains a number. Mathematicians refer to ω as the first of the non-finite numbers. The set ω is a purely imaginary mathematical set whose "ones" are all purely temporal numbers, i.e. all finite numbers. This set, ω , is the set of "natural integers", the set of finite numbers.

Mathematicians show that the *collection*²⁵ of ordinals – the collection of proper things that are numbers – is not a set. Phenomenologically, the whole numbers do not make a proper *situation*, any more than the whole things do. However, the collection of finite ordinals is a situation, is a set, is the set ω – which is an imaginary set, the first of infinite numbers. Any number, even an infinite one, is a situation, not *the whole* numbers.

The infinity of the "endless" numbers is the first dimension of infinity. It is the infinity of the number of proper things in a proper thing. A second dimension arises when we consider that every proper thing among the infinity of proper things in the proper thing is itself made up of an infinity of proper things, then a third dimension, and so on. This is how numerical infinity and the infinity of numerical infinities unfold in our imagination.

²⁵ A *collection* is a part, in the intuitive sense, of the Universe, defined by a relation involving a single free variable: $R(x)$. In other words, there are things, and, among things, there are elements – proper things – and properties. Those elements that have the property R constitute a *collection*. A collection is not a mathematical set since the things there are – the universe – is not a situation.

The phenomenology of the mathematics of infinite numerical sets – *generic extensions* of set theory – will be the subject of Chapter XI. With the generic extensions of set theory, it is just about infinite ordinal sets, just about "inaccessible cardinals", just about numerical infinity, just about what Cantor wanted to explore.

§77.- The construction of sets. Phenomenologically constructible sets.

The empty set is the only *explicit* proper thing that satisfies the axioms of ZF and is therefore a set of the theory that does not need the axioms of constructions to be shown. "Explicit" here means that the empty set is a purely temporal and totally stable proper thing, and therefore constantly present to our view. To construct an explicit theoretical set, we must start from an explicit theoretical set. The only set available to us for this purpose is the empty set. *Phenomenologically constructible sets* are, by definition, sets that are constructed from the empty set, recursively using the axioms of construction.

Starting from the empty set – noted \emptyset – which is his starting set, how does the mathematician, equipped with the construction axioms, construct others? Neither the axiom of reunion nor the scheme of comprehension is useful at the outset, since the empty set has no elements. From the pair axiom or the axiom of the set of subsets, it follows that the singleton $\{\emptyset\}$ is a set. This singleton, $\{\emptyset\}$, is the set of subsets of the empty set, a set whose only element is the empty set, since the empty set has no subsets. The existence of the pair $\{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}$ is deduced, again, by the axiom of the pair or the axiom of the set of subsets.

With the construction mechanism thus initiated, it is easy to see that, using the various axioms, we can construct, mechanically, indefinitely, other sets, the *phenomenologically constructible* sets and, in particular, all ordinal sets.

Phenomenologically constructible sets do not necessarily contain the empty set as an element. The property of a set not being the empty set

is sufficient to select, with the aid of the comprehension scheme, within any set, a subset that does not have the empty set as an element. For example, this selection applied to the set $\{\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}\}$ constructs the set $\{\{\emptyset\}\}$ that does not have the empty set as an element.

Phenomenologically constructible sets do not necessarily contain the symbol \emptyset in their explicit development. Using the replacement axiom scheme, any set can be replaced by its image in a functional relation. This shows that what matters, mathematically, relative to that proper thing of external space that is the theory set, is its structure, not its nature.

CHAPTER VII

Physis and Mathesis

Physical truth and mathematical truth

Physical Science and Mathematical Science

§78.- Mathematical truth as a phenomenological reduction of physical truth.

Numbers as the totally stable mathematical foundation of the simply stable physical thingness.

The alliance of time and imagination.

Scientific truth is expressed in the form of propositions that state *facts*. A fact is a purely temporal event, which, to merit study by science, to become scientific, must be visible, experimentally, to all of us.

Some scientific facts are statements that are said to be "the laws of physics". These laws are those that govern *changes* in the simply stable, purely temporal proper things of external space – so all the purely temporal proper things of external space except numbers.

What changes relative to a purely temporal simply stable proper thing in external space?

The physical characteristics – the objective properties – of such a proper thing are, for example, its mass, its temperature, its distance from

other proper things, its luminous intensity. It is these physical characteristics that change. These characteristics change, while the proper thing remains the simply stable proper thing that it is for us; despite these changes, the proper thing retains the natural properties that distinguish it from other proper things.

For common truth and classical physical science, these changes, regulated by the laws of physics, are all a function of time considered as a neutral, independent, continuous, uniform variable.

For phenomenology, it is time that regulates change in our eyes. Time, in change, is still the master of the game; it is anything but neutral, it has an objective. Its objective is to stabilize, normalize, neutralize the view which, initially, is unheard-of, violent, absolutely surprising, absolutely surprised by itself. The stabilized view is that of the living gaze.

In mathesis, there is no longer any game to master, the game is over, time has already reached its goal: the goal reached is the totally stable structure that is the common thingness. Among the proper things so structured, numbers are purely temporal, totally stable, and always available to the living gaze.

In physis outside mathesis, the goal of stability is still and always to be achieved through time. In this work, time has given itself an ally: imagination, especially human imagination, especially scientific imagination. Scientific imagination presupposes that the objective of time has been achieved. This presupposition is the generalized principle of contradiction, the *a priori* of science. Science seeks stability, and finds it, as it said in the laws of physics.

This search for stability manifests itself precisely in what we, all of us, call "time". The time of phenomenology, whose objective is stability, annihilation, is not the time of science or of common truth. For common truth, time is the regularity and coherence of changes in things as they appear; the time of science, the time of us all, is precisely what phenomenological time aims at.

Instead of total stability – unattainable on the whole – the work of time in physis is to show the living gaze – a gaze that is the metamorphosis, through time, of the initial gaze – the total coherence of the changes it is obliged to concede to Being. Obligated, because whatever logic does – whatever time and imagination do – there is!

"There is!" contradicts all coherence, all regularity, all neutrality, all normality. The exclamation mark makes all the difference. Being contradicts the logical ideal within it. This ideal is always within us, sought by us, we who are the metamorphosis of Being through time.

Every law of physics, first imagined by us, is then verified by an experimental set-up that is supposed to implement it. Through this set-up, time is summoned to say whether what has been imagined is true: it is time that tells the truth. All the entities present in the laws of physics are considered as things independent of the living gaze, the gaze that ascertains the truth of the law. These things are *the objective properties* of the simply stable proper things of external space.

Certain laws of physics – we can hardly say that they are laws of physics, although phenomenologically they are – do not need to be verified: everyone can see that they are true. They are self-evident and constant. These laws are so self-evident, so constantly demonstrated, that they are never presented as such. What is special about them is that, instead of relating the physical properties of things to each other – force, mass, acceleration, for example – they relate the living eye itself to what it sees, to things. There are three:

- 1) *There are things, there are only things.*
- 2) *Things are partitioned into properties and proper things: proper things have properties.*
- 3) *The proper things of external space are made of things.*

These laws involve nothing other than the living gaze and its truth. For the living gaze, there is an external space visible to all gazes at the

same time – everyone can see the same thing at the same time –, and this external space is made of things that are themselves made of things.

These are the structural laws of *mathematical truth*. The only property that intervenes in the structure of things, in addition to multiplicity – which presupposes stability, simple or total – is *the property of internal membership*, the property that says that the proper things of external space are made of things.

The property of internal membership results from the work, already done, of natural properties, those that have generated the sight of proper things by the living gaze. Mathematical truth intervenes *a posteriori* to the work, in time without beginning, of *natural properties*; it is not concerned with the natural properties of things, those that are at the origin of the mathematical structure of things.

The study of the *objective* properties of proper things in external space, the study of what changes in these proper things, is the domain of physical science, the science that tells what *physical truth* sees. Physical truth includes mathematical truth, although logos clearly separates physical science from mathematical science. For phenomenology, the mathematical is included in the physical, and mathematical science is included in physical science. For logos, mathematics seems to be out of time, an unconditioned necessity. Realist philosophers, at least some of them, make it their "in-itself", or their proof of the existence of "in-itself", of reality independent of us.

Physical truth is not integral common truth. The transition from common truth to physical truth requires a *phenomenological reduction*: we must disregard subjective affects originating in intimate space, and thus disregard the subjective properties of things.

The study of the different fields of common truth and the phenomenological reductions required to move from one to the other will be the subject of the next chapter.

The difference between mathematics and physics is between *structure* and *nature*, between totally stable and simply stable. Structure results from nature, from the work of natural properties, and is *a posteriori*.

Mathematical truth, which sees only the totally stable, only the structural, is a phenomenological reduction of physical truth.

If structure – mathematical – results from nature – physical –, nature and its laws result from the primary intention of the living gaze: its conservation, and therefore stability. It is the search for the vital in the "there is" that is at the origin of the formation of things of common truth and the coherence of what this truth shows to the living gaze.

The proper things studied by physical science are exclusively *purely temporal*. The only proper things of mathematical truth to be such are numbers, those particular multiples that give multiples their measure. The proper things of mathematical science, the mathematical sets, apart from numbers, are *purely imaginary* proper things, derived, by extrapolation, from the totally stable structure that is the common thingness of external space: any purely temporal proper thing of external space can be seen, in multiple ways, as a mathematical set.

All the laws of physics, apart from the axioms of mathematical truth, take the form of mathematical formulae. These laws are relationships between measurements of objective properties of things in external space. The properties in question – distance, duration, force, mass, energy, heat, luminosity, etc. – are therefore measurable. If they are measurable, it is because they are seen as multiples. To be seen as multiples, we must first decide what it is about them that makes "one", i.e. we must decide on the unit of measurement. The unit of measurement of a physical property is the purely temporal representation – a proper thing conserved as a *standard* – of an effect produced by that physical property. The property in question is represented by its purely temporal realization, which is a proper thing. One of these representations is chosen, arbitrarily but definitively, as the unit of measurement, as the standard, as "one", for the measurement of all the temporal realizations of the property under consideration – force, mass, distance, etc. Through the artifice of this measurement, physical science is linked to the science of numbers, to mathematics.

Why say that measurement is an "artifice"? Because any standard of measurement, unlike the number that provides the measure, is a purely temporal proper thing that is simply stable. The physical properties that concern it – that concern it as they concern what is measured through it – are relative and changeable. Physicists at least take the precaution of adding that measurements are made "under normal conditions". What these "normal conditions" are, we will never finish clarifying. Pragmatically speaking, and in a way that is adequate and sufficient for the technical use we make of these measurements, normal conditions are ours, those of our life, those in which we live, on our Earth, those of our current general situation in physis.

The first of these normal conditions, so normal that it has long been ignored – it no longer is, since the advent of quantum physics – is that the standard of measurement, what it is used to measure, and the measurement itself, be seen. The sight of things is the condition of things. Things are only seen. The sight of the living eye is not neutral in relation to the things it sees.

The laws of physics involve relationships between measurements, not the measurements themselves. Relative to the law, measurements are actually made – necessarily in an approximate way – only to show the validity of the law. While measurements are relative and approximate, the law is supposed absolute. Any deviation from the law must be explained. Science will not rest until it finds this explanation, possibly by proposing a new law. In this standardization, science – imagination – is the ally of time.

**§79.- Mathesis of external space and mathesis of intimate space.
Geometric spatial multiplicity and chronometric spatial
multiplicity.**

Pure affects.

Pure affect free of all questioning: Being.

Mathesis is the totally stable structure that is the thingness of common truth. This structure is home to purely temporal, totally stable things belonging to both intimate and external space: numbers. Numbers aside, the proper things, necessarily subject to this structure, are simply stable, and are either purely temporal or purely imaginary. Simple stability is kept coherent by time and by the imagination that mimics time: proper things change, but these changes are coherent, regulated by laws.

Within mathesis, the common thingness is subdivided into the common thingness of external space and the common thingness of intimate space.

Mathesis is the finished work of time in the living gaze: what it shows us is totally stable. It is said by the primitive axiom of common truth: there are things, there are only things. The axiom applies equally to external and intimate space.

Yet, as far as we know, there is no mathematical science of intimate space – unless it is atomic set theory, although no link has yet been made, it seems, between this theory and the proper things of intimate space.

The mathematical difference between the two spaces, intimate and external, lies in the membership relation. In intimate space, the membership relation is only external; in external space, it is also internal.

In external space, every proper thing is made of other things – except the emptiness, which, if not made of things, is relative to proper things and their structure: it shows this structure, it has this structure.

The emptiness, present in both external and intimate space, is inseparable from the multiplicity of proper things, from their unity,

from the distance – chronometric – intimate space – or geometric – external space – that separates them.

Intimate space is the space of affects. Apart from *pure affects*, affects are subjective, intimate properties of things in external space. *Pure affects* are those affects that relate exclusively to that intimate, unique thing that is oneself. Pure affects are intimate, purely temporal thoughts, pains or joys that have no external cause. They arise from the self and relate to the self, to the self-truth of the self. They invade the self, take hold of the self, identify with the self. Pure affects question themselves each time they appear, and this questioning changes their intensity. Questioning can reinforce, strengthen, or intensify a pure affect. It can also kill it – to put it away in belief – and, perhaps, give way to another pure affect, a *free pure affect*, the free pure affect.

Pure affects are not necessarily born of questioning, but questioning changes them, invigorating, or extinguishing them. When pure affect no longer generates questioning and remains the pure affect that it is, it is not only pure, but also free, it is violent, it is extreme.

What is questioning itself, what kind of thing is it?

Questioning is the taking over of pure affect by *our* logic, by the logic of our imagination. Questioning tends to reason pure affect, to seek a cause, a foundation, its reason. Questioning is logic in action. It is part of the work of our logic to translate questioning into language, to try to give it a place in the logos through a coherent discourse. If questioning does indeed take its place in the logos, this means that the common truth includes this discourse, that the questioned pure affect belongs to everyone, that it becomes common, that intersubjectivity functions: it is trivialized, normalized, reasoned. Otherwise, the discourse in question is considered by science to be nonsense. The pure affect that cannot be transmitted by language – although it is always sayable – cannot find its reason, it is without reason, it has no place in any logical, ordinary, theoretical, or ideal space; questioning has no hold on it, it knows it, it sees it, and that's crazy. Logic, which drives questioning, is unmasked at its core, in its reason, in its objective, which is annihilation.

It is definitively contradicted. This pure affect, free of all questioning, is indestructible, it is Being itself, the madness of being. Its truth is the truth of Being. When this truth speaks of our common truth, its discourse is not the logos, it is the logos seen from elsewhere, seen from nothingness, seen by freeing itself, in the instant, from the annihilation accomplished by time. Seen outside time, seen from nothingness, the world is extraordinary. The world – the thing, the self – contradicts nothingness. In beginningless time, the world is annihilated. It is seen thus, annihilated, by common truth, itself caught in time – itself unaware of anything, itself unaware of the "nothing" it becomes, that it has become, in time. In time, the world – everything, the self – is ordinary.

The multiplicity of proper things of external space is a *geometric spatial multiplicity*: external space – the multiplicity proper to external space – unfolds permanently before us all, and the distance between things is metric. This geometrical structure, always present to us all, is the theme of our mathematical sciences.

The multiplicity of affects in intimate space is a *chronometric spatial multiplicity*: in the instant, a single affect is present, felt, but successive affects, which disappear and re-emerge, are scattered in time, distant in time. The distance between different affects, between resurgences of the same affect, is chronometric, measured by duration. The time interval between two occurrences of the same affect – the affect that subjectively counts as "one" – is an empty space relative to that affect.

If, during a given interval of time, subjectivity finds no use for itself, either in itself – for example, as questioning – or in its relation to external space, then the pure affects that arise may be boredom or anguish. Pure boredom, pure anguish, are pure affects that can be said, retroactively, by metaphysical truth, to be on the brink of the abyss. They are a figure of nothingness, the vertigo of which they feel. The initial pure affect, Being, absolutely surprised by itself, is accessed by the human-being as soon as he sees the nothingness of the world.

Phenomenology can only be seen and said by this Being, accessed by the human-being, by its truth.

The list of different affects that can appear and reappear in intimate space – and which, by dint of reappearances, remain inscribed in memory – is a list of subjective properties of things. What varies, over time, in each of us, is not the occurrence of new affects, but their intensity when they return.

There is one exception to this rule of the return in presence of affects, to the rule of the *always already*. This exception concerns the pure affect of one's own birth, of access to the truth of Being. This unheard-of, unique affect is unforgettable, definitively coloring all future affects. It remains present, it is assailed by logical questioning, it has the power to relativize all questioning, to find its reason, to render it harmless in relation to the madness of being. With the end of the logical power of questioning, the human-being begins the struggle that leads to conciliation with the body and with the common truth, the struggle for serenity, here, in the world, in the world seen translogically.

Irrespective of this difference in spatiality – one geometric, the other chronometric – the fundamental phenomenological difference between the two spaces, external and intimate, lies in the fact that the things of intimate space – affects – are personal. Each of us is alone in seeing them when they arise in presence, with a certain intensity. However, we acquire the conviction, if not the certainty, that others see, in their own time, within themselves, things identical to those we see and experience. This conviction is the result of intersubjectivity. It is only through intersubjectivity that we give a common noun to the different kinds of affect. The descriptions made of the meanings of these common nouns and the consequences of the things they represent – the descriptions of intimate landscapes – constitute this very intersubjectivity. What are these descriptions of affect based on? From what is already common to us: from what is visible to all, from external space, from metaphors.

Body language, visible to all, is already indicative of our intimate feelings.

It is through metaphor that verbal language translates our own intimate things into descriptions of landscapes in external space, and that the common nouns that represent these things take on their meaning. It is the logos of external space that constructs the logos of intimate space. It is through the language that expresses the common external world that affects, however intimate, make their own entry into language, into the community.

External space is seen, received, and perceived by interior space, and is therefore part of it. What distinguishes it from everything perceived by interior space is that every living gaze perceives it at the same time. The intersubjectivity that makes the things of external space common is direct and immediate. It is from this direct intersubjectivity that language is first created, while it is from this primitive language that affects become common and are inscribed in logos.

It is this "at the same time for every living gaze" that gives the strong impression of the total independence of external space from interior space. For the common truth, the two spaces, interior and exterior, appear independent. For the common truth, the view of external space through interior space appears objective, uncorrelated. This raises the question of access to external space through interior space since interior space invests external space to the point of constituting a single space with it. The question no longer arises when we know, with phenomenology – the other phenomenology – that the living gaze is constructed in conjunction with what it sees.

Whether we are talking about the things of intimate space or the things of external space, any phenomenological discourse necessarily starts from the primitive axiom of common truth: there are things, there are only things. This axiom expresses the mathesis, the totally stable structure of multiplicity, whether intimate or external.

§80.- On the way: a brief recapitulation.

From the truth of Being to common truth, there is time, time without beginning. Time, in the service of nothingness, annihilates Being. Nothingness is the *a priori* idea of Being. Of its Idea, Being, absolutely surprised by itself, is the contradiction. In common truth, this idea is called "Reason".

Being, which is both the sight and the thing seen, unheard-of, is transformed by time into the living, multiple gazes, which see, in evidence, multiple things, including itself.

The result of time's work in Being is the observation that any living gaze can make: "There are things", a substitute for the initial "There is!".

These things are physis. Time continues its work in physis since its objective – nothingness – will never be achieved. It is this work, always in progress, that appears to us as what we call "time". For us, for science, time is the regularity of movement. For phenomenology, if time cannot, as logic, achieve the total stability of the things of physis – it only achieves total stability with numbers – it at least achieves relative stability in the form of the regularity, predictability, and coherence of the changes it presents to us. This coherence is what makes science and knowledge possible.

The regularity of movement, which for us is time itself, becomes for science the measure of time, of a time that is like the necessary envelope of physis, like the in-itself. Things change, but they change in a way that appears – that must appear, it is the *a priori* of science – totally coherent to the living eye.

It is the living gaze's search for the *vital* that builds the things there are for common truth. "Vital" means "necessary for the preservation of oneself and the species, necessary for the preservation of the same". The intention of conservation is the living form of the initial intention of nothingness in Being, an intention that consists in the stabilization, neutralization, and normalization of Being, knowing that the normal, according to the *a priori* Idea, is "nothing".

What makes a thing in the living gaze are its natural properties – which are also things. The natural properties of things are all derived from the primary property of being vital. Our things – our proper things – have properties. These properties are totally stable things, just as the *a priori* Idea is totally stable. We are always imagining new properties, but of these, only those are effective for which there are purely temporal proper things that have these properties. For us, then, there are two kinds of things: first, properties – derived from the vital, the vital itself being derived from the idea of nothingness and its intention within Being – and then proper things, the things detected by the living eye for their vitalism.

In order to be multiple, proper things are stable. This stability is constituted by their natural properties, those that have made things the things they are. Proper things change with the utmost coherence – the laws of physics – but they change. They are stable only through the concepts under which they are classified, a concept being a set of properties. Proper things are said to be *simply stable*: at any given moment, they are always another thing, although they retain – for a limited time, since one of the laws of physics is the finiteness of proper things – the properties that made it possible to detect them. Some of their properties change, since proper things change, but these properties are not the natural ones that serve to identify them, are not the ones that constitute one of the concepts under which they are classified. The properties that change are the properties studied by physical science, the physical properties; they change according to the laws of physics.

Proper things change until they become something else, until they are no longer recognizable, until they disappear, but their concept remains: for us, there are always things that continue to fall under this concept.

The study of the change of proper things, of their movements, is the object of physical science. The *a priori* of physical science is that of the coherence of changes: this *a priori*, unprecedented, is the generalized principle of contradiction, summed up by: time is never wrong. Time confirms, and must confirm, the validity of this principle. The scientific

imagination bets on the success of time, on the total coherence of what it shows us. Both, time, and imagination, are the two forms of logic – in the service of the idea of nothingness.

The study of the totally stable structure of proper things of external space, and therefore of the mathesis of external space, is the object of mathematical science. There is therefore no movement, no time, in mathematics: time has completed its work.

Since mathematical science today is based entirely on axiomatic set theory, we need to establish a link between the axioms of phenomenology, which describe the mathesis of external space – and which give rise to the definition of mathematical numbers and sets – and the axioms of set theory. The question arises whether the sets defined by theory are the mathematical sets defined by phenomenology, whether the ordinals of theory are the numbers of phenomenology, our familiar, totally stable numbers. These questions were dealt with in Chapters IV, V and VI.

CHAPTER VIII

Phenomenological reductions of common truth

Integral common truth

Physical truth

Mathematical truth

Radical common truth

Political art

§81.- Integral common truth.

Physical truth.

Mathematical truth.

Intimate space is the place where what the body perceives from external space resounds. For every objective thing in external space – physical things, things as seen by physical truth – intimate space associates a repercussion – hence a subjective property – made up of the different affects that can assail a living body. Affects are like the intimate color of things. The thing endowed with its affects is not the physical thing, it is another thing, different by this additional subjective property, which is a composition of affects, which is its repercussion.

The intensity of each affect in this repercussion varies, from indifference – almost zero intensity – to strong emotion. Intensity varies

from one individual to another – according to genealogy and personal history – and, for each individual, it varies over time, according to circumstances. Affect can be vital, sentimental, aesthetic, ideological or pathological.

The thing seen, with its intimate impact and repercussions, is the *integral thing*. The integral thing is a subjective thing, different from the objective thing, which is the same for all of us. This view, which preserves the affects of things seen, is that of *integral truth*.

If affects are intimate properties associated with things, they are nonetheless things in themselves, things identified intersubjectively and to which we have given a name: vital urgency, desire, admiration, gluttony, pride, jealousy, love, beauty, ugliness, nostalgia, pride, honor, indifference, repulsion, rejection, and so on.

Resonance, made up of affects, is the effect of the thing on the living body, which is itself a physical, biological thing. Each affect is a subjective property of things. It is a purely temporal thing, indecomposable, like any property, only variable in intensity – the intensity of the affect felt for a thing can be almost nil or strong.

The primary and common affect of a thing is that of being vital. This affect touches us all with the same necessity and intensity. It is at the origin of the relationship – the correlation – between the living gaze, the living body, and physis. It is from this relationship – born of the intention of the living gaze (its conservation), itself born of the initial intention (the reasoning of Being) – that common thingness is constituted in time, by time.

Since all natural properties derive from the prime property – the vital – we are led to ask whether there are objective properties of things, whether they are all common affects.

Absolute objectivity is merely an appearance born of the apparent independence of external space from interior space. The objectivity of things as seen by physical truth is a relative objectivity, observed *a posteriori* to the work of natural properties, those that make things appear to the common truth.

The objective properties of things, those studied by physical science, are regulated by laws. This regulation is the *intermediate* outcome of the work of natural properties, all which stem from the vital. This outcome, regularity, can only be intermediate, since the ideal, unattainable goal is total stability, definitive conservation. The intermediate outcome, achieved by the ongoing logical work of time – aided by our imagination – is the coherence of the changes that time shows to the living eye. The laws of physics account for this coherence. Coherence – regularity, which for science has become time itself – is an intermediate form of conservation and stabilization. This intermediate form also shows its opposite, movement, which is precisely what needs to be regularized, which will never be completely regularized, which will forever require time, time, the work of time, time as logic.

The definitive outcome achieved by time, which cannot be that of the total stability of things, is the total stability of the *structure* of things of common truth. This structure, obtained *a posteriori* from the work of natural properties over time, is multiplicity – which presupposes stability. It is said by: there are things.

The totally stable structure of things in external space is what our mathematical science studies. It manifests itself in the two structural properties of the things of common truth: multiplicity and internal membership. In addition to "There are things, there are only things", mathematics is entirely based on "The proper things of external space are made of things".

In us, the primary property, the vital, branches out into various properties, also sought in the "there is". These properties – the useful, the performing, the aesthetic, the playful, the comic, the gratifying, the harmful, etc. – are all subjective, as is the prime property, and continually generate new things from those that already exist. The logos is always extending. This extension always has its origin, more or less distant, in the intention of the living gaze: conservation. Even more

originally, this intention stems from that which emanates from the *a priori* Idea: the reasoning of Being.

§82.- The radical axiom of common truth: there is.

Does intimate space merely add a coloration – its resonance – to everything in external space? Is intimate space merely an enriched, colored copy of external? Are there things that belong in their own right to intimate space, without any relation to external? Is every affect an intimate property – intimately subjective, since natural properties are also subjective, the subject here being "all of us" – of something in external space? Are there autonomous proper affects, affects that are proper things of intimate space? Are there *pure affects*?

Can we cut ourselves off from external space? In other words, can we reduce ourselves to intimate space? In other words, is the phenomenological reduction of common truth to intimate space purely temporal, or is it a purely imaginary idea?

Conversely, can we keep silent about any repercussions within ourselves? This is what we do when we see things scientifically when we exercise our physical truth.

If the intellect – mental activity, the logical analysis of things, an analysis all the more logical in that it can be shared by all of us – belongs to intimate space, isn't its preoccupation constantly turned towards external space? Doesn't this preoccupation consist exclusively – it is another variation, another figure, more mental, of the exclusive, biological search for the vital – in showing the coherence of what this space shows us – science – and in producing a coherent discourse – a policy – concerning our common interaction with it and the interactions between us?

If the intellect is also concerned with our affects and their analysis, doesn't it see them all as the repercussions, always explicable, of what is happening outside us, in the world? Isn't the aim of psychoanalysis to regulate this impact by providing its exact cause, always external, often out of our memory, repressed?

What is left inside us if the intellect does not work to regularize either external or intimate space? In other words, what is left inside us if the intellect is not working, even though it is in a state of wakefulness? Is this state of vacancy of the intellect temporal? Are we capable of stopping the intellect's activity within us? Whether this cessation of intellectual activity is voluntary or not, what then remains?

What remains is wakefulness, the state of perception.

Before "there are things", there is "there is".

The first common thing, before any determination or analysis of what there is, is the fact that there is.

This fact, whose statement says sight, whose statement says the fact of seeing, the state of perception, is not said.

We do not say: there is. We do not even say: there are things.

That there is, this is self-evident: it is the *a priori* of the living. The *a priori* of the living being is the state of perception, of reception, in which it finds itself, at all times, even if it strives to perceive nothing, even if it strives to cut itself off from external space. This state is sight, it is "seeing" in the sense of "perceiving", it is the "seeing" that projects us onto the things there are, onto the multiplicity of things in physis, those things that are "always already" there because it has "always already" been necessary to live, to survive.

The living being sees, is always in a state of seeing, perceiving, feeling, in one way or another. The state of perception is the primitive, totally stable thing of common truth. This thing is so self-evident, so imposing on us, that it is not questioned by science. Science is interested in what sight sees, apart from sight itself, the fact of seeing, which is its *a priori*. In particular, it is interested in things that appear to us to be independent of intimate space, things that it intends to study objectively, i.e. in abstraction from all affects. Yet it is in the intimate space that we find the center of our vision, the center of the world. Every living being is a center of the world.

"Seeing" – being in a state to perceive, to feel – is the first common thing, and this thing is totally stable in the living gaze. This is the "seeing" that sees itself as "seeing", the seeing of seeing.

This "seeing", relating to itself, is both property and proper thing, cause and effect. It is a purely temporal thing, totally stable, unique and the source of all things. As the source of all things, "seeing" is *a priori*, which means that it is passed over in silence, that it is absent from things seen, that it is too evident to common truth to be mentioned.

The "seeing" of common truth refers immediately to things seen – to things already there, already seen, already detected by natural properties, by the vital. Things seen in this way are considered being seen independently of sight. Now, "Seeing" is the source common to things in intimate space as well as to things in external space. "Seeing" is the source of physis.

Let's repeat: sight, understood as the state of perception, is too evident to hold the attention of common truth. For it, for science, it is *a priori*.

This "seeing", totally stable, purely temporal, self-evident, is the metamorphosis, totally softened, totally annihilated, of the initial "seeing". The primary success of time is the metamorphosis of the initial, crazy "There is!" – the contradiction of "nothing", the contradiction of the *a priori* Idea that is in Being – into the "there is", into the *a priori* of the living, into unconditioned necessity, into an in-itself parallel to and independent of that other in-itself that is external space. The "seeing" of common truth sees itself in total indifference.

That there is, is, for the living gaze, an obvious necessity, and therefore unquestionable. What captures the attention of the living being, what triggers its action, what triggers its thought, are the things seen, especially the things of external space; it is the regularity of their changes, it is the role they play for its survival, for life in the world, for life together. It is also the finitude of things, and in particular its own finitude, the natural solution to which is reproduction, sexuality, the eternal return of the same.

Life is, in Being, the mark of the work of annihilation still in progress, eternally in progress, a work led in Being by its *a priori* Idea, the idea of nothingness, the idea of the supremely simple. There can be no end to this work, since the *a priori* Idea, nothingness, is an error, since "There is!".

What happens when the "seeing" of common truth no longer has any interest in what it sees, when the repetition of things seen renders them so banal that sight ends up seeing into the void, when "seeing" becomes pure boredom? Perhaps this is the living state – the state of maximum annihilation – conducive to the instant. Propitious to the instant when sight, seeing only itself, is suddenly surprised by itself and comes into Being. Propitious to the beginning, to the eternal instant of birth, of the madness of Being.

Whatever the occurrence of the instant, it immediately poses this question to the human-being, to the one who knows the instant: why is it that up until now, until this moment, everything has happened as if nothing had happened, as if it were normal to see? And this other question: what to do with life, what to do with the body of childhood, the physical, biological body? What is at stake here, in the world, for the human-being, is to reach an agreement between the truth of Being and the truth of the Body: through this agreement, through this conciliation, Being receives life as a gift, the gift that logic gives it through the intermediary of the human-being.

"Seeing" and its intent to preserve are the totally stable source of all our things. Unbeknownst to common truth, it is from them that the evidence and apparent independence of the things of physis unfold.

For us, for the common truth, the "there is" is forgotten. We immediately move on to the things that are.

"There is" is *the radical axiom* of mathesis, of physis, of all our sciences, of logos, of common truth.

Looking objectively at external space, the common "seeing" says: "There are things, there are only things, and within the things there are other things". Having said this, "seeing" has said the only axiom of our

mathematical science, an axiom that is only detected and detectable as such by phenomenological truth.

Looking subjectively at external space, the integral "seeing" says: "There are things, there are only things, and among these things, there are those I love, those I seek, those I need to endure, and there are those I fear, those I avoid, those I have to live with".

§83.- From mathematical truth to physical truth.

How can mathematics, all mathematics – whether of intimate or external space – be derived from this sole source, which springs from the meaning, the same for all of us, of these few words – "there are", "things" – put together to state the evident fact that there are things?

The reason is that *mathematical truth* is this reduction of common truth, which consists in keeping of things only that fundamental characteristic of things which is multiplicity – knowing that the multiplicity of common things implies their stability. The absence of any characteristic other than multiplicity implies that the stability proper to things seen by mathematical truth alone is *total stability*. These things are, by definition, those of mathesis. "There are things" speaks of the multiplicity of things and states the totally stable fact in time of the "there is" of this multiplicity. The thing that is this fact links the living gaze to the things seen: the two are inseparable.

All our mathematical sciences follow logically from this statement, and from the one that states the characteristic of the multiplicity of things in external space – internal membership. Our numbers, the familiar numbers, do not have to be demonstrated from abstract axiomatics; they show themselves, purely temporally, they are the purely temporal, totally stable proper things that mathematical truth shows us. They are the source of all mathematical science. They are the reason why mathematical science is fundamental to physical science.

Numbers are the only proper things of common truth whose proper noun is itself the thing it says. It is by saying a number that we use it, and we constantly need numbers. They are there, always there,

unchanged, totally stable. They are also the only purely temporal proper things that belong to both intimate and external space.

Other proper things, though stable, are stable thru at least one concept, they are *simply stable*. Proper things that are simply stable change over time, they are in motion, they have other characteristics than mere multiplicity.

The common truth of external space, when it disregards the resonance that intimate space associates with each proper thing in external space, is reduced to *physical truth*, a truth whose domain is the physis of external space.

Although physis and its particular domain, mathesis, encompass both intimate and external space, our sciences, mathematics and physics, are concerned only with external space. External space is that space which we can all observe and see *at the same time*. Because of this "at the same time", common truth considers its view of external space to be more objective than its view of intimate space. The intersubjectivity at work in the physical and mathematical sciences is more direct than that at work in the human sciences.

§84.- From one truth to another, phenomenological reductions of the truth of human-being.

Each of the passages

- 1) from translogical truth to common integral truth,
- 2) from common integral truth to common physical truth,
- 3) from physical truth to mathematical truth,
- 4) from mathematical truth to the single, radical truth of "seeing",

corresponds to a *phenomenological reduction*.

The first reduction consists in retaining from logic only the logic of the human imagination, thus concealing the logical role of time, while preserving the definitive achievement of time – mathesis – and its intermediate achievement – coherence – resulting from its work of regulating all that is shown to the living gaze. Within phenomenological

truth, this reduction leads to the integral common truth. Integral common truth is what we all experience in our ordinary lives. It is native, chronologically primary. In relation to a thing in external space, only the intensity of the affects linked to that thing varies from one individual to another. This first reduction is only activated, activable, for those of us who gain access to the truth of Being. *Chronologically*, our life begins with the integral truth.

Education teaches us to perform what, chronologically, is the first phenomenological reduction, the *physical reduction*, then the second phenomenological reduction, the mathematical reduction.

The second reduction consists in considering only external space and ignoring the impact of things on intimate space. The result, within phenomenological truth, within common truth, is physical truth, the truth of physical science, the truth that common truth calls "objective". The only repercussion, inseparable from common truth, which remains in this objective truth of things is evidence. The property of evidence is provided to sight by the "always already" imposed on us by time, the non-beginning.

The third reduction consists in retaining only those things in external space that are totally stable, those that have no temporal dependence – although it escapes this truth that this independence is an achievement of time, the accomplishment of its work. It leads, within physical truth, to mathematical truth, the truth that shows, in physis, the totally stable domain that is mathesis, the completed work of time in physis. The mathematical truth implemented by our mathematical science is the mathematical truth of external space. Mathematical sets are the proper, totally stable things of the mathesis of external space. Except for numbers, mathematical sets are purely imaginary.

The fourth, radical reduction consists in retaining only the fact that there is, only the seeing that sees and sees itself seeing, only seeing, only perception, only perceiving. This proper thing, which merges with its property – the seeing relating to itself – is totally stable, unique in its kind, is visible to all truths and is the source of all truths. It is so self-

evident that it is never mentioned in the logos, even though it clearly belongs to common truth and all its phenomenological reductions.

Only translogical truth, i.e. phenomenology, can give a description of these phenomenological reductions and say exactly what they consist of.

For all of us, the only truly conscious reduction is the one that goes from native truth, the integral common truth, to physical truth, that which, according to the logos, gives the objective truth of things. For most of us, the reduction of common truth that is necessary to see mathematically is not clearly brought to light. It is not necessary for mathematics at any level. Even a great mathematician – even a creator of a new field of mathematics – does not need it. Even one of the mathematicians considered to be the greatest, Bertrand Russell, admits that "mathematics is a science in which you don't know what you're talking about or whether what you're saying is true". Phenomenology tells us that the human-being knows and shows us exactly what mathematics is all about.

§85.- The four internal truths of common truth.

For common truth, there are 4 different truths of the thing: integral truth, physical truth, mathematical truth, truth of truth. The transition from one truth to the other takes place through a phenomenological reduction. The successive phenomenological reductions, from integral truth to the truth of the only truth – the truth of "seeing" – although they operate within us naturally, are increasingly difficult to operate consciously, in full awareness of what is kept and what is discarded.

The *integral truth* is the ordinary truth, the one that is immediately ours, yet not totally the same for everyone, since the intensities of affects linked to things differ from one individual to another. We recognize, intersubjectively, that we experience the same affects, albeit at separate times, and if it is at the same time and in relation to the same thing, it is with an intensity that depends on each of us.

Everyone has easy access to the truth of physical science or the so-called natural sciences, including medicine, a truth that corresponds to the first reductions: *physical reduction*. However, the physical reduction alone does not allow the common truth to discern, in external physics, that domain of external space that is the mathesis of external space, the theme of our mathematical sciences.

Mathematicians themselves are mostly unaware of the phenomenological reduction that precedes their science, *the mathematical reduction* – which has, as a prerequisite, the physical reduction. Armed with the basic axioms of their science – the latest version of which was laid down by trial and error during the twentieth century – they do not need to know where these axioms come from to logically deduce what can be deduced from them and to imagine their extensions. They do not need to know how to delimit the theme of their science from all that is apparent. No mathematician, it seems, has said that the theme of his science is that totally stable structure that is the common thingness of external space – if one of them said it, it was neither noticed nor remembered. Bertrand Russell's aforementioned remark bears witness to this blindness. Despite this general "we", who indeed do not know what they are talking about when they do mathematics, common truth has the possibility of knowing. This phenomenological knowledge, once clarified, must be able to be transmitted to science. If it is unprovable based on the axioms of science, it is also irrefutable based on these same axioms. It is "limit" scientific knowledge, pre-axiomatic, since its uncovering requires the help of translogical truth, i.e. metaphysical truth.

We all do arithmetic, we all need to know how to count, but we don't see, we don't know, that numbers are the proper nouns of physical, concrete things, the most concrete things there are, totally stable, proper nouns given to proper multiples, proper nouns that are themselves the proper multiples they say.

What we do not know is that mathematical sets, which are also the sets of axiomatic theory, of which numbers are a part, are the only

proper things of external space that possess only the necessary and sufficient properties to be proper things of external space: stability – necessarily total – multiplicity and internal membership. These properties are structural and result from the work of natural properties in what there is. We do not know that the sets of axiomatic theory, apart from numbers and sets of numbers, are purely imaginary.

Apart from mathematical sets, the proper things of external space have other properties, natural and physical, than those, structural, that are necessary and sufficient for things to be proper things of external space. These other properties, which vary over time, are regulated in their variations by the laws of physics.

Our things, which include the objective things of physical truth and mathematical truth, have subjective properties that are specific to each of us and that constitute their reverberation in intimate space, making them things of integral common truth.

Access to the most reduced common truth, to common truth reduced to truth itself, reduced to "seeing" seeing and seeing itself, is access to the very root of all knowledge in the sense of "having seen", of all aiming at things, of all science. This access results from radical phenomenological reduction. The reduction at work here is the one that moves from "There are things" – the axiom that says mathesis, one of the two axioms from which mathematical science unfolds – to "There is". "There is" is the immediate corollary of the "seeing" of common truth. This "seeing" is so evident, so pervasive, so necessary, that it does not even raise a question. It deploys its sight in both intimate and external space. It is purely temporal and totally stable, it is both the property and the proper thing of intimate space. In this sense, it is pre-mathematical. This extreme point of mathematics, the finished work of time, is on the brink of the abyss. How can it stand without vertigo? Between "There is", pre-mathematical, and "There is!", metaphysical, the chasm is abyssal. The difference lies in the exclamation mark. The difference is between nothingness – the constant evidence of "there is" – and Being, the madness of Being.

§86.- Integral truth and political truth.

Integral truth is the most ordinary truth, the one that is immediately ours, the most familiar. With integral truth, the thing, every thing, is seen *in its soul*, with all its characteristics, not only physical but also subjective, i.e. dependent on the individual and the repercussions of the thing within him or her. Subjective characteristics correspond to the affects that the objective thing produces in the intimate space: these affects, which are properties of the intimate space that modify the truth of the objective thing, constitute *the thing's soul*. Affects can be vital, aesthetic, sentimental or ideological. They are generally linked to things in external space: it is external space that generally presides over intimate life. Integral truth makes no distinction between intimate and external space; for it, there is only one space of truth, and it presupposes that it can be the same for all of us. The ordinary common impression is that of a single space – interior space swallowing external space – which, by dint of exchange, must be the space of "all of us". The space of all of us is where we must live together. Living together – and increasingly so, since together now means the whole of humanity – is the business of politics. Politics is concerned with integral truth.

§87.- Why is politics an art?

Although it deals with the common truth, the logos, politics is not a science, it is an art, the most complex art there is. What it is dealing with is the integral common truth, which, although common and sharable, differs from one individual to another, and which, for the same individual, differs from one period of his life to another.

Politics is the art of living together; for it is together that we must live, this "together" now extending to the entire planetary population. Politics deals with each and every one of us, with the diversity of integral truths – truths which, as far as the soul of things is concerned, are dependent on the biological characteristics and pathways specific to

each of us. As a result, the politics of the moment, whatever they may be, affect each of us in our own way, according to our own subjective criteria, according to our own life course, according to our own integral truth.

Science proper is concerned only with objective truth, a truth that is, and must be, the truth of all, a truth that ignores all affect. The distinction between art and science is that art deals with this version of the common truth which is the integral truth, intimately subjective. Taking this distinction even further, Great Art distinguishes itself from art by addressing us, not from common truth, but from the truth of Being, to show us what it sees. Only those who already have access to the truth of Being – this is the object of scandal – can see what Great Art shows.

Politics differs from the other arts in that it is about our living conditions, our survival, our access to the vital, our basic freedoms. It is an art – because it deals with the integral, multiple, and diverse truth, and not with the single, scientific truth – but it is a necessary, vital art. Consequently, current policy is only adequate, acceptable, and accepted if a large majority of the population considers it to be so. The absence of politics is an extreme form of politics.

Democracy is the most difficult form of politics since it claims to take account of all sensibilities and subjectivities. Autocracy, on the other hand, is the political practice that considers that there is only one sensibility, that of a single individual, and that tends to reduce the art of politics to a science, to a single truth, to the science of the common interest as seen by a single individual. This reduction necessarily relies on limiting individual freedoms and on repression.

The human sciences try, as far as they can, to bring their own theme within the physical or natural sciences. They try to eliminate, as far as possible, all subjective elements, so as to consider only physical, biological, neurological, and psychological elements.

Before being a human science, politics is a practice, a necessary and never-ending practice. This practice has an objective recognized by all:

social justice, the subsistence of each being linked to the subsistence of all.

The notion of social justice cannot be defined simply. Whatever its definition, social justice is never definitively achieved. Once a social equilibrium has been achieved and social peace has been established, changes in the world will disrupt the equilibrium and peace. The world changes; it is invariable that the world changes. Changes in the world lead to changes in the forms of injustice: new injustices emerge that must be considered. Changes in the world are not only technological and technical, not only ideological, but also natural, climatic, epidemiological, biological, and demographic.

Politics deals with what remains of Being in the world. It has to do with what resists regularization, normalization, levelling out, reasoning, annihilation. Like politics itself, this resistance is definitive, without end. Against this resistance, politics always appeals to Reason, diplomacy, and compromise.

Reason, always invoked in politics, engages in a double game. On the one hand, it works for social peace, for the appeasement of tensions between the different instances of common truth; on the other hand, it tends, politically, to free up time, to give people free time, time "for themselves", and therefore free space for meditation on the essential. This free space is fraught with danger. What to do with this free space, what to do with peace, what to do with the time of peace, what to do with time, the time that is the time before death?

Two dangers threaten free time. Two diametrically opposed dangers, two diverse ways of facing death.

The first danger is the temptation of worldly pleasures, which have become pleasures by mimicry and advertising: that's what's good to do, that gives pleasure, that gives meaning to your life. To ward off boredom and anxiety, free time is tempted by these remedies – remedies to kill time – offered by the leisure industry: tourism, extreme sports, artificial paradises of all kinds, technological novelties. Worldly remedies require means. This requirement opens the door to corruption.

The other danger, of an altogether different nature, is the abyss of the "bottomless" that leisure time rubs shoulders with, the other side of the abyss. It is this "bottomlessness" that Reason rejects because it shows Reason that Reason is fundamentally, originally, contradicted. It is this bottomlessness that justifies the political elaboration of worldly remedies. But when, suddenly, the moment has come for one of us to confront the "bottomless", then begins the struggle of a lifetime. Yet it is through this struggle, a struggle to the death – the death of childhood – that freedom is won, authentic freedom in the world, freedom that receives the world as a gift.

Man is the only animal that manages its own politics and the means of its subsistence. For other animals, this is already regulated, programmed, biologically, genetically. What this programming ignores is what man and his management of the world have in store for the other animals. It is part of politics to preserve the animals that man needs for his subsistence.

The definition of equality between men requires reflection. To begin with, at birth, there are differences between human beings. These differences – and we are not going to list them here – are for the most part definitive, and there can be no question, for the sake of equality, of suppressing or ignoring them in all circumstances. Many of these differences contribute to the charms of life, they are life itself.

When the revolutionary motto includes the equality of all in its political program, it means that human society must not favor some to the detriment of others. In this sense, politics must strive to be fair. What is at stake is the fair treatment of some by others. This reciprocal treatment cannot ignore differences, de facto inequalities, those that make life diverse, those that make aspirations diverse. On the contrary, it must give everyone the chance to live their own lives. This is where liberty, the other revolutionary motto, comes in.

If we want to maintain the motto of equality, it can only be the political objective of equality for all in terms of the opportunity to succeed in life. Given our differences, how can we know what suits one

of us so that he or she has the feeling of succeeding in life? In this respect, politics can only be general. The art of politics is to strike the right balance between the necessary constraints and the freedom required to develop everyone equally. Beyond politics, which is no more than the regulated space of a game that aims to be egalitarian, it is up to each individual to play, to play his or her life, with the degree of freedom that is left to them. At the end of what it can do, necessary politics says to each of us: it is up to you to play, live your life. What can we do with this freedom, if we see it, if we assume it, if we taste it? That is up to each and every one of us.

Freedom in the political sense is not necessary to gain the other freedom, that which consents to life as it is, that which is capable of enduring and appreciating it as it is, and which receives it as a gift, the gift that logic makes to Being. This freedom is concerned with childhood. It is concerned with politics, it is concerned with equality and freedom, and it knows that this concern is necessary and never-ending, always being called into question, because things change, the world changes.

The abolition of difference, of all difference, is the consecration of nothingness, the logical victory. It will never happen; metaphysical truth tells us.

It is with politics that time encounters the greatest difficulty in its work of annihilation. The logics that politics must apply in the face of the diversity of integral truth are the same as those used in game theory and diplomacy.

The equality between us, real, factual, is metaphysical, it is in Being, in the initial. Being unites "us" by abolishing the "me" – this "us" is potentially all of us, each joining the initial madness in his or her own time, thus definitively warding off boredom and anguish. With this equality, the freedom of the human-being in the world is also achieved: playing instead of being played.

§88.- From one truth to another, from one thing to another.

Depending on how it is viewed by the common truth or by one of its reductions, one thing becomes another thing. Yet it is the same thing seen differently, and according to this difference of view, it gives rise to other proper things. What is this same thing that gives rise to other things?

The truly common truth is the scientific truth of physical science, of experimental science, the common *objective* truth. Armed with this common objective truth, we all truly see the same thing at the same time. When the ordinary truth of a particular thing changes into the physical truth of that particular thing, it knows that it is the same thing stripped of its affects, that is, the thing seen objectively, according to its own nature.

The truth assumed by politics is the integral common truth, not scientific truth, and this is what makes politics an art.

There is no mathematical set without a purely temporal proper thing in external space, without an objectively seen proper thing in external space. The mathematical set is a creation of our imagination, born of the structure of the purely temporal proper things of external space, a structure that is said by: 1- There are things, 2- The things of external space are made of things. Although born of purely temporal proper things, mathematical sets are imaginary proper things that take on their autonomy in our imagination, based on axioms. It is all about structure. From a representative of this structure, from a mathematical set, we do not go back to the multiple proper things of external space that have this structure, except in the case of numbers. Numbers are the only purely temporal proper things whose objective view coincides with the mathematical view: their nature is also their structure.

Any change in the way we see one thing points to another, and numbers are no exception: numbers are not sentimentally neutral, and we associate certain numbers with affects of considerable intensity.

Mathematical truth, which is an imaginary truth – its only incursion into the temporal are numbers, the numbers whose view it shares with

physical truth – has the particularity of being able to see an infinite number of mathematical sets from a single purely temporal proper thing of external space, while remaining the truth that it is. What changes is not the truth – that remains mathematical – but the choice made as to what counts as "one" in the situation. This choice is multiple. For each of the choices made, the question arises of the new choice to be made in the composition of each of the "ones" chosen, of the choice of what counts as "one", each of these chosen "ones" now being considered as the situation, and so on. Any "one" in a mathematical situation is a mathematical set, a , which in the mathematical situation is seen as a "one", $\{a\}$. Since a situation can always belong to another, wider situation, this "one" that is $\{a\}$ for the situation is seen in a wider situation, which includes the previous one, as another "one", $\{\{a\}\}$, etc.

From a to $\{a\}$, the gaze passes from one multiple to another multiple made up of a single element, all the while pointing to the same thing; but this way of speaking is improper; the thing a , is not the thing $\{a\}$; what changes when we pass from a to $\{a\}$, is the mathematical situation. The set a is a mathematical situation. The set $\{a\}$ is an element, a "one", of a mathematical situation that includes the situation a .

It is tempting to say that the same thing can be seen as different things, as an infinite number of other things, in this case as an infinite number of mathematical sets. But what is this thing that is, improperly, the same?

Where is the thing, the thing that gives rise to A , or to A , or to a , or to $\{a\}$, or to $\{\{a\}\}$, etc., according to the common truth chosen and according to the situation chosen in this truth?

Let us say it is A .

A is a purely temporal, simply stable proper thing in external space, seen according to the integral truth, a common view even though the affects associated with it are not of the same intensity in each of us, ranging from indifference to strong emotion.

A first phenomenological reduction enables us to see *A* without the affects associated with intimate space, without its soul: *A* becomes *A*.

A results from the objective, scientific, physical view of *A*. *A* is the physical truth of *A*. *A* is the integral truth of *A*.

A is a purely temporal, simply stable proper thing in external space, which changes according to the laws of physics, but remains the same thing, i.e. under the same concept.

A second reduction allows us to see thing *A* in terms of the multiple universe it represents. For this truth, the mathematical truth, only the internal composition of the thing into multiple things is retained. From this point of view, all the purely temporal, simply stable things in external space show the same mathematical sets, the same multiple universe, except for one functional relation: this is what the axiomatic set theory replacement axiom scheme says.

If one of the mathematical sets seen from *A*, among an infinite number of others, is *a*, then another mathematical set is $\{a\}$.

A thing shows itself to the integral truth according to its soul: *A*. It shows itself to the objective truth of physical science according to its nature: *A*. Mathematical truth sees this same thing according to its different imaginary multiple structures – according to the different mathematical sets that can be seen in the situation *A*, according to the choice that is made of what counts as "one" in the situation, and what counts as "one" in each of these "ones", and so on. This is how it sees all the proper things of external space: all that matters to it is the general structure that is the common thingness of external space, with all the proper things of external space conforming to this same general structure – this is what the mathematical theory translates into the replacement axiom scheme. So, whether it is the objective thing, *A*, or any other objective thing, *B*, it makes no difference to mathematical truth and what it sees: it always sees the same thing, in fact the same structure.

From the physical to the mathematical, we pass from nature to structure, from the purely temporal to the purely imaginary. There are

an infinite number of imaginary multiple structures of a proper thing in external space: a simply stable proper thing in external space, whatever it may be, shows itself mathematically in an infinite number of mathematical sets. From one proper thing in external space to another, the mathematical universe represented is the same – apart from one functional relationship.

The mathematical universe described by our mathematical science cannot, however, be fully represented by the logical and structural extension of that one particular purely temporal totally stable proper thing of external space that is the empty set. Indeed, the empty set lacks the specificity of belonging only to external space. The empty set does not presuppose the axiom of internal membership specific to external space. At least one axiom must be added to the empty set. Theoretically, it is the axiom of extensionality; phenomenologically, it is the axiom that says that the proper things of external space are made of proper things.

§89.- One thing: the Loire River.

The Loire River remains the Loire despite the passage of time. Yet many of the things that make it up have changed, are constantly changing, which is why Heraclitus said: "We bathe and do not bathe in the same river". The Loire is not only part of our common external space, but it also has a particular presence – a soul – in the intimate space of each of us, with variations from one intimate space to another. Each of us has his or her own truth about the Loire. The differences stem from our feelings for it – or against it. A poetic literature surrounds it, making the Loire unlike any other river. It has inspired painters, writers, and poets. For example, there is the "Angevine Loire" of the poet Du Bellay.

What is the common truth about the Loire River? This common truth is not free of affects. If these affects are common, their intensity varies, and is strong among certain artists and among those of us who have a personal history with the Loire. Everyone recognizes a certain majesty

and gentleness in the Loire, but also, further upstream, its capriciousness and savagery. It is also, for all of us, the royal river, with the châteaux that line its banks, the châteaux of the Renaissance. It is the river that, with its tributaries, occupies the center of France.

A first phenomenological reduction consists in putting aside all poetry, all nostalgia – all resentment – and thus cutting the Loire off from its soul, to see it only from the common point of view of the science of nature. Here, intimate space is no longer an issue. As with any other river, it is essentially a question of its hydrography, hydrology, ecology, navigation and current or future development. All these characteristics are specific to the Loire and objectively describe and distinguish it from other rivers.

A second phenomenological reduction consists in seeing the Loire only from the point of view of mathematical truth. What this truth sees is simple and can be fully described in a few words. It sees that the Loire is, for all of us, a thing among other things, a thing itself made of things. It sees that the Loire participates in the totally stable fact that there are things, that there are only things, and that the things of external space are made of things. More precisely, the Loire participates in the thingness of external space. It blends into the totally stable structure of this space.

However, the Loire is not a number, and few of us see it as a mathematical set. It is primarily, for all of us, a thing of physical truth, a purely temporal, simply stable thing of external space, a thing whose physical characteristics change.

Mathematical truth does not see the changing nature of the Loire, it only sees its structure, totally stable, perfectly integrated into the totally stable structure that is the thingness of external space, a structure that is that of the mathematical set.

Finally, like all things, the Loire participates in the radical and fundamental fact that there is. From this radical point of view, it disappears, as all particular things disappear, to make way for just one

thing, the root of all common thing: sight, to see, the state of perception.
Like all things, the Loire, sight, reveals sight.

A thing among all things, sight always focuses on a situation, for example on the Loire, and rarely is it itself the situation, a particular situation that enables us to see all the others differently.

CHAPTER IX

Necessary and sufficient conditions for a thing to be a thing of common truth

Mathematics is an experimental science

§90.- Phenomenological characterization of the common thingness.

A thing is anything that shows itself to any one of us, however it shows itself. Linked to the thing are the "show itself", the "see", the "us", and the question: who sees, to whom does the thing show itself, who is "us"?

This is the definition of *thingness* – or *phenomenality*, thing and phenomenon being synonymous – since this general definition of the thing entails, by its generality, that of thingness, that of phenomenality: thingness or phenomenality is the fact that something shows itself to us.

For this definition, of thing or thingness, to really be a definition, "showing itself" would have to be defined, as would "seeing" and "us". But neither "seeing", nor "showing itself", nor "us", have a proper definition. They impose themselves; they are there. As the thingness is linked to "seeing", "showing itself", "us" and nothing else, it imposes itself on us in the same way. The four – "seeing", "showing itself", "us" and "thingness" – define each other in a circle, each referring to the others and imposing itself on "us" in the same way. "Us" imposes itself on us in the same way that "seeing", "showing itself" and "thingness" impose themselves on us. For us, the four are first there in evidence, as

an indisputable necessity, then, with the event of the suspension of the logical effect of time, they are there in absolute surprise.

In the world of human childhood, things are self-evident to us all. The thingness we are talking about, then, is *the common thingness*: we all see the same things, and things show themselves to us all in *evidence*.

These three characteristics of the common thing, namely:

- 1- It shows itself to us all,
- 2- It shows itself in evidence,
- 3- It shows itself as "one" among other things – multiplicity –,

are specific to the common thing and do not belong to the initial thing.

The initial thing merges with its sight, with "seeing", with "showing itself", with "us", with contradiction: it is an explosive unity. This initial, unique "us" is Being, it is the mad "One", it is the absolutely surprised sight of seeing, eternal. The absolute surprise of the "seeing" of initial truth is in total contradiction with the evidence of the "seeing" of common truth.

In particular, "all of us" refers to the appearance of a multiplicity of views, and therefore of a multiplicity of things.

The evidence that results from "always already seen", i.e. from time without beginning, has as its corollary the stability of common things.

The question that arises – not for "all of us" – is that of why and how "all of us" differ from "those of us" to whom everything shows itself in absolute surprise. This question is twofold:

- 1) There is the question of the metamorphosis of the "initial us" into "all of us". This metamorphosis is conducted by nothingness as *a priori* of the "initial us" and, in the service of nothingness, by time and logic.
- 2) Then there is the question of the reverse passage – sudden, violent, instantaneous – that takes us out of the nothingness of

the world and brings us back to the unheard-of initial. For the human-being, this reverse passage is birth, authentic birth. It is out of the question to explain the madness of Being; all we can do is attempt, with the words of the logos, to describe it; this description will never be able to show "all of us" what it shows, will never be able to give birth.

These two questions were posed and developed phenomenologically in section I. Here, in section II, the emphasis is on the view through the truth of Being – as accessed by human-being – of common truth, a view we have termed "translogical".

For us, human-beings, thingness is subdivided into initial thingness, that of Being, and common thingness, that of "all of us".

The initial thingness is said: "There is! ".

The common thingness is said: "There are things". From this statement – which is the unique axiom of mathesis – derives our mathematical science as the totally stable basis of our physical science – or mathesis as the totally stable structure of physis.

§91.- Scientific determination of the properties common to all proper things in external space. Numbers are the only purely temporal proper things in external space that possess only these properties.

This reminder of the essentials brings us to another question that will now occupy us. Phenomenology poses this question to science, to logos, to "all of us", to common truth. Here it is:

Is there a necessary and sufficient condition for something to belong to the common truth?

As posed, this question has no meaning for common truth, for science. Common truth ignores the existence for man of another truth, another power of view. Consequently, for it, things are only self-evident and

common to "all of us". For science, it is absurd to speak of things that escape common truth, which cannot be seen by all of us, only by some of us. For science, for all of us, it is obvious that there are things, that there are only things, and that these things are visible to all in the obvious. For all of us, it is implied that all it takes is for one of us to point out a thing, whatever it may be, to focus our attention on it, for us all to see it with him. It's so obvious that it cannot be said, that it is not worth saying. Nobody among "all of us" thinks of stating the primitive axiom of common truth, so obvious is it: there are things. Phenomenology shows that the entire mathematical edifice is deduced from the primitive axiom and the internal membership relation between the proper things of external space: the things of external space are composed of proper things. The primitive axiom is what man's childhood discovers, unsurprisingly, slowly, softly, as it comes into the world – not only man's childhood, but the whole of the living world, animality. If we bear in mind that for common truth – as for the truth of Being – the thing is defined as anything that shows itself, and that "to show itself" is synonymous with "there is", it immediately follows from the primitive axiom that not only are there things, but also that *there are only things*.

How should the question be posed if it is to make sense for common truth, for science?

The question posed was: "Given that there are only things, is there a necessary and sufficient condition for a thing to belong to the common truth?". We know the answer from metaphysical truth: this condition is the evidence of the thing in the gaze of each of us, evidence to which is added the intersubjectivity of gazes that makes the thing not only common but also sayable, represented in the logos.

To science, which we know partitions things into properties and proper things – instead of "proper thing", it says "element" –, and which we know is only interested in external space, we ask:

1- Are there any properties that the proper thing of external space, whatever it may be, necessarily possesses?

2- Having found these properties, are there proper things of external space that possess only these properties, properties that would then be necessary and sufficient to the fact of being a proper thing of external space, which would therefore constitute the proper thingness of external space?

The proper thingness, in these questions posed to science, is necessarily the common proper thingness, since, for science, there can be no other.

At every moment, there are things, there are only things, even if, of the things there are, most – those that are not properties and those that do not belong to mathesis – remain the same, from one moment to the next, only under a certain concept, a concept that allows us to give them a common noun. This fact, thus stated, speaks of the thing that is the common thing. Interested only in the external space where proper things are linked by the membership relation, mathematicians have translated this single, totally stable fact into the axioms of set theory. The sets of the theory are things whose only properties are those that are necessary and sufficient to be proper things of the external space, those that found the common thingness of this space: stability, multiplicity, internal membership. The stability in question here can only be total, otherwise the thing would have other properties – temporal, physical, changing with time – than those formally deduced from the primitive axiom. The set as defined by the mathematical theory is a common thing, visible to us all, whose only properties are stability, multiplicity, and internal membership. The mathematical set is the concept under which are classified the proper things of the mathesis of external space, that realm of physis where things are totally stable.

Mathematical science thus answers the questions posed by:

1- The proper things of external space are necessarily stable, multiple, and bound together by the membership relation.

2- There are proper things that are only stable, multiple, and linked together by the membership relation: mathematical sets.

Mathematical science thus answers the question put to it by saying that the necessary and sufficient condition for a thing to be a proper thing of external space is that it be stable, multiple, and composed of proper things.

The theme of mathematical science is the structure of proper things of external space, the common thingness proper to external space. From this thingness, it deduces everything that can be logically deduced from it, according to *our* logic, that of our imagination. The things of physics with which mathematics is concerned are none other than those whose only properties – stability, multiplicity, membership – necessarily belong to all the proper things of external space. Necessary for all things, they are also sufficient to show us the things that are mathematical sets. To see, as mathematical science does, only the specific thingness of external space is to perform a phenomenological reduction on common truth, a reduction in two stages: from integral truth to physical truth, from physical truth to mathematical truth.

Among mathematical sets, some are purely temporal: numbers. Numbers are the only purely temporal proper things of external space that possess only those properties necessary and sufficient to be proper things of external space. It is numbers, as the temporal measure of multiples, which form the link between physical science and mathematical science. Numbers are not constituted by the order relation between them. This way of introducing numbers, based on sets and the order relation between sets that is the membership relation, is that of theory, not phenomenology. It is numbers, and their natural succession in time, which constitute order, the order relation.

Who or what is it that comes to the aid of common truth by showing it the direct link between mathematical theory and this single, unprecedented axiom of common truth, the primitive axiom that says there are things? This is the translogical view of the things of common truth. Although it comes from metaphysical truth, the translogical view remains consciously, voluntarily, as if playing, in the continuous logical march of the world. It remains there, just as "all of us" remain there, but with this major difference in relation to common truth: translogical truth knows that this continuous logical march is primarily the march of time, and that the world and "all of us" are first and foremost in time. It knows that evidence is a product of time without beginning, and that time always ensures that whatever is shown to us all remains consistent with what it has already shown; it knows the generalized principle of contradiction and consciously adheres to it.

§92.- Mathematics is an experimental science.

"There is x " is the locution that, for all of us, confers existence on x .

For science, especially physical science, existence is delivered by time alone, independently of our imagination; it is time and time alone that shows us all that something exists, and that we designate by x . What mathematical science deals with is part of physical science, and also stems from time alone: what it deals with is the structure, purely temporal, *totally stable*, that is the common thingness of external space. This structure imposes itself on all of us and is a permanent experiential fact.

This structure, extrapolated by our imagination, shows imaginary proper things: the sets of the theory – which are also the mathematical sets as defined by phenomenology. Among these imaginary proper things, some are not purely imaginary, they are purely temporal: the numbers of phenomenology, or the ordinal sets of theory. The distinction between imaginary and temporal does not exist in mathematics. The imaginary arises from time, but is not always verified by time alone, in which case it is purely imaginary.

For phenomenology, as for mathematical-logical science, whatever there is, whether purely temporal or purely imaginary, is a thing, is unique, is a "one", is an x that exists.

The plural in "There are things" indicates that things only exist in multiples. For us, there can be no multiplicity without stability. Phenomenology distinguishes between *simple*, physical stability – the stability of the concept – and *total*, mathematical stability.

What can a multiple be multiple of, if not things, if not what there is since there are only things? And the things that make up this multiple, what are they made of? They are made of things, of a multiple of things, possibly of a single thing; in intimate space, a thing can be made of nothing but itself. This state of common things, multiplicity, which is in no way evolutionary, is always true, and time changes nothing. At every moment, there are things, there are only things, even if, among the things there are, most are no longer the same things from one moment to the next, although remaining the same under a certain concept. What remains, in total stability, is this structure in things referred to as "there are things", the structure that is common thingness.

What remains totally stable is what mathematicians, interested only in external space – the space we all see at the same time –, have translated into the axioms of set theory. The set of mathematical theory is a thing whose only characteristics are those that are necessary and sufficient to be a thing of external space, those that found the common thingness of this space: stability and double multiplicity – internal and external. The stability we are talking about here can only be total, otherwise the thing would have other temporal, physical characteristics than those formally deduced from the primitive axiom of common truth – there are things – and the axiom specific to external space – proper things are made of proper things. The specific structure of common thingness in external space is the structure of internal membership: things of common truth belong to things of common truth, and things of common truth belong to them. A mathematical set, whatever it may be, shows the membership structure of things in external space, and

shows only that. This totally stable structure is the mathesis of external space. This structure is exhibited by any set – including the empty set on condition that the extensionality axiom is added to it: the empty set does not show internal membership. The axioms of construction, which build sets from a set, in particular from the empty set, confirm the extensionality axiom and preserve the structure of internal membership.

The theme of the mathematical sciences is the phenomenological reduction of common truth to the sole truth of the structure that is the common thingness of external space. This reduction is the mathematical reduction applied to external space, the mathematical truth of external space – bearing in mind that there is the same mathematical reduction applied to the common truth of intimate space. Our mathematical sciences describe the mathesis of external space. To date, there is no mathematical science of intimate space.

Mathesis is an achievement of time. It is, in physis, that which is totally stable, definitive, and immutable in the eyes of the living. The mathesis of intimate space has not been the subject of any science. Its mathematics is certainly quite simple. Yet it is not without interest, especially for educational purposes. Intimate space is less annihilated by time than external space. Time's achievement in intimate space can be put simply. The work that time does to regulate this space, to ensure its coherence vis-à-vis the living gaze, is facilitated by the multiplicity of intimate spaces: each living gaze has its own particular space. The intersubjectivity that enables exchanges between intimate spaces, that enables their apparent community, is more blurred, let's say less constraining regarding overall coherence, than the intersubjectivity that makes things in external space common. On the other hand, intimate space is captivated by external space, if not entirely subject to it.

The fundamental axioms of set theory say nothing more than "There are things, there are only things, things are made of things" to us, who already know what is the same and what is distinct, who already know how to give a name to multiplicities (universe, one, two, three, etc.), who already know what a property is, who already know what negation

is. *Axioms are the result of our shared experience of things.* What we have succeeded in doing with them is to express, in the best possible way and in an operational, constructible way, the structure that is the common thingness of external space. All mathematical hypotheses are confronted with this common experience of the thingness thus expressed by axioms, and receive their truth only from it. Mathematical science, like all sciences, is an *experimental* science. Its specificity, from this point of view, lies in the fact that all the experience to which it belongs is contained in its axioms – there is no need to get out of the office to develop mathematical science, the five fundamental axioms, those of the ZF theory, suffice.

Phenomenology shows that these axioms of ZF theory can be reduced to the two axioms of common truth, which state the totally stable, purely temporal structure that is the common thingness of external space: 1- There are things, there are only things, 2- The proper things of external space are made of proper things.

CHAPTER X

Mathematical "nothing", imaginary "nothing", metaphysical "nothing"

§93.- Why call by the same name, "nothing", three different things?

What relationship is there – if any – between the empty set of mathematical theory, nothingness as defined by our dictionary – by logos, by common truth – and the nothingness of which Being is the contradiction? Each of them can be called "nothing", even though they are three different "nothings". To bear the same name, they must be related. What is this relationship?

First, let us give the phenomenological description – the description derived from translogical truth – of each of them.

§94.- Phenomenology of each of the three "nothings".

The empty set of mathematics is that "nothing" of common truth which is a purely temporal thing, totally stable, always present to view. It shows *in negative form* what every proper multiple – every thing presented to our gaze in the form of that particular universe which is the *situation* as seen, presently, by the living gaze – shows in positive form: the totally stable structure that is common thingness. The things of the situation, intimate or external, show the empty space that separates the proper things that count as "one" in the situation, whatever the choice, made by the living gaze, of what counts as "one". The empty set of

mathematics corresponds exactly to the "nothing" we use when we say, for example: there is nothing on the table. The situation is the table. What counts as "one" are not the constituents of the table, but the objects that are usually on the table. If there are not any, the table is empty. This emptiness is the empty set of set theory, the emptiness as defined by phenomenology in §46. The mathematical "nothing" is part of every thing that counts as "one", since it delimits it, since it isolates it within the thingness, since it is the space that separates the "ones". If there are two things on the table, what separates the two things is an empty space on the table, a relative empty space since there are certainly things between the things, but none that counts as "one", none that is an object placed on the table. Any situation of space, intimate or external, shows the emptiness. This emptiness is the emptiness of set theory – a theory that deals only with external space.

Nothingness, as defined by the dictionary, is the purely imaginary extrapolation of the operation of negation applied to all things: it is the radical negation of all things. It is a purely imaginary thing of common truth. It is a nothingness derived from things, obtained by negating them all, which is what our imagination knows how to do, or believes it knows how to do. Radical negation negates the operator of negation, negation, truth. As far as, for him, radical negation is not just a game of the mind – which, phenomenologically, it is – its operator says that everything is illusion, including illusion itself. The operator is then what logos calls a "nihilist". Within natural nihilism, the result of the work of annihilation wrought by time – a result which, in the eyes of the living gaze, is physis – the human imagination can imagine its own negation, and it gives it a name: "nothingness" or "nothing".

The nothingness of which Being is the contradiction is the *a priori* Idea of Being. This nothingness and this Being are not visible to the common truth, to childhood. It takes an accident, *the accident of a lifetime*, for them to be seen, for the truth of human-being to become the truth of Being, the truth that contradicts the Idea. The contradiction of the *a priori* Idea, this absolute difference, is the initial seeing,

absolutely surprised by itself, Being itself. The Idea is false. Time shows human-being that the Idea is false from the very instant when its logical effect ceases, when its annihilating effect ceases, when the difference with "nothing" arises. The "nothing" in question here is that of the truth that says: "There is no nothing!". The "nothing" thus denied is the world when it is at the height of its annihilation by logic, by time and imagination, and when it is thus seen, suddenly, by human-being. As soon as it is seen in this way, the world, like all things seen outside the logical effect, contradicts "nothing", contradicts the Idea. There is no rational explanation for this situation, which is madness itself. Any attempt at rationalization – a naturally human and ever-reborn attempt – is doomed to failure and despair: it is the sign of a relapse of the human-being, of a regaining of control by logic, by logos. We have to stay with this – eternal – moment of the madness of being if we are not to sink into the rationality of nothingness. This moment cannot be transmitted. Each of us lives it in our own time. To remain in the instant of contradiction is to resist the biological body naturally driven by rationality.

§95.- The relationship between mathematical "nothing" and metaphysical "nothing".

Since mathematical "nothing" is a thing, it absolutely contradicts metaphysical "nothing", like all things. This can only be seen, and can only be said, by the truth of Being. For the *a priori* Idea, which is the origin of the truth born of the living gaze, mathematical "nothingness" is, in physis, the most complete representation of metaphysical "nothingness", i.e. of the Idea itself. In physics, mathematical "nothing" represents the *a priori* of Being, the Idea, nothingness, metaphysical "nothing". Let us show it.

Time, which works for the Idea, seeks to stabilize Being. Its aim is to show total stability to the living eye: its aim is to show "nothing", the "nothing" that is the *a priori* of Being. The proper things of physis are simply stable: they change; this change, this movement, is what remains

of Being in physis. What does not change, in common truth, is the structure that is common thingness, that is mathesis. Mathesis, the totally stable structure of physis, contains its own purely temporal and totally stable things: numbers. The first number, the one with which all numbers begin, is the empty set of mathematical theory, which is also the emptiness as defined by phenomenology. With numbers, time has reached its ideal: total stability, the logical ideal. Here, mathematical "nothing" meets metaphysical "nothing". Mathematical "nothing" – the empty set of theory, the emptiness defined by phenomenology – is the realization, from Being and the work of the Idea within it, of the "nothing" of which Being is the contradiction. Mathesis is the region of physis annexed by the *a priori* Idea. With mathesis as the totally stable structure of physis, time has constructed, in the eyes of the living, the image of the ideal "nothing". Physis, endowed with this mathematical structure, is "nothing" in the sense that it is "scientifically true", not only true in its mathematical structure, but also in its overall coherence. The scientific "true" is that which is shown by time; and time, in the service of the Idea, shows, as far as it can, the stable. In the stable, it manages to show the totally stable, the mathesis, and in it, the purely temporal and totally stable things that are numbers – including the first and indispensable of them: the empty set.

The abyssal difference between the mathematical empty set as seen by common truth and the metaphysical nothingness – of which it is the image constructed by time – as seen by the truth of Being, and therefore also by phenomenology, is the same as the difference between "There are things." and "There is!".

The common view of "nothing" against a backdrop of evident annihilated things, on the one hand – the side of the living – and the emergence of the thing against a backdrop of "nothing", on the other – the side of Being – is a way of showing the abysmal difference between the two "nothings", which, although correct, can in no way make the metaphysical "nothing" visible to anyone who doesn't already see it.

The "nothing" of common truth, the empty set, the emptiness, is an accomplished "nothing" among the "nothing" that is the logical space of the world. The "nothing" of Being is its *a priori* Idea, an idea which it sees to be false, to its surprise, to its absolute surprise. The two "nothings" are things. One, common, is banal, so banal that it barely stands out in the general banality of the world. The other, potentially common because it is initial, is an error, the source of the folly of being. Difference is a difference of truth. The common truth emanates from an attempt – the logical attempt – to correct the error.

All this literature explains nothing and wants to explain nothing. It shows with the words of logos, and it knows that this monstration can only succeed in the eyes of those of us who already see what it shows.

CHAPTER XI

Phenomenology of the imaginary

Phenomenology of belief

§96.- Phenomenology of the imaginary.

In us, imagination takes over from time to continue and complete the work of logic, the work of annihilating Being. Imagination performs this work in two modes:

- the scientific mode, for which only what time shows us independently of our imagination is true,

- the speculative mode, which settles on the purely imaginary, i.e. without the possibility of temporal verification. This is the mode of mathematical infinity, the mode of fiction, of philosophical or ideological speculation, the mode that leads to the phenomenon of belief.

The scientific imagination attempts to predict what time shows us, after observing its coherence and regularity. Its prediction is said by a law – an axiom, a rule, a mathematical formula – which claims to be valid for all time. Its statement is at first only a hypothesis. The law of becoming may not be as simple as it seems. After experimental confrontation with the purely temporal truth, science corrects the law if

necessary. This is as true of the physical and biological sciences as it is of mathematics. The only difference is that, in the case of mathematics, there is no such thing as becoming. All mathesis is already there, fixed in time and by time, totally stable, within our permanent reach. Mathematical hypotheses are not confronted with temporal movement, but with the finished work of time, presented in front of us in the form of the fixed structure that is the common thingness, in particular that of external space. What mathematical science is concerned with is determining whether there is a logical path from axioms – which are supposed to represent the definitive achievement of time – to hypothesis. The axioms accepted by the scientific community are considered to be purely temporal, even if only by decree, as in the case of the axiom of infinity. In the case where the hypothesis can be neither validated nor invalidated by the resources of first-order predicate logic, which is often the case with infinite numbers – large cardinals – this work eventually calls on all the resources of our logic, *metamathematical* logic, the integral logic of logos, and not just that of the theory whose axiomatics – that of first-order predicate logic – is precise and therefore binding. In this case, it is a question of preserving for the hypothesis the *possibility* of its truth, the possibility of its coherence with the axioms, the possibility of its logical independence from the axioms, the possibility of itself being part of the axioms, as was the case for the axiom of infinity, the first case of its kind. When this possibility is shown, then this monstration gives rise to a theorem known as of "relative consistency".

Sometimes, however, our logic is unable to verify a mathematical hypothesis, and is only able to say that *it is not impossible* for it to be true: so it is with the hypotheses of the existence of large cardinals, those that are said to be "inaccessible" because their numerical infinity is so great. Any new *large cardinal* imagined by mathematicians represents a further leap towards even greater numerical infinities, a leap that needs to be legitimized.

Collectively, mathematicians make no mistake: whatever they assert, they show – they *monstrate* –, and it is not possible for this monstration to be contradicted by time, by what it has already fixed for us, and which is represented by the system of axioms.

In mathematics, the essential role of the imagination is to define properties applicable to sets, or to define relations between sets, and then to demonstrate that such sets, with such properties, or linked by such relations, do in fact exist, correspond to what the axioms show us.

This is how mathematical science is built, entirely left to our imagination and its logic, *our* logic. Our logic faithfully reproduces temporal logic, itself axiomatized. Axioms, whether mathematical or logical, do not leave the framework set by time, a framework they are charged with reconstituting, representing, to be able to substitute themselves for time. The most imaginary numerical mathematics – that of the generic extensions of set theory – is never considered by mathematicians to be purely imaginary. Implicitly, mathematicians consider that their pure temporality remains possible. The decree – the axiom of infinity – which makes our intuition of numerical infinity a temporal truth, remains legitimate. However, we will never see infinitely large quantities *in time alone*: they exist only in our imagination – which mimics time and anticipates what it shows us.

What is the purely imaginary?

The purely imaginary can always be expressed by one or more propositions.

A proposition is said to be "purely imaginary" if what it says, the thing it shows, cannot be shown by time alone. In the strict sense of what is true or false for physical science, a purely imaginary proposition cannot be considered true: for physical science, only what time shows us, independently of our imagination, is true. A false proposition, for both science and phenomenology, is one that contradicts what time shows us. It may happen that if it cannot be said that an imaginary proposition is scientifically true – it is purely imaginary –, neither can it be proved that it is false: time does not show it, but it does not contradict it. With

the axiom of infinity, mathematicians have declared infinite numbers true, even though they are purely imaginary.

For our logic, a false proposition is the negation of a true proposition. Logic does not concern itself with the origin of truth; it does not decide what is true, it only decides the propagation of truth from one proposition to another.

The imaginary presents itself to us in the form of propositions.

Some propositions deserve to be called "hypotheses" in the sense that their truth – or falsity – is not certain but needs to be demonstrated by confrontation with what time shows us. In mathematics, this confrontation is a confrontation with axioms: the axioms of mathematical theory take the place of time, they say the mathesis, they say what time has definitively fixed for us, the totally stable. In physical science, the confrontation with time takes place via an experimental set-up that forces time to decide.

Some hypotheses remain hypotheses in the sense that what they say can neither be confirmed nor denied: they float outside the field of what formal logic can see from axioms, beyond experimental reach, and remain purely imaginary. For phenomenology, as for mathematical-logical science, the things they show exist. The ambiguity of the position of mathematical-logical science about the concept of existence was dealt with in §72. For physical science, only that which is shown by time alone exists or is true.

Certain propositions do not deserve to be considered as hypotheses: they are obviously false. They arise from dreams, artifice, and fantasy. How could we have imagined them? Our imagination is capable, using words or images – all of which are derived from temporality – of forming things, by means of propositions, which clearly have no temporal reality. The simplest example is $1+1=3$. This proposition tells us that the multiplicity measured "three" is obtained by joining two multiplicities measured "one". This proposition makes sense. It shows us something: the equality of two quantities. This equality does not exist and never will, as time constantly tells us. It is false, mathematically

false. In less simple examples, involving larger quantities and more operations, it may be necessary to demonstrate that an equality between numerical expressions, asserted by an arithmetic proposition, is true or false.

What is important to bear in mind here is the artificiality of the purely imaginary. It is a free linguistic construction based on temporal elements. For this construction to make sense, for it to be a proposition, it must show something in our imagination. This condition is already strong. It is easy to be fooled, to give meaning to formulas that do not make sense – that are not propositions – and to get sidetracked. The tragedy of misdirection is that, even though it starts from nonsense, it not only holds out the promise of meaning, but also gives rise to belief – in other words, it can lead people to believe in the temporal truth of the mirage.

A typical example of misdirection is given by this definition of the in-itself as that which is *definitively* inaccessible to our perception, as the reverse side of appearing. At first glance, this definition seems to make sense. It is quite easy for us to make sense of it; in the end, we do make sense of it, and that's when belief comes in. After all, we do not see everything we can see. There are many reasons for this. We know what the other side of things is. The dark side of the moon – its actual underside – is currently inaccessible to our perception. However, we know very well that it exists, and we can talk about it: it shows itself temporally, we are able to see it, and when we see it, there is always a hidden side. But the formula that defines the in-itself says that it is *impossible* for it to be perceived by us. It is this impossibility, the result of a purely imaginary artifice, which robs this definition of all meaning. We know what the impossible is. The impossible is to make what is false true. It is impossible for $1+1=3$. We can see what the impossible is: it exists, it shows itself. There is such a thing as impossible. But an impossible that exists and, by definition, does not show itself in any way, we do not know what it is, we do not know what we are talking about, it is nonsense, it is a contradiction. To exist is to show oneself,

to be something. With the in-itself, we are talking about something that can in no way be something. Can we get away with defining the in-itself as not being a thing? It is then that which does not show itself to us in any way. Of that which does not show itself to us in any way, we can say nothing. Who can say, for example, of that which shows itself to us in no way, that it is, that it exists? To say "There is definitely something invisible" is a contradiction in terms, since we know that there are only things for us, and that the invisible in question is supposed not to be something – a thing, by definition, shows itself to us, and only shows itself to us what there is for us. We say that there is something definitely invisible when we define the in-itself in this way. We say what we say we cannot say.

We know, because we see, that there is. This fact is the universal absolute, absolute in the sense that it imposes itself on us absolutely, universal in the sense that it imposes itself *on us all, always*. In what there is, things take shape in front of our eyes. The "there is", for us, is made of things. Have we seen them all? Does it matter? Science is in charge of discovering the temporal law of movement and change. Our imagination takes care of fiction and dreams.

The definition of the in-itself as *that which exists independently of our view of it* is already more subtle. The intention is to show that our gaze accesses the in-itself, the absolute thus defined, an absolute that does not need us and our gaze on it to exist. Here, the misdirection is hidden in the word "exists". The existence in question presupposes time, presupposes that the in-itself is in time, time being ignored. What is posited as absolute here – unbeknownst to those who pose – is time, is logic in continuous, beginningless motion. Hence the care taken by phenomenology – the other – to show that mathesis – the supposed paradigm of the in-itself for those who make it the absolute accessible to our gaze yet independent of it – results from the work of time, and that it is the most perfect achievement of time, the most perfect monstration in evidence; evidence that comes from the impression of "always already" that time produces on us. This monstration in evidence

presupposes a gaze that sees – it presupposes our gaze, the living gaze – itself formed in and by time. Mathesis is formed in our gaze under the effect of time. What is at stake for time – but only metaphysical truth sees this – is to attenuate the violence of the contradiction that is the initial view, that of Being, that of the unique initial gaze, a gaze that time multiplies. The only in-itself, Being, is outside time. In this sense, in the sense of science, it does not exist. Being exists because it shows itself to human-being. But it exists outside time, it does not exist in the sense of science, it does not exist in the sense of common truth when it says of something that it exists.

Let's return to the authentic proposition, the one that makes sense, that shows something. Among purely imaginary propositions, there are those that time does not contradict. Our analogical logic shows something; time does not show it, but it does not contradict it either. The purely imaginary is subdivided into propositional things that are scientifically and phenomenologically false – contradicted by time – and propositional things that time does not show but does not contradict either. Mathematical sets – apart from numbers – and infinite numbers fall into the latter category. We could say that our analogical logic, with the purely imaginary not contradicted by time, acts as a complement to time.

To posit as true something that is purely imaginary and not contradicted by time is what our mathematical science does when it establishes the theory of sets: sets, apart from numbers, are purely imaginary. Infinite numbers are purely imaginary. Time contradicts neither the purely temporal existence of sets nor the purely temporal existence of infinite numbers. Here, our analogical logic goes further than time, it widens the scope of mathesis, contributes to annihilation.

To believe is to mistake the purely imaginary for the purely temporal, to mistake a purely imaginary proposition for a scientifically true one. What saves set theory, the foundation of the entire mathematical edifice, is that numbers are purely temporal sets, and that neither sets nor infinite numbers are things contradicted by time.

Why do we always cling to what time shows us? Why systematically set aside the purely imaginary? Physical science does just that. Once a hypothesis has been posed – and it is never without reason that a scientific hypothesis is posed – the whole job of physical science consists in validating or invalidating it, in other words, in verifying whether what it says can be shown in time. Time decides of the common truth, of the scientific truth. Our imagination is built on what time shows us. What it shows us, it shows us both mathematically – the structure that is the common thingness – and logically – the formal coherence that our imagination mimics. The freedom that our imagination gives itself from what it arbitrarily shows, through language, is very relative. This freedom is constrained by time.

The absolute that is ours, that of the human-being, needs neither infinity nor dreams. It is ours, even though it is not scientific. It alone knows what science is, what the absolute is. The absolute says, speaking of itself – because it sees it, because it sees itself, because it sees, because it sees that seeing is madness – that it is absolutely surprising. This surprise may well be described as infinite, but in no way can it be quantified in the way that numerical infinities are.

§97.- Phenomenology of belief.

The phenomenon of belief is intimately linked to purely imaginary propositions.

What characterizes the purely imaginary proposition is that it is possible for it to be considered scientifically true by some of us, either only during the time of a dream or entertainment, in the time of fiction, or, in the case of belief, during the time of a lifetime, thus putting an end to free thought.

Everyone knows how to indulge in fiction. Dreams are a delight for the mind, they have their charms, they make no claim to temporal truth, only to escapism, humor, and fantasy. Fiction – novels, biographies, films, plays – that aim to be realistic must be set aside here. In many cases, what is shown here can claim to be so in real life, and can have

an educational, exemplary, or edifying impact. Fiction that knows itself to be fiction, and is seen as such, poses no particular problem of truth; it offers us a dream.

The same cannot be said of fiction that is unaware of being fiction, or that is not seen as such, and is regarded as a temporal, scientific truth. This is the case with belief.

To say that numerical infinity is a temporal truth – that is what the infinity axiom says – makes infinite mathematics a belief. So far, time has never contradicted the consequences of this belief. The infinite mathematical universe seems to cohabit with the temporal universe, although the coherence of the whole cannot be proven. This semblance of cohabitation is the mitigating circumstance of this belief in infinite mathematics. For example, it will never be shown that inconstructible cardinals are based on an error. Infinite mathematics, the generic extensions of set theory, retain a temporal legitimacy that is not based on belief: time does not invalidate what they say.

Understanding the meaning of "God exists" presupposes that two conditions are met. Both questions must be answered:

- What is "God"?

- What does it mean "to exist"?

For all of us, "to exist" means "to be seen in time", even if this existence only appears at the end of our imagination, since it is itself in time: existence is exclusively temporal, by including the imaginary in the temporal. Within existence, therefore temporal, we can distinguish between what is shown independently of the imagination – the purely temporal – and what is only shown in the imagination – the purely imaginary.

Mathematicians have defined numerical infinity: a number is infinite if it has no finite predecessor. On the other hand, mathematicians have decreed the temporal existence of the infinite number: the axiom states

that the infinite number exists – implicitly *in time and independently of our imagination*. Finally, time does not contradict this existence; it is a purely temporal fact. This, *a posteriori*, justifies the decree, justifies the axiom of infinity.

Our dictionary defines God as the creator of everything and of himself. Is this definition logically acceptable? In other words, does it make sense? Can something create itself? We are faced with a contradiction. But why not, if this contradiction shows itself, temporally, if we are brought face to face with it, if it imposes itself on us without our imagination intervening, if we are brought face to face with it, brutally?

Who has seen, other than in a dream, a thing, God, creating itself, a thing causing itself? Nobody, of course, except Husserl in his *Ideen*. He reveals this vision of God, the culmination of successive *epochés*, in paragraph 81:

"The transcendental "absolute" that we have provided for ourselves through the various reductions, is not in truth the last word; it is something that, in a certain profound and absolutely unique sense, constitutes itself, and takes its radical source in a definitive and true absolute."

This "last word", which points to "something that constitutes itself", situated upstream of the transcendental absolute obtained through successive phenomenological reductions, is the word "God".

Husserl's intention, the goal of his phenomenological approach, is the scientific approach to the absolute, to God.

For a god, self-creation can also mean being outside time and bringing his own existence, i.e. in time, through the intermediary of mankind. For God, to create himself would be to bring himself into existence from eternity, to create time, the world and mankind. Is this not also what Being does, Being as seen by *the other* phenomenology? More

precisely, isn't this creation from Being the work, in it, of its *a priori* idea, the idea of nothingness?

Since Being – the truth of Being – is itself a contradiction, can we not say that this God of believers is Being itself, that we believe in Being as we believe in God? that the Being which, starting from the Idea, generates the beings, the existing, creates itself as God does? that there is identity between the Being of phenomenology and the God of theology, the God of Husserl?

We cannot say, because we do not have to "believe" in Being. We ourselves are this contradiction, this madness. If this Being is God, then God has done nothing to be, he is absolutely surprised to be, surprised to see, to see himself, he is as if taken by madness, he does not know why he is. He is without reason. He is, without reason. He has no reason to be. He contradicts all reason. But what is this reason? It is the *a priori* of Being, its Idea: nothing, nothingness.

Who is this "one" who would have seen Being and who, seeing it, by the same gesture, would have joined it, would be Being? Testimonies to the truth of Being, to its sudden appearance in time, in the instant, are numerous. They are current, they are repetitive, and literature presents them. In none of these cases is there any question of a gradual, scientific, Husserl-like approach to Being, only a direct, brutal confrontation with contradiction, with the contradiction of the Idea, a contradiction that is Being itself.

To save the situation – the situation raised by the question: isn't God purely imaginary, a fiction? – believers in God, or simply those who politically want us to believe in God, have found the solution. God himself has been seen, heard, in this world, in time, historically. Consequently, God exists. Testimony to his existence is given to us by the sacred books. We must believe in what the sacred books tell us. In the monotheistic tradition, these witnesses to God are Abraham, Moses, Jesus – who is the incarnation of God himself – and Mohammed through the intermediary of an angel. But there are also all those more contemporary saints who testify to having seen God. How can we

recognize God? To recognize him, don't you already have to know him?
Who already knows him?

Witnesses to Being, to his appearance in time, go by other names, and are not all prophets or saints of the Church – some saints, if we look closely, are witnesses to Being, to Being immediately assimilated to God, God being, through belief, already there; the typical example is saint Paul, the founder of Christianity. Some of these names were cited in §25 of section I. They *do not recognize* Being, they become it, they are Being, they join it, in the greatest surprise, in the dread of contradiction. It is quite possible that Husserl is one of them, although he committed the double error of wanting to bring us scientifically to Being, and of confusing it with the God of monotheistic believers, with *causa sui*. Being exists – in time – only through us, only through those instances of it that we are – currently or potentially. In physics, movement is the trace of Being, a trace that time – the time that merges with the regularity of movement – attempts to annihilate by dint of regularization. What needs to be annihilated, through time and logic, is the violence of Being, the violence of the initial contradiction.

Men need to believe; they want to believe in their eternity. Being is eternal; you do not have to believe it, only see it. Seeing Being cannot result, in this life, in belief in a god. Seeing the Being cannot result in giving to believe, making believe, teaching others to believe in the right way. Belief is adorned with many details, as the imagination knows how to do. Beliefs in God are as diverse as religions and their heresies. For many God-believers, the only way to believe is the way their religion tells them to.

To believe is to hold as true, as scientifically true, what is purely imaginary.

There are other beliefs than belief in God, other utopias, other gods, other kinds of religions, with the same consequences. Philosophical speculation also leads to belief. Modern philosophical speculation insists on calling itself scientific and realistic.

From the purely imaginary to science, there is always a logical error, a deception. Husserl's phenomenology, which he develops for us in the *Ideen*, and which aims to bring us collectively to the touch of God, to this phenomenon, is such a deception. And this even though it was established in good faith: let us just say that it is an exemplary deception.

Phenomenology, whose theme is monstration, sets the phenomenon of belief apart because it sees where it comes from. It highlights the purely temporal phenomenon of expulsion from the continuous logical process – that event.

CHAPTER XII

From primordial chaos to physis: the endless metamorphosis of Being

The "endless" of History and Politics

The accident of a life

Our truths

§98.- The myth of primordial chaos.

Logos has always alluded to primordial chaos. Chaos, in our imagination, is the very opposite of stability and regularity; it knows no logic and is therefore timeless. Its metamorphosis begins with time. This ancient story is echoed in the recent fable of the "big bang", the fable of the beginning of time. The modern fable, based on the theory of relativity, says that at the instant of the beginning of time, chaos takes the form of an infinitely dense, infinitely hot point, a point on the verge of explosion.

It has always seemed impossible that the world could have been created from nothing. According to the popular imagination, there is already something at the start, but something formless, unstable, a "chaos": something awaiting intervention to acquire stability and form. It is divine intervention that transforms chaos into a world, into our world. This is how our imagination has always thought.

§99.- From chaos to mathesis, the metamorphosis of Being.

Chaos, in place of the world's actual regularity, helps us to grasp the mathematical stability of things, through an effect of contrary or symmetry. Chaos helps us to grasp mathesis as the space where formal logic is king, as the space where our logic unfolds infinitely at the whim of the imagination, whereas time has always already fixed its structure: the thingness of common truth.

Armed with this grasp, can't we refine the notion of chaos and bring less of the marvellous – divine or magical – into play in this passage from chaos to ourselves, to our world, to physis, to mathesis? Instead of the marvellous or the fantastic, can't we propose a description of this passage that involves only logic? And all this while giving this logic an origin – and a meaning, hence a definition – of a clarity and simplicity worthy of logic itself, as we know it, which takes us from one evidence to another in a continuity that is either temporal or imaginary.

The word that always comes back, the one we should ponder first, the one that says what holds us together, is indeed this one: "evidence". Mathesis is precisely that which is so obvious, so present, that it cannot be detected: multiplicity, totally stable. Outside the totally stable realm of mathesis – as expressed by "There are things" – the rest of physis continues to evolve over time, maintaining that bend in stability that is movement, even regular movement. Rimbaud's poem *Movement*, that authentic illumination put into words, reveals as such the last wild presence of Being that is movement – "strom" – and the attempt by science, our science, to tame it completely, to mathematize it, to substitute "comfort", sport, rest, for its violence.

When it comes to things, our tendency has always been to focus on analyzing their differences. We differentiate particular things from universal things, from concepts. We arrange things in categories of things, Aristotle's ontological categories. This analysis leaves the prey for the shadow. It makes us miss the essential. The essential point, which Husserl's phrase "Right to the thing itself" should remind us of.

But this word is not understood as it should be, not even by Husserl, as the development of his thought shows.

The essential thing about the thing, about everything, is that it shows itself. Phenomenology – for which there is a strict identity between the thing and the phenomenon – consists in analyzing not the differences between things, but the diverse ways in which things show themselves to us. What needs to be studied, the object of phenomenology, is monstration, the way in which monstration operates. The very fact of monstration, unheard of, reveals nothingness, the nothingness from which we come, and which disappears with our birth: to see, seeing.

Ordinarily, things show themselves to us all in the evidence: firstly, in the mathematical evidence – unbeknownst to us, since the evidence of the total stability of mathematics is such that it prevents us from distinguishing it – and secondly, in the physical evidence, since we have always been accustomed to the regular evolution in time, the normalized movement of things. It is all about questioning the evidence. Paradoxically, it is the evidence of the way things are shown to us that usually withdraws monstration from our reflection. Yet monstration, the fact that something shows itself, is the phenomenon *par excellence*.

Why is it that things first present themselves to us as self-evident, so self-evident that we do not usually think of questioning neither evidence nor monstration? What is it among things that differentiates physis from mathesis?

Things and ourselves, things among things, are self-evident. The word "evidence" tells us almost nothing. What it tells us is so evident that there is nothing to say about it. Evidence seems to have something to do with "nothing". How can we translate this evidence with words other than "nothing", more explicit than it? What is evident is without surprise, as expected, predicted, *déjà vu*, normal. Where does this total absence of surprise come from? If the word "surprise" exists in the logos, it is because surprise shows itself to us all. There is a common, ordinary, I would even say: evident surprise. On closer inspection, this ordinary surprise always ends up finding an explanation. In the end, it

is not really a surprise; it should not have surprised us. So, when does a genuine surprise present itself to us, an unexplained and inexplicable surprise that is totally and definitively opposed to the evidence, an absolute surprise?

The genuine surprise, the end of the evidence, arises with the event of the suspension of the logical march, with the suspension of the logical effect of time. What emerges is a monstration other than the ordinary monstration that shows us things as self-evident, and which itself seems self-evident. In this other monstration, logic still plays the leading role. Instead of carrying us along in its continuous march, from evidence to evidence, as it had always done until now, it is suddenly suspended, at a standstill before the contradiction of its ideal, at a standstill before this fact: there is! This contradiction, seen, of the logical ideal, is Being, Being itself.

If the truth of Being sees things in the greatest surprise, our common truth sees them in the evidence produced by beginningless time – *chronological* evidence – or, complementing time and mimicking it, in the evidence produced by our imagination – *eidological* evidence. The whole of what shows itself to us all in the evidence produced by logic in continuous march, temporal or imaginary, constitutes the logos, our common homeland, put into words, transmitted by language. The logos brings us together and holds us together, but together we were at the origin, an origin whose name is "Being".

The adventure that logos relates, that of the world and of mankind, is that of the ongoing work of logic, a work whose objective is the restoration, in Being, of the *a priori* Idea: the idea of nothingness. This work is endless and will never abolish the initial madness: there is! Traces of this madness will always remain in physis, in life, in us.

§100.- History of men. History of Being.

Where are we now? What about us? Where are we going? Does it make sense? What can we say? What is there to say? In these questions, recurrent in the philosophy of logos, we must understand the "us" as

"all of us", the "us" whose truth is the common truth. The answers offered by common truth and its logos are sociological, political, historical, theological, and scientific. It is generally assumed that the history of mankind has a meaning, that it is going somewhere, that, to a large extent, we are masters of our destiny, that it is a question of Reason, a question of Politics, or a question of faith – in God or in Reason.

Translogical truth – which is what the truth of Being sees when it observes common truth – knows that political Reason is a biological necessity, and that its role is to maintain man's childhood as it is, i.e. to ensure that, overall, nothing changes, even if certain historical periods may appear darker or brighter than others, even if there are twilights – the end of civilization – and Renaissance. We are used to saying that animals obey instinct. This instinct is the genetic, biological program generated by time, through which time regulates animal behavior. As far as the human animal is concerned, the relative freedom that time leaves to man remains regulated by that specific instinct that is Reason, political Reason, that motor of regulation, of regularization.

Translogical truth answers questions other than those posed by common truth. These questions are: what does logic do with us? what does time do with us? what does the imagination do with us, complementing the work of time by substituting itself for it?

What comes into play for the common truth, as far as the destiny of mankind is concerned, are considerations linked to the progress of science, to technological evolution, to the evolution of our general living conditions, to the way we use natural resources, to social justice, to the possibilities available to us to occupy our free time – all considerations that are and must be taken into account by politics, by our politics. Politics makes human history. These considerations are the leitmotiv of our "intellectuals": political scientists, sociologists, worldly philosophers, editorialists. The political *a priori* is that of a positive historical evolution of the human condition. The underlying question is and will remain that of human happiness on Earth, happiness for all.

The political *a priori* is that of the possibility of happiness for all on Earth. However, the logos has established that happiness is a complex feeling, that full happiness is not lasting, that it only exists because its opposite, unhappiness, also exists, and that it is probably better to say that the political objective is to give everyone the possibility of living happily here on earth, knowing that the conditions that make us happy are specific to each of us. To live happily is to have a sense of success in one's life. Some people are only happy in political combat, because they are convinced that things could be better, that people in general could be happier, freer, without too much thought being given to what they can do with their freedom.

For the translogical truth, this *a priori* guiding policy is necessary so that, in the end, nothing changes, necessary for the general equilibrium of childhood.

History, the one driven by man's childhood and his politics, is always the same, despite the twists and turns recounted in our history books. It is undeniable that the world, as seen by common truth, is changing. It changes within the degree of freedom that time allows. Time ensures the absolute coherence of what it shows to the common truth. Common truth relies on this absolute consistency since its science is founded on it. As a consequence of time and its role, as a consequence of science, the world remains the world of childhood, despite the twists and turns of its history. Contingency, which is the effect of the degree of freedom that time allows the world and mankind, will always be framed by coherence. The consequence of this coherence is that, whatever happens, it could have been foreseen, or at least predicted, by science – nothing should surprise us. Whatever the vagaries of history, Reason – the coherence anchored within us, political or scientific Reason – always ends up finding a new equilibrium, one that we must strive to preserve until a relative imbalance is once again apparent.

If the History of Man is the History of the Same, the History of Childhood, then there is no History of Being in the world. The History of Being does not take place in the world. Being exerts no influence on

the world and its history, no influence on childhood and its politics. In the world, when it comes to Being, it was the same in pre-Socratic times as it is today. What it was, as it is today, was that each of us has the possibility of accessing the truth of Being, and that this access, untransmissible, has no impact on the world and the world's political conduct. The History of Being does not take place in the world, it takes place inside a human life. Only the human being, in his life, lives the History of Being. Every human life lives the History of Being, repeats the History of Being. Being itself has no history; it is eternal madness.

In the human being, History is that of his authentic birth, a birth after which time is another time, life is another life, freedom is another freedom. History is the gift of logic and time to the human-being: time gives him the world, the spectacle of the world, participation in the world game, the wonder of wonders. Childhood does not receive the world; it has *always already* received it. For it, it is a necessity, evidence, as is its own gaze.

Human history is history as seen, conceived, and lived by common truth and its logos.

The History of Being is, within the life of a man, that which he or her experiences through his or her access to the truth of Being.

There is no "historiality of Being" – such historiality exists only in Heidegger's imagination. Man, as "all of us", will never decide in favor of Being. Decisions only make sense if we have access to the truth of Being. A common decision can only be that of childhood, and childhood cannot decide in favor of what it does not know. To want to win the decision is to want people to believe in your preaching. Belief is a phenomenon that replaces clairvoyance. What the people believe in is the eternity that the preaching discourse gives them hope of. Eternity according to Paul of Tarsus, eternity according to Heidegger, eternity according to any of the best preachers, those who access the truth of Being, is understood by the common truth in a way that gives it hope. Hope is the hope of escape from finitude, from death. But the death in question – in the epistles of Paul of Tarsus, in the work of Heidegger,

but also in the work of Spinoza, Kierkegaard, Rimbaud, Kafka, Pessoa, etc. – is not the physical, biological death of the body, but the death of childhood, a death that is immediately followed by authentic, eternal birth.

Only those who reach the truth of Being have a decision to make. This decision is to accept the biological body of childhood, to accept the gift of life to the world, to receive the gift of the world, to agree to play the world's game, to welcome – with these few words, with phenomenology, with ethics – those who suddenly appear and begin their struggle.

§101.- The accident of a life.

We are naturally logical, and we cannot do without logic. Before it became a science, before the emergence of the human species, logic already existed. The science of logic simply establishes explicitly the rules that the model it recognizes, our reasoning, naturally follows to operate correctly. It is the science of correct reasoning. It is not concerned with what this reasoning is in its essence, or in its origin, or in its possibility.

Why does this correct reasoning work, which, given a proposition considered to be true, deduces others that are necessarily true? First of all, for what is it good?

Logic is not just a fancy word. It is fundamentally useful, even indispensable, to living beings. All animals have, to varying degrees, a capacity for reasoning, some of which is inscribed in their flesh and constitutes what we call "instinct". To say that logic leads from truth to truth is to say that temporal reality conforms to the conclusions of its reasoning. Its rules are not only those of correct reasoning, but they are also primarily the rules of the temporal reality in which we are immersed. Natural reality, that of living beings, is logical and imposes its logic on living beings. We are naturally logical in reference to the reality of the world. If we want to succeed in our undertakings, if we simply want to survive, we must learn the logic of the world and

conform to it. This learning takes place in childhood – not only in our own childhood, but before that, in the childhood of the species, in the childhood of living things – without us even realizing it.

As living beings, we cannot get rid of beings and time, but can we get rid of logic? The question requires further reflection, for logic, unlike time and beings, seems to be within our grasp, dependent on us: we are, or we are not, logical; we seem to be more or less logical. Some of us even come to believe that logic is a human invention, that it did not exist before us. It is in the essence of logic, and in its role, to make itself forgotten. It lets us believe that we play with it freely, whereas it is logic that plays with us and our reality. The principle of contradiction, the first rule of logic, governs our reality, whether we like it or not.

What does it mean that our reality is logical? "Logical" means "predictable", and "predictable" means "conforming to expectation". How is this expectation forged? By the regularity of what happens to us. From this regularity, we infer a law: a law of physics, a law of the world, a rule of logic. Logic reflects the natural regularity of the world.

In number 6.3 of his *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein rightly writes: "Logical investigation constitutes the investigation of all regularity. And outside logic, everything is an accident."

Logic occupied Wittgenstein's thought and work. If Heidegger is the philosopher of being, Wittgenstein is the philosopher of logic, but he is the philosopher of the *interior* of logic.

"That logic exists *a priori* is due to the fact that one cannot think illogically," he writes in number 5.4731 of the same *Tractatus*. For this assertion to be accurate, logic must still be present in thought, in man. Would human logic work, would it give reliable results, if it did not reflect a natural logic? If our logic is so successful, it is because all its deductions are confirmed by physical reality. Our logic presupposes and re-enacts a natural logic, that of physis. Natural logic is the active principle of the regularity of our reality, and therefore of the permanence, stability and evidence of things and the laws that govern them. Natural logic presents itself to us under the guise of time.

If "everything outside logic is an accident", what is an accident? It is a case where logic is contradicted. What example can we give of an accident?

An accident, in the ordinary sense of the word, is usually not really an accident at all. In the ordinary sense of the word, an accident is an event that we know can happen, even though it has a low but certain probability of occurrence. Occurrence is statistically predictable. On a case-by-case basis, it is not foreseen by us for the simple reason that we do not have all the data required to predict it. The effort and resources required to do so are disproportionate. Even if the statistics are sometimes fooled, logic is never contradicted by this kind of accident: the case is rare, but we knew it was possible.

So, is there an example of an accident that contradicts logic? As soon as such an accident occurs, our science and its logic have no choice but to solve the problem it poses. Because in such cases, science is always faced with a problem to be solved: science should have foreseen the case. One of the implicit axioms of science is that any accident that contradicts logic is only apparent. It is not logic that is at fault, it is our knowledge of the laws of physics. The solution to the problem lies in better observation of nature, followed by correction of the current law. This is how science progresses. In his *Lecture on Ethics*, Wittgenstein deals with the accident as follows:

"Imagine the case where suddenly a lion's head grew on the shoulders of one of you, and he began to roar. Surely that would be something as extraordinary as anything I can imagine. What I would suggest then, once you had recovered from your surprise, would be to fetch a doctor, have a scientific examination of the man's case and, were it not for the suffering it would entail, have him vivisected. And what would the miracle have achieved? For it is clear that, if we look at things in this way, everything miraculous disappears; unless what we mean by this term is simply this: a fact that has not yet been explained

by science, which in turn means that we have not yet succeeded in grouping this fact with others within a scientific system."

Wittgenstein had begun his *Lecture on Ethics* – which he could just as well have called *Lecture on Metaphysics*, although it also includes ethical considerations in the ordinary sense – by describing his "experience par excellence". He describes it with the proposition: "I am astonished at the existence of the world". This astonishment is indeed an event, an accident, the accident of a life. But unlike the appearance of the lion's head, which he can imagine, Wittgenstein declares that *he cannot imagine* that the world does not exist: "But it is nonsense to say that I am astonished at the existence of the world, because I cannot imagine that it does not exist." This raises two questions.

First, why doesn't Wittgenstein ask himself about his astonishment, which is real? Let us do it for him. If he is surprised by the existence of the world, it is because what wouldn't have surprised him? It is "nothing". "Nothing" does not have to be imagined. It can only be in relation to "nothing", or nothingness, that Wittgenstein is astonished by existence. "Nothing" is the *a priori* Idea, and that is why its contradiction, the world, is astonishing. Through the logic at work, the world simulates "nothing", and that is just as well why the world, ordinarily, does not astonish us. Before his "experience par excellence", Wittgenstein was not surprised. When the "nothing" worked on by logic without our knowledge suddenly appears as the "nothing" that is not there, because we appear as its contradiction, that is the event, the accident. The Idea that was *a priori* arrives at the concept: suddenly, it is seen in its realization by logic, a realization that is the world itself, the world before the accident. At the same time, Wittgenstein is astonished by the existence of the world: there is no "nothing", I am its contradiction, and it is crazy. "Nothing" is just an idea.

The second question concerns meaning and nonsense. Wittgenstein's questioning comes to nothing because, in his view, the statement "I am astonished at the existence of the world" is nonsense. It is nonsense

because "nothing" is unimaginable. Indeed, before the accident, "nothing" is unimaginable. The accident consists precisely, first, in seeing "nothing", but not in imagination, in time, in reality. At the moment of the accident, "nothing" is the world, "nothing" is installed in the world by logic. The accident then consists in realizing, as soon as nothingness is seen, that it is contradicted: he who is astonished is himself the contradiction of "nothing", of nothingness. After the event, "nothing" is imagined, as all concepts and ideas can be, but it is now recognized as what it is in Being: it is the *a priori* Idea of Being. It is the Idea of which Being is the contradiction, the Idea consubstantial with Being. But Wittgenstein shrinks from contradiction. He rejects "nothing" as an *a priori* Idea, an idea whose realization he has seen, in one instant, and whose contradiction he has seen in the same instant, and is astonished by it. He stubbornly remains in the ordinary sense that his astonishment nevertheless invites him to leave: he stubbornly remains in the nothingness of the world. Why this obstinacy?

Wittgenstein ends his *Lecture on Ethics* with such lucidity about his inability to leave science and logic that it is hard to understand why, having reached this critical point, he cuts short all questioning and retreats back into the world's ordinariness, into science, into "signifying language", into worldly tranquillity. Speaking of his own allegedly meaningless expressions, he concludes:

"Indeed, all I wanted to achieve with them was to go beyond the world, i.e. beyond signifying language. All I was aiming for – and, I believe, all men who have ever tried to write or speak about ethics or religion – was to confront the limits of language. It is perfectly, absolutely, hopeless to give head like this against the walls of our cage. As far as ethics is born of the desire to say something about the ultimate meaning of life, about the absolute good, about what has absolute value, ethics cannot be science. What it says adds nothing to our knowledge, in any sense."

Metaphysics – or ethics in Wittgenstein's sense – is not born of desire. It is not born of a will or a desire to give meaning to life. If it is, in fact, situated beyond the world, it is because it is suddenly expelled from it – more precisely, the neo-metaphysician is expelled from it, in the accident of a lifetime. The world, then, is no longer the same world, no longer the ordinary world. The world that had hitherto been self-evident is now astonishing. We would have to say, "absolutely astonishing", to make this astonishment something other than ordinary astonishment. Language says what we want it to say. It can express difference. Language has only the limits we give it. Only for the ordinary world, only for science, are metaphysical propositions meaningless. Wittgenstein did not dare to free himself from the logos. Language follows us out of the logos. It then becomes *translogical*, like the speaker.

In the traditional sense of a behavioral rule to be observed, the ethics of metaphysics consist, on the one hand, of respect for the rules of the ordinary world – respect for childhood – and, on the other, of welcoming newcomers to metaphysics – welcoming them through language, through literature, that which leaps over the ordinary boundaries of language. For the accident is, quite literally, a trauma from which "the body of childhood" – as Spinoza puts it at the end of *Ethics* – has difficulty recovering.

Let us leave Wittgenstein to his logical scruples. Let us return to the accident.

Why did Heidegger distrust logic and question its sovereignty? When, how and why did he place himself outside logic? Doesn't he himself reason when he writes? Under what circumstances was he led to contradict logic?

Answer: when he discovered nothingness, at the same time as he discovered Being. Neither Being nor "nothing" can be discovered at the end of a continuously logical process. Nothingness and Being arise suddenly, without reason, in man's solitude. "Our finitude is such that it is precisely neither by our decree nor by our own will that we can

place ourselves in the original presence of Nothingness", says Heidegger in his lecture "*What is Metaphysics?*". "Original presence" is to be understood here as "*a priori*". As soon as man is confronted with nothingness, Being emerges, and the surprise is total. This is the accident. It is experienced by a man in solitude. In solitude, because it is impossible to share the accident, to let others experience it, to show it to them, except to those who have already experienced it. Those who have already experienced it recognize it in the description. The others see it as nonsense, an abuse of language. The accident will strike them later, perhaps never.

§102.- Our truths.

The human-being has three truths. During a man's life, the three truths appear in this chronological order:

1- The common truth, the truth of "all of us", the truth of man's childhood, the truth that shows us things in their evidence. This truth is *always already* ours; it has no beginning.

2- The truth of Being, absolute surprise, contradiction. The only word in the logos that can give an idea of this is "madness". The unforeseeable, untransmissible event of access to the truth of Being is the event of a lifetime.

3- Translogical truth. This is the truth of Being's view of common truth. The truth of Being accessed by human-being recalls the truth of childhood and its logos. For translogical truth, the logic of common truth, that of our imagination, is but the mime of a larger, original logic, the one whose manifestation for us all is what we call "time".

By phenomenological reduction, common truth can be subdivided into 4 truths:

1- Integral common truth (or ordinary truth, where the soul of things dominates, the subjective truth of things).

2- Scientific truth (or physical, objective truth, that which is concerned, in particular, with the change of things, with the laws of their change).

3- Mathematical truth (internal to physical truth, that which sees, in what there is, only the totally stable structure stated by the primitive axiom of common truth – there are things –, and by the axiom specific to external space – proper things are made of proper things).

4- The truth of truth (the result of the radical reduction to the sole state of perception, said by: there is).

In man's childhood, the logical goal of self-preservation evolves between two extremes:

1- The will to power. Sight, thought, as power in the service of the "I", the "I" being able to extend, by calculation, to the family, the clan, the nation, the world. It is not just a question of preserving oneself, but of being sure of preserving oneself, and to do so, to grow, to dominate, to fear nothing and nobody in this world. This will can be exercised in one or more of the following fields: politics, material/financial, sports, tourism, media, aesthetics, love, science, religion.

2- The "no-business" state, without will, the "seeing" reduced to itself, to "There is". This state, which appears necessary and obvious, accessible to all, and from which boredom and anguish can arise, borders on the bottomlessness of the contradiction.

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