

I. Intuition as Method

A. Rigorous method determined by three acts:

1. stating and creating problems

a) True/False applies not just to solutions, but to problems themselves (14)

(1) realizing that we are the creators of our own problems gives us "semi-divine power"; those who accept ready-made problems of society are slaves (15)

(2) once the true problem has been stated/created, all that remains is to uncover/discover its answer (like a mathematical equation $4y=8$)

b) Deleuze: "the history of humanity, from the theoretical as much as from the practical point of view is [the history] of the construction of problems. It is here that humanity makes its own history, and the becoming conscious of that activity is like the conquest of history." (16)

c) two types of false problem (17)

(1) nonexistent problems- the very terms contain a confusion of the "more" and the "less"

(a) example: nonbeing/disorder/possible- there is not less, but more in the idea of nonbeing/disorder/possible than being/order/real (the idea of disorder only appears because we refuse to see two or more irreducible orders) (19)

(b) asking "why is there something rather than nothing?" is to mistake the more (nothing) for the less (something)

(2) badly stated problems- the terms represent badly analyzed composites; arbitrary grouping of things that differ in kind

(a) 2nd problem related to the 1st, in that the most general error of science and metaphysics is to see everything in terms of difference in degree (nonbeing is more or less than being, etc.) rather than differences in kind (20)

d) only intuition can decide true from false problems, thereby throwing intelligence back upon itself (Kant: the critical mode: reason constructs its own problems)

2. discovering genuine differences in kind

a) Bergson (in)famous for dualism: "Intuition as method is a method of division, Platonic in inspiration" (22)

b) Even so, Bergson recognizes that experience offers nothing but compositions, with kinds mixed together

c) Science and metaphysics have become forgetful of the distinction between space and time; they become mixed as one kind of representation where two "pure presences" of duration and extensity are lost

(1) They then confuse space-time for a deteriorated opposite of eternity

d) Kinds are tendencies or movements

(1) Duration = contraction

(2) Extensity = expansion/relaxation

- e) Example: the brain's function is not different in kind from the reflex functions of the body—the brain does not manufacture representations (24)
 - (1) the brain complicates the relationship between excitation and response by establishing an interval
 - (2) the interval is the interest of the organism
 - (3) Deleuze: "Perception is not the object *plus* something, but the object *minus* something, minus everything that does not interest us." (25)
 - (4) Bergson's thesis: "Perception puts us at once into matter"- there is no difference in kind between perception of matter and matter itself
- f) The mixture of the two tendencies pure memory and pure perception (or "matter-perception-memory") is our representational experience (26)
 - (1) the method of intuition leads us beyond the turning point of representational experience to the *conditions* of experience (27)
 - (2) these conditions are not general or abstract, not the conditions of all *possible* experience (which would be the Kantian method), but rather the conditions of *actual* experience
- g) Deleuze: "Dualism is only a moment, which must lead to the re-formation of a monism"
 - (1) differences in kind, established in the first turn beyond experience to its concrete conditions of actuality, intersect at another point, converging on the same ideal virtuality in the returning point of experience (28-29)
- h) Philosophy is not about human wisdom, but about opening us to the beyond, to what is inhuman and superhuman (durations that are inferior or superior to our own)
- 3. apprehending real time/solving problems in terms of duration (31)
 - a) time/duration (heterogeneous, varying qualitatively within itself) v. space/extensity (homogeneous and quantitative, varying only according to degree)
 - b) Plato formulated method of division, but also criticized it for lacking a middle term (32)
 - c) Bergson avoids the need for a middle term by reducing degrees of space to the kinds of time by way of intuitive method (i.e., space emerges from relations between the durations of things (49))
- B. Bergson's evolution as a thinker
 - 1. early phase: treated duration in psychological way
 - 2. later phase: came to see duration as the essence of all things and the theme of a complex ontology (34)
 - a) He came to see space, not as a fiction separating us from the psychological reality of duration, but as grounded in being, one of its two tendencies
 - b) absolute being has two tendencies: "spirit imbued with metaphysics" and "matter known by science" (35)
 - c) Absolute = Difference (between degree and kind)
- II. Duration as Immediate Datum
 - A. Intuitive method decomposes experiential composite of extensity and duration (space-time) to reveal two types of "multiplicity"

1. space with its differences of degree and juxtaposition of simultaneous instants (actual and discontinuous)
2. duration with its differences of kind and fusion of successive heterogeneous occasions

B. Bergson v. Riemann on the issue of “multiplicity” (39)

1. Bergson was opposed to the theory of Relativity because of its interpretation of “continuous multiplicities”
 - a) Riemann (and Einstein) mistakenly interpret temporal multiplicities as though it they could be measured according to a single metrical principle
 - b) Bergson argues that temporal multiplicities belong to the sphere of duration, where divisions cannot be measured by differences in degree but can only be marked by differences in kind (40)
 - c) Bergson’s multiplicities are subjective, qualitative, and continuous; Riemann’s/Einstein’s are objectified, quantitative, and numerical
 - (1) subjective sphere of duration holds its differences in reserve (in virtuality)
 - (2) objective sphere of extensity has no virtuality; everything is already actualized as matter (mere surface hiding nothing)
 - (3) Deleuze: “with duration, we speak of indivisibles at each stage of its division.” (42)

(a) Duration is the virtual in the process of actualization.

2. Virtuality v. Possibility (43; see also 96-98)

3. Critique of Negation and Dialectic

- a) Bergson condemns Hegel’s “false, abstract” dialectical movement as failure to track real, concrete movement (44)
- b) Hegel’s logical concepts of Being and nonbeing are like baggy clothes, too big to fit their intended realities- “a net so slack that everything slips through” (45)
- c) “Never, with concepts or points of view, will you make a thing”
- d) Dialectic is only the beginning stage of philosophy, which progresses to the method of intuition (124n16)
- e) There are only different kinds of being, there is no negation of being
 - (1) negation always involves abstract concepts (nonbeing, disorder, possibility, etc.), giving them a force and a power to effect reality
 - (2) negation leads to the consideration of the deterioration, by degrees, of being until it reaches nonbeing (as in emanationist schemes of creation)

III. Memory as Virtual Coexistence

A. in *Matter and Memory*, Bergson decomposes the composite of representational experience into two kinds of tendency (53)

1. matter/perception/objectivity
2. memory/recollection/subjectivity
3. (with affectivity as the blurred meeting point between matter and memory)

B. Asking “where is memory?” creates a false problem! (i.e., a badly analyzed composite) (54)

1. The brain is an object and so cannot hold the subjective memory contents

2. Recollection preserves itself; the past is indestructible, never ceasing to be (55)

C. Critique of Presentism

1. We tend to confuse *being* with *being-present*.
2. The present is precisely what *is not*, what is always moving outside itself, always in the process of falling beyond itself, always caught *in the act of presentation*: in a word, the present is *ecstatic*.
3. The past, though it has ceased to act, has not ceased to be; it always still *is*. The past is always already present.
4. Deleuze: "Only the present is 'psychological'; but the past is pure ontology." (56)
 - a) the past is universal and eternal, "the condition of the passage of every particular present"
 - b) "ontological Memory" takes Bergson beyond psychological duration (57)
 - c) When I remember something, I dip into the virtual past as it exists *in itself* (impersonally) in order to retrieve and actualize it in a particular way, relevant *for me*.
 - d) The past is the condition of the present's passage. (59)

D. Deleuze: the only equivalent to Bergson's account of ontological Memory is Plato's doctrine of Anamnesis.

1. Plato's account of Recollection serves as the foundation for the unfolding of time.

E. Deleuze's Cinematographical method of composition

1. The past coexists with the present, just as recollection coexists with perception
 - a) experience is the composite of repetition and difference (i.e., *virtual* and not actual repetition)
 - b) the experiential composition of memory-matter is like the frames in a cartoon movie, each one only slightly different from the last, but still just different enough to successfully generate the appearance of continuous animation.
 - c) See Bergson's Time Cone diagram (60)
 - (1) Each "plane" (or "frame" in the movie analogy) of the virtual/pure memory, though different in kind from other planes and from the present, nevertheless coexists with them in the passage of the present.
 - d) Deleuze's VCR analogy: "The whole of our past is played, restarts, repeats itself, *at the same time*, on all the levels that it sketches out." (61)

F. False problems/questions about time lead to:

1. the notion that we can reconstitute the past with the present
2. that we pass gradually from present to past
3. that past and present are before and after
4. that the mind works through the addition of elements, rather than jumps between levels (61-62)

G. True problem regarding time = "How can pure memory take on psychological existence?" (62)

1. Memory can translate-contract, and/or rotate-orient itself so as to improve useful action and image-recall in the present (64)

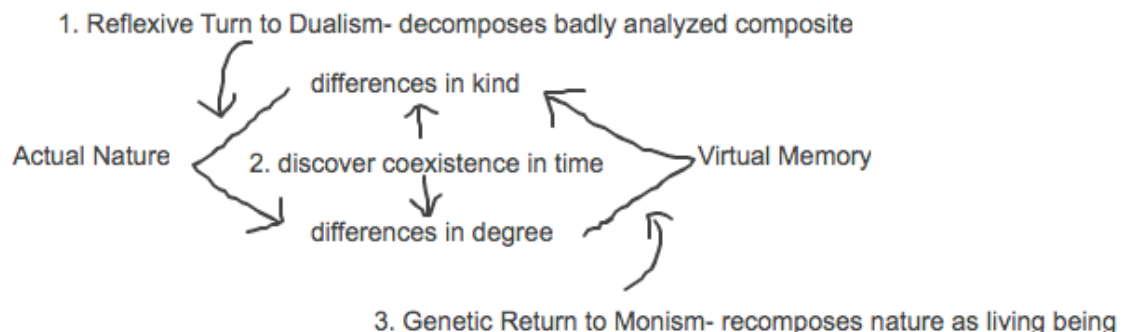
2. Picture yourself embedded in a transparent lattice-work that is constantly rotating/contracting around you to provide you with proper access to relevant memories stored within its network of heterogeneous planes.
3. Deleuze: "The past literally moves toward the present in order to find a point of contact with it." (70)
4. Psychologically, accessing the past feels to us like a "leap" or "jump" to a level beyond the present; but ontologically, it is first of all the past that comes to meet experience.
5. Are Bergson/Deleuze trying to give a properly posited account of Einstein's space-time [this time as *virtual* (real time), rather than *actual* (spatialized time)]?
 - a) contraction = temporal gravitation?
 - b) rotation = spatial acceleration?

IV. One or Many Durations?

- A. Bergson's early dualism is finally resolved in a monism (but doesn't this repeat the mistake of reducing things that differ in kind to those that differ only in degree?)
 1. Deleuze: "The present itself is only the most contracted level of the past." (74)
 2. Deleuze: sensation is "the operation of contracting trillions of vibrations onto a receptive surface" (i.e., quality emerges from the contraction of quantity)
 3. The dualism of differences in kind between extensity and duration becomes, in the later Bergson, the difference in degree between contraction and relaxation (75)
 4. Bergson's thought moves through a series of hypotheses regarding time:
 - a) generalized pluralism- completely different rhythms of duration coexist
 - b) limited pluralism- material things only gain duration by participating in duration of living beings
 - c) monism- there is really only a single duration, that of the universe, in which everything participates (78)
 5. Deleuze wonders if Bergson has forgotten his posing of the problem of time as "multiplicity"?
- B. implications of Einstein's interpretation of Relativity Theory (79):
 1. movement entails a contraction of bodies and a dilation of their time
 2. simultaneity is dislocated
 3. rest and movement are relative
 4. space and time are reciprocal
 5. there are multiple flows of time each with different rates of passage relative to the others.
- C. Bergson critiques Einstein's "time" as a false time, a mere "numerical multiplicity" (80)
 1. Einstein has confused (through bad analyzation of a composite) time with space
 2. Bergson also posits multiple/different flows, but they coexist in the triplicity of simultaneous duration (the flow of the river, the movement of wind-blown leaves, the duration of my experience) (81)
 - a) the duration of my experience of duration is always the privileged time-system

- b) Einstein negated lived time by insisting upon the lack of a privileged time-system (83)
 - 3. Bergson insists that other time-systems (i.e., non-simultaneously/non-coexisting time-systems) can only be symbolic; in reality, there must be a single, universal, and impersonal time flow, accessed by us via the method of intuition (which necessarily takes beyond ourself and is inhuman/superhuman) (82)
 - 4. Einstein's "simultaneity" is only applicable to mechanical clocks: it may be true that this clock-simultaneity is variable and relative, but only symbolically
 - 5. Einstein confuses the virtual for the actual, leading Bergson to condemn "the whole combination of space and time into a badly analyzed composite, where space is considered ready-made, and time, in consequence, as a 4th dimension of space." (86)
 - 6. Bergson's theory of simultaneity confirms the conception of duration "as the virtual coexistence of all the degrees of a single and identical time." (85)
 - a) expansion/relaxation and contraction are relative to one another
 - (1) therefore: there is always extensity in our duration, and always duration in matter
 - b) Deleuze: "Matter is never expanded enough to be pure space, to stop having this minimum of contraction through which it participates in duration." (88)
 - (1) therefore: pure space is an abstraction, a concept that has been made too baggy to fit anything concrete
 - (2) intelligence pushes matter to its extreme, which is space; but intelligence then adapts itself to space/matter by means of duration/memory (89)
- V. Élan Vital as Movement of Differentiation
- A. Search for the next true problem begins with "How are we to resolve the difference between the dualism of differences of kind and the monism of differences in degree?" (91)
 - 1. Deleuze asks aloud whether Bergson contradicts himself on this point, or if his method move through successive moments (92)
 - 2. reflexive dualism v. genetic dualism (96)

Deleuze's Bergsonian Intuitive Method



- a) reflexive dualism- results from decomposition of impure composite
 - b) genetic dualism- results from differentiation of pure virtual
- B. Virtual v. possible- the virtual is “real without being actual, ideal without being abstract” (97)
 - 1. virtual actualization = divergence and creation
 - 2. possible realization = imitation and limitation
- C. the “possible” is the source of false problems
 - 1. in Einstein’s space-time bloc, the idea of the possible is reducible to reality, such that the real is understood to come about on its own as if everything were already given and pre-made
 - a) the possible is reduced to a fictitious image projected backward by the real
 - b) this backwards projection obscures the true process of creation (=the living differentiation of the simple virtual)
- D. Deleuze: “Evolution takes place from the virtual to the actuals” (99)
 - 1. Duration becomes life (élan vital) when it appears in the movement of differentiating matter
 - a) duration is simple virtuality that becomes actual/alive by way of self-differentiation.
 - 2. The actualization of the virtual through differentiation refutes the reductionist notion that chance variation guides the process
 - a) chance variations would only ever remain external and indifferent one to the other
 - b) the process of evolution proceeds rather through internal differentiations, leaping all at once to new planes
 - 3. Deleuze: “Differentiation is never a negation but a creation; difference is never negative but essentially positive and creative.” (103)
 - a) living beings, in relation to matter, appear primarily as the stating of problems
 - (1) for example: “The construction of an eye is primarily the solution to a problem posed in terms of light.”
 - (2) sometimes living beings state false problems and lose their way, becoming trapped in a particular level, no longer open to further differentiation (mollusks, insects) (104)
 - b) Deleuze: “Life as movement alienates itself in the material form that it creates... every species is thus an arrest of movement.”
- E. Mechanism v. Finalism-both spatialize time, deceiving us into thinking the whole is given (even if only from a God’s eye view)
 - 1. mechanism- everything is calculable in terms of its state
 - 2. finalism- everything is calculable in terms of its program
- F. Bergson’s “open” finalism
 - 1. Creation has a purpose, but it is only discovered in the act (106)
 - 2. Human being is the purpose of evolution in the sense that in her, the actual becomes adequate to the virtual
 - a) Human “brings about in [herself] successively everything that, elsewhere, can only be embodied in different species.”

- b) Human is able to leap beyond her plane (plan) as nature natured in order to reach nature naturing
 - c) Deleuze quoting Bergson: "On man's line of differentiation, the élan vital was able to use matter to create an instrument of freedom, 'to make a machine which should triumph over mechanism.'" (107)
- G. Instinct v. Intelligence
 - 1. even though instinct and intelligence diverge as they actualized, each was able to recapture the advantage of the other side
 - a) Humans possess virtual instinct in their actual intelligence
 - (1) This virtual instinct is the "story-telling function" ("the creation of gods," "invention of religions," etc.) (108)
 - (2) this virtual instinct causes human societies to close in on themselves, just like other animal species (109)
 - (3) How are we able to go beyond our condition? - the interval or hesitation between the instincts of society and the intelligence of the individual ruptures the closed circle, generating an open soul and an open society
 - (a) intuition appears in this interval as creative emotion
 - (b) this emotion is different in kind from both intelligent egoism and quasi-instinctive social pressure
 - (c) this emotion is "like the God in us...making us adequate to the whole movement of creation" (111)
 - b) Deleuze: "Great souls do not contemplate, they create." (112)
 - (1) "It is the mystic who plays with the whole of creation, who invents an expression of it whose adequacy increases with its dynamism. Servant of an open and finite God, the mystical soul actively plays the whole of the universe, and reproduces the opening of a Whole in which there is nothing to see or to contemplate."