

# THE METHOD OF INTUITION

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Submitted to

Central European University

Department of Philosophy

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy*

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*Budapest, Hungary*

2020

## Abstract

*Bergson's original account of time entails also a completely different account of metaphysics itself, which (1) promises an overcoming of the Kantian limitations of understanding, and (2) provides a better picture about reality than conceptual metaphysics can. Kant's critique of reason has made metaphysics an impossibility. Bergson offers a way to overcome Kantian limitations of understanding by invoking the intuitive aspect of thought, relying on which he then develops Intuition as a method for philosophy. The resulting account centers around Duration (Bergson's notion of time) as a movement, thus suggesting a dynamic view more on par with reality as we experience it.*

*The first part of this thesis will lay out Bergson's account, his theory of time and its implications on methodology in philosophy, through which the Kantian criticism is overcome, and metaphysics shown possible. The method of Intuition suggested by Bergson is examined, and Deleuze's explication of the method considered.*

*Chapter two will argue that Bergson's metaphysics provides a better picture of reality than conceptual metaphysics can, because of how it accounts for change. The failure of the traditional account of change in the face of Zeno's paradoxes show how conceptualization holds metaphysics back in general (concepts that stand for substances will not help to describe essences as they are formed in time), while intuitive thinking allows to go beyond conditions of experience (above the "turn" of experience).*

*The third chapter will discuss implications of Bergson's metaphysics on the problem of free will, providing a concrete example of the method of Intuition in practice.*

## Table of contents

Abstract .....	2
Table of contents .....	3
Introduction .....	4
Chapter 1 Bergson's Account .....	6
1.1 Intellect and Intuition .....	10
1.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Multiplicities .....	13
1.2.1 Real or Lived Time (Duration) and Mathematical Time .....	15
1.3. Intuition as a Method .....	16
1.3.1. Doctrine of Intuition described in <i>The Creative Mind</i> .....	17
1.3.2. Deleuze's Interpretation of Bergson's Intuition as a Method .....	21
2.1 From conceptual to process approach .....	26
2.2 Essentiality of Time .....	28
2.3 Language .....	29
Chapter 3. Implications on the problem of Free Will .....	31
Conclusion .....	34
Bibliography or Reference .....	36

## Introduction

In *The Creative Mind* Bergson reveals how he began to explore Intuition as an alternative mode of thinking, as opposed to the intellectual mode: “Kant had proved, so it was said, [...] the “thing in itself” escapes us; to comprehend it, we would need an intuitive faculty which we do not possess. On the contrary, from my analysis the result was that at least a part of reality, our person, can be grasped in its natural purity.” (p. 29). Kant thinks we lack the intuitive faculty to understand “the thing in itself”, but Bergson finds an immediate access to his own person through a faculty he calls Intuition, which he then raises to the level of a philosophical method<sup>1</sup>. Bergson’s idea seems to be that: if one can access oneself immediately, then there is a faculty that makes such immediate access possible. Kant’s critique applies to the Intellect, not to Intuition, says Bergson. The method of Intuition for Bergson is about extending the grasp of this faculty.

Bergson continues: “One of the most profound and important ideas in the Critique of Pure Reason is this: if metaphysics is possible, it is through a vision and not through a dialectic. Dialectics leads to contrary philosophies; it demonstrates the thesis as well as the antithesis of antinomies. Only a superior intuition (which Kant calls an “intellectual” intuition), that is, a perception of metaphysical reality, would enable metaphysics to be constituted. ... Only, having proved that intuition alone would be capable of giving us a metaphysics, he added: this intuition is impossible.” (p. 139) Bergson agrees with Kant in that a metaphysics constructed through the intellectual faculties is impossible, but he claims we do possess this intuitive faculty for

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<sup>1</sup> Bergson’s notion of Intuition is not the same as Kant’s. Bergson is aware of the philosophical baggage the term Intuition carries. For Bergson Intuition is about “Getting back to Duration and recapturing its essence” (CM, pp. 32-33). The intellect (i.e. reason, rational insight) for Bergson works by supposing immobility, abstracting time from the subject or reconstructing the time with immobilities (as it is done when a trajectory of a moving body is created to study movement in the sciences). Kant showed the limitations of reason and supposed that a limitless way of knowing would require a faculty other than reason, a faculty that would operate beyond the bounds of space and time. Bergson thinks the limitations shown by Kant apply to the Intellect, but not to Intuition. Intuition is thinking in Duration, taking into account the ongoing process of change.

constructing a metaphysical vision on par with reality. The rigid concepts supplied by the intellect are not fit to account for the changing nature of reality.

In *Matter and Memory* Bergson develops the same idea: “If metaphysics claims to be made up of concepts we possessed prior to it, if it consists in an ingenious arrangement of pre-existing ideas which we utilize like the materials of construction for a building, in short, if it is something other than *the constant dilation of our mind, the constantly renewed effort to go beyond our actual ideas and perhaps our simple logic as well*, it is too evident that it becomes artificial like all works of pure understanding.’ (pp. 230-231). The “*constantly renewed effort to go beyond our actual ideas*” is what Bergson thinks metaphysics should be about and what he suggests through his method of Intuition.

The first chapter will examine Bergson’s account, his views on change, time and space, and his distinction between the Intellect and Intuition, to see if Bergson’s method of Intuition can make metaphysics possible, thus overcoming Kantian limitations of understanding. The second chapter will demonstrate how the fallacy of Zeno’s paradoxes is reliant on a spatialized conception of time which considers change as a succession of static and distinct elements. It will then discuss how reaffirming the reality of change (which cannot be reduced to a succession of distinct elements) alters the approach the study of change calls for (which is what Bergson’s philosophy offers) as well as the language this approach would require. Third chapter will discuss the implications of a Bergsonian understanding of metaphysics on the problem of free will.

The discussion shows the interconnectedness of metaphysics and methodology. Kant’s analysis of knowledge as a subject supplied with form of knowing qua thought and matter of knowing qua sensing, makes it seem like thinking and sensing have to be of the same type in a sense – for the formula to work. Otherwise if there is something sensed but in a form that cannot be thought of, how is it then known? It excludes the possibility of knowledge that does

not fit the framework of thought (reason, which is communicated through language). This picture works if it is taken that, as Bergson says, “our logic is, preeminently, the logic of solids” (which is the same as the logic of reason, or the intellect, mathematics, language, etc. Language in the sense that words also stand to denote *things*, i.e. solids), so the form of thought does correspond to the matter of deliberation, both are governed with the same logic, are of the same kind, which explains the development of the sciences (CE, p. 9).

However Bergson thinks that besides matter (which is extended), which can be sensed and then known through (translated to, or represented by) thought, there are also virtual (unextended) states, which undergo qualitative changes unlike the extended matter, and which are not governed by the logic of solids but by a “logic of alteration”<sup>2</sup>, and are not directly expressible through language. In this case the form of knowing as thought is not of the same type as what is sensed – the unextended states. Therefore, it is not surprising that the tools of thought, tailored for the extended, cannot provide knowledge about the unextended states that are sensed. If Bergson is right, and we can experience states that are not governed by the logic of solids, then what other way there is to explore these states? Bergson says intuition.

### Chapter 1 Bergson’s Account

Bergson sees reality as movement. He writes “What we have here is merely an uninterrupted thrust of change - of a change always adhering to itself in a duration which extends indefinitely.”(CM, p. 15) And further: “Movement is reality itself, and what we call immobility is a certain state of things analogous to that produced when two trains move at the same speed, in the same direction, on parallel tracks: each of the two trains is then immovable to the travellers seated in the other.” (CM, p. 168) Or: "Take, for example, a summer day. We are stretched on the grass, we look around us everything is at rest there is absolute immobility

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<sup>2</sup> As Leonard Lawlor refers to it in *The Challenge of Bergsonism* (p. 82)

no change. But the grass is growing, the leaves of the trees are developing or decaying we ourselves are growing older all the time. That which seems rest, simplicity itself, is but a composite of our ageing with the changes which takes place in the grass, in the leaves, in all that is around us. Change, then, is simple, while 'the state of things' as we call it, is composite. Every stable state is the result of the co-existence between that change and the change of the person who perceives it." (*La Nature de L'Ame*, 1911)

Prioritizing the process of movement over substance, time takes on a bigger role in Bergson's account. Because everything is moving constantly without a stop that would break down the movement into two, the movement is taken to be indivisible. The absence of stops in the movement make it impossible to differentiate parts within the movement - the components of it interpenetrate each other. This movement is time itself, Duration as Bergson refers to it. The difference between time, as it is perceived by the sciences and the common sense, and Duration, is that Duration cannot be reduced to space. Bergson thinks that the scientific representation of time relies on space, an act that abstracts the actual movement from it. Duration is time as it is given in immediate experience, in its mobility. This may be the central signification of Duration, but it is also associated with change, memory, novelty. Bergson describes it as a multiplicity, hinting at the complexity of its movement conditioned by a variety of factors. It is qualitative multiplicity, as opposed to a quantitative multiplicity. It is a qualitative multiplicity as it is comprised of multiple elements which are not strictly separable from one another and differ qualitatively from each other (heterogeneous). A quantitative multiplicity, on the other hand, consists of units that are similar and separable (homogeneous).

Bergson invokes these notions in order to describe, with the qualitative multiplicity – Duration, and with quantitative multiplicity – space. Because quantitative multiplicities are homogeneous and discontinuous, they easily lend themselves to measuring. The units do not

differ from each other, as the numbers that can represent them. The beginning of one unit and the end of it are easily located, as beginnings and ends of markings on a coordinate system. The extended quantitative multiplicity corresponds in kind to the dots, numbers, or other fixed symbols that represent them. Qualitative multiplicities, on the other hand, are not measurable with number, which implies spatiality. Its parts are inseparable and different from each other, making it heterogeneous and inexpressible with fixed symbols. Bergson's point is that a mistake is being made when one describes a qualitative multiplicity such as time, as an extended, ready-made, fixed line, which ignores the qualitative differences that occurred in an interpenetrating succession and arbitrarily separates instants in time (implying stopping points). He calls this the "spatialized" view of time. The spatial depiction of time deprives time of what is essential to it, tries to assimilate its dynamic qualities into quantities, which becomes a cause for various problems, as the problem of free will or the paradoxes of Zeno.

One may ask why does this spatialization of time take place? The cause of the tendency to "spatialize" time is a natural inclination of the intellect. Bergson describes it as follows: "Our mind, which seeks solid bases of operation, has as its principal function, in the ordinary course of life, to imagine states and things. Now and then it takes quasi-instantaneous views of the undivided mobility of the real. It thus obtains sensations and ideas. By that means it substitutes for the continuous the discontinuous, for mobility stability, for the tendency in process of change it substitutes fixed points which mark a direction of change and tendency. This substitution is necessary to common sense, to language, to practical life, and even, to a certain extent which we shall try to determine, to positive science. Our intelligence, when it follows its natural inclination, proceeds by solid perceptions on the one hand, and by stable conceptions on the other. It starts from the immobile and conceives and expresses movement only in terms of immobility. ... It does not do so in order to obtain an internal and metaphysical knowledge of the real. It is simply to make use of them, each concept (like each sensation) being a practical



question which our activity asks of reality and to which reality will answer, as is proper in things, by a yes or a no. But in so doing it allows what is the very essence of the real to escape.” (CM, pp. 221-222) The intellect considers things in fixity in order to act and is essentially a tool for exploring the extended, the quantifiable. When it comes to the unextended, the change that is made possible by Duration, the Intellect’s tools do not apply, as these tools presuppose the relative fixity of matter, whereas nothing is fixed in Duration. (Even the persistence of matter is relative, present due to a form of memory matter possesses that allows only for automatic repetition).

Bergson says Kant’s critique of reason applies to the Intellect. But besides intellect aiming to quantify with regard to a goal for action, we have an Intuition which allows us to perceive change, and to feel Duration. The intellect fails to examine the type of change described as reality by Bergson as this movement has a “flowing” nature, which does not allow for immobilizing, separating and analyzing it, in the same way as the Intellect immobilizes, separates and analyzes matter. The intuition is “the thought turning back on itself”: it is what allows for noticing the Intellect’s tendency to spatialize and “drive(s) the intelligence to turn back against itself.” (Bergsonism, p. 21) As Bergson puts it “How then could mind still be intellect when it turns upon itself?” (CM, p. 91).

Bergson claims Intuition allows for Immediate knowledge, in the sense that one is able to access the multiplicities of Duration at once, in fact one is given a mixture of these in experience. Intuition is firstly the recognition of the givens, and secondly an effort to divide according to “natural articulations”. What is being virtually separated first are the multiplicities of quality and quantity. So, instead of treating everything (and in particular time) as an extensity through the Intellect, and running into problems of explaining qualitative change as a

succession of elements, with the help of Intuition an appropriate division between the quantitative and qualitative multiplicities is carried out.

The quantitative multiplicity of matter, being extended and posing no differences in degree (as its units are uniformly alike) lends itself to measurement. The qualitative multiplicity of time, on the other hand, being a movement of qualitative change, does not allow for measurement and analysis, it allows for differences in kind. Quantitative multiplicity applies to things – static, all given at the same time in space, qualitative multiplicity applies to a movement, not all of which is given at the same time – it takes time to occur. In other words, thinking about things that are juxtaposed and available at the same time, in a homogeneous medium cannot be the same as thinking about a movement, a difference philosophical methodology should account for. “The theories of space and time thus become counterparts of one another. To pass from one to the other one had only to change a single word: "juxtaposition" was replaced by "succession." (CM p. 12) The essential elements show themselves in time.

The following sections will discuss in greater depth how Bergson differentiates between Intellection and Intuition, quantitative and qualitative multiplicities, real time (lived time, Duration) and mathematical time.

### **1.1 Intellect and Intuition**

Bergson contrasts Intuition with Intellect. He writes: “Long before there was a philosophy and a science, the role of the intelligence was already that of manufacturing instruments and guiding the action of our body on surrounding bodies. Science has pushed this labor of the intelligence much further, but has not changed its direction. It aims above all at making us masters of matter” (CM, p. 42). Bergson considers intelligence to be “the faculty of abstracting and

generalizing, judgment and reasoning” the start of which is mathematics and the proper domain of which is inert matter (p. 41).

Counting, conceiving of things as identical units implies spatiality for Bergson, because to count we must separate between distinct units, and space provides a discontinuity which allows for separation. For example, we can count a flock of sheep because each sheep is clearly separated from another in space. We can count them as a sum by imagining them in space, all at the same time, all separate from each other, and ignoring the particularities of each sheep. Alternatively, we could count them one by one, but then, after each count the previous number will have to be stored somehow, for the next one to add on. The “storing” of it is what is meant by implication of spatiality. To count the 50th sheep the previous 49 have to be imagined somewhere (TF, p. 82). If we count successively, in time, we end up counting fifty “ones”, the moments of time cannot be added to each other in the same way as the units of space. In other words if the counting occurs in time there is no “place” for the numbers to accumulate in. Because intelligence operates by assuming spatiality, it reduces time to successive snapshots of space, each of which is static taken on its own. The succession of such snapshots (Bergson refers to this as “the cinematographic view”) is only a reconstruction of time based on space, it imitates movement with immobile shots of space, having abstracted the movement itself from the reconstruction. This view of time leads to contradictions such as ones raised in the form of paradoxes by Zeno of Elea (discussed in Chapter 2).

As opposed to the Intellect, which abstracts and generalizes, assuming fixity and spatiality, Intuition is the faculty that allows to recognize a succession without juxtaposition, that is a multiplicity of elements in a flow. Things extended in space lend themselves easily to the divisions, abstractions and generalizations carried out by the Intellect. The unextended qualities felt and experienced are treated in the same manner as things spread out in space.

However the unextended qualities cannot be divided from each other as clearly as things in space.

Not only common sense, but language operates in the way that depicts a process as a thing (as movement is depicted by a line), and according to Bergson, this comes from a habitual mode of thinking that views everything with an interest to make use of it. He writes “The artifice of this method simply consists, in short, in distinguishing the point of view of customary or useful knowledge from that of true knowledge. The duration wherein we see ourselves acting, and in which it is useful that we should see ourselves, is a duration whose elements are dissociated and juxtaposed. The duration wherein we act is a duration wherein our states melt into each other.”(MM, p. 244) We see ourselves acting when we create a representation of a movement such as a trajectory, we act when we are moving. Decomposing movement scientifically aims to enable us to act upon the world, not gain disinterested knowledge of it.

Bergson thinks that Intellect and Intuition together can provide a fuller picture of reality and that the knowledge gained through each faculty should complement knowledge gained by the other. Having differentiated modes of thinking according to the “materials” that are thought about he also assigns a domain to each: the exploration of extended matter by the Intellect to Science, and the exploration of lived experience through Intuition to Philosophy. Intuition is a method that presupposes Duration. To understand Bergson’s notion of Duration (or Real Time) as opposed to Space, and as opposed to mathematical time, it is useful to examine further the two different multiplicities: quantitative and qualitative. The multiplicities serve as a tool to help recreate Duration and Space as Bergson sees them – Duration as a qualitative multiplicity and space as a quantitative multiplicity.

## 1.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Multiplicities

The matter that is extended in space forms what Bergson would call a quantitative multiplicity. A quantitative multiplicity is composed of units that are distinct from one another and alike. These identical units together form a homogeneous medium. A quantitative multiplicity is opposed to a qualitative multiplicity. In a qualitative multiplicity several things coexist without being distinct from each other in virtue of succession. The “units” of a qualitative multiplicity are different from each other, during the succession they undergo qualitative change. Thus, they are not identical, and they cannot be counted simultaneously, as units of a quantitative multiplicity. Instead of succeeding each other as distinct and equal units, the end of each clearly separated from the beginning of the next, as it is in a quantitative multiplicity, the ‘parts’ of the qualitative multiplicity interpenetrate and melt into each other, they move. An example of a qualitative multiplicity is Duration (Bergson’s concept of real or lived time).

In *The Creative Mind* Bergson suggests examples to help understand Duration as a qualitative multiplicity. One example is the unrolling of a spool, another the colour spectrum, and a third, the stretching of an elastic band. He moves from one example to the other in order to describe the different tendencies of Duration as a qualitative multiplicity. The unrolling spool stands for the continuous movement in the qualitative multiplicity, a movement which is progressive and ongoing. But the example sacrifices the uniqueness of each part, since parts are superposed on each other and the thread does not differ from itself. The colour spectrum accounts for the qualitative change between its parts, but sacrifices the flow, as all of its parts are spread out at the same time. The example of the stretching of the elastic band from a single mathematical point outward into an elongating line of a circle, focusing not on the line of the band itself, but on the movement it makes, aims to represent an indivisible movement without stops that would allow to discern between its parts - “Let us consider that this action, in spite

of its duration, is indivisible if one supposes that it goes on without stopping; that, if we intercalate a stop in it, we make two actions of it instead of one and that each of these actions will then be the indivisible of which we speak; that it is not the moving act itself which is never indivisible, but the motionless line it lays down beneath it like a track in space. Let us take our mind off the space subtending the movement and concentrate solely on the movement itself, on the act of tension or extension, in short, on pure mobility. This time we shall have a more exact image of our development in duration.” (CM p. 191-192) Duration is a movement, which can be described as a qualitative multiplicity because of the manner in which its elements interpenetrate.

A melody can be considered as a qualitative multiplicity. It undergoes qualitative change as it progresses, all of its parts stand in a certain relation to the parts next to it, as if containing some of the proceeding part and announcing the following, so that any division within would alter the quality of the melody as a whole. However, a melody has a beginning and an end, Duration as lived time is ongoing.

In the broad sense, the two multiplicities are designed to account for the difference the movement of time and fixity of space. A qualitative multiplicity as Duration is constantly in motion, while the quantitative multiplicity of matter remains relatively fixed. The distinction Bergson draws between Duration and Extensity is such that: Duration cannot be studied the same way as extensity, i.e. using the same methods and tools. This is why Bergson is compelled to offer an alternative method for philosophy - the method of intuition. Intuitive thinking takes into account Duration, which is the real lived time, instead of the mathematical time which is an abstraction from real time, a reconstruction of real time with immobilities, which is considered by the Intellect. Considering the reconstructed version of time (mathematical time) leads to unsolvable paradoxes, such as Zeno’s paradoxes of change.

### 1.2.1 Real or Lived Time (Duration) and Mathematical Time

The separation Bergson makes between lived and mathematical time can be explained through his notions of multiplicities as well. Lived time undergoes qualitative changes which resist quantification, states interpenetrate and melt into each other in a way that one cannot rigorously dissect them from one another and into separate parts. Mathematical time abstracts from lived time, imposing on it points of immobilities, creating units of time, units that are external to each other, and equal to each other, which constitute a quantitative multiplicity. Movement of time is lost in this abstraction.

Mathematical time is time treated as space, with equal intervals allowing us to measure it, whereas real time is the continuous, creative “unrolling” of reality. Bergson compares the idea of mathematical time to a cinematographic film, where successive static states (“snapshots” of space) are succeeding each other. We can see how this conception of time is reliant on space, since it depends on a succession of images of space. Change is portrayed as a succession of static states. The film already exists as a whole, the images are simply are following each other and in theory what happens next is calculable. While this conception of time is extremely useful in the practical sense and is one reason the sciences are able to progress the way they do, according to Bergson: it has no place in metaphysics. Mathematical time enables progress for the sciences because the object of the sciences is matter, which is in space and is given to us all at once, but in philosophy it creates paradoxes, as the movement which is essential to the flow of time has been abstracted from mathematical time, leaving behind static points representing where the object was – with nothing representing how it moved from one to the other.

Bergson refers to the representation of time with static symbols as “spatialized time”. Mathematical Time is assumed to be homogeneous and discontinuous as space (matter) is. In

fact it is an abstraction of movement that belongs to real time (Duration). He writes: “Pure duration, of which the flow is continuous and in which we pass insensibly from one state to another: a continuity which is really lived, but artificially decomposed for the greater convenience of customary knowledge.” (MM p. 243)

Bergson describes real time the following way: “Pure duration might well be nothing but a succession of qualitative changes, which melt into and permeate one another, without precise outlines, without any tendency to externalize themselves in relation to one another, without any affiliation with number: it would be pure heterogeneity.” (Bergson, 1960) Real time is immeasurable because it cannot be divided into equal and distinct intervals because that would imply a stop, whereas time never stops. It is indivisible because it flows and cannot be separated into parts, it is not a succession. Since time is constantly “flowing” without stops that would break it up into intervals, the way we measure it becomes somewhat superficial. The representation of time as a line does not capture its flow. In fact, it is impossible to represent time since representation implies immobility, while time is mobility itself. To further illustrate his point about the difference between real time (Duration) and mathematical time, Bergson writes: “Time could be enormously and even infinitely accelerated; nothing would be changed for the mathematician, for the physicist or for the astronomer. And yet the difference with regard to consciousness would be profound” states Bergson (1946).

### 1.3. Intuition as a Method

The method of Intuition presupposes Duration, which for Bergson is the real time that reflects the continuous flow of reality, as opposed to mathematical time, which is the time represented through a model of space - time spatialized. Intuition presupposes Duration in the sense that it accounts for qualitative change without reducing it to quantitative change. Intuition considers the immediate givens of the consciousness, which are received as a mixture of two



multiplicities. The effort of Intuition is the exploration of this mixture in time – the process of change it undergoes. As Deleuze describes it as a method of division that tries to divide mixtures through their natural articulations. These articulations are according to differences in kind (as in qualitative multiplicities) and according to differences in degree (as in quantitative multiplicities).

The particular qualitative changes that are involved in each problem under consideration affect the results provided by the method of Intuition, making it so that “Each problem will require a new effort, no solution will be geometrically deduced from another”, but at this price the philosophical (virtual) world will be on par, exactly fitting the real world. (CM p. 34, 104, 206).

### 1.3.1. Doctrine of Intuition described in *The Creative Mind*

In *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics* Bergson provides a most thorough account of the method of intuition. More than half of the collection of book is his introduction where he goes into detail about the relationship of time and space, suggesting a view of a dynamic reality which can be explored through Intuition as a philosophical method. The method is described by Bergson with its presuppositions and steps in the following passages, which are partial quotations from *The Creative Mind*.

1. “*There is an external reality which is given’s immediately to our mind.*” (CM, p. 221)  
By “immediately”<sup>3</sup> it is meant that the reality is accessible directly, we are in contact with it and there is nothing distorting this contact. The method of Intuition is rooted in immediate experience with the reality, not a representation of it in any sort of symbols<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> The word “immediately” is used in the same sense as in the subtitle of “Time and Free Will: Immediate data of consciousness”

<sup>4</sup> A question may arise: how is then communication about this contact possible, as the communication is in the form of language, which uses symbols? The section on language in the next chapter will address this question.

2. *“This reality is mobility. There do not exist things made, but only things in the making, not states that remain fixed, but only states in process of change. Rest is never anything but apparent, or rather, relative. The consciousness we have of our own person in its continual flowing, introduces us to the interior of a reality on whose model we must imagine the others. All reality is, therefore, tendency, if we agree to call tendency a nascent change of direction.” (CM, p. 221)*

The reality is not a “thing”, but a movement. It seems that Bergson insists on this firstly based on the experience of the immediate givens (perceiving the growing grass, the decaying trees, etc.), secondly based on an analogy between the experience of ourselves (which according to him is given immediately, recall the quote: “from my analysis the result was that at least a part of reality, our person, can be grasped in its natural purity”(CM, p. 29)) and the external movement. So, he is in a sense prioritizing the access he has to himself (more precisely, “of himself”), and modeling the external reality after the internal reality he experiences.

3. *“Our mind, which seeks solid bases of operation, has as its principal function, in the ordinary course of life, to imagine states and things. Now and then it takes quasi-instantaneous views of the undivided mobility of the real. It thus obtains sensations and ideas. By that means it substitutes for the continuous the discontinuous, for mobility stability, for the tendency in process of change it substitutes fixed points which mark a direction of change and tendency. This substitution is necessary to common sense, to language, to practical life, and even, to a certain extent which we shall try to determine, to positive science. Our intelligence, when it follows its natural inclination, proceeds by solid perceptions on the one hand, and by stable conceptions on the other. It starts from the immobile and conceives and expresses movement only in terms of immobility. It places itself in ready-made concepts and tries to catch in them, as in a net, something of the passing reality. It does not do so in order to obtain an internal and metaphysical knowledge of the real. It is simply to make use of them, each concept (like each sensation) being a practical question which our activity asks of reality and to which reality will answer, as is proper in things, by a yes or a no. But in so doing it allows what is the very essence of the real to escape.” (CM, p. 221)*

The mind (more precisely, the intellectual faculty of it) is taken as a tool for survival and action upon the world, not speculation about disinterested truth. It fixates on things in the world, which are all a part of the movement of time, and conceives of them as immobile. But this will be only a *conception*, that is a representation, not the movement that is given. These immobilized

conceptions we form about the extended objects in the external reality with the help of the intellect are useful for some purposes, but they do not constitute the truth about them.

4. *“The difficulties inherent in metaphysics, the antinomies it raises, the contradictions into which it falls, the division into opposing schools and the irreducible oppositions between systems, are due in large part to the fact that we apply to the disinterested knowledge of the real the procedures we use currently with practical utility as the aim. (CM, p. 222)*

The method resists conceptualization. The reality of change cannot be translated to concepts which are created to serve practical end. These concepts are an attempt to construct a reality of change with immobilities.

5. *“But it does not follow from the fact that we fail to reconstitute living reality with concepts that are rigid and ready-made, that we could not grasp it in any other manner. The demonstrations which have been given of the relativity of our knowledge are therefore tainted with an original vice: they assume, like the dogmatism they attack, that all knowledge must necessarily start from rigidly defined concepts in order to grasp by their means the flowing reality.” (CM, p. 223)*

The problems and paradoxes that arise in metaphysical systems often do not belong to reality itself, but to the conceptual reconstitution of it. (For example, the problem of free will, discussed in Chapter 3)

6. *“But the truth is that our mind is able to follow the reverse procedure. It can be installed in the mobile reality, adopt its ceaselessly changing direction, in short, grasp it intuitively. But to do that, it must do itself violence, reverse the direction of the operation by which it ordinarily thinks, continually upsetting its categories, or rather, recasting them. In so doing it will arrive at fluid concepts, capable of following reality in all its windings and of adopting the very movement of the inner life of things. Only in that way will a progressive philosophy be constituted, freed from the disputes which arise between the schools, capable of resolving problems naturally because it will be rid of the artificial terms chosen in stating them. To philosophize means to reverse the normal direction of the workings of thought.” (CM, p. 223)*

To reverse the habitual way of thinking means to stop oneself from immobilizing the reality that is in a process of movement. This step is of crucial importance, as without it the attained knowledge will not be disinterested. It resembles in many ways Husserl’s phenomenological

deduction, which demands a “bracketing” of the natural attitude in favor of the phenomenological attitude.

7. *“This reversal has never been practiced in a methodical manner; but a careful study of the history of human thought would show that to it we owe the greatest accomplishments in the sciences, as well as whatever living quality there is in metaphysics”.* (CM, p. 223)

Even though intuition as a faculty has been present, it has not been approached methodically.

8. *“What has caused this object to be lost sight of, and misled science itself about the origin of certain methods it employs, is that intuition once grasped must find a mode of expression and application which conforms to our habits of thought and which furnishes us, in well-defined concepts, the solid basis we so greatly need. That is the condition of what we call strictness, precision, and indefinite extension of a general method to particular cases. Now this extension and this work of logical perfecting can be carried on for centuries, while the generative act of the method lasts only an instant. That is why we so often take the logical apparatus of science for science itself, forgetting the intuition from which the rest was able to ensure”* (CM, p. 228)

“The generative act of the method [that] lasts only an instant” is the reversal of the habitual way of thinking. From here, we can see that at its core the method of Intuition is a change of attitude towards the world, from a static, immobilizing view to a dynamic, flexible regard of reality. Our language also conforms to the habitual way of thinking, perhaps even is to an extent modeled after it. This is an important point, as it raises a concern about how the findings of Intuition could be expressed. The section on language discusses the dynamic, fluid, less rigid concepts Bergson suggests.

9. *That there are not two different ways of knowing things thoroughly, that the various sciences have their roots in metaphysics, is what the philosophers of antiquity, in general, believed. Not in that lay their error. It consisted in adopting the belief so natural to the human mind, that a variation can only express and develop invariabilities. The result of this was that Action was a weakened Contemplation, duration a false, deceptive and mobile image of immobile eternity, the Soul a fall of the Idea. The whole of that philosophy which begins with Plato and ends with Plotinus is the development of a principle that we should formulate thus: "There is more in the immutable than in the moving, and one passes - from the stable to the unstable by a simple diminution." Now the contrary is the truth.* (CM pp. 226)

The formation of static concepts assumes that whatever the concept denotes will remain static as well, which goes contrary to the view of reality in a flux. The fixity can be abstracted from the movement, but a movement cannot be reconstructed as a fixity. The Doctrine of Intuition as presented by Bergson is an attempt to reconcile the experience of change we have in reality with the metaphysical view about it.

### 1.3.2. Deleuze's Interpretation of Bergson's Intuition as a Method

Gilles Deleuze's *Bergsonism* provides a summary of Bergson's method. Deleuze presents Intuition as "neither a feeling, an inspiration, nor a disorderly sympathy, but a fully developed method, one of the most fully developed methods in philosophy. It has its strict rules, constituting that which Bergson calls "precision" in philosophy." Deleuze describes the method to be (1) problematizing, as it tests the problems for truth and falsity before posing them, (2) differentiating, as it makes divisions between differences in kind and differences in degree, (3) temporalizing, as it takes into account change. Deleuze outlines five rules of the method of Intuition:

*"First Rule: Apply the test of true and false to problems themselves. Condemn false problems and reconcile truth and creation at the level of problems. "Complementary Rule: False problems are of two sorts, "nonexistent problems," defined as problems whose very terms contain a confusion of the "more" and the "less"; and "badly stated" questions, so defined because their terms represent badly analyzed composites."*

For example, we treat negation as something less, while it is in fact more, because it includes the object for negation, the application of negation, and the motive for carrying out a negation. Or we think that there is less in the idea of the possible than in the idea of the real, as the real is regarded as something possible "realized", as if the possible needs something to become real, or as if it has the same sort of existence as the real. But in fact "there is more in the idea of the possible than there is in the idea of the real: 'For the possible is only the real

with the addition of an act of mind that throws its image back into the past once it has been enacted,' and the motive of that act". For example the question of "Why is there being?" presupposes the existence of nothingness. The question derives from an opposition between 'being' and 'nothing'. But 'being' is something that has real existence, while nothing is a virtual operation of the mind, an idea carrying *more* intellectual content when we think it carries *less*, and so use it as if it carries less content. So, the mistake is treating being and nothing as different only in degree, while they are different in kind. We say that the terms of the problem represent badly analyzed composites – so the problem is non-existent. So, the first sort of false problems (confusion of more and less) relies on the second sort (terms containing badly analyzed composites).

This step shows how the method of Intuition aims to extend beyond our human condition: it tries to dismantle "an illusion that carries us along, or in which we are immersed, inseparable from our condition" (p. 20). This illusion consists in treating differences in kind as differences in degrees, thinking in terms of more and less and "is based in the deepest part of the intelligence: It is not, strictly speaking, dispelled or dispellable, rather it can only be repressed" - as the tendency of this kind of thought is a part of our condition as organisms and useful non-philosophically (Deleuze, p. 21). We treated being and nothing as having differences in degree, when in fact there is a difference in kind – 'being' has a real existence, 'nothing' is an artificial abstraction, a creation of the intellect. But this is not the kind of differences in kind that we are looking for, we will try to find and make a division according to differences in kind in the articulations of the real, meaning within entities that have actual, real existence. Which brings to the next step of the method. As we will see in the 3rd chapter, the problem of free will is an instance of a non-existent problem.

*"Second Rule: Struggle against illusion, rediscover true differences in kind or articulations of the real"* (p.15)

It is important to keep in mind that the division is not between things, but tendencies. As Bergson stated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> point of the doctrine of Intuition: “All reality is tendency, if we agree to call tendency a nascent change of direction.” So, the division is not meant to result in parts, but instead to highlight the different tendencies present in what the terms denote.

In experience we are always given a mixture, more precisely a mobile mixture. In it we try to locate the tendencies that differ in kind as they are what conditions the mixture – what makes it possible to be, and to be what it is. Deleuze explains: “The composite must therefore be divided according to qualitative and qualified tendencies, that is, according to the way in which it combines duration and extensity as they are defined as movements, directions of movements. Duration and extensity serve as the conditions of real experience. He continues: “We go beyond experience, toward the conditions of experience (but these are not, in the Kantian manner, the conditions of all possible experience: They are the conditions of real experience” (p. 23).

*“Complementary Rule to the second rule: The real is not only that which is cut out according to natural articulations or differences in kind; it is also that which intersects again along paths converging toward the same ideal or virtual point.”*

So, the division has been carried out so that the tendencies intersect again, or more precisely, different divisions need to be employed, until the one in which the tendencies reunite is found.

*“Third Rule: State problems and solve them in terms of time rather than of space.”*

The essential properties reveal themselves in the way things persist or endure, so the essences should be looked for in time, rather than space, as time facilitates the qualitative changes that define everything.

## **Chapter 2. Conceptual reconstruction as a barrier**

As we have seen, change has been given a central role in Bergsonian metaphysics. Accordingly, spatialized treatment of time has been criticized by Bergson, as the change itself is wholly absent from the immobile reconstruction of movement. The section below discusses how an immobile reconstruction of the mobile results in an unresolvable paradox on the case of Zeno's paradoxes.

Time is normally measured as a trajectory of a body in motion, and the representation of time used in the sciences is a line. The line consists of points as its parts. The points are taken as units, equal to each other and in the can have the same kind of relationship to one another. Bergson finds this way of dividing time into units inadequate. One reason is because such a depiction presupposes stopping points in time, which do not exist as time goes on continuously. Measuring is typically carried out through taking as a unit an aspect or an effect of whatever is being measured, but when time is measured points of immobility are taken as units, when there is no real immobility in time - immobility (i.e. the fixed points that make up the trajectory of the moving body) is not an aspect or effect of time (CM, p.10). Take a movement such as raising a hand, the invisible line the hand makes going from one place into another traces it. The points making up the invisible line would represent where the hand was at each point of time, as if it went from A to B, then from B to C and so on, but these stops are only imagined, virtual, while the movement itself is indivisible. Bergson writes "The line one measures is immobile, time is mobility. The line is made, it is complete; time is what is happening, and more than that, it is what causes everything to happen. The measuring of time never deals with duration as duration; what is counted is only a certain number of extremities of intervals, or moments, ind." (CM, p. 10)

Duration is the real time for Bergson, indivisible and thus unmeasurable - not quantitative but qualitative. Duration is opposed to the clock time, which is composed of seconds as units,



seconds that follow one another as a sequence, one beginning then ending, then a new one beginning. But the sequence itself does not capture the flow of time as it is experienced, instead it divides it into artificial parts. “[Time’s] essence being to flow, not one of its parts is still there when another part comes along. Superposition of one part on another with measurement in view is therefore impossible, unimaginable, inconceivable...In the case of time, the idea of superposition would imply absurdity, for any effect of duration which will be superimposable upon itself and consequently measurable, will have as its essence non-duration.” writes Bergson. (CM, p. 9)

While the mathematical time, as it is - artificially divided into units and measured, is useful for the sciences, for practical action upon the world, it leads to confusion and paradoxes when it is used in philosophy. In *Matter and Memory* Bergson discusses Zeno’s paradoxes as a result of mistreatment of time. One of the paradoxes suggested by Zeno is the Arrow paradox, which claims that at any moment of time a flying arrow is at rest. Russel describes the paradox by saying “It is never moving, but in some miraculous way the change of position has to occur between the instants, that is to say not at any time whatever”. Russel’s description brings out how the paradox relies on viewing time as having successive unit instants, and how viewing time as succession of instants makes movement impossible and requires a “a miracle” between the instants to make it happen. Bergson claims at the root of the paradox is thinking that points can be distinguished in time as they are distinguished in space (in the trajectory of a moving body). He writes “... the fallacy appears, yet more evident, in the third argument (the Arrow) which consists in the conclusion that, because it is possible to distinguish points on the path of a moving body, we have the right to distinguish indivisible moments in the duration of its movement’. This fallacy derives from a common sensical understanding of time, which “regards becoming as a thing’, which creates an unmoving line to depict movement” (MM, p. 251). Bergson writes “In holding movement to be divisible, as its trajectory is, common sense

merely expresses the two facts which alone are of importance in practical life: first, that every movement describes a space; second, that at every point of this space the moving body might stop.’ But a movement when it is carried out in reality is whole and occurs in a certain unique manner impossible to fully capture with fixed ready-made symbols, like the line. This idea helps make sense of the paradox relating to the race of Achilles with the tortoise. Thinking that the movement of Achilles and the movement of the tortoise coincide with their trajectories, the division and the manipulation of the trajectories is carried over to their movements, and so the paradox arises. The trajectories of their movements are divided and manipulated with the same logic, which fails to account for different paces. But the pace is essentially important to the movement as it occurred in reality, in which Achilles eventually catches up with the tortoise. The paradox rendering movement impossible, as to reach to a point one has to go half the distance, and half of the half of the distance, as so on infinitely, so that one has to overcome infinity to move, shows the mismatch between the movement as it occurs in actuality and the movement’s reconstruction as a trajectory of the moving body. The human intellect imagines division of the trajectory infinitely, subscribing to each point of the trajectory a point of time. But it does not take an infinity for time to pass - it moves without a stop, continuously, indivisibly because time does not have moments as points on a line it passes through, it is not a succession of “now”-s. The division of the trajectory of the movement is possible, but not the division of the movement itself. The treatment of time as comprised of instants is merely an assumption, which is based on analogizing time to space.

## **2.1 From conceptual to process approach**

From Zeno’s Paradoxes we see the fallacy of treating time as a homogeneous quantitative multiplicity. The abstraction of all qualitative difference that movement possesses leaves nothing of the movement but a succession of empty static instants. It is as if the “miracle” that takes place in between the instants, the miracle that is essential to change, does not occur

at all. An artificial reconstruction of time as space (“spatialized time”) abstracts the movement of time from time, reducing it to successive snapshots of space. Representing a movement with an immobility equates to treating time as matter.

In the following passage Bergson makes a connection between the terms in which the problems are stated and the solutions they can receive:

“It already frees us of certain speculative certitudes when it posits the problem of the mind in terms of mind and not of matter, when, in a general way, it makes it unnecessary for us to employ concepts to do work for which most of them are not meant. These concepts are included in words. They have most often been elaborated by the social organism in view of an object which has nothing to do with metaphysics. In order to form them society has cut out reality according to its needs. Why should philosophy accept a division which in all probability will not correspond to the articulations of the real? This division, however, it does usually accept. It accepts the problem as it is posited by language. It is therefore condemned in advance to receive a ready-made solution or, at best, simply to choose between the two or three only possible solutions, which are co-eternal to this positing of the problem” (CM p. 57)

The concepts employed in traditional metaphysics cannot accommodate a movement, as these concepts are modeled on space to begin with. The more rigorous they become, the further we are from reality. Bergson thinks the question comes down to a choice: “Here, then, is the question which arises, and which I consider essential. Since any attempt at purely conceptual philosophy calls forth antagonistic efforts, and since, in the field of pure dialectics there is no system to which one cannot oppose another, should we remain in that field or, (without, of course, ceasing to exercise our faculties of conception and reasoning), ought we not rather return to perception, getting it to expand and extend? ” (p. 156)

When moments of time, which is change itself, are denoted as immobilities, they are taken as things. This stands at the heart of conceptual metaphysics, which proceeds with a virtual construction and perfection of a certain explanatory schemata that is meant to be true eternally. Conceptual metaphysics puts an emphasis on the substance that remains itself, does not change, and what does not change is eternal. To seek for a system of metaphysics that is meant to be eternally true is to abstract time from the analysis. Therefore, such a system will not be close to reality – with the movement and change present in it. “But in each case, we are dealing with theories. Let us stick to the facts. *Time is immediately given*. That is sufficient for us, and until its inexistence or perversity is proved to us we shall merely register that there is effectively a flow of unforeseeable novelty.” such is the alternative offered by Bergson. (CM, p. 122-123)

## 2.2 Essentiality of Time

The fundamental role given to time in Bergson’s account, reflected in his supposition that the ultimate reality is change, and his criticism of “spatialized time” raises a question: Is time more “essential” than space? The third step of the method of Intuition as Deleuze interprets it is to solve problems in terms of time, rather than space. Deleuze considers this step as one giving “the fundamental meaning of intuition” (*Bergsonism*, p. 31). He suggests to understand it in the light of differences in kind and considers the principle Bergsonian division between duration and space. But it is not enough to say that duration and space differ in kind, the real division “occurs between (1) duration, which “tends” for its part to take on or bear all the differences in kind (because it is endowed with the power of qualitatively varying with itself), and (2) space, which never presents anything but differences of degree (since it is quantitative homogeneity). There is thus not a difference in kind between the two halves of

the division; the qualitative difference is entirely on one side.” (p. 31) This is what it means to divide according to natural articulations<sup>5</sup>, so that “we have: on the one hand, the aspect of space, by which the thing can only ever differ in degree from other things *and from itself* (augmentation, diminution); and on the other hand, the aspect of duration, by which the thing differs in kind from all others and from itself (alteration)” (p. 31). He then brings the example of a lump of sugar, which has a particular “spatial configuration”, but this criteria allows us to differentiate only between the sugar and anything else. But “it also has a duration, a rhythm of duration, a way of being in time that is at least partially revealed in the process of its dissolving, and that shows how this sugar differs in kind not only from other things, but first and foremost from itself. This alteration, which is one with the essence or the substance of a thing, is what we grasp when we conceive of it in terms of Duration.” (p.32)

### 2.3 Language

Giving time a central role in metaphysics has consequences not only on the methodology for metaphysics, but also the language through which it is communicated. This is a point on which Bergson has been harshly criticized (for example by Bertrand Russell, in his *History of Western Philosophy*, 1946), being accused of vagueness and metaphor-icity, at the same time his language is the reason he has been awarded with a Nobel Prize in Literature.

To think intuitively one must reverse their “habitual way of thinking” (CM, 223, 162, 81). This habitual way carries many conventions of traditional metaphysics. The rules that come with language are also conventional, language itself does not contain metaphysical truth. Keeping this idea in mind and thinking about language firstly as a means of communication;

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<sup>5</sup> Deleuze clarifies “as with proportions and figures that vary greatly from case to case” (p. 31). He refers to the qualitative “parts” of Duration which are not homogeneous but heterogeneous and thus vary in proportions and figures when they are instantiated.

imagery, metaphorical expressions and analogies become just as justified in use as the usual way of employing words.

Having criticized reason as a philosophical method, Bergson cannot use it to establish the validity of intuition or to define it. And, having criticized the dialectic for its rigidity, metaphors and analogies become an alternative, more suitable tools for Bergson to express his ideas. He uses not only analogies, metaphors and imagery to explain duration, but moves from one to another, through commonalities of two metaphors or a defect he notices in one and tries to avoid in the next description. The way he wants to use language is very much like the way he explains real time to be: dynamic, fluid, creative. His literary techniques are not a barrier, but on the contrary an aid to gain a better understanding of his philosophical thought. The dynamic way he employs language is suited to satisfy the demands of his dynamic metaphysical views.

“Intuition will be communicated only by the intelligence. It is more than idea; nevertheless in order to be transmitted, it will have to use ideas as a conveyance. It will prefer, however, to have recourse to the most concrete ideas, but those which still retain an outer fringe of images. Comparisons and metaphors will here suggest what cannot be expressed. That will not constitute a detour; it will amount to going straight to the goal. If one were constantly to speak an abstract, so called "scientific" language, one would be giving of mind only its imitation by matter, for abstract ideas have been drawn from the external world and always imply a spatial representation: and yet one would think one had analyzed mind. Abstract ideas alone would, therefore, in such a case, be inviting us to imagine mind on the model of matter and to think it by transposition, that is, in the exact meaning of the word, by metaphor.” (CM p. 48)

Even the concepts Bergson uses to describe Duration and Intuition are placeholders, ready to be developed further. He writes “We shall in this way think we are forming a faithful representation of duration by lining tip the concepts of unity, multiplicity, continuity, finite or infinite divisibility, etc. That is precisely the illusion”. He goes on further claiming that “... our duration can be presented to us directly in an intuition, that it can be suggested indirectly to us by images, but that it cannot-if we give to the word concept its proper meaning-be enclosed in a conceptual representation.” Instead what he has in mind is “flexible, mobile, almost fluid representations, always ready to mold themselves on the fleeting forms of intuition.”

On Bergson’s view language itself is in many ways rigid and, because it cannot abstain from abstracting and generalizing and assigning symbols to things. However, language is also a flexible tool, one that can be used in many ways and not only for satisfying a fixed practical interest or imprisoning a fluid notion in a concept. The language used in literature and poetry, for example, is used in a looser, more fluid way, however even in these cases language manages to communicate, and perhaps communicate in a deeper sense, as it strives not towards abstraction but towards particularity. The way in which Bergson uses language is specifically tailored to communicate the essence of intuition. Thick descriptions complementing each other are necessary for expressing the movement that is reality in a nuanced way.

### **Chapter 3. Implications on the problem of Free Will**

Bergson’s account of the problem of Free Will in *Time and Free Will: Essay on the immediate Data of Consciousness* shows the problematizing aspect of Intuition, which constitutes the first step of the method as discussed by Deleuze. Bergson argues that “an illegitimate translation of the unextended into the extended, of quality into quantity, has introduced contradiction into the very heart of the question” of free will. Here by the extended he means the things spready out in space and which constitute a quantitative multiplicity, by the unextended he means psychic

states which constitute a qualitative multiplicity. By introducing the discreteness that is out there in space into the internal processes, a false analogy is being made, since psychic states are not discrete and discernable as things in space.

In the first two of the three chapters of the work Bergson discusses the conceptions of intensity and duration, in the third he shows how objections against the free will rely on a false analogy between extensity and duration, between magnitude and intensity.

He begins with the common state view that psychological states (pain, pity, aesthetic enjoyment, etc) have magnitudes, for example it is common to say something like: “I like this painting *more* than the other”. “No one will deny that we experience psychological states as intrinsically qualitative, but Bergson rejects the common idea that they are also somehow intrinsically quantitative” as Gutting explains (*20<sup>th</sup> century French Philosophy*, pp. 56-57). Furthermore, the common sense view suggests that these psychological states can be regarded as distinct and succeed each other in time. Bergson examines a range of psychological states concluding that the quantitative language of “more” and “less” refers either to the quantifiability of the cause of the state or impacted “more area”, either physically or psychically, but not to the state itself. The quantifiability of the cause would be feeling “greater” pain because of a harder kick versus weaker kick. Of course what is felt would be partly the actual force of the kick (which could be harder or weaker), but the feeling cannot be reduced to that. The other reason, “bigger area” of impact, for example the kick covering more or less of the body, or, grief impacting a “bigger area” of one’s mental world. But again, the particular quality of pain remains in the picture and cannot be reduced to either: quantifiable causes, or body area/psychic life “area”<sup>6</sup>. The lesser punch can feel worse somehow because it

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<sup>6</sup> I use words denoting spaces in parenthesis, as I see how spatial metaphors make it easier to show the point, but at the same time the argument is exactly against treating internal states as occupying place (that would mean they do have magnitudes, what is extended lends itself to calculation easily as it is uniform, in that it shows only differences in degree).



is coming from a friend, the grief can feel lighter, even if it affects all of one's psychic life, when goodbyes have been said properly. This particularity of experience is what makes the qualities of it irreducible to quantity.

The claim that psychic states are distinct and succeed in a temporal sequence allows for the view that they are also in certain causal relations with each other. This is a reduction such that "denies what is given in our immediate experience of our psychological states as temporal namely, 'a wholly qualitative multiplicity, an absolute heterogeneity of elements which pass over into one another'" (*20<sup>th</sup> century French Philosophy*, p.57, TF, p. 229).

Bergson's argument on the temporal aspect would be the same as we have seen with other problems, he says: the idea that there can be instants in time which would correspond to psychic states occurring during each instant, would be an artificial separation and would deny change to the states, when we know from our experience (immediate givens of consciousness) that these states do undergo change, and this change is such that cannot be divided. The subtle, un-orchestrated development of internal states, which are of different qualities, will not accept a single mold as a unit for measurement because the units would differ from each other qualitatively, which is contrary to the idea of a unit. Gutting continues "Common sense and, especially science misdescribe psychological states by trying to apply the categories of quantity and extension to what is in fact irreducibly qualitative and temporal".

Regarding the psychological experience of a self as a succession of discernable states equates to regarding it as juxtaposed in space (the experience of the self as simply the sum of these states)<sup>7</sup>, as opposed to a continuous process. The cause and effect type of relationship observed in extended matter (discussed in the section below as an automatic response of matter) is then carried over to the unextended, aiming to explain the unextended by means of an

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<sup>7</sup> In Bergson's view this is the associationist account of the self in psychology

analogy with the extended. We find the same fallacy of treating Duration as Extensity, a qualitative multiplicity as a quantitative multiplicity.

The “transient” causation finds that place in Bergson’s account, as when an agent (as an organic process) has the ability to produce an effect, but not causation which follows an external law necessarily. But the determinism of physical states does not extend to the psychic states. While “mathematical pre-existence implies non-duration, (...) we endure and therefore may be free” (TF, pp. 204). It seems that restoring the temporal aspect to the story also restores our freedom. At the same time Bergson allows for this freedom to be in degrees, that is, his theory accounts for actions that would be “automatic” and so, unfree. These are habitual actions, which do not necessarily have the qualitative temporal aspect, but are merely necessary for sustaining ourselves, or achieving a certain practical goal.

## **Conclusion**

We can see the problems involved in taking time as comprised of distinct elements: impossibility of change, deterministic implications, and a big gap with time as it is experienced by us and as it is described to ultimately be. Bergson’s philosophy offers, if not a way to avoid these problems, at least a change of attitude towards them, another perspective from which one can pose these problems, which is valuable in itself. His method of Intuition suggests a particular way of proceeding with these problems, the treatment of negation and possibility constrain the metaphysical “system” to what is real, instead of leaving the world in the middle of empty extreme concepts of nothing and everything, zero and infinity of the logical systems. Not unlike how Kant was looking for a new starting point, different from the empiricist one, which could not account for the order, substantial causal connections in nature and our

experience from their perspective focusing on ideas, Bergson invites us to look for a new starting point for metaphysics. His method is radical. Since conceptual accounts cannot satisfactorily understand movement, Bergson tries to overcome this problem by taking mobility as given. But of course, his position, like every other, also comes with difficulties arising from its most basic commitments. Given the radicality of his account, he cannot rely on concepts the same way other metaphysicians can, and he also needs to account for the apparent utility and reliability of scientific thinking. Because of his critique of the Intellect he has been mislabeled as an “anti-intellectualist” by many, but it is important to keep in mind that his criticism of intellect applies only when the tools of the intellect are extended to and used in philosophy. By assigning the domain of matter to science, and the domain of Duration to philosophy, a full knowledge of reality can be achieved.

Bergson’s method of Intuition allows for the overcoming of limitations of understanding shown by Kant. His metaphysical views provide a better picture of reality, which relies and agrees with our experience of change, and by extension offers a novel attitude for the restatement and resolution to the long-standing problem of free will. What we end up with is a metaphysical view not reconstructed from ready-made conceptual points which are in formulaic relations with each other, and can be deduced from each other, but one which accounts for change and offers a unique attitude and a unique solution to each problem, according to the real articulations of it.

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