



Identity and Event

in Pli 9 (2000), 174-89. Identity and Event* FRANÇOIS LARUELLE Thinking means thinking, for example, the event, but how does thinking itself become an event? And what type of event? The immediate empirical and philosophical characteristics used to describe the event are well known - I am not concerned with them here insofar as it is a question of bringing to the fore the conditions for a rigorous theory of the event. A theory of the event presupposes two operations which are no doubt unified, but certainly not, as we shall see later, reciprocal. The first consists in foregrounding the intra-philosophical invariants for every thinking of the event, thereby revealing the most inclusive structure of philosophy to be condensed within the event as such, so that philosophy will become the prototype which condenses 'eventuality [l'événementialité], the figure par excellence of the event – 'the philosophy-Event, which we will say rather is the world-Event, for I postulate that philosophy is the form of the World. The second is entirely different and consists in determining the type of thought that can in turn take this philosophy or world-Event as its object, and in putting forward the type of Real, the instance able to assume the role of cause for this thought. In both these stages, identity will be at issue. In the first as One- Other, as supreme instance of philosophy (the object of the epekeina tes ousias [that which outstrips or exceeds being – translator]). In the second as One-in-One or One which is no longer also an Other, One that is no longer ultimately measurable vis-à-vis essence, that is rather without essence to the extent of no longer even being a 'beyond essence. This is what we call the Real. **From the philosophy of the event to the philosophy-Event or world** I will first bring to the fore a certain philosophical 'logic of the event, a logic conditioning all the figures of the event to the extent of rendering that logic itself the Event par excellence. The events philosophical conditions of possibility: these are self-evident. But what is less evident is to show that these conditions exhaust all of philosophy as such and that philosophy is the prototype of the event. By way of example: the event has become a theme allowing one to gather together and situate almost all of French philosophy after the period of structuralism in its strict sense; it is, apparently, post-metaphysical and post-historical. But, inversely, to what extent do these philosophies of the event constitute an event that is itself historical and philosophical? My hypothesis is that those philosophies of history which postulated a certain homogeneity between temporal continuity and of that singularity constituted by the event have witnessed the shattering of that alliance. At the end of the 20th century, they have split or divided themselves lengthwise into two apparently autonomous, not to say opposing, branches: an inferior branch, that of communication; and a superior branch, that of the event as such. The twin ages of communication and of the event have succeeded the age of history. Why twin? I maintain that the most encompassing concept of philosophy – for I allow myself the right, one that is perhaps contentious but which I will try to legitimate, to speak of 'philosophy [la philosophie] is that of a discourse, a special or transcendental one insofar as it aspires to be the discourse of the Real par excellence, but one which, given a degree of linguistic saturation in every way prior to the linguistic turn, is, like all discourses, doubly-articulated. These two articulations – and here I am delineating a simple schema, the invariant of 'the philosophical Decision – possess the general form of transcendence as act or



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operation, but according to two modalities that are themselves both very heterogenous and reciprocally correlated. The first articulation, let us say on the whole and for simplicity's sake, is that of Being and of the entity, one which finds expression in terms of the meta and that tends to be 'ecstatico-horizonal and ontico-ontological, to take up two Heideggerian expressions in a simplified, descriptive sense. It constitutes a historico-systematic structural a priori proper to the philosophies of communication which are developing globally in the realm of the meta and of the universal project, albeit obviously not without brushing up against the event both in its lower aspect of generality or representation, that of the media for instance, and in its higher aspect, that which Heidegger, for example, upholds as Ereignis. The second articulation tends to be that of Being and of the One. It is no longer spoken of in terms of the meta but of the epekeina, it has an 'ecstatico-vertical form and finally has the Real as One rather than as Being for its object, albeit the One only insofar as it is simultaneously an Other. It constitutes a historico-systematic structural a priori proper to those philosophies of the event which are developing globally within the dimension of the epekeina. Thus the event corresponds to another articulation, one which is emergent relative to that of the transcendence of Being. It can constitute a rupture within Being, History, Time, only if it exceeds horizontal depth as well as the merely horizontal interval; only if it constitutes an emergence at the same time as a rupture; a rupture in excess of horizontal transcendence. It is the One-as-Other and sometimes, but then more Judaically, the Other-as-One. It goes without saying that there is no empirical event – it would be drowned within the indifference of generality and particularity. On the other hand, the event may sometimes provide the basis for a superior empiricism. Whatever the case, the event is not merely the result of superimposing an ontology onto a history, but rather, it introduces a new order. It does not even merge with Being, whether Being is presence, or a pure multiple without presence, or regularity once again. It appears whenever there is a repression, a cutting, or a collapsing of Being. The event thereby indexes a more general ground which may be, depending on the case, an order of presence, of effects or singularities rather than of generalities, of multiplicities or of the multiple rather than of unity. It indexes an ontological ground with which it remains complicit even as it detaches itself from it. This ontological ground, the outcome of the meta, may disappear or fade, be occasionally forbidden, repressed, or subjected to varying operations. In general it is the hybrid forms of this ground which are eliminated, the hybrid of the One and the Multiple for example; and in this case the event remains solely dependent on a Being that is radically multiple and inconsistent. Or, in another instance, the hybrid of Being and of the particular entity is eliminated; in this case the event remains dependent on a universal Being-One free of particularity. Thus, from our point of view Deleuze gives a standard, philosophically average description of the event because he brings together all its transcendental conditions in perfect equilibrium. The event connects a base of pure, ideal, infinite continuity, an a priori but non-empirical regularity, a curve that carries it; and a rupture, an emergence that is at least unilateral and irreversible. Nietzsche and Deleuze empty Platonism of its intermediary hybrids and identify the extremes. They fold the epekeina, without erasing it, back onto the meta. In doing so they assemble an 'overposition, a logic of the 'over, of overcoming or overview. The event is geostationary, so to speak; it oversees and carries off history and the world as an eternal One that is coextensive



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with the Multiple. The event is over-cut, line of flight, tendential limit [limite tendancielle], relative-absolute cut rather than interruption. Derrida on the contrary maintains the duality, the heterogeneity of the two transcendences, as well as the rootedness of the second within the first. He maintains the formers excess of transcendence over the latter but at the same time bends it back toward itself and accentuates in the event that aspect of it which constitutes an 'inhibition or 'interruption of the logos or of presence. Generally, the two transcendences are bound through co-belonging to one another – this is an invariant – and are only separable by means of abstraction. In other words, one trails the other at its base or periphery, partially containing it according to a relation of domination that differs in each case. Communication and event divide between themselves philosophys unique destiny. Even if these two transcendences find themselves competing with one another in separate philosophies, they are always combined according to varying relations and proportions. These combinations contain the One, the Other, Being, and the particular entity as the transcendental components of the event. Their combinations amount to so many transcendental equations of the event, equations exploring and developing the possible space of philosophy within the ambit of its most encompassing concept. One may distend the event through any one of its dimensions or aspects, it always remains possible to pin it to the four corners of the philosophical Decision, to inscribe it within this space. Such is the span and stature of the event, its non-punctuality, its internal complexity. We may, after a fashion, generalize Deconstruction: the event is not the Other of the Logos but the Other of/in philosophy as defined according to the wider aspect of its complex structure, rather than solely in terms of 'presence. The event occurs at the borders of philosophy, only at its borders, but by inserting within it the total invariant of philosophy we modify its concept: philosophys calculation of the event, the events philosophically calculable character, is its least well known aspect, but that aspect alone is what allows its character as incalculable, or as One-Other, to 'exist. Thus, the widened concept of the event is coextensive with that of philosophy and hence with the world, and puts into play the totality of great transcendentals. Each philosophy now cuts or carves out 'its event from this crystal by valorizing or suspending the One or the Multiple, the One or Being, Being or the particular entity. This labour of remarking or subtraction, of accentuation or cutting, answers to a few invariants: the invariance of its transcendental structures regardless of the empirical knowledge effectuating them; the invariance of the events position as following on from ontology or onto-theo-logy, in an apparently derivative, but in reality ultimate and therefore originary position; the invariance finally of an event affected by the suspension of the inferior or superficial forms of representation, particularly of those hybrid forms in which the transcendentals are mixed. The event is a constantly simplified combination of these transcendentals, one shorn of intermediate forms. But all these operations presuppose the entirety of philosophical operations, with the event appearing at the limits of that totality through a series of gestures designed to allow the dimension of the epekeina to manifest itself. Philosophy posits the event as a real in itself but in reality it is the effect of a philosophical decision, inscribed within the order of possibilities proffered by philosophy, with regard to which it constitutes the most extreme form as well as the highest realization. If the event focuses within its apparently ineffable simplicity the entire structure of that which I call the philosophical Decision along with



its double-articulation, then inversely that Decision is itself the proto-event, the self-positing of the event, and hence the Event which contains its own reason: 'the philosophy or world-Event. It then becomes necessary to maintain simultaneously, on the one hand that the philosophies of the event, insofar as they are manifold and opposing philosophies, particular combinations of meta and epekeina, are not 'events, there being nothing older than the philosophy which encompasses them; and on the other hand, that philosophy, which is not particular, is the only event or the essence, the 'eventuality of the event, there being nothing more emergent, more exceptional and singular than philosophy. Corollary: the philosophies of the event remain affiliated, directly in some cases, indirectly in others, with the far from novel attempt, intrinsic to every philosophy, but particularly accentuated and re-marked since Nietzsche and Heidegger, to enclose philosophy within itself, raise it up to the peak of its emerging juncture, cause it to be gathered and transcended by itself in its entirety as epekeina both toward itself and toward the Real as One or One-Other. If the event illuminates and nourishes History, the World, Existence, this is precisely because it is this lightning, this originary flash of which the Platonic sun is the effect or residue in the human eye – an effect of the sun or a luminous spot so to speak. **How identity is at stake in the event. Transition to non-philosophy.** The problem of a rigorous thought of the event has thereby been defined. We have universalized what the event exceeded, the Logos, in the form of philosophy itself, now distilled down to the structure of the One-Other, and we have thus universalized the event in the form of philosophy as such. But now the problem takes on an altogether different form: what would be the structure of an event capable this time of exceeding philosophy, the One-Other itself, that is to say the world in the expanded sense of the term, without remaining reciprocally bound to it in any way? This is the problem of non-philosophy. Identity and event: these terms seem to refer back to an interplay of metaphysical entities. But at issue here is the possibility of a thinking of the event that would be at once more rigorous and less circular than that of philosophy, the possibility of a theory that would prise the event free from the realm of the philosophies of history, one that would stop making of it merely the crest of times wave or the mere excess of philosophy or the world over themselves, even if it also meant also thinking it in terms of a certain relation to this commonly accepted and undeniable conception. On the face of it there would seem to be nothing more irreconcilable than identity and event. Yet identity is implicated in the event, and, we would like to suggest, implicated in a variety of heterogeneous ways. Following the suggestions proposed above, we shall define 'philosophy, slight differences in the 'philosophies of the event aside, in terms of the convertibility of identity and event, a convertibility which is only assured so long as philosophy is not fetishistically reduced to its objects or its entities, but grasped in the totality of its operations. And we shall define what we call 'non-philosophy in terms of the non-convertibility, or of a duality which we call 'unilateral, of identity and event. If philosophy, regardless of its stance, defines the event in terms of identity plus a few other determinations, then it reciprocally makes of identity, as such, an event, albeit one that is doubtlessly special or extreme. Non-philosophy, on the other hand, refuses this convertibility, it does not turn identity into an event but determines the event unilaterally through identity as real presupposition of thought. Accordingly, this thesis is not without relation to philosophy -it has a philosophical 'ring or 'resonance, it bears a well known



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air of 'family resemblance to it – and yet for all that it is not properly speaking 'philosophical in the sense which I have begun to give to this word. Identity thus has a double status: as actively involved in philosophy, mixed with alterity or difference and ascribed higher functions of synthesis or consistency; but also, and in sharp contrast, as real presupposition of thought, as a Real that we shall characterize as being without essence, without donation, without consistency or form – for Identity 'in the flesh [l'identité en chair et en os] is in fact none of these things, even when, as above, it passes for that which grants consistency and form. Let us first quickly examine its status within philosophy. According to philosophy, the event is already essentially related to identity, and not merely related to it as that which it seeks to destroy or overcome, but essentially related to it in its transcendental form as One- Other rather than in its ontico-ontological form. However, this aspect is generally understood in a truncated manner, or the event interpreted through that which it overcomes. This is an appearance of representational and metaphysical origin. The event is perceived as if it was without identity, and even as that which dissolves identity. Identity in the event is initially understood in term of inferior forms, as ontic and/or ontological, but not as beyond these, for the One-Other is as much alterity as identity. It is not surprising that the event cuts into, represses, or overcomes these representational forms of identity and that the problem of an identity of the event has become incomprehensible and paradoxical, or cynically and dogmatically understood as the quasi-material identity of the event as 'thing. Because identity is already understood as belonging to objects in themselves, and since the event apparently does not refer back to itself, the latter is, from the very outset, drawn toward the multiplicity and singularity harboured within a merely apparent unity. Consequently, there results the idea that the event presupposes an indefinite multiplicity of individually unassignable causes and that it requires a hermeneutics for its multiple possible meanings. Against these metaphysical appearances, it is in any case necessary to reestablish identity within the event. But the real problem still lies elsewhere: the event does not lack identity yet it is identity's desire for itself. Its aspect as Other and its aspect as One are adjoined without distance. The event is a decision of identity, an identification, and, furthermore, it solicits a co-responding decision: one must will it or accept it, cause it to occur or undergo it, desire it, affirm it or over-affirm it. When all is said and done, the event thinks itself just as 'philosophy [la philosophie] thinks itself; it is thus only apparently a non-decision. It has a decision as its inverse, it is an undecidable decision. Understood thus, according to all its dimensions, the event is not only affiliated to multiplicity but equally to identity. And it is not only affiliated to the in-itself but just as equally to desire. It is even the identification of identity and desire. The event matters to philosophy as the Real which finally appears at the limits of its ideal abstractions. It is the apex of its effort and of its will. Philosophy is desire of the Real and hence desire of the event. The event is its own awaiting, it is accompanied by prayer and by petition, or by desire, and this desire is a part of its complete constitution. It is a desired identity, rather than an identity 'in person. The event is a locus of reversal, a revolutionary pivot, a point of transvaluation, an inaugural rupture, a turning in thought, an appeal which takes aback or interpellates ... It is an object of desire and sometimes of messianic awaiting ... It is for the same reason that philosophy is an event; is, in the final analysis, a thinking of the all-event, and that it is not a theory of the event. The event



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even seems to be the non-theorizable par excellence, an absolute limit for the theoretical grasp, requiring other modes of approach: a non-objective thought, a turning in thought, a willing of the event or an affect of its reception, etc. All this, which is philosophical, announces, but announces as wholly other, the non-philosophical perspective. What would a non-philosophical event be? One not structured or determined in its essence by philosophy and able to take the philosophy-Event as its object? Obviously, it would itself be the theory of this philosophy-Event. But it then becomes evident that this theory-event merely has a philosophical aspect, one not positing or determining itself, but determined instead by the Real, the One, or Identity insofar as these are given rather than insofar as they are desired. In other words, the event will remain primary but will no longer be itself the Real to which philosophy aspires. In order to defeat idealism, that of philosophy rather than the restricted version of it found in the famed 'idealist positing, a real presupposition for thought is necessary, and this presupposition must be a real given totally, unconditionally, and without any act of giving, a given that is not the result of a givenness. In philosophy this Real is the One, but philosophy identifies it with Being, with ideality and transcendence, it is the hybrid of the One-Other. The non-philosophical transformation then, consists in modifying the axioms of thought at a global level according to a new experience of the Real as without-Being and without-Other, a Real which we shall characterize as non-consistent, devoid of ontological consistency, and simply as in-One. We shall accordingly distinguish all of the ideal structures of philosophy, or even its hybrid, part-ideal, part-real structures, from the Real defined in terms of the non-consistency of a One which is no longer the apex of philosophy. Philosophy continuously ups the ante in the search for the events ideal conditions of possibility until it finally attains its real condition, the One-Other. But the *epekeina* aims at a real which is transcendent, and does so in a manner which is still ecstatic. Nonphilosophy does not invert the vector of philosophy, transcendence, but substitutes the Real, the real presupposition, which is to say radical immanence, for the events transcendent construction as part-ideal, partreal. The real presupposition is identity as such, that which is not predicated of the entity, of Being, of the Other, or even of itself: an Identity of immanence, one which is non-consistent. The radical One does not consist within itself. This non-consistent given, which can alone determine a thinking for philosophy, but not philosophy itself, is not provided as a result of some form of scientific cognition taking over from philosophical ontology. The Real cannot here be given according to a scientific mode of cognition or one which would be identically scientific and ontological, by means of an operation of scission within philosophy, an operation rejecting the One and philosophical ontology; it cannot be given through a mathematical donation at once external to philosophy yet also sufficiently internal to be capable of arrogating its ontological function, thereby effecting a decisive resolution 'within its concept a a whole. This refusal immediately puts into play the conception one has of the event. The latter ordinarily passes as being without a reason, without a why, without an assignable cause. The mode of the event we are describing, the thinking of the philosophy- Event, is certainly without a why, an origin, or an end, but it is more generally without reason, and this absence of an external reason does not amount to a self-causing, a *causa sui* of the event. On the contrary, this event constituted by the thinking that is of/for philosophy is determined by a cause but only-in-the-last-instance, a feature which



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maintains its relative autonomy. It cannot be a cause in one of the four metaphysical senses (formal, final, efficient, material). The Real is nothing ontic, ontological, or even heterological – it is an instance of manifestation of the World of philosophy – but a ‘last-instance, or a power of manifestation-in-the-last-instance. Correllatively, it is the One-in-One that is the real content of the supposed identification of the scientific-mathematical and the ontological, and which constitutes the real or last-instance of presupposition for this identification. The distinction, which is crucial for us, between the realaccording- to-philosophy (the philosophically consistent real of the One- Other), and a non-consistent Real, is extended into that between philosophy and theory as identity-in-the-last-instance of science and philosophy. 1. A theory of the event must apply to ‘philosophy itself as invariant event of every philosophy of the event; its object is the convertibility of ‘philosophy and event – the world or philosophy-Event – rather than this or that local event within the supposed horizon of philosophy. The world- Event is effectively the set of the philosophies of the event (of its transcendental equations), there is no pure event or event-in-itself, unless by virtue of philosophical appearances. 2. A theory of the world-Event (we will abbreviate the latter as ‘Event) cannot itself be just a philosophy or just a science, it must be a certain combination of the two, one determined-in-the-last-instance. It must possess a scientific aspect so as not to duplicate its object in a sterile fashion, and a philosophical aspect so as not to remain foreign to philosophy and remain capable of relating to this latter without denying or dismembering it. We shall call unified theory of the Event this theory which elaborates itself as identity of science and philosophy. 3. The identity of science and philosophy is not their epistemological or, more widely, philosophical co-belonging. That would be a contradictory conception and one bound to fail. In light of the preceding conditions, this identity is altogether special. On the one hand it is itself neither a scientific object, a cognition, nor a philosophical object, the One- Other for example. We shall say that it is an identity-in-the-last-instance only of science and philosophy. The problem which then arises concerns the nature of this presupposition and its relation to thought. Moreover, it only identifies science and philosophy, with a view to determining the theory of the Event, through their minimal invariant, their ‘posture, rather than in terms of particular knowledges, theories, or doctrines. Theory is theoretical insofar as it is able to produce a non-specular cognition concerning the Event-object; and it is philosophical, which is to say basically transcendental, insofar as it constitutes itself with and for this object to which it relates itself, in a relation which is consequently transcendental and no longer one of objective cognition. ‘Non-philosophy is at its starting point a ‘transcendental science in a sense which is no longer Husserlian or philosophical, but rather that of an identity-in-the-lastinstance of science and philosophy. 4. The ultimate problem is no longer that of the ‘cause of the event. On the one hand, the cause is here cause of the theory of the Event, on pain of lapsing into cynicism or materialism. On the other, it is cause of the theory of the world-Event, not of this or that event as conceived by this or that philosophy whilst failing to scrutinize the totality of those operations necessary for carving it out. We shall gather all these clarifications together by saying that the sought after cause determines-in-the-lastinstance the unified theory of the world-Event. Lastly, we distinguish three modes of the event: 1. the intraphilosophical event or event-object of philosophies; 2. the world-Event with its philosophical form, or ‘philosophy insofar as it constitutes the prototypical or originary event; 3.



a rigorous theory (that of the world- Event) as non-philosophical Advent [Avènement]; one which is still primary but dependent on a cause of the last-instance. **From the philosophy-Event to the non-philosophical Advent** Let us attempt to construct the theoretical apparatus which draws all these conditions together. I am putting it forward here without providing its detailed analysis. With this goal in mind, can we identify an exemplary existing form of cognition, with a view to transforming it so as to furnish it with an essential philosophical sense, that is to say, a transcendental pertinence? Can we identify, according to the general non-philosophical conditions of the One or the Real, a structure of thought incorporating the donation of the philosophy-Event as object at once universal in form, and contingent and variable in content? In other words, the non-philosophical Event we seek under the name of the Advent should, in conforming to this structure, distinguish itself from its object whilst relating to it in the manner of a cognition, but also relate to it transcendently in the manner of a philosophy. This cognitive matrix is probably, its non-philosophical transformation aside, the form of the function, albeit not exactly that of the function in its mathematical usage, since it must now also receive an intrinsically transcendental use. We thereby propose substituting the 'function form, whilst modifying its in a sense which we will progressively specify, for philosophical syntaxes such as those of the dialectic, of difference, of the order of reasons, etc. The role of the constant is obviously held by the instance of the One-in- One, which is not just any constant but the constant par excellence, identity personified, that which universalizes the new apparatus and renders it immanent. The One as constant is by definition the condition required for the production of a non-specular condition, one which is heterogeneous to its object, the One being radically foreclosed to philosophy and to the latter's specific causality. But since it is at the same time able to 'give or 'manifest philosophy in its (relative) autonomy, the Real can fulfill the function of a transcendental (non-arithmetical) constant. The role of argument or variable is taken by the world-Event, which is an invariant structure, but one which is always clothed and given through particular variations. What is important is that any philosophical content whatsoever, provided it has the the invariant form of what we call the philosophical Decision, can fulfill the condition of the variable. In this instance it is the theme or content known as 'event, but the Event now par excellence, that constituted by philosophy and given through distinct realizations. Thus, as given-in-One or manifested by the One, the Advent will be a transcendental function of the philosophy-Event, which is to say, in this context, and in accordance with these new, obviously non-Kantian, conditions, a transcendental function which is real-in-the-last-instance. What do we mean by a 'transcendental function if the former term is no longer to be understood in its Kantian sense? The Real or One is given without an operation of givenness, manifested without an operation of manifestation. It is not split in two, divided and represented by itself, posited by itself, cause of itself, or passive effect of itself. This suffices to ensure its universality, that is to say, to ensure that it allows philosophy itself to be also given, and to give it according to its own modality which is that of the 'without-givenness. There is a givenness of philosophy, but it is a self-givenness which has no effect on that being-given which the Real as such is. The Real, on the other hand, gives philosophy's self-givenness according to its own modality of being-given. Yet, inasmuch as the Real brings forth nothing, and particularly not philosophy, but brings its own being-given (without-givenness) to



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the latter, or, better still, since the latter is in any case given according to its own modality, brings forth philosophy according to the modality of this being-given (without-giveness), then the Real immediately fulfills a transcendental function with regard to philosophy as such. The Real is initially in itself a condition sine qua non, one which is negative and necessary but not sufficient. But when the variable, as we shall say, 'effectuates the Real or One, then the latter enters, without alienating itself, without losing its character as Real, into a transcendental function through which it relates to philosophy, or, more precisely, through which it brings forth philosophy as given-in-One. We will say that it brings it forth or determines it only-in-the-last-instance. The non-philosophical event will then alter in its phenomenal but not in its material status with regard to the philosophical event. It shifts from the terrain of transcendence in general, and from the alterity of the epekeina in particular, to that of immanence. It is neither given horizontally through a phenomenological depth or distance, nor vertically through an infinity of separation. The One does not cause it to appear, like an object or mode of the subject, one side lined with invisibility and hence bilateral, or like a presence that always remains bilateral. It is not the result of a distance of objectivation, nor that of a distance of alterity; on the contrary, it is a radical immanence that causes the World to spring forth otherwise. The Advent is no longer in excess of the World as given, because such an excess now belongs to the World. But it also stops cancelling itself, erasing itself in itself, in the manner of a World continuously expanding and retracting. The Event is in turn raised up or manifested in the form of the Advent. How can we describe the latter phenomenally? The Advent, we now know, does not lie at the world's horizon and is not the other side of that horizon (Heidegger). But neither can it be said to constitute an infinite of reverse verticality, of reverse transcendence which would pierce or puncture the horizon (Levinas). The Advent comes neither from afar nor from on high. It emerges as a radical solitude that it is impossible to manipulate, to dominate, to reduce, like the solitude of great works of art... It no longer announces anything, it is neither absence nor presence nor even an 'other presence, but rather unique solitude given-in-One in-the-last- instance. It emerges as the identity of a unique face without a 'face to face. The World is 'facing, is in a state of 'facing, in the same way in which something is said to be 'living. This is its 'uni-faciality. The 'more the immanence constituting the Real is radical, the more the World appears outside itself or given as unique face of the World: this is its unilaterality. Uni-laterality/faciality is not the alterity belonging to the widened concept of the Event. The solitude of the unique 'facing transforms alterity itself, the Real being even more 'other, stranger than the Other, or 'being-other differently because it is radical immanence. The World as given-in-One or according to the One is thereby a stranger to itself in a more radical fashion than if it were merely other-than-itself. This is precisely its solitude as 'the unique. Thus conceived, the Advent is delivered from every direct onto-theological determination, these determinations never going beyond the order of the variable. The Advent is not more absolute than the philosophy- Event, which is already absolute, but it is radical. It is not more 'originary in some vague manner, it is archi-originary or radically first, that is, unioriginary, or determined-in-the-last-instance by the Real-One. It is rid in its essence of every primary, ontic or ontological, historic or historial [historial] content, which remains merely of the order of the variable. It is the event as such of rigorous transcendental thought, of



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theory as identity-in-the-last-instance of the scientific and the philosophical. Consequently, it is not an 'event of thought but the Advent of thought [la pensée] in its identity, that is to say, of the 'force (of) thought, even if there is thought and knowledge before it, but in a separated state, either philosophical or scientific. Accordingly, just as we had moved before from the event within philosophy to philosophy as prototype of the event, we have now moved from this prototype to an archi-type which is a 'heno-type in-the-lastinstance. However, understood in this way, the Advent as theory or thinking for 'philosophy as such is no longer an extension of the latter, a meta- or over-event. Philosophy is already the event of the meta- , and, more than this, the over-event of the epekeina. But the Advent is no longer a supplement of transcendence, of height, or of distance. It is, on the contrary, the being-given-in-One in-the-last-instance of the Event; it is for the Event; it is Advent. The Advent maintains or at least recalls certain essential features of the vulgar or even philosophical conception of the event, but it transforms them: 1. Its unicity? It is not so much unicity as identity, not so much singularity as solitude. The One is no longer its attribute, its ultimate essence, but that which determines it, the immanent cause of the Advent rather than the transcendent cause of the event. Identity does not manifest itself in the lightning flash of the event, it is that which manifests or brings forth the Advent to the World. But it achieves this at the cost of its solitude, the solitude of Identity. 2. Its causality? But it is not so much transcendence outside the World or at the limits of the World, of history for instance, as it is the immanent causality of thought for the World or for history. The Advent is the manner in which the philosophy-Event presents itself when it is determined-in-the-last- instance by the solitude of the One. If the event constitutes a flight beyond the World, or a line of flight at best, the Advent is a way of making the World and its philosophical form come forth [advenir] to the One or the Real. There where the Real is, the World in its form as philosophy must come to be [advenir] according to the modality of the Advent. 3. To be the effect of an immanent cause, or more precisely, one acting in and through immanence, is to be in a manner of speaking without a direct cause, or at least without an assignable cause according to representation or the world. The Advent is radically alien to the World on account of its cause which is only of-the-last-instance; and relatively alien to the World on account of the material which it draws from the latter. It is bound by the World; but only in the sense of drawing its materials and its occasions from it, rather than in the sense of requiring a foothold within it. At the same time it comes from elsewhere, rather than from the World. The Real of-the-last-instance is utopic and the Advent is utopic and uchronic through this latter. This is its radical irreversibility, but one that is identical to its determination-in-the-last-instance. By way of conclusion, there follow a few remarks concerning the style of what I call 'nonphilosophy. What I have just presented has all the characteristics of an abstract, second-degree theoretical construction. But:1. I lay claim to the abstract – the Real or One – rather than to abstraction. The One is an abstract-without-an operation-of-abstraction, abstraction follows after and is imposed upon thought, as its form, by the Real. 4. I lay claim to theory, but I understand it in terms of the radical identity of science and philosophy, which is to say, the radical identity of the two aspects: knowledge on the one hand, and a transcendental usage or pragmatics of philosophy on the other. It is thus a transcendental theory or science, one providing a non-empirical, identical or 'unified knowledge and pragmatics of the



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philosophy-object as form of the World. 5. Lastly, it is a theory without a primacy of the theoretical. It is, on the contrary, anti-idealist and anti-theoreticist because it is subordinated to the primacy of the Real which, in this context, has never been of the order of cognition or even of thought, of consciousness, etc. Its determination-in- François Laruelle 189 the-last-instance by the Real does not indicate the philosophical position known as 'realism. This type of Real excludes realism. In virtue of its nature as a radical identity, it is more of the order of a kind of performative, or more exactly, a Performed-without-Performance. Nonphilosophy is a theory, but one which is practical-in-the-last-instance or determined by such a practice. * This paper was first presented at the 'Thinking the Event conference at the University of Warwick (16-17th June 1999). Thanks to Professor Laruelle for permission to print it here.

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