

## 1. What Is a Concept?

There are no simple concepts. Every concept has components and is defined by them. It therefore has a combination [*chiffre*\*]. It is a multiplicity, although not every multiplicity is conceptual. There is no concept with only one component. Even the first concept, the one with which a philosophy “begins,” has several components, because it is not obvious that philosophy must have a beginning, and if it does determine one, it must combine it with a point of view or a ground [*une raison*]. Not only do Descartes, Hegel, and Feuerbach not begin with the same concept, they do not have the same concept of beginning. Every concept is at least double or triple, etc. Neither is there a concept possessing every component, since this would be chaos pure and simple. Even so-called universals as ultimate concepts must escape the chaos by circumscribing a universe that explains them (contemplation, reflection, communication). Every concept has an irregular contour defined by the sum of its compo-

\*See translators’ introduction.

nents, which is why, from Plato to Bergson, we find the idea of the concept being a matter of articulation, of cutting and cross-cutting. The concept is a whole because it totalizes its components, but it is a fragmentary whole. Only on this condition can it escape the mental chaos constantly threatening it, stalking it, trying to reabsorb it.

On what conditions is a concept first, not absolutely but in relation to another? For example, is *another person* [*autrui*] necessarily second in relation to a self? If so, it is to the extent that its concept is that of an other—a subject that presents itself as an object—which is special in relation to the self: they are two components. In fact, if the other person is identified with a special object, it is now only the other subject as it appears to me; and if we identify it with another subject, it is me who is the other person as I appear to that subject. All concepts are connected to problems without which they would have no meaning and which can themselves only be isolated or understood as their solution emerges. We are dealing here with a problem concerning the plurality of subjects, their relationship, and their reciprocal presentation. Of course, everything changes if we think that we discover another problem: what is the nature of the other person's position that the other subject comes to "occupy" only when it appears to me as a special object, and that I in turn come to occupy as special object when I appear to the other subject? From this point of view the other person is not anyone—neither subject nor object. There are several subjects because there is the other person, not the reverse. The other person thus requires an a priori concept from which the special object, the other subject, and the self must all derive, not the other way around. The order has changed, as has the nature of the concepts and the problems to which they are supposed to respond. We put to one side the question of the difference between scientific and philosophical problems. However, even in philosophy, concepts are only created as a function of problems which are thought to be badly understood or badly posed (pedagogy of the concept).

Let us proceed in a summary fashion: we will consider a field of experience taken as a real world no longer in relation to a self but to a simple "there is." There is, at some moment, a calm and restful world. Suddenly a frightened face looms up that looks at something out of the field. The other person appears here as neither subject nor object but as something that is very different: a possible world, the possibility of a frightening world. This possible world is not real, or not yet, but it exists nonetheless: it is an expressed that exists only in its expression—the face, or an equivalent of the face. To begin with, the other person is this existence of a possible world. And this possible world also has a specific reality in itself, as possible: when the expressing speaks and says, "I am frightened," even if its words are untruthful, this is enough for a reality to be given to the possible as such. This is the only meaning of the "I" as linguistic index. But it is not indispensable: China is a possible world, but it takes on a reality as soon as Chinese is spoken or China is spoken about within a given field of experience. This is very different from the situation in which China is realized by becoming the field of experience itself. Here, then, is a concept of the other that presupposes no more than the determination of a sensory world as condition. On this condition the other appears as the expression of a possible. The other is a possible world as it exists in a face that expresses it and takes shape in a language that gives it a reality. In this sense it is a concept with three inseparable components: possible world, existing face, and real language or speech.

Obviously, every concept has a history. This concept of the other person goes back to Leibniz, to his possible worlds and to the monad as expression of the world. But it is not the same problem, because in Leibniz possibles do not exist in the real world. It is also found in the modal logic of propositions. But these do not confer on possible worlds the reality that corresponds to their truth conditions (even when Wittgenstein envisages propositions of fear or pain, he does not see them as modalities that can be expressed in a position of the other

person because he leaves the other person oscillating between another subject and a special object). Possible worlds have a long history.<sup>1</sup> In short, we say that every concept always has a *history*, even though this history zigzags, though it passes, if need be, through other problems or onto different planes. In any concept there are usually bits or components that come from other concepts, which corresponded to other problems and presupposed other planes. This is inevitable because each concept carries out a new cutting-out, takes on new contours, and must be reactivated or recut.

On the other hand, a concept also has a *becoming* that involves its relationship with concepts situated on the same plane. Here concepts link up with each other, support one another, coordinate their contours, articulate their respective problems, and belong to the same philosophy, even if they have different histories. In fact, having a finite number of components, every concept will branch off toward other concepts that are differently composed but that constitute other regions of the same plane, answer to problems that can be connected to each other, and participate in a co-creation. A concept requires not only a problem through which it recasts or replaces earlier concepts but a junction of problems where it combines with other coexisting concepts. The concept of the Other Person as expression of a possible world in a perceptual field leads us to consider the components of this field for itself in a new way. No longer being either subject of the field or object in the field, the other person will become the condition under which not only subject and object are redistributed but also figure and ground, margins and center, moving object and reference point, transitive and substantial, length and depth. The Other Person is always perceived as an other, but in its concept it is the condition of all perception, for others as for ourselves. It is the condition for our passing from one world to another. The Other Person makes the world go by, and the "I" now designates only a past world ("I was peaceful"). For example, the Other Person is enough to make any length a possible depth in space, and vice versa, so that if this concept

did not function in the perceptual field, transitions and inversions would become incomprehensible, and we would always run up against things, the possible having disappeared. Or at least, philosophically, it would be necessary to find another reason for not running up against them. It is in this way that, on a determinable plane, we go from one concept to another by a kind of bridge. The creation of a concept of the Other Person with these components will entail the creation of a new concept of perceptual space, with other components to be determined (not running up against things, or not too much, will be part of these components).

We started with a fairly complex example. How could we do otherwise, because there is no simple concept? Readers may start from whatever example they like. We believe that they will reach the same conclusion about the nature of the concept or the concept of *concept*. First, every concept relates back to other concepts, not only in its history but in its becoming or its present connections. Every concept has components that may, in turn, be grasped as concepts (so that the Other Person has the face among its components, but the Face will itself be considered as a concept with its own components). Concepts, therefore, extend to infinity and, being created, are never created from nothing. Second, what is distinctive about the concept is that it renders components inseparable *within itself*. Components, or what defines the *consistency* of the concept, its endoconsistency, are distinct, heterogeneous, and yet not separable. The point is that each partially overlaps, has a zone of neighborhood [*zone de voisinage*], or a threshold of indiscernibility, with another one. For example, in the concept of the other person, the possible world does not exist outside the face that expresses it, although it is distinguished from it as expressed and expression; and the face in turn is the vicinity of the words for which it is already the megaphone. Components remain distinct, but something passes from one to the other, some-

<sup>1</sup>See translator's introduction

thing that is undecidable between them. There is an area *ab* that belongs to both *a* and *b*, where *a* and *b* “become” indiscernible. These zones, thresholds, or becomings, this inseparability, define the internal consistency of the concept. But the concept also has an exoconsistency with other concepts, when their respective creation implies the construction of a bridge on the same plane. Zones and bridges are the joints of the concept.

Third, each concept will therefore be considered as the point of coincidence, condensation, or accumulation of its own components. The conceptual point constantly traverses its components, rising and falling within them. In this sense, each component is an *intensive feature*, an intensive ordinate [*ordonnée intensive*\*], which must be understood not as general or particular but as a pure and simple singularity—“a” possible world, “a” face, “some” words—that is particularized or generalized depending upon whether it is given variable values or a constant function. But, unlike the position in science, there is neither constant nor variable in the concept, and we no more pick out a variable species for a constant genus than we do a constant species for variable individuals. In the concept there are only ordinate relationships, not relationships of comprehension or extension, and the concept’s components are neither constants nor variables but pure and simple *variations* ordered according to their neighborhood. They are processual, modular. The concept of a bird is found not in its genus or species but in the composition of its postures, colors, and songs: something indiscernible that is not so much synesthetic as syneidetic. A concept is a heterogenesis—that is to say, an ordering of its components by zones of neighborhood. It is ordinal, an intension present in all the features that make it up. The concept is in a state of *survey* [*survol*†] in relation to its components, endlessly traversing them according to an order without distance. It

\*See translators’ introduction.

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is immediately co-present to all its components or variations, at no distance from them, passing back and forth through them: it is a refrain, an opus with its number (*chiffre*).

The concept is an incorporeal, even though it is incarnated or effectuated in bodies. But, in fact, it is not mixed up with the state of affairs in which it is effectuated. It does not have spatiotemporal coordinates, only intensive ordinates. It has no energy, only intensities; it is anenergetic (energy is not intensity but rather the way in which the latter is deployed and nullified in an extensive state of affairs). The concept speaks the event, not the essence or the thing—pure Event, a hecceity, an entity: the event of the Other or of the face (when, in turn, the face is taken as concept). It is like the bird as event. The concept is defined by *the inseparability of a finite number of heterogeneous components traversed by a point of absolute survey at infinite speed*. Concepts are “absolute surfaces or volumes,” forms whose only object is the inseparability of distinct variations.<sup>2</sup> The “survey” [*survol*] is the state of the concept or its specific infinity, although the infinities may be larger or smaller according to the number of components, thresholds and bridges. In this sense the concept is act of thought, it is thought operating at infinite (although greater or lesser) speed.

The concept is therefore both absolute and relative: it is relative to its own components, to other concepts, to the plane on which it is defined, and to the problems it is supposed to resolve; but it is absolute through the condensation it carries out, the site it occupies on the plane, and the conditions it assigns to the problem. As whole it is absolute, but insofar as it is fragmentary it is relative. It is *infinite through its survey or its speed but finite through its movement that traces the contour of its components*. Philosophers are always recasting and even changing their concepts: sometimes the development of a point of detail that produces a new condensation, that adds or withdraws components, is enough. Philosophers sometimes exhibit a forgetfulness that almost makes them ill. According to Jaspers, Nietzsche,



"corrected his ideas himself in order to create new ones without explicitly admitting it; when his health deteriorated he forgot the conclusions he had arrived at earlier." Or, as Leibniz said, "I thought I had reached port; but . . . I seemed to be cast back again into the open sea."<sup>3</sup> What remains absolute, however, is the way in which the created concept is posited in itself and with others. The relativity and absoluteness of the concept are like its pedagogy and its ontology, its creation and its self-positing, its ideality and its reality—the concept is real without being actual, ideal without being abstract. The concept is defined by its consistency, its endoconsistency and exoconsistency, but it has no *reference*: it is self-referential; it posits itself and its object at the same time as it is created. Constructivism unites the relative and the absolute.

Finally, the concept is not discursive, and philosophy is not a discursive formation, because it does not link propositions together. Confusing concept and proposition produces a belief in the existence of scientific concepts and a view of the proposition as a genuine "intension" (what the sentence expresses). Consequently, the philosophical concept usually appears only as a proposition deprived of sense. This confusion reigns in logic and explains its infantile idea of philosophy. Concepts are measured against a "philosophical" grammar that replaces them with propositions extracted from the sentences in which they appear. We are constantly trapped between alternative propositions and do not see that the concept has already passed into the excluded middle. The concept is not a proposition at all; it is not propositional, and the proposition is never an intension. Propositions are defined by their reference, which concerns not the Event but rather a relationship with a state of affairs or body and with the conditions of this relationship. Far from constituting an intension, these conditions are entirely extensional. They imply operations by which abscissas or successive linearizations are formed that force intensive ordinates into spatiotemporal and energetic coordinates, by which the sets so determined are made to correspond to each other.

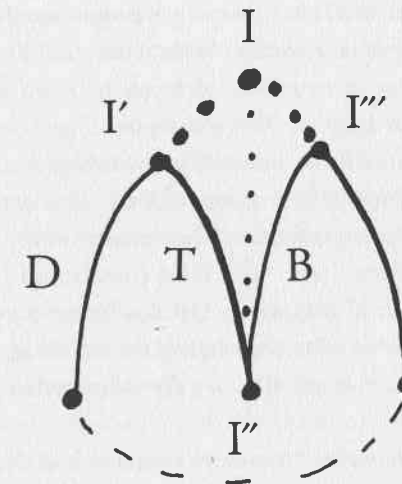
These successions and correspondences define discursiveness in extensive systems. The *independence of variables* in propositions is opposed to the *inseparability of variations* in the concept. Concepts, which have only consistency or intensive ordinates outside of any coordinates, freely enter into relationships of nondiscursive resonance—either because the components of one become concepts with other heterogeneous components or because there is no difference of scale between them at any level. Concepts are centers of vibrations, each in itself and every one in relation to all the others. This is why they all resonate rather than cohere or correspond with each other. There is no reason why concepts should cohere. As fragmentary totalities, concepts are not even the pieces of a puzzle, for their irregular contours do not correspond to each other. They do form a wall, but it is a dry-stone wall, and everything holds together only along diverging lines. Even bridges from one concept to another are still junctions, or detours, which do not define any discursive whole. They are movable bridges. From this point of view, philosophy can be seen as being in a perpetual state of digression or digressiveness.

The major differences between the philosophical enunciation of fragmentary concepts and the scientific enunciation of partial propositions follow from this digression. From an initial point of view, all enunciation is positional. But enunciation remains external to the proposition because the latter's object is a state of affairs as referent, and the references that constitute truth values as its conditions (even if, for their part, these conditions are internal to the object). On the other hand, positional enunciation is strictly immanent to the concept because the latter's sole object is the inseparability of the components that constitute its consistency and through which it passes back and forth. As for the other aspect, creative or signed enunciation, it is clear that scientific propositions and their correlates are just as signed or created as philosophical concepts: we speak of Pythagoras's theorem, Cartesian coordinates, Hamiltonian number, and Lagrangian function just as we speak of the Platonic Idea or Descartes's cogito

and the like. But however much the use of proper names clarifies and confirms the historical nature of their link to these enunciations, these proper names are masks for other becomings and serve only as pseudonyms for more secret singular entities. In the case of propositions, proper names designate extrinsic *partial observers* that are scientifically definable in relation to a particular axis of reference; whereas for concepts, proper names are intrinsic *conceptual personae* who haunt a particular plane of consistency. It is not only proper names that are used very differently in philosophies, sciences, and arts but also syntactical elements, and especially prepositions and the conjunctions, “now,” “therefore.” Philosophy proceeds by sentences, but it is not always propositions that are extracted from sentences in general. At present we are relying only on a very general hypothesis: from sentences or their equivalent, philosophy extracts *concepts* (which must not be confused with general or abstract ideas), whereas science extracts *prospects* (propositions that must not be confused with judgments), and art extracts *percepts and affects* (which must not be confused with perceptions or feelings). In each case language is tested and used in incomparable ways—but in ways that do not define the difference between disciplines without also constituting their perpetual interbreeding.

#### EXAMPLE I

To start with, the preceding analysis must be confirmed by taking the example of one of the best-known signed philosophical concepts, that of the Cartesian cogito, Descartes’s *I*: a concept of self. This concept has three components—doubting, thinking, and being (although this does not mean that every concept must be triple). The complete statement of the concept qua multiplicity is “I think ‘therefore’ I am” or, more completely, “Myself who doubts, I think, I am, I am a thinking thing.” According to Descartes the cogito is the always-renewed event of thought.



The concept condenses at the point *I*, which passes through all the components and in which *I'* (doubting), *I''* (thinking), and *I'''* (being) coincide. As intensive ordinates the components are arranged in zones of neighborhood or indiscernibility that produce passages from one to the other and constitute their inseparability. The first zone is between doubting and thinking (myself who doubts, I cannot doubt that I think), and the second is between thinking and being (in order to think it is necessary to be). The components are presented here as verbs, but this is not a rule. It is sufficient that there are variations. In fact, doubt includes moments that are not the species of a genus but the *phases* of a variation: perceptual, scientific, obsessional doubt (every concept therefore has a phase space, although not in the same way as in science). The same goes for modes of thought—feeling, imagining, having ideas—and also for types of being, thing, or substance—infinite being, finite thinking being, extended being. It is noteworthy that in the last case the concept of self retains only the second phase of being and excludes the rest

of the variation. But this is precisely the sign that the concept *is closed* as fragmentary totality with "I am a thinking thing": we can pass to other phases of being only by bridges or crossroads that lead to other concepts. Thus, "among my ideas I have the idea of infinity" is the bridge leading from the concept of self to the concept of God. This new concept has three components forming the "proofs" of the existence of God as infinite event. The third (ontological proof) assures the closure of the concept but also in turn throws out a bridge or branches off to a concept of the extended, insofar as it guarantees the objective truth value of our other clear and distinct ideas.

When the question "Are there precursors of the cogito?" is asked, what is meant is "Are there concepts signed by previous philosophers that have similar or almost identical components but from which one component is lacking, or to which others have been added, so that a cogito does not crystallize since the components do not yet coincide in a self?" Everything seems ready, and yet something is missing. Perhaps the earlier concept referred to a different problem from that of the cogito (a change in problems being necessary for the Cartesian cogito to appear), or it was developed on another plane. The Cartesian plane consists in challenging any explicit objective presupposition where every concept refers to other concepts (the rational-animal man, for example). It demands only a prephilosophical understanding, that is, implicit and subjective presuppositions: everyone knows what thinking, being, and I mean (one knows by doing it, being it, or saying it). This is a very novel distinction. Such a plane requires a first concept that presupposes nothing objective. So the problem is "What is the first concept on this plane, or by beginning with what concept can truth as

absolutely pure subjective certainty be determined?" Such is the cogito. The other concepts will be able to achieve objectivity, but only if they are linked by bridges to the first concept, if they respond to problems subject to the same conditions, and if they remain on the same plane. Objectivity here will assume a certainty of knowledge rather than presuppose a truth recognized as preexisting, or already there.

There is no point in wondering whether Descartes was right or wrong. Are implicit and subjective presuppositions more valid than explicit objective presuppositions? Is it necessary "to begin," and, if so, is it necessary to start from the point of view of a subjective certainty? Can thought as such be the verb of an I? There is no direct answer. Cartesian concepts can only be assessed as a function of their problems and their plane. In general, if earlier concepts were able to prepare a concept but not constitute it, it is because their problem was still trapped within other problems, and their plane did not yet possess its indispensable curvature or movements. And concepts can only be replaced by others if there are new problems and another plane relative to which (for example) "I" loses all meaning, the beginning loses all necessity, and the presuppositions lose all difference—or take on others. A concept always has the truth that falls to it as a function of the conditions of its creation. Is there one plane that is better than all the others, or problems that dominate all others? Nothing at all can be said on this point. Planes must be constructed and problems posed, just as concepts must be created. Philosophers do the best they can, but they have too much to do to know whether it is the best, or even to bother with this question. Of course, new concepts must relate to our problems, to our history, and, above all, to our becomings. But what does it mean for a concept to be of our time, or of any time? Concepts are not eternal, but does this mean they are temporal? What is the philosophical form of the problems of



a particular time? If one concept is "better" than an earlier one, it is because it makes us aware of new variations and unknown resonances, it carries out unforeseen cuttings-out, it brings forth an Event that surveys [*survole*] us. But did the earlier concept not do this already? If one can still be a Platonist, Cartesian, or Kantian today, it is because one is justified in thinking that their concepts can be reactivated in our problems and inspire those concepts that need to be created. What is the best way to follow the great philosophers? Is it to repeat what they said or *to do what they did*, that is, create concepts for problems that necessarily change?

For this reason philosophers have very little time for discussion. Every philosopher runs away when he or she hears someone say, "Let's discuss this." Discussions are fine for roundtable talks, but philosophy throws its numbered dice on another table. The best one can say about discussions is that they take things no farther, since the participants never talk about the same thing. Of what concern is it to philosophy that someone has such a view, and thinks this or that, if the problems at stake are not stated? And when they are stated, it is no longer a matter of discussing but rather one of creating concepts for the undiscussible problem posed. Communication always comes too early or too late, and when it comes to creating, conversation is always superfluous. Sometimes philosophy is turned into the idea of a perpetual discussion, as "communicative rationality," or as "universal democratic conversation." Nothing is less exact, and when philosophers criticize each other it is on the basis of problems and on a plane that is different from theirs and that melt down the old concepts in the way a cannon can be melted down to make new weapons. It never takes place on the same plane. To criticize is only to establish that a concept vanishes when it is thrust into a new milieu, losing some of its components, or acquiring others that transform it. But those who criticize without creating, those who are content to defend the vanished concept without being able to give it the forces it needs to return to life, are the plague of philosophy. All these debaters

and communicators are inspired by *ressentiment*. They speak only of themselves when they set empty generalizations against one another. Philosophy has a horror of discussions. It always has something else to do. Debate is unbearable to it, but not because it is too sure of itself. On the contrary, it is its uncertainties that take it down other, more solitary paths. But in Socrates was philosophy not a free discussion among friends? Is it not, as the conversation of free men, the summit of Greek sociability? In fact, Socrates constantly made all discussion impossible, both in the short form of the contest of questions and answers and in the long form of a rivalry between discourses. He turned the friend into the friend of the single concept, and the concept into the pitiless monologue that eliminates the rivals one by one.

#### EXAMPLE 2

The *Parmenides* shows the extent to which Plato is master of the concept. The One has two components (being and nonbeing), phases of components (the One superior to being, equal to being, inferior to being; the One superior to nonbeing, equal to nonbeing), and zones of indiscernibility (in relation to itself, in relation to others). It is a model concept.

But is not the One prior to every concept? This is where Plato teaches the opposite of what he does: he creates concepts but needs to set them up as representing the uncreated that precedes them. He puts time into the concept, but it is a time that must be Anterior. He constructs the concept but as something that attests to the preexistence of an objectality [*objectité*], in the form of a difference of time capable of measuring the distance or closeness of the concept's possible constructor. Thus, on the Platonic plane, truth is posed as presupposition, as already there. This is the Idea. In the Platonic concept of the Idea, *first* takes on a precise sense, very different from the meaning it will have in Descartes: it



is that which objectively possesses a pure quality, or which is not something other than what it is. Only Justice is just, only Courage courageous, such are Ideas, and there is an Idea of mother if there is a mother who is not something other than a mother (who would not have been a daughter), or of hair which is not something other than hair (not silicon as well). Things, on the contrary, are understood as always being something other than what they are. At best, therefore, they only possess quality in a secondary way, they can only *lay claim* to quality, and only to the degree that they *participate* in the Idea. Thus the concept of Idea has the following components: the quality possessed or to be possessed; the Idea that possesses it first, as unparticipable; that which lays claim to the quality and can only possess it second, third, fourth; and the Idea participated in, which judges the claims—the Father, a double of the father, the daughter and the suitors, we might say. These are the intensive ordinates of the Idea: a claim will be justified only through a neighborhood, a greater or lesser proximity it “has had” in relation to the Idea, in the survey of an always necessarily anterior time. *Time in this form of anteriority* belongs to the concept; it is like its zone. Certainly, the cogito cannot germinate on this Greek plane, this Platonic soil. So long as the preexistence of the Idea remains (even in the Christian form of archetypes in God’s understanding), the cogito could be prepared but not fully accomplished. For Descartes to create this concept, the meaning of “first” must undergo a remarkable change, take on a subjective meaning; and all difference of time between the idea and the soul that forms it as subject must be annulled (hence the importance of Descartes’s point against reminiscence, in which he says that innate ideas do not exist “before” but “at the same time” as the soul). It will be necessary to arrive at an instantaneity of the concept and for God to create

even truths. The claim must change qualitatively: the suitor no longer receives the daughter from the father but owes her hand only to his own chivalric prowess—to his own method. Whether Malebranche can reactivate Platonic components on an authentically Cartesian plane, and at what cost, should be analyzed from this point of view. But we only wanted to show that a concept always has components that can prevent the appearance of another concept or, on the contrary, that can themselves appear only at the cost of the disappearance of other concepts. However, a concept is never valued by reference to what it prevents: it is valued for its incomparable position and its own creation.

Suppose a component is added to a concept: the concept will probably break up or undergo a complete change involving, perhaps, another plane—at any rate, other problems. This is what happens with the Kantian cogito. No doubt Kant constructs a “transcendental” plane that renders doubt useless and changes the nature of the presuppositions once again. But it is by virtue of this very plane that he can declare that if the “I think” is a *determination* that, as such, implies an *undetermined* existence (“I am”), we still do not know how this undetermined comes to be *determinable* and hence in what form it appears as *determined*. Kant therefore “criticizes” Descartes for having said, “I am a thinking substance,” because nothing warrants such a claim of the “I.” Kant demands the introduction of a new component into the cogito, the one Descartes repressed—time. For it is only in time that my undetermined existence is determinable. But I am only determined in time as a passive and phenomenal self, an always affectable, modifiable, and variable self. The cogito now presents four components: I think, and as such I am active; I have an existence; this existence is only determinable in time as a passive self; I am therefore determined as a

passive self that necessarily represents its own thinking activity to itself as an Other (*Autre*) that affects it. This is not another subject but rather the subject who becomes an other. Is this the path of a conversion of the self to the other person? A preparation for "I is an other"? A new syntax, with other ordinates, with other zones of indiscernibility, secured first by the schema and then by the affection of self by self [*soi par soi*], makes the "I" and the "Self" *inseparable*.

The fact that Kant "criticizes" Descartes means only that he sets up a plane and constructs a problem that could not be occupied or completed by the Cartesian cogito. Descartes created the cogito as concept, but by expelling time as *form of anteriority*, so as to make it a simple mode of succession referring to continuous creation. Kant reintroduces time into the cogito, but it is a completely different time from that of Platonic anteriority. This is the creation of a concept. He makes time a component of a new cogito, but on condition of providing in turn a new concept of time: time becomes *form of interiority* with three components—succession, but also simultaneity and permanence. This again implies a new concept of space that can no longer be defined by simple simultaneity and becomes form of exteriority. Space, time, and "I think" are three original concepts linked by bridges that are also junctions—a blast of original concepts. The history of philosophy means that we evaluate not only the historical novelty of the concepts created by a philosopher but also the power of their becoming when they pass into one another.

The same pedagogical status of the concept can be found everywhere: a *multiplicity*, an absolute surface or volume, self-referents, made up of a certain number of inseparable intensive variations according to an order of neighborhood, and traversed by a point in a state of survey. The concept is the contour, the configuration, the

constellation of an event to come. Concepts in this sense belong to philosophy by right, because it is philosophy that creates them and never stops creating them. The concept is obviously knowledge—but knowledge of itself, and what it knows is the pure event, which must not be confused with the state of affairs in which it is embodied. The task of philosophy when it creates concepts, entities, is always to extract an event from things and beings, to set up the new event from things and beings, always to give them a new event: space, time, matter, thought, the possible as events.

It is pointless to say that there are concepts in science. Even when science is concerned with the same "objects" it is not from the viewpoint of the concept; it is not by creating concepts. It might be said that this is just a matter of words, but it is rare for words not to involve intentions and ruses. It would be a mere matter of words if it was decided to reserve the concept for science, even if this meant finding another word to designate the business of philosophy. But usually things are done differently. The power of the concept is attributed to science, the concept being defined by the creative methods of science and measured against science. The issue is then whether there remains a possibility of philosophy forming secondary concepts that make up for their own insufficiency by a vague appeal to the "lived." Thus Gilles-Gaston Granger begins by defining the concept as a scientific proposition or function and then concedes that there may, nonetheless, be philosophical concepts that replace reference to the object by correlation to a "totality of the lived" [*totalité du vécu*].<sup>4</sup> But actually, either philosophy completely ignores the concept, or else it enjoys it by right and at first hand, so that there is nothing of it left for science—which, moreover, has no need of the concept and concerns itself only with states of affairs and their conditions. Science needs only propositions or functions, whereas philosophy, for its part, does not need to invoke a lived that would give only a ghostly and extrinsic life to secondary, bloodless concepts. The philosophical concept does not refer to the lived, by way of

compensation, but consists, through its own creation, in setting up an event that surveys the whole of the lived no less than every state of affairs. Every concept shapes and reshapes the event in its own way. The greatness of a philosophy is measured by the nature of the events to which its concepts summon us or that it enables us to release in concepts. So the unique, exclusive bond between concepts and philosophy as a creative discipline must be tested in its finest details. The concept belongs to philosophy and only to philosophy.

## 2. The Plane of Immanence

Philosophical concepts are fragmentary wholes that are not aligned with one another so that they fit together, because their edges do not match up. They are not pieces of a jigsaw puzzle but rather the outcome of throws of the dice. They resonate nonetheless, and the philosophy that creates them always introduces a powerful Whole that, while remaining open, is not fragmented: an unlimited One-All, an "Omnitudo" that includes all the concepts on one and the same plane. It is a table, a plateau, or a slice; it is a plane of consistency or, more accurately, the plane of immanence of concepts, the *plano-menon*. Concepts and plane are strictly correlative, but nevertheless the two should not be confused. The plane of immanence is neither a concept nor the concept of all concepts. If one were to be confused with the other there would be nothing to stop concepts from forming a single one or becoming universals and losing their singularity, and the plane would also lose its openness. Philosophy is a constructivism, and con-