

of science, which in any case does not pass for a spectacular discipline, has somehow found himself present in discussions where he himself took care never to figure. But take away Canguilhem and you will no longer understand much about Althusser, Althusserism and a whole series of discussions which have taken place among French Marxists; you will no longer grasp what is specific to sociologists such as Bourdieu, Castel, Passeron and what marks them so strongly within sociology; you will miss an entire aspect of the theoretical work done by psychoanalysts, particularly by the followers of Lacan. Further, in the entire discussion of ideas which preceded or followed the movement of '68, it is easy to find the place of those who, from near or from afar, had been trained by Canguilhem.

Without ignoring the cleavages which, during these last years after the end of the war, were able to oppose Marxists and non-Marxists, Freudians and non-Freudians, specialists in a single discipline and philosophers, academics and non-academics, theorists and politicians, it does seem to me that one could find another dividing line which cuts through all these oppositions. It is the line that separates a philosophy of experience, of sense and of subject and a philosophy of knowledge, of rationality and of concept. On the one hand, one network is that of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty; and then another is that of Cavailles, Bachelard and Canguilhem. In other words, we are dealing with two modalities according to which phenomenology was taken up in France, when quite late – around 1930 – it finally began to be, if not known, at least recognized. Contemporary philosophy in France began in those years. The lectures on transcendental phenomenology delivered in 1929 by Husserl (translated by Gabrielle Peiffer and Emmanuel Levinas as *Méditations cartésiennes*, Paris, Colin, 1931; and by Dorion Cairns as *Cartesian Meditations*, The Hague, Nijhoff, 1960) marked the moment: phenomenology entered France through that text. But

it allowed of two readings: one, in the direction of a philosophy of the subject – and this was Sartre's article on the "Transcendance de L'Ego" (1935) and another which went back to the founding principles of Husserl's thought: those of formalism and intuitionism, those of the theory of science, and in 1938 Cavailles's two theses on the *axiomatic method* and the *formation of set theory*. Whatever they may have been after shifts, ramifications, interactions, even rapprochements, these two forms of thought in France have constituted two philosophical directions which have remained profoundly heterogeneous.

On the surface the second of these has remained at once the most theoretical, the most bent on speculative tasks and also the most academic. And yet it was this form which played the most important role in the sixties, when a "crisis" began, a crisis concerning not only the University but also the status and role of knowledge. We must ask ourselves why such a mode of reflection, following its own logic, could turn out to be so profoundly tied to the present.

Undoubtedly one of the principal reasons stems from this: the history of science avails itself of one of the themes which was introduced almost surreptitiously into late eighteenth century philosophy: for the first time rational thought was put in question not only as to its nature, its foundation, its powers and its rights, but also as to its history and its geography; as to its immediate past and its present reality; as to its time and its place. This is the question which Mendelssohn and then Kant tried to answer in 1784 in the *Berlinische Monatschrift*: "Was ist Aufklärung?" (What is Enlightenment?). These two texts inaugurated a "philosophical journalism" which, along with university teaching, was one of the major forms of the institutional implantation of philosophy in