O

OTHERWISE

THAN

BEING

OR BEYOND ESSENCE

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the confusion between Being and entities, speaks of Being as an identified entity. And the mutation is ambivalent, every nameable identity can turn into a verb.

To affirm that this mutation in the amphibology of being and entities is an amphibology of the logos, that it is due to the status of the said, is not to reduce the difference between being and entities to a frivolous play of syntax. It is to measure the pre-ontological weight of language instead of taking it only as a code (which it is also). But also, by interpreting the fact that essence exposes and is exposed, that temporalization is stated, resounds, is said, it is to not give priority to the said over the saying. It is first to awaken in the said the saying which is absorbed in it and, thus absorbed, enters into the history that the said imposes. To the extent that the saying would have no other meaning than this enunciation of the said, that it would be strictly “correlative” with the said, it would justify the thesis that the subject is dependent on being, as well as the thesis that being refers to the subject. We must go back to what is prior to this correlation. Is not saying but the active form of the said? Does not to tell oneself amounts to being said (“Se dire,” revient-il à “être dit”)? The reflexive pronoun oneself and the recurrence it denotes raise a problem; they can not be understood solely on the basis of the said. The originally accusative form of this singular pronoun is hardly perceptible when it is joined to verbs and used to confer on them a passive form, in the said. We must go back to their signification beyond or on the hither side of the comprehending activity or passivity in being, the said, the logos and the amphibology of being and entities. The “reduction” is made in this movement. It involves a positive phase: to show the signification proper to the saying on the hither side of the thematization of the said.

e. The Reduction

It is clear that the verb to be, or the verb to consist, is used in the formulas from these first pages that name the hither side of being. It is also clear that being makes its apparition, shows itself, in the said. As soon as saying, on the hither side of being, becomes dictation, it expires, or abdicates, in fables and in writing. If being and manifestation go together in the said, it is in fact natural that if the saying on the hither side of the said can show itself, it be said already in terms of being. But is it necessary and is it possible that the saying on the hither side be thematized, that is, manifest itself, that it enter into a proposition and a book? It is necessary. The responsibility for another is precisely a saying prior to anything said. The surprising saying which is a responsibility for another is against “the winds and tides” of being, is an interruption of essence, a disinterestedness imposed with a good violence. But one has to say that the gratuity none-
theless required of substitution, that miracle of ethics before the light, this astonishing saying. comes to light through the very gravity of the questions that assail it. It must spread out and assemble itself into essence, posit itself, be hypostasized, become an eon in consciousness and knowledge, let itself be seen, undergo the ascendancy of being. Ethics itself, in its saying which is a responsibility, requires this hold. But it is also necessary that the saying call for philosophy in order that the light that occurs not congeal into essence what is beyond essence, and that the hypostasis of an eon not be set up as an idol. Philosophy makes this astonishing adventure—showing and recounting as an essence—intelligible, by loosening this grip of being. A philosopher's effort, and his unnatural position, consists, while showing the hither side, in immediately reducing the eon which triumphs in the said and in the monstrations, and, despite the reduction, retaining an echo of the reduced said in the form of ambiguity, of diachronic expression. For the saying is both an affirmation and a retraction of the said. The reduction could not be effected simply by parentheses which, on the contrary, are an effect of writing. It is the ethical interruption of essence that energizes the reduction.

To expose an otherwise than being will still give an ontological said, in the measure that all monstrous exposes an essence. The reduction of this said unfolds in stated propositions, using copulas, and virtually written, united anew into structures; it will let the destructuring it will have operated be. The reduction then will once again let the otherwise than being be as an eon. As the truth of what does not enter into a theme, it is produced out of time or in two times without entering into either of them, as an endless critique, or skepticism, which in a spiralling movement makes possible the boldness of philosophy, destroying the conjunction into which its saying and its said continually enter. The said, contesting the abdication of the saying that everywhere occurs in this said, thus maintains the diachrony in which, holding its breath, the spirit hears the echo of the otherwise. The hither side, the preliminary, which the pre-originary saying animates, refuses the present and manifestation, or lends itself to them only out of time. The unsayable saying lends itself to the said, to the ancillary indiscretion of the abusive language that divulges or profanes the unsayable. But it lets itself be reduced, without effacing the unsaying in the ambiguity or the enigma of the transcendent, in which the breathless spirit retains a fading echo.

But one can go back to this signification of the saying, this responsibility and substitution, only from the said and from the question: "What is it about...?", a question already within the said in which everything shows itself. One can go back to it through reduction only out of what shows itself, that is, the essence and the thematized eon, of which alone there is a
manifestation. But in it the questioning look is only the impossible syn-
chronization of the unassembleable, Merleau-Ponty’s fundamental historic-
ity, which the diachrony of proximity has already escaped.

The reduction, the going back to the hither side of being, to the hither
side of the said, in which being shows itself, in which the con is hypo-
thatized, could nowise mean a rectification of one ontology by another, the
passage from some apparent world to a more real world. It is only in the
order of being that rectification, truth and error have meaning, and that
the betrayal is the lack of a fidelity. The hither side of or the beyond being
is not an entity on the hither side of or beyond being; but it also does not
signify an exercise of being, an essence, that is truer or more authentic that
the being of entities. The entities are, and their manifestation in the said is
their true essence. The reduction nowise means to dissipate or explain
some “transcendental appearance.” The structures with which it begins are
ontological. That the really true being and entities are in the said, or that
they lend themselves to expression and writing, takes nothing from their
truth and only describes the level and the seriousness of language. To enter
into being and truth is to enter into the said; being is inseparable from its
meaning! It is spoken. It is in the logos. But the reduction is reduction of
the said to the saying beyond the logos, beyond being and non-being,
beyond essence, beyond true and non-true. It is the reduction to signifi-
cation, to the one-for-the-other involved in responsibility (or more exactly in
substitution), to the locus or non-lieu, locus and non-lieu, the utopia, of
the human. It is the reduction to restlessness in the literal sense of the term,
or to its diachrony, which, despite all its assembled forces, despite all the
simultaneous forces in its union, being can not eternalize. The subjective
and its Good can not be understood out of ontology. On the contrary,
starting with subjectivity in the form of saying, the signification of the said
will be interpretable. It will be possible to show that there is question of
the said and being only because saying or responsibility require justice.
Thus only will justice be done to being, will the affirmation, the, to take it
literally, strange affirmation that through injustice “all the foundations of
the earth are shaken” will be understandable. Thus alone will the terrain of
disinterestedness that allows us to separate truth from ideology be given its
truth.

4. SAYING AND SUBJECTIVITY.

a. The Saying without the Said
From the amphibology of being and entities in the said we must go back to
the saying which signifies prior to essence, prior to identification, on the