

Notes

- 1 Plato, *Philebus*, 24, d., trans. R. Hackforth; *Parmenides*, 154–155, trans. E. M. Cornforth; in E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, eds. *Plato: The Collected Dialogues* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).
- 2 Plato, *Cratylus*, 437E. With respect to the preceding, see appendix 1.

Second Series of Paradoxes of Surface Effects

The Stoics also distinguish between two kinds of things. First, there are bodies with their tensions, physical qualities, actions and passions, and the corresponding “states of affairs.” These states of affairs, actions and passions, are determined by the mixtures of bodies. At the limit, there is a unity of all bodies in virtue of a primordial Fire into which they become absorbed and from which they develop according to their respective tensions. The only time of bodies and states of affairs is the present. For the living present is the temporal extension which accompanies the act, expresses and measures the action of the agent and the passion of the patient. But to the degree that there is a unity of bodies among themselves, to the degree that there is a unity of active and passive principles, a cosmic present embraces the entire universe: only bodies exist in space, and only the present exists in time. There are no causes *and* effects among bodies. Rather, all bodies are causes—causes in relation to each other and for each other. In the scope of the cosmic present, the unity is called Destiny.

Second, all bodies are causes in relation to each other, and causes for each other—but causes of what? They are causes of certain things of an entirely different nature. These *effects* are not bodies, but, properly speaking, “incorporeal” entities. They are not physical qualities and properties, but rather logical or dialectical attributes. They are not things or facts, but events. We cannot say that they exist, but rather that they subsist or inhere (having this minimum of being which is appropriate to that which is not a thing, a nonexistent entity). They are not substantives or adjectives but verbs. They are neither agents nor patients, but results of actions and passions. They are “impassive” entities—impassive results. They are not

THE LOGIC OF SENSE

living presents, but infinitives: the unlimited Aion, the becoming which divides itself infinitely in past and future and always eludes the present. Thus time must be grasped twice, in two complementary though mutually exclusive fashions. First, it must be grasped entirely as the living present in bodies which act and are acted upon. Second, it must be grasped entirely as an entity infinitely divisible into past and future, and into the incorporeal effects which result from bodies, their actions and their passions. Only the present exists in time and gathers together or absorbs the past and future. But only the past and future inhere in time and divide each present infinitely. These are not three successive dimensions, but two simultaneous readings of time.

In his fine reconstruction of Stoic thought, Émile Bréhier says:

when the scalpel cuts through the flesh, the first body produces upon the second not a new property but a new attribute, that of being cut. The *attribute* does not designate any real *quality*. . . . it is, to the contrary, always expressed by the verb, which means that it is not a being, but a way of being. . . . This way of being finds itself somehow at the limit, at the surface of being, the nature of which it is not able to change: it is, in fact, neither active nor passive, for passivity would presuppose a corporeal nature which undergoes an action. It is purely and simply a result, or an effect which is not to be classified among beings. . . . [The Stoics distinguished] radically two planes of being, something that no one had done before them: on the one hand, real and profound being, force; on the other, the plane of facts, which frolic on the surface of being, and constitute an endless multiplicity of incorporeal beings.¹

Yet, what is more intimate or essential to bodies than events such as growing, becoming smaller, or being cut? What do the Stoics mean when they contrast the thickness of bodies with these incorporeal events which would play only on the surface, like a mist over the prairie (even less than a mist, since a mist is after all a body)? Mixtures are in bodies, and in the depth of bodies: a body penetrates another and coexists with it in all of its parts, like a drop of wine in the ocean, or fire in iron. One body withdraws from another, like liquid from a vase. Mixtures in general determine the quantitative and qualitative states of affairs: the dimensions of an ensemble—the red of iron, the green of a tree. But what we mean by “to grow,” “to diminish,” “to become red,” “to become green,” “to cut,” and “to be cut,” etc., is something entirely different. These are no longer states of affairs—mixtures deep inside bodies—but incorporeal events at the surface which are the results of these mixtures. The tree “grows” . . . ? The genius of a philosophy must first be measured by the new distribution which it

SECOND SERIES OF PARADOXES OF SURFACE EFFECTS

imposes on beings and concepts. The Stoics are in the process of tracing out and of forming a frontier where there had not been one before. In this sense they displace all reflection.

They are in the process of bringing about, first, an entirely new cleavage of the causal relation. They dismember this relation, even at the risk of recreating a unity on each side. They refer causes to causes and place a bond of causes between them (destiny). They refer effects to effects and pose certain bonds of effects between them. But these two operations are not accomplished in the same manner. Incorporeal effects are never themselves causes in relation to each other; rather, they are only “quasi-causes” following laws which perhaps express in each case the relative unity or mixture of bodies on which they depend for their real causes. Thus freedom is preserved in two complementary manners: once in the interiority of destiny as a connection between causes, and once more in the exteriority of events as a bond of effects. For this reason the Stoics can oppose destiny and necessity.² The Epicureans formulated another cleavage of cause and effect, but cut up causality according to atomic serenity of cause and effect, but cut up causality according to atomic serenity whose respective independence is guaranteed by the *clinamen*—no longer destiny without necessity, but causality without destiny.³ In either case, one begins by splitting the causal relation, instead of distinguishing types of causality as Aristotle had done and Kant would do. And this split always refers us back to language, either to the existence of a *declension* of causes or, as we shall see, to the existence of a *contingation* of effects.

This new dualism of bodies or states of affairs and effects or incorporeal events entails an upheaval in philosophy. In Aristotle, for example, all categories are said of Being; and difference is present in Being, between substance as the primary sense and the other categories which are related to it as accidents. For the Stoics, on the other hand, states of affairs, quantities, and qualities are no less beings (or bodies) than substance is; they are a part of substance, and in this sense they are contrasted with an *extra-Being* which constitutes the incorporeal as a nonexisting entity. The highest term therefore is not Being, but *Something (aliquid)*, insofar as it subsumes being and non-being, existence and inherence.⁴ Moreover, the Stoics are the first to reverse Platonism and to bring about a radical inversion. For if bodies with their states, qualities, and quantities, assume all the characteristics of substance and cause, conversely, the characteristics of the Idea are relegated to the other side, that is to this impassive extra-

Being which is sterile, inefficacious, and on the surface of things: the *ideational* or the *incorporeal* can no longer be anything other than an "effect."

These consequences are extremely important. In Plato, an obscure debate was raging in the depth of things, in the depth of the earth, between that which undergoes the action of the Idea and that which eludes this action (copies and simulacra). An echo of this debate resonates when Socrates asks: is there an Idea of everything, even of hair, dirt, and mud—or rather is there something which always and obstinately escapes the Idea? In Plato, however, this something is never sufficiently hidden, driven back, pushed deeply into the depth of the body, or drowned in the ocean. *Everything now returns to the surface*. This is the result of the Stoic operation: the unlimited returns. Becoming-mad, becoming unlimited is no longer a ground which rumbles. It climbs to the surface of things and becomes impassive. It is no longer a question of simulacra which elude the ground and insinuate themselves everywhere, but rather a question of effects which manifest themselves and act in their place. These are effects in the causal sense, but also sonorous, optical, or linguistic "effects"—and even less, or much more, since they are no longer corporeal entities, but rather form the entire Idea. What was eluding the Idea climbed up to the surface, that is, the incorporeal limit, and represents now all possible *ideality*, the latter being stripped of its causal and spiritual efficacy. The Stoics discovered surface effects. Simulacra cease to be subterranean rebels and make the most of their effects (that is, what might be called "phantasms," independently of the Stoic terminology). The most concealed becomes the most manifest. All the old paradoxes of becoming must again take shape in a new youthfulness—transmutation.

Becoming unlimited comes to be the ideational and incorporeal event, with all of its characteristic reversals between future and past, active and passive, cause and effect, more and less, too much and not enough, already and not yet. The infinitely divisible event is always *both at once*. It is eternally that which has just happened and that which is about to happen, but never that which is happening (to cut too deeply and not enough). The event, being itself impassive, allows the active and the passive to be interchanged more easily, since it is *neither the one nor the other*, but rather their common result (to cut—to be cut). Concerning the cause and the effect, events, *being always only effects*, are better able to form among themselves functions of quasi-causes or relations of quasi-causality which are always reversible (the wound and the scar).

The Stoics are amateurs and inventors of paradoxes. It is necessary to reread the astonishing portrait of Chrysippus given in several pages written by Diogenes Laertius. Perhaps the Stoics used the paradox in a completely new manner—both as an instrument for the analysis of language and as a means of synthesizing events. *Dialectics* is precisely this science of incorporeal events as they are expressed in propositions, and of the connections between events as they are expressed in relations between propositions. Dialectics is, indeed, the art of *conjuration* (see the *confutatio* or series of events which depend on one another). But it is the task of language both to establish limits and to go beyond them. Therefore language includes terms which do not cease to displace their extension and which make possible a reversal of the connection in a given series (thus too much and not enough, few and many). The event is coextensive with becoming, and becoming is itself coextensive with language; the paradox is thus essentially a "sorites," that is a series of interrogative propositions which, following becoming, proceed through successive additions and retractions. Everything happens at the boundary between things and propositions. Chrysippus taught: "If you say something, it passes through your lips; so, if you say 'chariot,' a chariot passes through your lips." Here is a use of paradox the only equivalents of which are to be found in Zen Buddhism on one hand and in English or American *nonserise* on the other. In one case, that which is most profound is the immediate, in the other, the immediate is found in language. Paradox appears as a dismissal of depth, a display of events at the surface, and a deployment of language along this limit. Humor is the art of the surface, which is opposed to the old irony, the art of depths and heights. The Sophists and Cynics had already made humor a philosophical weapon against Socratic irony; but with the Stoics, humor found its dialectics, its dialectical principle or its natural place and its pure philosophical concept.

Lewis Carroll carries out this operation, inaugurated by the Stoics, or rather, he takes it up again. In all his works, Carroll examines the difference between events, things, and states of affairs. But the entire first half of *Alice* still seeks the secret of events and of the becoming unlimited which they imply, in the depths of the earth, in dug out shafts and holes which plunge beneath, and in the mixture of bodies which interpenetrate and coexist. As one advances in the story, however, the digging and hiding gives way to a lateral sliding from right to left and left to right. The animals below ground become secondary, giving way to *card figures* which have no thickness. One could say that the old depth having been spread out became

width. The becoming unlimited is maintained entirely within this inverted width. "Depth" is no longer a complement. Only animals are deep, and they are not the noblest for that; the noblest are the flat animals. Events are like crystals, they become and grow only out of the edges, or on the edge. This is, indeed, the first secret of the stammerer or of the left-handed person: no longer to sink, but to slide the whole length in such a way that the old depth no longer exists at all, having been reduced to the opposite side of the surface. By sliding, one passes to the other side, since the other side is nothing but the opposite direction. If there is nothing to see behind the curtain, it is because everything is visible, or rather all possible science is along the length of the curtain. It suffices to follow it far enough, precisely enough, and superficially enough, in order to reverse sides and to make the right side become the left or vice versa. It is not therefore a question of the *adventures* of Alice, but of Alice's *adventure*: her climb to the surface, her disavowal of false depth and her discovery that everything happens at the border. This is why Carroll abandons the original title of the book: *Alice's Adventures Underground*.

This is the case—even more so—in *Through the Looking-Glass*. Here events, differing radically from things, are no longer sought in the depths, but at the surface, in the faint incorporeal mist which escapes from bodies, a film without volume which envelops them, a mirror which reflects them, a chessboard on which they are organized according to plan. Alice is no longer able to make her way through to the depths. Instead, she releases her incorporeal double. *It is by following the border, by skirting the surface, that one passes from bodies to the incorporeal*. Paul Valéry had a profound idea: what is most deep is the skin. This is a Stoic discovery, which presupposes a great deal of wisdom and entails an entire ethic. It is the discovery of the little girl, who grows and diminishes only from the edges—a surface which reddens and becomes green. She knows that the more the events traverse the entire, depthless extension, the more they affect bodies which they cut being too deep, they no longer understand. Why do the same Stoic examples continue to inspire Lewis Carroll?—the tree greens, the scalpel cuts, the battle will or will not take place. . . . It is in front of the trees that Alice loses her name. It is a tree which Humpty Dumpty addresses without looking at Alice. Recitations announce battles, and everywhere there are injuries and cuts. But are these examples? Or rather, is it the case that every event is of this type—forest, battle and wound—all the more profound since it occurs at the surface? The more it skirts bodies, the more

incorporeal it is. History teaches us that sound roads have no foundation, and geography that only a thin layer of the earth is fertile.

This rediscovery of the Stoic sage is not reserved to the little girl. Indeed, it is true that Lewis Carroll detests boys in general. They have too much depth, and false depth at that, false wisdom, and animality. The male baby in *Alice* is transformed into a pig. As a general rule, only little girls understand Stoicism: they have the sense of the event and release an incorporeal double. But it happens sometimes that a little boy is a stuttrer and left-handed, and thus conquers sense as the double sense or direction of the surface. Carroll's hatred of boys is not attributable to a deep ambivalence, but rather to a superficial inversion, a properly Carrollian concept. In *Sylvie and Bruno*, it is the little boy who has the inventive role, learning his lessons in all manners, inside-out, outside-in, above and below, but never "in depth." This important novel pushes to the extreme the evolution which had begun in *Alice*, and which continued in *Through the Looking-Glass*. The admirable conclusion of the first part is to the glory of the East, from which comes all that is good, "the substance of things hoped for, and the existence of things not seen." Here even the barometer neither rises nor falls, but goes lengthwise, sideways, and gives a horizontal weather. A stretching machine even lengthens songs. And Fortunatus' purse, presented as a Möbius strip, is made of handkerchiefs sewn in the *wrong way*, in such a manner that its outer surface is continuous with its inner surface: it envelops the entire world, and makes that which is inside be on the outside and vice versa.⁶ In *Sylvie and Bruno*, the technique of passing from reality to dream, and from bodies to the incorporeal, is multiplied, completely renewed, and carried out to perfection. It is, however, still by skirting the surface, or the border, that one passes to the other side, by virtue of the strip. The continuity between reverse and right side replaces all the levels of depth; and the surface effects in one and the same event, which would hold for all events, bring to language becoming and its paradoxes.⁷ As Carroll says in an article entitled *The Dynamics of a Particle*: "Plain Superficiality is the character of a speech. . . ."

Notes

- 1 Émile Bréhier, *La Théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme* (Paris: Vrin, 1928), pp. 11–13.
- 2 On this example, see the commentary of Bréhier, p. 20.
- 3 On the distinction between real internal causes and external causes entering into limited relations of "confatality," see Cicero, *De Fato*, 9, 13, 15, and 16.
- 4 The Epicurean notion of the event is very similar to that of the Stoics: Epicurus, *To Herodotus*, 39–40, 68–73; and Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, 1:449ff. As he analyzes the event, "the rape of Tynndareus' daughter . . .," Lucretius contrasts *eventus* (servitude-liberty, poverty-wealth, war-peace) with *coniuncta* (real qualities which are inseparable from bodies). Events are not exactly incorporeal entities. They are presented nevertheless as not existing by themselves—impossible, pure results of the movements of matter, or actions and passions of bodies. It does not seem likely though that the Epicureans developed this theory of the event—perhaps because they bent it to the demands of a homogeneous causality and subsumed it under their own conception of the *simulacrum*. See appendix 2.
- 5 On the account of Stoic categories, see Plotinus, 6:1.25. See also Bréhier, p. 43.
- 6 This description of the purse comprises some of Carroll's best writing: *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*, ch. 7.
- 7 This discovery of the surface and this critique of depth represent a constant in modern literature. They inspire the work of Robbe-Grillet. In another form, we find them again in Klossowski, in the relation between Roberte's epidemic and her glove: see Klossowski's remarks to this effect in the postface to *Lois de l'hospitalité*, pp. 135, 344; see also Michel Tournier's *Friday*, trans. Norman Denny (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985, by arrangement with Doubleday).

SECOND SERIES OF PARADOXES OF SURFACE EFFECTS

p. 67: "It is a strange prejudice which sets a higher value on depth than on breadth, and which accepts 'superficial' as meaning not 'of wide extent' but 'of little depth,' whereas 'deep,' on the other hand, signifies 'of great depth,' and not 'of small surface.' Yet it seems to me that a feeling such as love is better measured, if it can be measured at all, by the extent of its surface than by its degree of depth." See appendixes 3 and 4.

Third Series of the Proposition

Between these events-effects and language, or even the possibility of language, there is an essential relation. It is the characteristic of events to be expressed or expressible, uttered or utterable, in propositions which are at least possible. There are many relations inside a proposition. Which is the best suited to surface effects or events?

Many authors agree in recognizing three distinct relations within the proposition. The first is called denotation or indication: it is the relation of the proposition to an external state of affairs (*datum*). The state of affairs is *individuated*; it includes particular bodies, mixtures of bodies, qualities, quantities, and relations. Denotation functions through the association of the words themselves with *particular images which ought to "represent" the state of affairs*. From all the images associated with a word—with a particular word in the proposition—we must choose or select those which correspond to the given whole. The denoting intuition is then expressed by the form: "it is that," or "it is not that." The question of knowing whether the association of words and images is primitive or derived, necessary or arbitrary, can not yet be formulated. What matters for the moment is that certain words in the proposition, or certain linguistic particles, function in all cases as empty forms for the selection of images, and hence for the denotation of each state of affairs. It would be wrong to treat them as universal concepts, for they are formal particulars (*singuliers*) (*indicateurs*). These formal indexicals are: this, that, it, here, there, yesterday, now, etc. Proper names are also indexicals or designators, but they

have special importance since they alone form properly material singularities. Logically, denotation has as its elements and its criterion the true and the false. "True" signifies that a denotation is effectively filled by the state of affairs or that the indexicals are "realized" or that the correct image has been selected. "True in all cases" signifies that the infinity of particular images associable to words is filled, without any selection being necessary. "False" signifies that the denotation is not filled, either as a result of a defect in the selected images or as a result of the radical impossibility of producing an image which can be associated with words.

A second relation of the proposition is often called "manifestation." It concerns the relation of the proposition to the person who speaks and expresses himself. Manifestation therefore is presented as a statement of desires and beliefs which correspond to the proposition. Desires and beliefs are causal inferences, not associations. Desire is the internal causality of an image with respect to the existence of the object or the corresponding state of affairs. Correlatively, belief is the anticipation of this object or state of affairs insofar as its existence must be produced by an external causality. We should not conclude from this that manifestation is secondary in relation to denotation. Rather, it makes denotation possible, and inferences form a systematic unity from which the associations derive. Hume had seen this clearly: in the association of cause and effect, it is "inference according to the relation" which precedes the relation itself. The primacy of manifestation is confirmed by linguistic analysis, which reveals that there are in the proposition "manifesters" like the special particles I, you, tomorrow, always, elsewhere, everywhere, etc. In the same way that the proper name is a privileged indicator, "I" is the basic manifester. But it is not only the other manifesters which depend on the "I": all indicators are related to it as well.¹ Indication, or denotation, subsumes the individual states of affairs, the particular images and the singular designators; but manifesters, beginning with the "I," constitute the domain of the *personal*, which functions as the principle of all possible denotation. Finally, from denotation to manifestation, a displacement of logical values occurs which is represented by the Cogito: no longer the true and the false, but veracity and illusion. In his celebrated analysis of the piece of wax, for example, Descartes is not at all looking for that which was dwelling in the wax—this problem is not even formulated in this text; rather, he shows how the I, manifest in the Cogito, grounds the judgment of denotation by which the wax is identified.

We ought to reserve the term "signification" for a third dimension of the proposition. Here it is a question of the relation of the word to *universal or general concepts*, and of syntactic connections to the implications of the concept. From the standpoint of signification, we always consider the elements of the proposition as "signifying" conceptual implications capable of referring to other propositions, which serve as premises of the first. Signification is defined by this order of conceptual implication where the proposition under consideration intervenes only as an element of the "demonstration," in the most general sense of the word, that is, either as a premise or as conclusion. Thus, "implies" and "therefore" are essentially linguistic signifiers. "Implication" is the sign which defines the relation between premises and conclusion; "therefore" is the sign of *assertion*, which defines the possibility of affirming the conclusion itself as the outcome of implications. When we speak of demonstration in the most general sense, we mean that the signification of the proposition is always found in the indirect process which corresponds to it, that is, in its relation to other propositions from which it is inferred, or conversely, whose conclusion it renders possible. Denotation, on the other hand, refers to a direct process. Demonstration must not be understood in a restricted, syllogistic or mathematical sense, but also in the physical sense of probabilities or in the moral sense of promises and commitments. In this last case, the assertion of the conclusion is represented by the moment the promise is effectively kept.² The logical value of signification or demonstration thus understood is no longer the truth, as is shown by the hypothetical mode of implications, but rather the *condition of truth*, the aggregate of conditions under which the proposition "would be" true. The conditioned or concluded proposition may be false, insofar as it actually denotes a nonexistent state of affairs or is not directly verified. Signification does not establish the truth without also establishing the possibility of error. For this reason, the condition of truth is not opposed to the false, but to the absurd: that which is without signification or that which may be neither true nor false.

The question of whether signification is in turn primary in relation to manifestation and denotation requires a complex response. For if manifestation itself is primary in relation to denotation, it is the foundation, it is so only from a very specific point of view. To borrow a classic distinction, we say that it is from the standpoint of speech (*parole*), be it a speech that is silent. In the order of speech, it is the I which begins, and begins absolutely. In this order, therefore, the I is primary, not only in relation to all possible denotations which are founded upon it, but also in relation to

the significations which it envelops. But precisely from this standpoint, conceptual significations are neither valid nor deployed for themselves: they are only implied (though not expressed) by the I, presenting itself as having signification which is immediately understood and identical to its own manifestation. This is why Descartes could contrast the definition of man as a rational animal with his determination as Cogito: for the former demands an explicit development of the signified concepts (what is animal? what is rational?), whereas the latter is supposed to be understood as soon as it is said.³

This primacy of manifestation, not only in relation to denotation but also in relation to signification, must be understood within the domain of "speech" in which significations remain naturally implicit. It is only here that the I is primary in relation to concepts—in relation to the world and to God. But if another domain exists in which significations are valid and developed for themselves, significations would be primary in it and would provide the basis of manifestation. This domain is precisely that of *language (langue)*. In it, a proposition is able to appear only as a premise or a conclusion, signifying concepts before manifesting a subject, or even before denoting a state of affairs. It is from this point of view that signified concepts, such as God or the world, are always primary in relation to the self as manifested person and to things as designated objects. More generally, Benveniste has shown that the relation between the word (or rather its own acoustic image) and the concept was alone necessary, and not arbitrary. Only the relation between the word and the concept enjoys a necessity which the other relations do not have. The latter remain arbitrary insofar as we consider them directly and escape the arbitrary only insofar as we connect them to this primary relation. Thus, the possibility of causing particular images associated with the word to vary, of substituting one image for another in the form "this is not that, it's that," can be explained only by the constancy of the signified concept. Similarly, desires would not form an order of demands or even of duties, distinct from a simple urgency of needs, and beliefs would not form an order of inferences distinct from simple opinions, if the words in which they were manifested did not refer first to concepts and conceptual implications rendering these desires and beliefs signification.

The presupposed primacy of signification over denotation, however, still raises a delicate problem. When we say "therefore," when we consider a proposition as concluded, we make it the object of an assertion. We set aside the premises and affirm it for itself, independently. We relate it to the

state of affairs which it denotes, independently of the implications which constitute its signification. To do so, however, two conditions have to be filled. It is first necessary that the premises be posited as effectively true which already forces us to depart from the pure order of implication in order to relate the premises to a denoted state of affairs which we presuppose. But then, even if we suppose that the premises A and B are true, we can only conclude from this the proposition in question (let us call it Z)—we can only detach it from its premises and affirm it for itself independently of the implication—by admitting that Z is, in turn, true if A and B are true. This amounts to a proposition, C, which remains within the order of implication, and is unable to escape it, since it refers to a proposition, D, which states that "Z is true if A, B, and C are true . . .," and so on to infinity. This paradox, which lies at the heart of logic, and which had decisive importance for the entire theory of symbolic implication and signification, is Lewis Carroll's paradox in the celebrated text, "What the Tortoise Said to Achilles."⁴ In short, the conclusion can be detached from the premises, but only on the condition that one always adds other premises from which alone the conclusion is not detachable. This amounts to saying that signification is never homogeneous: or that the two signs "implies" and "therefore" are completely heterogeneous; or that implication never succeeds in grounding denotation except by giving itself a ready-made denotation, once in the premises and again in the conclusion.

From denotation to manifestation, then to signification, but also from signification to manifestation and to denotation, we are carried along a circle, which is the circle of the proposition. Whether we ought to be should add a fourth—which would be sense—is an economic or strategic question. It is not that we must construct an a posteriori model corresponding to previous dimensions, but rather the model itself must have the aptitude to function a priori from within, were it forced to introduce a supplementary dimension which, because of its evanescence, could not have been recognized in experience from outside. It is thus a question *de jure*, and not simply a question of fact. Nevertheless, there is also a question of fact, and it is necessary to begin by asking whether sense is capable of being localized in one of these three dimensions—denotation, manifestation, or signification. We could answer first that such a localization seems impossible within denotation. Fulfilled denotation makes the proposition true; unfulfilled denotation makes the proposition false. Sense,

evidently, can not consist of that which renders the proposition true or false, nor of the dimension in which these values are realized. Moreover, denotation would be able to support the weight of the proposition only to the extent that one would be able to show a correspondence between words and denoted things or states of affairs. Brice Parain has discussed the paradoxes that such a hypothesis causes to arise in Greek philosophy.⁵ How are we to avoid paradoxes, like a chariot passing through one's lips? More directly still, Carroll asks: how could names have a "respondent"? What does it mean for something to respond to its name? And if things do not respond to their name, what is it that prevents them from losing it? What is it then that would remain, save arbitrariness of denotations to which nothing responds, and the emptiness of indexicals or formal designators of the "that" type—both being stripped of sense? It is undeniable that all denotation presupposes sense, and that we position ourselves *straight away* within sense whenever we denote.

To identify sense with manifestation has a better chance of success, since the designators themselves have sense only in virtue of an I which manifests itself in the proposition. This I is indeed primary, since it allows speech to begin; as Alice says, "if you only spoke when you were spoken to, and the other person always waited for you to begin, you see nobody would ever say anything. . . ." It shall be concluded from this that sense resides in the beliefs (or desires) of the person who expresses herself.⁶ "When I use a word," said Humpty Dumpty, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less. . . . The question is . . . which is to be master—that's all." We have, however, seen that the order of beliefs and desires was founded on the order of the conceptual implications of signification, and that even the identity of the self which speaks, or says "I," was guaranteed only by the permanence of certain signifieds (the concepts of God, the world . . .). The I is primary and sufficient in the order of speech only insofar as it envelops significations which must be developed for themselves in the order of language (*langue*). If these significations collapse, or are not established in themselves, personal identity is lost, as Alice painfully experiences, in conditions where God, the world, and the self become the blurred characters of the dream of someone who is poorly determined. This is why the last recourse seems to be identifying sense with signification.

We are then sent back to the circle and led back to Carroll's paradox, in which signification can never exercise its role of last foundation, since it presupposes an irreducible denotation. But perhaps there is a very general

reason why signification fails and why there is a circularity between ground and grounded. When we define signification as the condition of truth, we give it a characteristic which it shares with sense, and which is already a characteristic of sense. But how does signification assume this characteristic? How does it make use of it? In discussing the conditions of truth, we raise ourselves above the true and the false, since a false proposition also has a sense or signification. But at the same time, we define this superior condition solely as the possibility for the proposition to be true.⁷ This possibility is nothing other than the *form of possibility* of the proposition itself. There are many forms of possibility for propositions: logical, geometrical, algebraic, physical, syntactic. . . . Aristotle defined the form of logical possibility by means of the relation between the terms of the proposition and the *loci* of the accident, *proprium*, genus, or dental and the moral. But by whatever manner one defines form, it is an odd procedure since it involves rising from the conditioned to the condition. Here one rises to a foundation, but that which is founded remains what it was, independently of the operation which founded it and unaffected by it. Thus denotation remains external to the order which conditions it, and the true and the false remain indifferent to the principle which determines the possibility of the one, by allowing it only to subsist in its former relation to the other. One is perpetually referred from the conditioned to the condition, and also from the condition to the conditioned. For the condition of truth to avoid this defect, it ought to have an element of its own, distinct from the form of the conditioned. It ought to have *something unconditional* capable of assuring a real genesis of denotation and of the other dimensions of the proposition. Thus the condition of truth would be defined no longer as the form of conceptual possibility, but rather as ideational material or "stratum," that is to say, no longer as signification, but rather as sense.

Sense is the fourth dimension of the proposition. The Stoics discovered it along with the event: sense, *the expressed of the proposition*, is an incorporeal, complex, and irreducible entity, at the surface of things, a pure event which inheres or subsists in the proposition. The discovery was made a second time in the fourteenth century, in Ockham's school, by Gregory of Rimini and Nicholas d'Aurcourt. It was made a third time at the end of the nineteenth century, by the great philosopher and logician Meinong.⁸ Undoubtedly there are reasons for these moments: we have seen that the

Stoic discovery presupposed a reversal of Platonism; similarly Ockham's logic reacted against the problem of Universals, and Meinong against Hegelian logic and its lineage. The question is as follows: is there something, *aliquid*, which merges neither with the proposition or with the terms of the proposition, nor with the object or with the state of affairs which the proposition denotes, neither with the "lived," or representation or the mental activity of the person who expresses herself in the proposition, nor with concepts or even signified essences? If there is, sense, or that which is expressed by the proposition, would be irreducible to individual states of affairs, particular images, personal beliefs, and universal or general concepts. The Stoics said it all: neither word nor body, neither sensible representation nor *rational representation*.⁹ Better yet, perhaps sense would be "neutral," altogether indifferent to both particular and general, singular and universal, personal and impersonal. It would be of an entirely different nature. But is it necessary to recognize such a supplementary instance? Or must we indeed manage to get along with what we already have: denotation, manifestation, and signification? In each period the controversy is taken up anew (André de Neufchateau and Pierre d'Alilly against Rimini, Brentano and Russell against Meinong). In truth, the attempt to make this fourth dimension evident is a little like Carroll's Snark hunt. Perhaps the dimension is the hunt itself, and sense is the Snark. It is difficult to respond to those who wish to be satisfied with words, things, images, and ideas. For we may not even say that sense exists either in things or in the mind: it has neither physical nor mental existence. Shall we at least say that it is useful, and that it is necessary to admit it for its utility? Not even this, since it is endowed with an inefficacious, impassive, and sterile splendor. This is why we said that *in fact* we can only infer it indirectly, on the basis of the circle where the ordinary dimensions of the proposition lead us. It is only by breaking open the circle, as in the case of the Möbius strip, by unfolding and untwisting it, that the dimension of sense appears for itself, in its irreducibility, and also in its genetic power as it animates an a priori internal model of the proposition.¹⁰ The logic of sense is inspired in its entirety by empiricism. Only empiricism knows how to transcend the experiential dimensions of the visible without falling into ideas, and how to track down, invoke, and perhaps produce a phantom at the limit of a lengthened or unfolded experience.

Husserl calls "expression" this ultimate dimension, and he distinguishes it from denotation, manifestation, and demonstration.¹¹ Sense is that which

is expressed. Husserl, no less than Meinong, rediscovered the living source of the Stoic inspiration. For example, when Husserl reflects on the "perceptual noema," or the "sense of perception," he at once distinguishes it from the physical object, from the psychological or "lived," from mental representations and from logical concepts. He presents it as an impassive and incorporeal entity, without physical or mental existence, neither acting nor being acted upon—a pure result or pure "appearance." The real tree (the *denotatum*) can burn, be the subject and object of actions, and enter into mixtures. This is not the case, however, for the noema "tree." There are many noemata or senses for the same *denotatum*: evening star and morning star are two noemata, that is, two ways in which the same *denotatum* may be presented in expressions. When therefore Husserl says that the noema is the perceived such as it appears in a presentation, "the perceived as such" or the appearance, we ought not understand that the noema involves a sensible given or quality; it rather involves an ideational objective unity as the intentional correlate of the act of perception. The noema is not given in a perception (nor in a recollection or an image). It has an entirely different status which consists in *not* existing outside the proposition which expresses it—whether the proposition is perceptual, or whether it is imaginative, recollective, or representative. We distinguish between green as a sensible color or quality and "to green" as a noematic color or attribute. "*The tree greens*"—is this not finally the sense of the color of the tree; and is not "*the tree greens*" its global meaning? Is the noema anything more than a pure event—the tree occurrence (although Husserl does not speak of it in this manner for terminological reasons)? And is that which he calls "appearance" anything more than a surface effect? Between the noemata of the same object, or even of different objects, complex ties are developed, analogous to those which the Stoic dialectic established between events. Could phenomenology be this rigorous science of surface effects?

Let us consider the complex status of sense or of that which is expressed. On one hand, it does not exist outside the proposition which expresses it; what is expressed does not exist outside its expression. This is why we cannot say that sense exists, but rather that it inheres or subsists. On the other hand, it does not merge at all with the proposition, for it has an objective (*objectivité*) which is quite distinct. What is expressed has no resemblance whatsoever to the expression. Sense is indeed attributed, but it is not at all the attribute of the proposition—it is rather the attribute of the thing or state of affairs. The attribute of the proposition is the

predicate—a qualitative predicate like green, for example. It is attributed to the subject of the proposition. But the attribute of the thing is the verb: to green, for example, or rather the event expressed by this verb. It is attributed to the thing denoted by the subject, or to the state of affairs denoted by the entire proposition. Conversely, this logical attribute does not merge at all with the physical state of affairs, nor with a quality or relation of this state. The attribute is not a being and does not qualify a being: it is an extra-being. "Green" designates a quality, a mixture of things, a mixture of tree and air where chlorophyll coexists with all the parts of the leaf. "To green," on the contrary, is not a quality in the thing, but an attribute which is said of the thing. This attribute does not exist outside of the proposition which expresses it in denoting the thing. Here we return to our point of departure: sense does not exist outside of the proposition . . . , etc.

But this is not a circle. It is rather the coexistence of two sides without thickness, such that we pass from one to the other by following their length. *Sense is both the expressible or the expressed of the proposition, and the attribute of the state of affairs.* It turns one side toward things and one side toward propositions. But it does not merge with the proposition which expresses it any more than with the state of affairs or the quality which the proposition denotes. It is exactly the boundary between propositions and things. It is this *aliquid* at once extra-being and inherence, that is, this minimum of being which befits inherences.¹² It is in this sense that it is an "event": *on the condition that the event is not confused with its spatio-temporal realization in a state of affairs.* We will not ask therefore what is the sense of the event: the event is sense itself. The event belongs essentially to language; it has an essential relationship to language. But language is what is said of things. Jean Gattegno has indeed noted the difference between Carroll's stories and classical fairy tales: in Carroll's work, everything that takes place occurs in and by means of language; "it is not a story which he tells us, it is a discourse which he addresses to us, a discourse in several pieces. . . ."¹³ It is indeed into this flat world of the sense-event, or of the expressible-attribute, that Carroll situates his entire work. Hence the connection between the fantastic work signed "Carroll" and the mathematicological work signed "Dodgson." It seems difficult to say, as has been done, that the fantastic work presents simply the traps and difficulties into which we fall when we do not observe the rules and laws formulated by the logical work. Not only because many of the traps subsist in the logical work itself, but also because the distribution seems to be of an entirely

different sort. It is surprising to find that Carroll's entire logical work is directly about *signification*, implications, and conclusions, and only indirectly about sense—precisely, through the paradoxes which signification does not resolve, or indeed which it creates. On the contrary, the fantastical work is immediately concerned with *sense* and attaches the power of paradox directly to it. This corresponds well to the two states of sense, *de facto* and *de jure*, a posteriori and a priori, one by which the circle of the proposition is indirectly inferred, the other by which it is made to appear for itself, by unfolding the circle along the length of the border between propositions and things.

Notes

- 1 See the theory of "connectors" (*embrayeurs*) as presented by Benveniste in *Problèmes de linguistique générale* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), ch. 20. We separate "tomorrow" from yesterday or today, since "tomorrow" is first of all an expression of belief and has only a secondary indicative value.
- 2 For example, when Brice Parain opposes denotation (denotation) and demonstration (signification), he understands "demonstration" in a manner that encompasses the moral sense of a program to be fulfilled, a promise to be kept, a possibility to be realized—as, for example, in a "demonstration of love" or a phrase such as "I will love you always." See *Recherches sur la nature et les fonctions du langage* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), ch. 5.
- 3 Descartes, *Principes*, 1:10.
- 4 See Lewis Carroll, *Logique sans peine*, trans. Gategno and Courmet (Paris: Hermann, 1972). For the abundant literary, logical, and scientific bibliography concerning this paradox, refer to Ernest Courmet's commentaries, pp. 281–288.
- 5 Brice Parain, ch. 3.
- 6 Bertrand Russell, *An Inquiry Into Meaning and Truth* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1940).
- 7 *Ibid.*, p. 179: "We may say that whatever is asserted by a significant sentence has a certain kind of possibility."
- 8 Hubert Elié, in an excellent book, *La Complexité significative* (Paris: Vrin, 1936), exposes and comments on the doctrines of Gregory of Rimini and Nicolas d'Autrecourt. He points out the extreme resemblance to Meinong's theories, and how a similar polemic was repeated in both the nineteenth and fourteenth centuries. He does not, however, indicate the Stoic origin of the problem.

THE LOGIC OF SENSE

- 9 On the Stoic differentiation of incorporeal entities and rational representations, composed of corporeal traces, see E. Bréhier, pp. 16–18.
- 10 See Albert Lautman's remarks on the subject of the Möbius strip: it has "but single side, which is essentially an extrinsic property, since in order to give an account of it the strip must be broken and untwisted. This presupposes a course a rotation around an axis external to the surface of the strip. Yet it is also possible to characterize this unilaterality by means of a purely intrinsic property. . . ." *Essai sur les notions de structure et d'existence en mathématique* (Paris: Hermann, 1938), 1:51.
- 11 We do not have in mind here the particular use Husserl makes of "signification" in his terminology, either to identify it or to bind it to "sense."
- 12 These terms, "inherence" and "extra-Being," have their correlates in Meinong's terminology as well as in that of the Stoics.
- 13 *Logique sans peine*, preface, pp. 19–20.

Fourth Series of Dualities

The first important duality was that of causes and effects, of corporeal things and incorporeal events. But insofar as events-effects do not exist outside the propositions which express them, this duality is prolonged in the duality of things and propositions, of bodies and language. This is the source of the alternative which runs through all the works of Carroll: to eat or to speak. In *Sylvie and Bruno*, the alternative is between "biss of things" and "biss of Shakespeare." At Alice's coronation dinner, you either eat what is presented to you, or you are presented to what you eat. To eat and to be eaten—this is the operational model of bodies, the type of their mixture in depth, their action and passion, and the way in which they coexist within one another. To speak, though, is the movement of the surface, and of ideational attributes or incorporeal events. What is more serious: to speak of food or to eat words? In her alimentary obsessions, Alice is overwhelmed by nightmares of absorbing and being absorbed. She finds that the poems she hears recited are about edible fish. If we then speak of food, how can we avoid speaking in front of the one who is to be served as food? Consider, for example, Alice's blunders in front of the Mouse. How can we avoid eating the pudding to which we have been presented? Further still, spoken words may go awry, as if they were attracted by the depth of bodies; they may be accompanied by verbal hallucinations, as in the case of maladies where language disorders are accompanied by unrestricted oral behavior (everything brought to the mouth, eating any object at all, gnawing one's teeth). "I'm sure those are not the right words," says Alice, summarizing the fate of the person who speaks of food. To eat words, however, is exactly the opposite: in this case, we raise the operation