BERGSON'S DOCTRINE OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PERCEPTION

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INTRODUCTION

Bergson's philosophy, from a certain perspective, appears representative of the spiritualistic trend of his time.[1] For example, in a book[2] written in tribute to Bergson - the contents of which were accorded Bergson's personal approval,[3] the author, Edouard LeRoy, tells of a "prosperous" and "new spirit" sweeping 20th century France, a veritable "renaissance of idealism."[4] The roots of this trend may be traced back to the late 18th and early 19th centuries in such thinkers as Maine de Biran and Ravaisson.[5] LeRoy quotes Ravaisson's "prophetic" 1867 work, Report.

> Many signs permit us to forsee in the near future a philosophical epoch of which the general character will be the predominance of what may be called a spiritual realism or positivism, having as generating principle the consciousness which mind has of itself of an existence recognized as being the source and support of every other existence, being none other than its action.[6]

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[1] This reference to spiritualism or idealism, as it is sometimes called, is not necessarily intended in a pejorative sense. The "trend" which I allude to, French spiritualism, is commonly, and perhaps often prematurely, considered a form of idealism. What is of interest here, however, is Bergson's affinity, if any, to a premise - the "generating principle" mentioned above - of the movement itself.

[2] Edouard LeRoy, A New Philosophy: Henri Bergson, trans. by Vincent Benson (New York: Henry Holt, 1913).

[3] Ibid, pp. vii-viii; [4] Ibid, p. 135.

[5] Jean-Gaspard-Félix Ravaisson is acknowledged by Bergson as being an inspiration and source of his thought. For an account of this see Bergson's article "The Life and Work of Ravaisson" in Bergson's The Creative Mind, trans. by Mabelle L. Andison (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), pp. 261-300.

[6] Ravaisson in LeRoy's A New Philosophy: Henri Bergson, p. 137.

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual realism emphasizes the "action," so to speak, of consciousness. The term spiritual realism, then, is derived from that philosophical movement commonly known as French spiritualism. As we shall see the "action" of consciousness referred to above denotes, for Bergson, the flow of consciousness, the source of his central notion of duration or "real time." Duration is what Bergson calls "reality itself."[1]

Now the equation of "reality itself" with the flow of consciousness, or duration, seems to comprise an "epistemological monism." Indeed, the identification of the whole of reality with consciousness is generally understood to be idealism. For example, Bergson defines idealism as the reduction of the material world into "nothing but a synthesis of subjective and unextended states" of consciousness.[2] In this latter sense our knowledge corresponds, strictly, to our consciousness. But in fact Bergson does not classify himself as an idealist, except in a qualified,

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 38.

[2] Henri Bergson, Matter and Memory, trans. by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (Doubleday, 1959) p. 40. In regard to realism Bergson adds that it places "behind this synthesis...an independent reality corresponding to it." (Ibid) For the realist then, knowledge of matter is mediated, in as strict a sense as could be attributed to the idealist, through consciousness. Both the realist and idealist, in accordance with Bergson's definitions, claim consciousness to be the immediate object of external perception. In either case the real nature of matter, if such were conceded to exist, would need be considered epistemologically remote.

limited sense.[1] Contrary to his being considered an idealist, then, Charles W. Morris upholds the "unmediated nature" of external knowledge in Bergson.

> His doctrine of perception as the direct apprehension of the material world points definitely in the direction of new realism...[2]

New realism attempts to resolve the subject - object problem of knowledge via its anti-dualistic stance; the notion of an ontological dualism involving a mind matter compresence in knowing is thus mitigated by this doctrine. Consequently, Morris observes that "in all but the most fundamental sense" Bergson's position is "'frankly dualistic,' distinguished by an attempt to 'soften' and make more acceptable this dualism."[3] To put it plainly, Morris is trying to say that the "softened" nature of Bergson's duality is more indicative of the latter's affinity

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[1]"That every reality has a kinship, an analogy, in short a relation with consciousness - this is what we concede to idealism by the very fact that we term things 'images'". (Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 225).

[2]Charles W. Morris, Six Theories of Mind (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932) p. 80.

[3]Ibid., p. 81.

with new realism than it is with French "spiritualism" and "idealism."[1] But if the reader examines Morris' reasoning closely, he will notice that the dissolution of a duality, i.e. of a mind matter relationship devolves back to a non relational, purely "given" theory of external knowledge quite similar to what Morris himself terms, in another context, an"epistemological monism."[2] Wildon H. Carr, in speaking of Bergson's philosophy, states the problem this way:

> It appears to accept fully the premises of New Realism, that is to agree entirely with it in declaring for the unmediated nature of the knowledge of reality that we obtain in external perception, and yet to draw a totally different conclusion respecting the nature of external reality.[3]

Eventually Carr will tell us that Bergson's "scandalous" - in the opinion of the new realists - conclusion regarding matter refers to his speaking of matter in terms of images. He defends Bergson's usage of the term image, concluding that it strikes closer to reality than the words "thing" or "object," which leave us, he says, with the impression of some substance[4] foreign to the content of our perception.[5] But if we likewise

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[1]Morris, Six Theories of Mind, p. 80.

[2]Ibid., p. 275.

[3]Wildon H. Carr, The Philosophy of Change (London: Macmillan, 1914), p. 97.

[4]For example, a noumenon.

[5]Carr, The Philosophy of Change, pp. 97 - 120.

consider Ravaisson's prediction, then Carr's reference to a "totally different conclusion respecting the nature of external reality" assumes an added dimension, i.e. the problem of a world the nature of which is essentially that of mind.

The difficulty revealed within the context of the preceding interpretations emphasizes the need of a detailed, explicit account of Bergson's doctrine of perception, the fundament of his theory of knowledge. Since an undertaking of this sort has yet to be accomplished, my intention is to proceed in its accomplishment by way of a close, textual analysis.

Throughout his philosophy Bergson maintains a doctrine of perception depicting two levels or 'kinds' of perception. It is 'internal' perception that provides us with real knowledge, i.e. duration, a heterogeneous continuum of qualities, an undivided flow. 'External' perception is prone to action upon matter; in this instance, its purpose is to immobilize and objectify - matter, in preparation for action. Matter, as we shall see, is actually an undivided continuum which may be considered analogous, in regard to its nature, to consciousness. But, if in order to distinguish mind from matter in terms of duration, our real knowledge of the external world is reduced to the inner perception of consciousness in Bergson, which is commensurate to duration in his philosophy then we are faced with idealism.[1] If, on the other hand, external perception is capable of resulting

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[1] I apply the term idealism in a sense similar to that which Bergson refers to on page 40 of Matter and Memory. There he says, as I have noted, that idealism is the reduction of the material world into "nothing but a synthesis of subjective and unextended states" of consciousness. In this instance the determining factor is that the immediate object of our real knowledge - in regard to matter, is consciousness and not matter. Emphasis will be placed on Bergson's treatment of this difficulty.

in"real" knowledge - meaning duration - concerning matter, we may no longer have a dualism in which mind could be distinguished - in terms of duration - from matter. Understandably, then, Bergson's expressed purpose, as we shall see in the following chapters of my text, will be (1) the maintenance of a 'duality' between mind and matter; (2) the establishment of a 'relation' between mind and matter. The doctrine of perception will provide Bergson with the vehicle in his attempt to accomplish this purpose. Bergson's explicit claim, in regard to his second objective, will be that external perception - as he formulates it, and in contrast to the position, as he views it, of idealism and realism - is an immediate "contact" with the external world. The claim of immediate "contact" with matter in external perception is meant to refute the idealism of the "Kantians" and those "English philosophers" who contend that what we know within external perception, in essence, are "nothing" more than subjective states of consciousness. This sets the background in which Bergson posits his doctrine.

Bergson's initial concern, however, as evidenced in his first major work, Time and Free Will (1889), was to establish the freedom of the will. This he set out to do within the context of a duration which finds its source in consciousness. In the evolution of his thought duration, as I have already indicated, will become the epitome of reality. Nonetheless, the doctrine of perception, while developed in accordance with the notion of duration throughout his major works can be clearly understood in respect of two aspects of reality, of consciousness (l'esprit) and matter. Consciousness and matter, the basis of Bergson's duality, will serve to distinguish internal and external perception respectively. The key issue,

then, in the context of distinguishing mind from matter in terms of duration, or in establishing that external perception is an actual contact with matter, is whether our knowledge of duration, that is, reality itself, is limited to an internal perception of consciousness, or whether duration may be perceived externally, i.e. within matter. Thus, the aim of this research thesis is to first elucidate, through an analysis of the five basic texts of Bergson which treat perception, his position regarding the two kinds of perception. Next, it will be to indicate the problems which this position raises. Since Bergson's doctrine of perception is intimately linked to his theory of duration, and as such cannot be understood apart from that theory as progressively developed in the course of the various contexts in which that theory is engaged, the five texts, which represent Bergson's treatment of specific problems, will be studied in chronological order. The study of each text will comprise a chapter.

CHAPTER I

TIME AND FREE WILL

Space and External Perception

The issue at hand is the manner in which the immediate data of consciousness, our sensations, are analysed by those whom Bergson considers to be in the Kantian tradition. Bergson claims that they regard sensations as distinct psychic states; Bergson himself refers sensations to what he describes as the heterogeneity of consciousness. The positivists, the empiricists, the psychology contemporary to the writing of Time and Free Will, all in Bergson's estimation, represent the Kantian approach to knowledge. Together with Bergson, they consider sensations to be essentially qualitative; however, it is Bergson's contention that these schools of thought examine qualitative change in terms of 'increase' and 'decrease,' which terminology, for Bergson, represents spatial magnitude, or quantity. What is immediately given to consciousness as pure quality, our sensations, is thus modified by a "refraction" through space otherwise known as external perception. In identifying a sensation with external and quantitative causes we "project" it into space and it returns to us with the latter "having left its mark."[1] Thus, by means of this 'kind'of perception, the intensity of a psychic state, that which itself is qualitative, is represented in terms of divisible, homogeneous space, i.e. quantity. The intensity of a psychic state from this latter point of view is referred to by Bergson as a form, e.g. a form refracted by, or borrowed from space.[2]

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[1]Henri Bergson, Time and Free Will, trans. by F. L. Pogson (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960), pp, 90, 217.

[2]Henri Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 217, 223.

This is an allusion by Bergson to Kant's definition of space as a priori form.

As we shall see in greater detail in the second section of this chapter, Bergson bases his notion of real time, or duration on the heterogeneous and "successive flow" of consciousness. But time, as defined in terms of space by the positivists etc., is likewise referred to as a 'form' by Bergson. Although Bergson is critical of Kant's definitions of time and space, both claim to derive their notion of time from consciousness, and both attribute a species of reality to space. But the pivotal issue for Bergson is that consciousness is analyzed by the positivists through the "medium of certain forms,"[1] e.g. time, intensity, forms that are actually accrued through external perception and 'refracted'by space. Consequently, in order to adequately comprehend Bergson's doctrine of perception, it is necessary to examine precisely how he and Kant differ as regard to space. Accordingly, in this first section, I list six pertinent aspects of Kant's definition of space which are then compared with the description of space given by Bergson. Now if, in similarity to Kant's definition of space, space as a priori form, "homogeneous space" were in any way considered a reality apart from the "representation of matter," that is to say, as distinct from the 'manner' by which in external perception we represent material objects, in Bergson, then its effect would be to increase the disparity between external perception and Bergson's

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[1]Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 223.

notion of internal perception, which has as its object consciousness, i.e. that which itself is "pure quality." The precise reason is that 'homogeneous space' for Bergson is "pure quantity;"[1] and, if homogeneous space were a reality somehow independent of the "representation" of matter it would also be, as a corelative of matter, a necessary condition for external perception.

Augustin Fressin, in his book La perception chez Bergson et chez Merleau-Ponty, renders an interpretation of a particular text from Time and Free Will that attributes to Bergson's philosophy that kind of reality regarding homogeneous space that Bergson frequently criticizes in Kant. Upon examination of the evidence with which M. Fressin supports his interpretation, I again resumewwith an analysis of the Bergsonian texts concerning space, its reality, and its relation to perception. If M. Fressin is correct, external perception must in all circumstances remain quantitative in character. Bergson attributes quantity to the 'intuition' of a homogeneous space; and, if homogeneous space, as implied by Fressin's interpretation, is a necessary condition which confirms the existence of 'distinct' objects, it would be the same as saying that space exists a priori. A reality of this type would set space apart from the "representation" of matter. Thus, material multiplicity would always be "quantitative" multiplicity, since the divisible character of homogeneous

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[1] "The fact is that there is no point of contact between the unextended and the extended, between quality and quantity." (Henri Bergson, Time and Free Will, trans. by F. L. Pogson, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960. p. 70.)

space would always be corelated with the perception of matter. But if Bergson does in fact refute this reality attributed to homogeneous space, except for its application in "conceptual" form, then we must admit the viability of the external perception of qualitative multiplicity in Bergson's text. Therefore, this first section ends with a study of Bergson's notion of extensity in comparison to the meaning he assigns to quantity, and in relation to an external perception which characterizes qualitative multiplicity.

In conclusion to his first major work, Time and Free Will, Bergson re-examines the basic issue which prompted him to challenge the arguments posed at free will by his contemporaries. This issue, as stated above, is the analysis of sensations made by his contemporaries "though the medium of certain forms" which modify perception, and which thus account for a distinction between consciousness and the externally perceived world.

> Modern psychology seems to us particularly concerned to prove that we perceive things through the medium of certain forms borrowed from our own constitution. This tendency has become more and more marked since Kant: while the German philosopher drew a sharp line of separation between time and space, the extensive and the intensive, and, as we should say today, consciousness and external perception, the empirical school, carrying analysis still further, tries to reconstruct the extensive out of the intensive, space out of duration, and externality out of inner states.[1]

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 222.

The "forms" which Kant and the psychologists, with whom Bergson attests to be in contention, consider to be a priori, and which, for Kant, at least, of necessity constitute the structure of mind, are, in Bergson's opinion, forms that are actually reconstituted in terms of space.

> Kant's great mistake was to take time as a homogeneous medium. He did not notice that real duration is made up of moments inside one another, and that when it seems to assume the form of a homogeneous whole, it is because it gets expressed in space.[1]

Now when Bergson speaks of "external perception," does he, in every instance, mean a perception which is similarly expressed in space? To totally explain external perception in this way would be to retain the a priori condition, space, which accounts for the distinction between external perception and consciousness which Bergson refers to in his criticism of Kant. Inversely, if the "immediate data of consciousness" is considered the epitome of "real duration," and duration were devoid of any form of extension, then the efficacy of our perceptions of a real, external world certainly becomes questionable. The answer to these questions depends on the kind of multiplicity - and, as we shall see, the kind of extension - quantitative or qualitative, that Bergson designates to external perception.

If homogeneous space corelates to quantitative multiplicity, it would be necessary to exclude 'space' in order to perceive qualitative multiplicity externally. To exclude space in this sense would mean of course to exclude the necessity of space. The 'reality' of space would consequently be

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[1]Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 232.

dependent on conditions other than the 'intrinsic' nature of matter, or of mind in the strict sense, e.g. Kant's reference to space as a "transcendental ideality." Homogeneous space, therefore, could be the result of a mind which is naturally inclined to 'think' it. It is this latter interpretation of space that we find in Bergson. A comparison of Kant's notion of space with that of Bergson will bring this out more clearly.

There are six characteristics of Kantian space that are of interest to us. They are as follows: (1) "Space is a necessary representation a priori, forming the very foundation of all external intuitions." (2) "Space is nothing but the form of all phenomena of the external senses." (3)"Space is essentially one." (4) Space is "not a concept." (5) Space "is an intuition a priori." (6) Space itself "means nothing."[1]

To say that space is an a priori in the context of the Transcendental Aesthetic is to separate space from sensible experience, i.e. the a posteriori.[2] There is no question that Bergson recognized this in his criticism of Kant.

> The empirical or genetic explanations have thus taken up the problem of space at the very point where Kant left it: Kant separated space from its contents: the empiricists ask how these contents, which are taken out of space by our thought, manage to get back again.[3]

Bergson's contention is that the empiricists first analytically divide consciousness into purely qualitative units, or psychic states, which is actually to juxtapose them in space, and then query as to how qualitative states are set in space during experience. In a sense, therefore,

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[1]Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. by F. Max Muller (Garden City, N.Y. : Doubleday, 1966), pp. 24-26, B38-44.

[2]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, 32-34, p.21.

[3]Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 93.

Bergson attributes spatial representation to a form enacted by the mind, but to a mind which 'thinks' it.

> It is true that they have apparently disregarded the activity of the mind, and that they are obviously inclined to regard the extensive form under which we represent things as produced by a kind of alliance of the sensations with one another: space, without being extracted from the sensations, is supposed to result from their co-existence.[1]

Now this "activity of the mind" which Bergson speaks of may be interpreted in two ways: in one sense - and this is what Bergson means, it can be understood simply as a volitive 'act' associated with the perception of an external object; in another sense - and here I allude to Kant, this activity can be understood as a necessary and involuntary subjective process by which the form is actualized in the perception of an external object. In both interpretations it can be said that space is 'actualized' at the moment of perception, but in the former interpretation this activity of mind, which refers to the conception of space, is not necessary to perception. Neither, in that case, is it necessary that one be aware that the conception of space is an arbitrary activity of mind prior to conceiving objects juxtaposed in space. Thus, the implication made by Bergson in this statement is that "they have apparently disregarded," that is, have not taken notice, that space is actually 'conceived' at the moment of this 'kind' of perception. But in the latter interpretation mentioned above, Kant's it is all important that space, as a form, possess priority over our sensations; space, here, could not be an arbitrary

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 94-94.

concept since Kant is not concerned with volition in this matter, but with apodictic certitude. Although space is an entirely subjective condition for external perception, it is nevertheless intrinsic to the object as phenomenon, i.e. the object as mental representation.[1] If this is understood in Kant, it can likewise be understood in what sense Bergson criticizes the distinction which Kant makes between consciousness and external perceptions; if the "form" of a sensible intuition is of itself nothing prior to that intuition, but is nevertheless an "a priori form," then the "form," which is distinct from the a posteriori, i.e. that which is "given" in experience, must be a constituent of mind.[2] Taken in itself it is nothing and cannot be perceived. Likewise, the "matter" which is given a posteriori is not, of itself, what is perceived. Thus, if Bergson understands space to be no more than a concept, then a consciousness which conceives the external world in terms of space - as he believes Kant does - is in actuality formed by this very concept. The

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[1] "If we drop the subjective condition under which alone we can gain external intuition, that is, so far as we ourselves may be affected by objects, the representation of space means nothing." (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 26 (B42-44).

[2] "Now it is clear that it cannot be sensation again through which sensations are arranged, and placed in certain forms. The matter only of all phenomena is given us a posteriori; but, their form must be ready for them in the mind (Gemuth) a priori, and must therefore be capable of being considered as separate from all sensations." (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 21-22, B34-38).

two, external perception - in this case, external "conceptualization" - and consciousness, thus formed, cannot be separated.

For Kant, therefore, space must also be a reality which paradoxically 'is',[1] and is nevertheless "nothing" apart from that which is externally perceived. To return to what Bergson means, precisely, by an "act of the mind" in relation to space, the following quote indicates that space, understood as a homogeneous and divisible medium - as Kant says that which is "essentially one" - cannot be separated from the"representation of matter"

> Thus inextensive sensations will remain what they are, viz., inextensive sensations, if nothing be added to them. For their coexistence to give rise to space, there must be an act of the mind which takes them in all at the same time and sets them in juxtaposition: this unique act is very like what Kant calls an a priori form of sensibility. If we now seek to characterize this act, we see that it consists essentially in an intuition, or rather the conception, of an empty homogeneous medium.[2]

The degree of reality which Bergson assigns to space can be stated as follows: space itself, apart from an act of the mind which "sets" sensations in juxtaposition - and which 'conceives' objects juxtaposed in space, is nothing; thus, it cannot be separated from the "representation of matter." In reference to the six characteristics of Kantian space listed previously, the following indicates Bergson's comparative position:

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[1]"The constant form of this receptivity which we call sensibility, is a necessary condition of all relations in which objects, as without us, can be perceived; and, when abstraction is made of these objects, what remains is that pure intuition which we call space." (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 26, B. 42-44).

[2]Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 94-95.

(1) Space is not a necessary representation a priori, since space is "clearly conceived by the human intellect." (2) Space is not the "form of all phenomena of the external senses." To attribute space to phenomena is to give them "a new form, which immediate perception did not attribute to them." (3) Space is "an empty homogeneous medium". (4) Space is a "conception," i.e. it is a concept. (5) Space is not "an intuition a priori," since it is a "reaction against that heterogeneity which is the very ground of our experience." (6) Space itself means nothing. We cannot separate "space from its contents."[1]

In accordance with my assessment of the preceding texts, it can be asserted that Bergson, as indicated where underlined, opposes Kant in postulates 1, 2, 4 and 5. He is in agreement with Kant in 3 and 6. Take notice that 3 and 6, in the context of Bergson's thought, is an affirmation of 4, i.e. that space is a concept. In consequence this points to the second postulate, in which I find Bergson conditionally disagreeing with Kant.[2] This disagreement, as we shall see, is essential to Bergson's doctrine of perception.

It is on the issue of space in relation to external perception that

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[1]Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 90-97.

[2]Bergson is in agreement with Kant that space is the necessary form of the perception of 'distinct' objects; but he disagrees that the 'form of space' is necessary for external perception.

TIME AND FREE WILL

I find Augustin Fressin's interpretation conflicting with the texts previously quoted. In his book, Fressin excerpts texts from pages 73, 80, 81, 83, 84 of Time and Free Will. The key text is taken from pages 80 and 81.

> ... all unity is the unity of a simple act of the mind,...this is an act of unification, there must be some multiplicity for it to unify. No doubt, at the moment at which I think each of these units separately, I look upon it as indivisible, since I am determined to think of its unity alone. But as soon as I put it aside in order to pass to the next, I objectify it, and by that very deed I make it a thing, that is to say, a multiplicity.

The determining factor in translating this text is of course the context from which it is taken. The title of this section of Time and Free Will is Numerical Multiplicity and Space. Bergson identifies two "kinds" of multiplicity, the quantitative, which refers to the above, and the qualitative, which he treats elsewhere. The following is Fressin's interpretation of this text:

> So there is perception because there is a relation between the multiplicity of matter and the unity of spirit; and this, first, on the level of the body, the first field of encounter between spirit and matter, where life has made spirituality penetrate. For Bergson, this is not equivelant to placing reality on the side of spirit only, that is, making out of perception a relation between reality and appearance. In effect, although the unity is an act of the spirit, and the matter is a multiplicity, this multiplicity is spatial (of space); and, consequently, it is real and really associated with the quality of the perceived object.[1]

While it is true that Bergson refers to the unity of spirit elsewhere,[2] and in a manner which is more in line with the meaning that Fressin attributes

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[1] Augustin Fressin, La perception chez Bergson et chez Merleau-Ponty, (Paris: Societe D'edition d'enseignment superior, 1967), pp. 138-139. (partial translation of text by Helen Lemieux-T.)

[2] Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 111-112.

the term 'unity', here, there is no doubt that upon examination of the section quoted by Fressin, Numerical Multiplicity and Space, the specific meaning of the term in question, 'unity,' is that which is the result of a mental synthesis which gathers in a multiplicity of juxtaposed parts. An 'irreducible' unit becomes a multiplicity of this type when objectified in terms of divisible space.

> ...as soon as I put it aside in order to pass to the next, I objectify it, and by that very deed I make it a thing, that is to say, a "multiplicity."[1]

The unity which is the result of a mental sythesis and the unit as objectified are not the same.

> In a word, we must distinguish between the unity which we think of and the unity which we set up as an object after having thought of it, as also number in process of formation and number once formed. The unit is irreducible while we are thinking of it and number is discontinuous while we are building it up: but, as soon as we consider number in its finished state, we objectify it, and it then appears to be divisible to an unlimited extent.[2]

The unity of the former is merely thought, since we are "determined to think of its unity alone;"[3] whereas the multiplicity of the latter, the unit as objectified, is the implicit result of an act which perceives it under the aspect of divisible space. 'Its' unity cannot be compared to the unity of an act of the mind itself.

> How could we divide the unit, if it were here that ultimate unity which characterizes a simple act of the mind? How could we split it up into fractions while affirming its unity, if we did not regard it implicitly as an extended object, one in intuition but multiple in space?
> . . . . . .
> From the beginning, therefore, we must have thought of number as of a juxtaposition in space. This is the conclusion we have reached at first, basing ourselves on the fact that all addition implies a multiplicity of parts simultaneously perceived.[4]

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 81.

[2] Ibid, p. 83; [3] Ibid, p. 80-81; [4] Ibid, pp. 81,85.

Bergson asks, how could a unity be a multiplicity? The "ultimate" unity of "a simple act of the mind," and the 'unity' of number, which implies quantitative multiplicity have nothing in common. How then, one is compelled to ask of Fressin, is the multiplicity implied in the latter considered real in respect of the "ultimate unity" of the former? Unless, of course, this 'reality' is conceived. If space is a concept in Bergson's estimation, then "unlimited division," numerical multiplicity and the like are merely derivations of this concept.

> What we must say is that we have to do with two different kinds of reality, the one heterogeneous, that of sensible qualities, the other homogeneous, namely space . This latter, clearly conceived by the human intellect, enables us to use clean-cut distinctions, to count, to abstract, and perhaps also to speak.[1]

It is more than questionable that the kind of multiplicity which Fressin regards as real is the kind of mulitplicity which Bergson designates to matter. For example, Bergson distinguishes 'what' is perceived and its immediate data from subsequent 'changes' within consciousness, such as those which characterize 'perceived' distinctions. In other words, he attempts to point out the difference between an intellectual analysis and an "immediate" perception.

> ...a complex feeling will contain a fairly large number of simple elements; but, as long as these elements do not stand out with perfect clearness, we cannot say that they were completely realized, and, as soon as consciousness has a distinct perception of them, the psychic state which results from their synthesis will have changed for this very reason.[2]

As long as these elements do not stand out in perfect clearness, they

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 97.

[2] Ibid, p. 84.

are perceived as interpenetrating qualities. As soon as distinctions are made, we are juxtaposing our own sensations in space, thus enumerating consciousness as if it were a composition of distinct psychic states.

> But there is no change in the general appearance of a body, however it is analyzed by our thought, because these different analyses, and an infinity of others, are already visible in the mental image which we form of the body, though they are not realized...[1]

'What' is perceived, the body itself, does not change in relation to psychic states which represent distinctions, since the "simple elements" which Bergson mentions above are none other than sensations: and, sensations are elements of qualitative multiplicity. If quantitative multiplicity applies here, it is only implied.

> In short, we must admit two kinds of multiplicity, two possible senses of the word 'distinguish,' two conceptions, the one qualitative and the other quantitative...Sometimes this multiplicity, this distinctness, this heterogeneity contains number only potentially, as Aristotle would have said.[2]

However, bodies, or material objects are closer in definition to a numerical multiplicity than are sensible qualities. Bergson is careful to indicate, though, that the 'image' of a body is 'thought' in the context of that "medium," the reality of which is conceptual, i. e. space.

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 84.

[2] Ibid, p. 121.

TIME AND FREE WILL

When we speak of material objects, we refer to the possibility of seeing and touching them; we localize them in space. In that case, no effort of the inventive faculty or of symbolical representation is necessary in order to count them; we only have to think them, at first separately, and then simultaneously, within the very medium in which they come under our observation.[1]

The 'reality' of distinct objects is conceptual. Bergson confirms this by citing the character of an "immediate perception" of the material world and, consequently, the nature of "the very ground of our experience."

We shall understand how a perception of this kind is possible if we remember that we ourselves distinguish our right from our left by a natural feeling, and that these two parts of our own extensity do then appear to us as if they bore a different quality; in fact, that is the reason why we cannot give a proper definition of right and left. In truth, qualitative differences appear everywhere in nature, and I do not see why two concrete directions should not be as marked in immediate perception as two colors. But the conception of an empty homogeneous medium is something far more extraordinary, being a kind of reaction against the heterogeneity which is the very ground of our experience.[2]

I mentioned previously that space could not be separated from the "matter of representation," which in effect meant, for Bergson, the 'manner' in which we represent matter as divisible. If matter, in that sense, is conceptually represented through spatial "refraction," Bergson does 'in fact' distinguish matter, in the sense of "the very ground of our experience," from space.

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 85.

[2] Ibid., p. 97.

So we have assumed the existence of a homogeneous Space and, with Kant, distinguished this space from the matter which fills it. With him we have admitted that homogeneous space is a 'form of our sensibility' and we understand by this simply that other minds, e.g. those of animals, although they perceive objects, do not distinguish them so clearly either from one another or from themselves.[1]

The human mind, in Bergson's philosophy, is alone capable of effecting "clean-cut distinctions." Space, therefore, is "clearly conceived by the human intellect;" it is not a reality to which other species correspond.[2]

Bergson identifies a 'kind' of multiplicity, consisting of qualitative differences, with 'external' perception. The ability to 'distinguish' 'one' from the 'other,' right from left, therefore is due essentially to an "extensity" which is qualitative in character. Extensity, in this modified and very unique sense, is, for Bergson, the basis of material multiplicity, and the 'immediate' data of external perception. By immediate I mean the character of an "immediate perception," which is "given as a qualitative heterogeneity," prior to that "activity of the mind" we have examined in Fressin's interpretation. Neither should this fundamental, or "immediate data of consciousness" be confused with 'pre-conscious' knowledge. Bergson, to be sure, states that this kind of extensity, i.e. qualitative, is perceived.

The more you insist on the difference between the impressions made on our retina by two points of a homogeneous space, the more do you thereby make room for the activity of the mind, which perceives under the form of extensive homogeneity what is given it as qualitative heterogeneity. No doubt, though the representation of a homogeneous space grows out of an effort of the mind, there must be within the qualities themselves which differentiate two sensations some reason why they occupy this or that definite position in space. We must thus distinguish between the perception of extensity and the conception of space...[3]

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 236.

[2] Ibid; [3] Ibid, p. 96.

The conception of space, when identified with a perception, effects a 'perception' quite different in kind from the perception of extensity. Although Bergson alludes to the former, conceptual meaning when he infrequently applies the words, "external perception," in his text, he takes issue to describe the "immediate perception" of matter and the "perception of extensity" in places previously quoted. Accordingly, perception, in an 'external' sense, may be understood in two ways, quantitatively, as in the former example, and qualitatively, as in the latter.

2. Internal Perception and Duration

In the preceding section I have analyzed the relation of space to external perception in Bergson's text. My conclusion was that Bergson does not consider homogeneous space a reality in the Kantian sense, but that he describes it as the result of an act of the mind which "conceives" distinct objects. Thus, quantity, which is the equivelant of a conceived homogeneous space, is not the essential element in the perception of a 'kind' of multiplicity. The outcome of Bergson's argument is that, when the concept of space is excluded from external perception, the result is the perception of a qualitative multiplicity in which the elements permeate one another. The "perception of extensity" is thus differentiated from the "conception of space."

Since Bergson does not identify psychic phenomena with their 'cause' in the external world, that is, with the concept of "quantity," he will consider duration, which, as knowledgeable, is the equivelant of consciousness in his text, a "pure quality."[1] Thus, internal, or inner perception, presumably, would have as its object duration described as pure quality.

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[1]Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 100, 103-104, 107, 137, 229.

Now the difficulty encountered in this section may be stated as follows: both deep-seated psychic states, "affective" states such as our emotions, the aesthetic and moral "feelings," and our psychic states which represent the world permeate one another and form consciousness. Consequently, if psychic states which represent the external world, exclusive of the concept of space and resulting from the "perception of extensity" in its modified and qualitative sense, form consciousness, then extensity, as such, must also be a characteristic of consciousness.[1] However, can extensity, in any sense, likewise be a characteristic of duration? The answer, if I may take a degree of liberty on the reader's part, is somewhat in doubt. Thus, I pose the following question. What, precisely, is inner perception, and what is its relation to the "perception of extensity," i.e. external perception sans the conception of space? The simplest approach to this difficulty may be to enquire into the nature of duration, the presumed 'object' of inner perception.

Bergson emphasizes that the distinction which Kant makes between time and space does not account for the fact that time is defined by Kant as homogeneous and quantitative; thus, in accordance with Bergson's criticism, Kant neither distinguished space from time, nor, consequently, from consciousness, from which Kant attests to derive time. I begin this section with a listing of the essential characteristics of Kant's definition

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[1]The propensity of Bergson's argument as delineated in section one is that the 'real' is essentially qualitative. Extensity itself, in its modified form, has been shown to be a quality.

of time, in this case four, and compare them, as I did previously with his definition of space, with Bergson's description of duration. The reader will find a remarkable resemblance, at least technically, between the two definitions of time. Kant, for instance, says that time is perceived as a succession. If Kant defines time as a succession, one might ask,how can Bergson accuse him of formulating a definition of time which is homogeneous, that is, in Bergson's jargon, that which is capable of being divided into parts? Temporal succession, for Kant, is that which, unlike space, has no simultaneous parts.[1] A succession, for Bergson, lacks distinctions: each of its elements represents the whole.[2] Succession, in both examples, seemingly excludes division. But if Bergson cannot verify his accusation, then his criticism of Kant in respect of his own doctrine of perception lacks coherence. This because, in making the specific criticism that Kant "drew a sharp line of separation between..., consciousness and external perception," Bergson implies that consciousness, which is also commensurate to time in Kant, and external perception, which is conditioned by the form of a "simultaneously divisible space"[3] must, within the context of Kant's philosophy, coalesce, despite Kant's assertions to the contrary. Since time is commensurate to consciousness in Kant, Bergson is indebted to prove to the reader that consciousness must evitably be regarded as homogeneous and divisible in Kant. Bergson's reasoning is that consciousness cannot be substantially differentiated from perceptions

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[1]Kant, Critique of Rure Reason, p. 29 (B44-47).

[2]Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 101.

[3]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 24-29 (B38-47).

necessarily conditioned by the form of 'divisible space.' Likewise, Bergson reasons, neither may a concept of time derived from a consciousness understood in terms of distinct psychic states be otherwise than quantitative in character. If Bergson establishes his point, then a reconciliation between a 'successive consciousness,' which represents duration, and external perception is feasible. The first textual analysis of Time and Free Will in this second section thus centres on the reasons given by Bergson for his criticism of Kantian time. This is followed by Bergson's description of duration. A comparison is then made with texts which treat inner perception. The object is to identify the role, if any, of 'extensity' in inner perception, and, to clarify the relation of Bergson's notion of inner perception with the "perception of extensity."

The definition of time in Kant's Transcendtal Aesthetic can be reduced to four essentials. They are as follows:(1) Time is known through inner perception. "Time cannot be perceived (angeschaut) externally as little as space can be perceived as something within us." (2) "Time has one dimension only; different times are not simultaneous, but successive..." (3) Time is "intuitive (internal) a priori..." (4) "Time is nothing but the form of the internal sense, that is, of our intuition of ourselves, and of our internal state."[1]

All four characteristics, as stated, have some similarity to duration as Bergson describes it in his discussion concerning measurable time and real time. i.e., duration, in the conclusion to Time and Free Will.[2]

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[1]Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, pp. 23-31 (34-51).

[2]Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 226-235.

Bergson adds that physical phenomena are "simultaneities" which are "absolutely distinct," "one has ceased to be when the other takes place."[1] In turn, consciousness is referred to as "an inner life in which succession implies interpenetration."[2] Although the 'simultaneities' of the external world are distinct, they succeed one another "for our consciousness." However, he continues, in the process of extending duration, in the form of succession, to external things the "idea" arises that external things endure like ourselves. Since the aspect of distinction and simultaneity is nevertheless retained from our perception of things, our consciousness, or "inner duration" is externalized, that is, the "successive moments" of our inner duration are set in juxtaposition.[3] Bergson contends that extensity, in this instance extensity meaning the equivelant of space, and duration, are "torn asunder," that is, the characteristic of one is added to the other. If science does this with external phenomena to the advantage of spatial division and immobility, he implies that one is then justified in doing the opposite when the object of study is consciousness.

> Therefore the same separation will have to be made again, but this time to the advantage of duration, when inner phenomena are studied, - not inner phenomena once developed, to be sure, or after the discursive reason has separated them and set them out in a homogeneous medium in order to understand them, but inner phenomena in their developing, and in so far as they make up, by their interpenetration, the continuous evolution of a free person. Duration, thus restored to its original purity, will appear as a wholly qualitative multiplicity, an absolute heterogeneity of elements which pass over into one another.[4]

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 228.

[2] Ibid, p. 228.

[3] Ibid, p. 228.

[4] Ibid, p. 229.

TIME AND FREE WILL

What the specific accusation which Bergson made against Kant implies is that Kant understood consciousness as separate from, not merely quantitative, external perceptions, but also, from its "successive moments." For Bergson, a separation of this kind would be tantamount to denying heterogeneity in favor of homogeneity. As it appears, how else could Kant's theory of sensible perceptions necessarily conditioned by the form of space, and, from Bergson's viewpoint, 'moments of consciousness' be reconciled unless these 'moments,' i.e. psychic states, were in fact considered 'distinct' and not successive. It is difficult to interpret Kant's description of time as a "one dimensional succession" in terms other than homogeneity and divisibility.[1] But this is to insist, as does Bergson, that homogeneity necessarily entails divisibility. Thus, despite Kant's definition of time as a succession, and as a derivative of consciousness, Bergson seemed compelled to interpret him as follows:

> Kant's great mistake was to take time as a homogeneous medium. He did not notice that real duration is made up of moments inside one another, and that when it seems to assume the form of a homogeneous whole, it is because it gets expressed in space. Thus the very distinction which he makes between space and time amounts at bottom to confusing time with space, and the symbolical representation of the ego with the ego itself. He thought that consciousness was incapable of perceiving psychic states otherwise than by juxtaposition, forgetting that a medium in which these states are set aside by side distinguished from one another is of course space, and not duration.[2]

Attention should now be placed on how Bergson relates consciousness to perception. In analyzing external perception my conclusion was that,

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[1] Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 29 (B44-47). I wish to add that Kant, perhaps undeniably, distinguished the 'conscious self' from 'knowledge of things perceived' through his definition of time.

[2] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 232.

excluding the concept of space, Bergson's doctrine makes accommodation for an external perception of qualitative and heterogeneous character. Extensity itself was seen to be at bottom a quality. What of consciousness and inner perception? Bergson makes it sufficiently clear that when he speaks of inner perception he does not mean deep-seated psychic states, such as the moral and aesthetic 'feelings,' exclusively. The perception of 'right' and 'left,' the perception of extensity was also cited to be the result of a feeling in Bergson.[1] When he speaks of consciousness, the 'object' of inner perception, he does not distinguish, in a one sided manner, deep-seated psychic states from the perception of extensity. A representative sensation, which is generally considered a sensation which 'represents' some external object or cause,[2] for example, the visual perception of color, the auditory perception of sound, is regarded as qualitative by Bergson, in that colors interpenetrate within our visual

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[1]Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 95-97. Bergson applies the term 'feeling' as that which is strictly qualitative and interior. See pp. 7-21 of his text.

[2]It is therefore time to re-examine the traditional causal theory of perception, usually called the Representative Theory...An excellent introduction to this task is the study of classical attempts to explain it, for although the detailed study of these processes has made great advances, their general principle is much the same as in Locke's day;...
. . . . . .
In the old style it said that the brain activity caused the mind to receive ideas which were representations of the object causing the activity; it is now said, with only verbal change, that the cortical activity causes private sensations or sense-date which are symbols of their external causes." (R. J. Hirst, The Problems of Perception, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1966,pp. 145, 279).

field, and sound is really a continuum. 'External' objects, e.g. the blue lights which 'cause' color, the string instruments which 'cause' sound, and which we are accustomed to quantify and to substitute for our sensations of, let us say, blue stage light and string music, are themselves quantified via spatial conceptualization. Objects are not quite as distinct as we might believe them to be.[1] To objectify things in external perception is to "look at them from afar," to project them outward so to say. In his treatment of the inner perception of consciousness Bergson will include representative sensation as an aspect of consciousness. I quote at length a text which serves as the basic doctrine of inner perception for Bergson in Time and Free Will ; it follows the conclusion to his examination of the physical law, the impenetrability of matter. Bergson has just concluded that impenetrability is a purely logical necessity. The implication is of course that matter interpenetrates.

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[1]Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 236.

> If, in order to count states of consciousness, we have to represent them symbolically in space, is it not likely that this symbolical representation will alter the normal conditions of inner perception? Let us recall what we said a short time ago about the intensity of certain psychic states. Representative sensation, looked at in itself, is pure quality; but, seen through the medium of extensity, this quality becomes in a certain sense quantity, and is called intensity. In the same way, our projection of our psychic states into space in order to form a discrete multiplicity is likely to influence these states themselves and to give them in reflective consciousness a new form, which immediate perception did not attribute to them.. Now, let us notice that when we speak of time, we generally think of a homogeneous medium in which our conscious states are ranged alongside one another as in space, so as to form a discrete multiplicity. Would not time, thus understood, be to the multiplicity of our psychic states what intensity is to certain of them, - a sign, a symbol, absolutely distinct from true duration? Let us ask consciousness to isolate itself from the external world, and, by a vigorous effort of abstraction, to become itself again.[1]

We observe here that Bergson does not exclusively specify any particular kind of psychic state when he speaks of consciousness and true duration, and the inner perception of such, excepting that he leaves no doubt whatsoever that these psychic states are not to be "symbolically represented in space." Take notice also that whereas he refers to the "immediate perception" of our psychic states here in the context of 'inner' states that are not to be "projected" into space, on page 97 of his text, if we recall, he speaks of the "immediate perception" of right and left as the result of qualitative differences, and, that extensity is here to be understood as a feeling. To isolate consciousness "from the external world" may very well mean to exclude the 'concept' of space alone. Although Bergson does not specifically state that a consciousness purified from the concept of space, and which represents duration, possesses qualitative extensity as a characteristic, there is

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 90.

indication in Bergson's text that this 'kind' of extensity is a de facto characteristic of consciousness, and that it may account for a reconciliation between the inner perception of consciousness and the "perception of extensity," i.e. external perception sans space. How could one have - what is obviously considered real by Bergson - a "perception of extensity"[1] without it being included within consciousness as real knowledge? The propensity of Bergson's doctrine of perception in this text, and here I refer to perception exclusive of 'spatial conceptualization,' is more toward an 'intuitive' or "immediate perception," than it is toward two distinct 'kinds' of perception. This, however, does not eliminate the importance in Bergson's 'doctrine of perception' of an external perception which, in utilizing the concept of space, is of a different 'kind' than what has been termed immediate, or qualitative.

If Bergson's modified notion of extensity affords a possible reconciliation between the inner perception of consciousness and the external perception of matter, it also presents the possibility of channeling his philosophy in the direction of a monism; the difficulty in merging an intuitive inner perception and an intuitive 'immediate' or external perception would be in distinguishing external reality from consciousness. Duration, apparently, would need be regarded as the 'opposing' element of a duality with matter, if idealism is to be avoided. The 'realm' of duration is consciousness and spirit. A consistent doctrine of the internal perception of duration would appear to be called for. If matter forms the other side of this duality, then duration cannot be wholly identified with it. Likewise, it would seem that external perception must somehow remain inadequate in regards to duration. In the conclusion to

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 96.

TIME AND FREE WILL

Time and Free Will Bergson, as I have noted, does claim that physical phenomena are "absolutely distinct in the sense that one has ceased to be when the other takes place,..." This is said in reference to duration and external perception.

> To put duration in space is really to contradict oneself and place succession within simultaneity. Hence we must not say that external things endure, but rather that there is in them some inexpressible reason in virtue of which we cannot examine them at successive moments of our own duration without observing that they have changed.[1]

Whether Bergson means here "external things" as the result of 'spatial conceptualization,' or external things under all circumstances, including the "perception of extensity," is not clear. If this were clear, Bergson would not have admitted of an "inexpressible reason" as to why things do not endure but change. The "perception of extensity," and its obvious reference to a heterogeneous "ground of experience" could not apply as a solution here because the problem centres on the occurrence and disappearance 'in time' of a 'quantity' of things.[2] Taken as it stands, we have here an apparent ambiguity. But if this is an attempt on Bergson's part to maintain a duality, one wonders whether quantity and distinction here are merely due to conceptual space, which would render this 'material side' of the duality 'conceived,' or, if this quantity and "absolute" distinction is due to some other, perhaps, necessary, perceptual principle, one which bifurcates reality itself. In this latter instance, we are once

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[1] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 227.

[2] I wish to emphasize that the distinction between duration and extension is Bergson's. The problem raised is this: if a "perceived extensity" comprises consciousness, can we justifiably distinguish the notion of extension from a notion of time which finds its source in consciousness?

again the subjects of the particular Kantian distinction between mind and phenomena, i.e., in Bergson's terms, between consciousness and external perception. Nevertheless, the two alternatives which I have mentioned in regard to external multiplicity and the maintenance of a duality are not the only ones available to Bergson. For example, in one instance Bergson repudiates causality - here meaning the necessary determination of external phenomena - and then tells us that the more we strengthen the case of an externally perceived causality, the more we tend to regard duration as entirely subjective.[1] The implication is that external things do, in fact, endure like ourselves. But if Bergson is to follow through with this idea, it seems that he is once again channeling his philosphy in the direction of monism. It shall be interesting, therefore, to learn how Bergson treats this 'two horned dilemma,' within the context of perception, in his next major work, Matter and Memory.

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[1]"It is no less obvious that our belief in the necessary determination of phenomena by one another becomes stronger in proportion as we are more inclined to regard duration as a subjective form of our consciousness. In other words, the more we tend to set up the causal relation as a relation of necessary determination, the more we assert thereby that things do not endure like ourselves." (Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 210.)

CHAPTER II

MATTER AND MEMORY

1. A General Survey of the Doctrine of Perception and the Issues Involved

Kant, as indicated in Chapter 1, depicted time as a one dimensional succession. However, his purpose in applying this analogy was to specify that temporal succession "supplies no shape", namely, that time is distinct from extension, or space.[1] In the Critique of Pure Reason external perception is determined by the form of space; inner perception is determined by the form of consciousness, which form, as was shown, is time. Kant distinguished time as the a priori which enables us to understand the appearance and disappearance of things in space, or the perception of change.[2] Thus, as Bergson pointed out, Kant separated external perception from consciousness. But, in Bergson's estimation, this separation was made without due cause since our psychic states resulting from 'perceptions' of being and non-being

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[1] "And exactly because this internal intuition supplies no shape, we try to make good this deficiency by means of analogies, and represent to ourselves the succession of time by a line progressing to infinity, in which the manifold constitutes a series of one dimension only; and we conclude from the properties of this line as to all the properties of time, with one exception, i.e. that the parts of the forme are simultaneous, those of the latter successive."
(Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, (47-51), p.31).

[2] "Here I only add that the concept of change and with it the concept of motion (as change of place), is possible, only, through and in the representation of time; and that, if this representation were not intuitive (internal) a priori, no concept, whatever it be, could make us understand the possibility of a change, that is, of a connection of contradictorily opposed predicates (for instance, the being and not being of one and the same thing in one and the same place) in one and the same object."
(Ibid, p.30).

are - and here I presume on Bergson's part,[1] conceived as juxtaposed, i.e. in space.

As I summized in Chapter 1, it appears that if Bergson is intent upon maintaining a duality between matter and mind, as was Kant's intention, he must refrain from identifying material extensity with duration. Bergson, from this perspective, cannot directly apply his concept of duration, that is, "duration within us" an "organic evolution which is yet not an increasing quantity,"[2] as a means of reconciling that which is necessarily perceived as an "increasing quantity", i.e. material change defined as a "present which is always beginning again,"[3] or "simultaneity."[4] The question, then, concerns the status, in Bergson's philosophy, of a perceived "simultaneity" that corresponds to an "increasing quantity". If it is necessary, then it is a condition for perception which inevitably determines the character of consciousness. Nevertheless, if such were the case, the issue of a duality need not centre, specifically, on whether consciousness, the source of our inner perception of duration is or is not identifyable, in similarity

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[1]In the concluding pages, Chapter 1 of this paper, I remarked that in Time and Free Will, p. 227, Bergson was not quite clear as to the kind of distinction, quantitative or qualitative, that he refers to when he speaks of external things which do not endure but change; however, when he speaks of "simultaneity " immediately following (p. 228, Time and Free Will), he indicates that he is referring to quantity and the concept of space.

[2]Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 226. The "duration within us" which Bergson alludes to is consciousness.

[3]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 131.

[4]Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 227.

to Bergson's criticism of Kant, with external quantity and divisibility.[1] Therefore, neither from the opposite and, in the context of Bergson's thought, more feasible perspective, need the issue of a duality centre on whether consciousness is identifyable with an extensity which corresponds to that qualitative "perceived extensity" that Bergson frequently alludes to as the material continuum.[2] There are other means of achieving a duality, and ingenuity is certainly not lacking in Bergson. Thus, in Matter and Memory, Bergson refutes the contention, in at least one instance,[3] which one might have held in reading Time and Free Will that external things actually are "simultaneities"[4] which are "absolutely distinct," in that "one has ceased to be when the other takes place."[5] However, Bergson's anticipated solution of one issue, the establishment of a duality, may not necessarily resolve the related difficulty of another. And that other issue is precisely the perception of an external world distinguishable from self or "our duration", i.e. consciousness. It would seem that the perception of "simultaneity," in this instance, the appearance of a simultaneous creation and evanescence of things cannot be altogether repudiated if "our consciousness" is to be

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[1] Ibid, p. 232.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 216;

[3] Ibid, p. 142.

[4] "There is a real duration, the heterogeneous moments of which permeate one another; each moment, however, can be brought into relation with a state of the external world which is contemporaneous with it.... Duration thus assumes the illusory form of a homogeneous medium, and the connecting link between these two terms, space and duration, is simultaneity, which might be defined as the intersection of time and space." (Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 110).

[5] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 228.

distinguished from matter. Consequently, a duality which does not take this difficulty into account would seem incomplete.

In Matter and Memory Bergson develops the term spirit. Consciousness, which becomes progressively identifyable with perception, e.g. "conscious perception," can be loosely understood as a transition between spirit and matter. There is a transition in degrees from the unextended, which is "pure memory", i.e. memory in an unconscious state,[1] to perception, which is consciousness of the unextended, i.e. matter.[2] Extensity, as a qualitative reality, increases to the degree that consciousness is realized. Bergson makes it clear in this text that extensity is a characteristic of consciousness.[3] Since pure memory falls within the realm of the "unconscious,"[4] and is unextended,[5] it is most likened to spirit.[6] In an act of perception there is a continuous "circuit"[7] between a "pure perception," memory-image, and pure memory. Pure perception is our "primordial contact" with matter;[8] however, it is not a 'conscious' contact. Consciousness begins with the coalescence of extended perception and unextended memory in what is termed

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 134.

[2]"And when we go more deeply into this double postulate, we discover... in regard to mind, the illusory idea that there are no degrees, no possible transition, between the extended and the unextended." (Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 217).

[3]Ibid, pp. 216-217; [4]Ibid,pp. 118-119, pp.126-132, pp.134-135.

[5]Ibid, p. 133; [6]Ibid, p. 237; [7]Ibid, pp. 93-94; [8]Ibid. p. 54.

"concrete perception."[1] Thus the duality which Bergson professes to adhere to in this text is more evident between unextended pure memory, which is spirit, and extended matter, than it is between consciousness and matter. The drift of this complex of issues leads us, as Bergson says, to that major concern of philosophers, the relation between body and soul.[2] However, when we speak in terms of actual, or "concrete perception," we, who are following the analysis of these texts, are concerned with the relation between consciousness and matter.[3] Thus, while the efficacy of a 'duality' between spirit and matter is one concern, the consequent problem of the 'distinguishability' of consciousness and matter is another.

Thus far my survey of the subject matter of Bergson's text, which survey is intended to introduce the reader, for his convenience, to the intricate development of issues regarding Bergson's doctrine of perception, has indicated Bergson's purpose of maintaining both a duality within the real, and a relation between consciousness and external perception. Now I direct our attention to the latter, the relation between consciousness and external perception.

Although there is a transition in degrees between extended matter and unextended spirit, Bergson wishes to refute any claim that the difference between spirit and matter is in degrees and not of kind. Bergson's reasoning

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[1] Ibid, p. 216.

[2] Ibid, p. 217.

[3] As Bergson states in Time and Free Will, p. 222 we are concerned with the relation between consciousness and external perception, or, for my purposes, the relation between internal and external perception.

is that if spirit were to be reduced, by way of degrees, to matter, then spirit or mind[1] could be considered an epiphenomenon of matter.[2] So as to distinguish between mind and matter[3] Bergson describes external perception as a "sectioning"[4] of the real, which sectioning effects what is called in temporal terms, a "present moment." [5] This "present moment" is the equivelant of the "material world".[6] But the 'present,' if it is to be distinguished from that which is retained in memory as the past, must be regarded as a discontinuity in relation to the continuity of memory. This discontinuity is "a present which is always beginning again,"[7] i.e. it is a simultaneity. Bergson, in retaining simultaneity, apparently distinguishes mind from matter. Therefore, Bergson extends the duality, in terms of duration, to what is apparently the experiential level. But let us examine

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[1]The term l'esprit in French can be applied with the same meanings which are attributed to the English words mind and spirit. Whereas in English the term mind may denote consciousness, the term spirit may carry somewhat of a different meaning, e.g. in reference to the 'soul', or what is specifically understood to be immaterial. Furthermore, spirit, in English, is not generally applied when the subject referred to is either mind or consciousness. Bergson applies the term l'esprit to mean l'conscience (consciousness) and mind. However, as we shall see, Bergson also distinguishes the term l'esprit in a very special sense, such as when he refers to the "unconscious reality" of spirit in the form of "pure memory."

[2]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 223

[3]In Section 3 we shall see that Bergson's intention here is to distinguish consciousness, otherwise known as "my present," from a "conceived matter" which is the result of "an act of the mind," such as that indicated in Chapter 1 of my paper.

[4]"To section" is here understood in a surgical sense, e.g. to cut into parts.

[5]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p.131.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

this issue more closely. Memory is distinct from matter in that it is a "synthesis of past and present."[1] The present, as "my present," is "both a perception of the immediate past," which is sensation, "and a determination of the immediate future," which is action.[2] Neither constituent of "my present," which is itself a "continuity of becoming,"[3] has anything in common with a "present moment," i.e. matter "defined (as we believe it must) as a present which is always beginning again."[4] Since "the present moment," which is matter "so far as extended in space,"[5] is understood in a discontinuous and quantitative sense, in what manner, we may ask, does our experience, that is, our external perceptions relate to the heterogeneous nature of our consciousness? The answer is that "every perception is already a memory."[6] Thus:

....our successive perceptions are never the real moments of things, as we have hitherto supposed, but are the moments of our consciousness.[7]

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 217.

[2]Ibid, pp. 130-131; [3]Ibid., p. 131; [4]Ibid., [5]Ibid.,

[6]Ibid., p. 143. However,I wish to add that the crux of the question is not entirely resolved. The difficulty here would be to determine that consciousness does in fact remain heterogeneous and indivisible.

[7]Ibid., p. 36.

If there is any doubt as to what Bergson means here, that is, if the term "successive" implies an original "conscious perception" of which the "successive" are merely reflections in memory, the following statement specifies that perception, insofar as it is practical, that is, a "conscious" perception, is of the past.

> Your perception, however instantaneous, consists then in an incalculable multitude of remembered elements; and in truth every perception is already memory. Practically we perceive only the past, the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future.[1]

The continuity of consciousness is preserved through a contiguous relation to external perception. As for the discontinuous "present moment" effected by a "sectioning" of the material world, this is most likely the result of the "juxtaposition" of our psychic states through "refraction."[2] Nevertheless, how are we to understand matter described as a continuum, in one instance, and as a discontinuous "present moment" in another? This can be understood with sufficient clarity if we distinguish what Bergson calls his "psychology of perception" and his "metaphysic of matter."[3]

A significant element of Bergson's psychology of perception, as contained in Matter and Memory, is the notion of "pure perception." Pure perception exists in theory rather than in fact.[4] What Bergson intends here is not a denial of the import of this notion, but rather his wish is to emphasize that in an actual, or "concrete perception" we are always concerned with memory. Pure perception is that content of the "present" which is a "contact" between the perceiving subject and perceived object.[5] But the

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 143.

[2] A discontinuous "present moment" may be understood here as the equivelant of simultaneity, that "intersection" of conceived space and real time. (Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 110). This issue will be clarified in another place.

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 209. Bergson applies the term "metaphysic" here in reference to his understanding of the real nature of matter, e.g. an extended continuum.

[4] Ibid, p. 219; [5] Ibid, p. 63.

perceiving subject cannot be said to know at the precise moment of this contact.

> Pure perception, in fact, however rapid we suppose it to be, occupies a certain depth of duration ... in fact, there is for us nothing that is instantaneous. In all that goes by that name there is already some work of our memory, and consequently of our consciousness,....[1]

This is why it is never the real moments of things that we know.[2] Consciousness, in Matter and Memory, denotes memory; what we know in perceiving are the moments of our own consciousness.

Since Bergson found it necessary to defer his theory of extensity in favour of his theory of duration so as not to identify, in a monomorphic sense, spirit with matter, in Bergson's terms, the "inextensive with the extensive," his metaphysics of matter will comply to, but not be wholly identified with, his theory of duration. Matter, sans spatial conceptualization, is perceived as an extended continuum in Time and Free Will. In Matter and Memory matter, sans perception in any sense, 'is' an extended continuum.[3] What of the nature of this 'unperceived' continuum? How may it compare to that perceived continuum which Bergson designates "concrete

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[1] Ibid, p. 56.

[2] The explanation given here refers to Bergson's theory of "vibrations." For example, on p. 57 he says that the real moments of things are an "enormous multiplicity of vibrations." On pp. 198-199 he says that qualities, such as colors, consists of "billions of vibrations which they execute in one of our moments." The "pace" of our duration "narrows" or "contracts" these vibrations to the point that they become indistinguishable; and, what we then perceive are colors.

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 204.

extensity?"[1] That which accounts for this 'unperceived' continuum is the intensity of movements or "vibrations" which constitute its qualities.[2] As to its nature, the continuum, in this 'unperceived' sense, is described as "greatly extended" or "highly diluted." My duration, i.e. my consciousness, though possessive of the characteristic of extensity, is distinguished from the material and extended universe in terms of differences of "tension." I never perceive the actual "intervals" or moments of each vibration in a material quality; I perceive rather these intervals contracted in memory in accordance with the specific "rhythm" of "my duration."[3] Duration, in the sense of my duration, manifesting a higher pitch of tension, so to say, is thus differentiated from that "diluted" extension which comprises the material universe a priori,[4] as it were, to perception.

Essentially Bergson's philosophy, in this text, is based on his notion of duration. Our own duration, our consciousness, is a qualitative continuum; it is progressively augmenting itself. Spirit, in one sense, is distinguished from matter in terms of a real duration, i.e. memory, which is capable of

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[1] Ibid, pp. 181-182, 228.

[2] Ibid, pp. 198-199.

[3] Ibid, p. 56.

[4] I apply the term a priori here not without allusion to Kant's idea of a content of knowledge which is prior to conscious experience, and which constitutes, of itself, what may be termed an 'unconscious' reality. We shall see, particularly in the third section of this chapter, the importance of a reality in this sense in relation to Bergson's doctrine of perception.

contracting the past with the present.[1] I call the attention of the reader to this latter point since it directly involves Bergson's doctrine of perception and the recurring problem of maintaining both a duality and a relation between consciousness and matter, or ultimately, between body and soul. If, in Bergson's psychology of perception, that which distinguishes matter from consciousness is attributed solely to an act of memory which contracts the "moments of matter," and, if, as a result, what we know are the moments of our own consciousness, then a "concrete" or "conscious perception," presumably, cannot indicate to us whether or not this duality is a fact.

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 217.

2. Conscious Perception

I open this section with an account of Bergson's utilization of the term "image" in Matter and Memory . The image is chosen as a neutral term, etymologically indifferent to philosophical disputes concerning the perception of matter. One image, the human body, is a centre of action. Its 'field of action,' the totality of images which surround it, comprises the material universe. A "totality of images" is thus at the disposal of the human body. Man's freedom specifies that "indetermination" characterizes human perception; and, consequently, indetermination signifies discernment and consciousness. For example, due to our freedom to chose from the totality of "present images"[1] which comprise the material continuum, those images which are selected become 'our' representations.[2] This selection of images out of the material continuum effects a "diminution" of the real. It shall be seen that the development of consciousness corelates with this ability to select. My question is whether a "conscious perception" is diminutive by nature. If this were so, how could it be reconciled with the perception of an extended continuum? I follow these questions with a reevaluation of extensity in the context of Matter and Memory, and determine whether Bergson does in fact retain the opinion that a material continuum can be externally perceived. The next question which I analyze in this section concerns the maintenance of a duality. Conscious perception corresponds to action. Bergson's doctrine in this text is better understood in view of his thoughts concerning action, virtual and real. External perception and internal

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 21-22.

[2] Ibid, pp. 22-23.

affections are distinguished respectively. The virtual action of perception advances to the real action of affections. The difficulty here is whether a description of perception in terms of real and virtual action suffices as a 'realist' argument in favor of the subject's ability to distinguish the external from the internal, or self.

I have said that Bergson has selected the "image" as a neutral term not to be implicated with the disputes of philosophers. This, however, is not to say that Bergson's position is entirely neutral, i.e. that he is not disposed in any way toward knowledge. His position, initially, is that of common sense realism.[1]

> For common sense, then, the object exists in itself, and, on the other hand, the object is, in itself, pictorial, as we perceive it: image it is, but a self-existing image.[2]

The term image allows Bergson a substantial amount of flexibility. Before verification is made concerning the object perceived, one must consider, if the object is understood to be "pictorial," what may have been added to or subtracted from this "picture." Since something may be without being perceived, Bergson distinguishes between a "present image" i.e. that which

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[1]But it is a common sense reality with one significant peculularity, and this is that the immediate verification of a perception is deferred in favor of what is termed "pictorial." A 'picture' invokes the notion of an intermediary between the knowing subject and the object known, in the sense that what is known is the intermediary, e.g. consciousness, and not the real object. "That every reality has a kinship, an analogy, in short a relation with consciousness - this is what we concede to idealism by the very fact that we term things 'images.'" (Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 225).

[2]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. xii.

simply is, from a "represented image," i.e. that which is perceived.[1] Therefore, when Bergson refers to a "material object," he considers it a "represented image by way of diminution," i.e., that it is a picture which has been subtracted from. Also, what Bergson terms "objective reality" can be regarded as a continuum in consistency with his earlier position in Time and Free Will. In Matter and Memory the reality of material objects, i.e. 'our' represented images, and the reality of the material continuum, i.e. the "totality" of present images,[2] is upheld in that the perceptions which account for the former are veritably abstractions obtained from the interrelated action and continuity of the latter.

> That which distinguishes it as a present image, as an objective reality, from a represented image is the necessity which obliges it to act through every one of its points upon all the points of all other images, to transmit the whole of what it receives, to oppose to every action an equal and contrary reaction, to be, in short, merely a road by which pass, in every direction, the modifications propagated throughout the immensity of the universe.[3]

Our freedom, in effect, diminishes the mutual action and reaction of those images which constitute the material universe. Our representations of things, i.e. what we understand to be material objects, are the effect of this diminution. Thus, a modification of this mutual action and reaction denotes consciousness.

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[1] Ibid, p. 20.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 22.

[3] Ibid, p. 21.

This is as much as to say that there is for images merely a difference of degree, and not of kind, between being and being consciously perceived. The reality of matter consists in the totality of its elements and of their actions of every kind. Our representation of matter is the measure of our possible action upon bodies...[1]

Perception,[2] here, consists of a diminution of the context of the real. Since the difference between the real as intact and the pictorial substance of my perception is merely according to degree, the suggestion here is that there is no difference in kind between the real and what is perceived;[3] Bergson's intention, undoubtedly, is to confirm the reality of perception. Now the ability to diminish the real in order to acquire a specific representation in external perception requires, as was previously

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1 Ibid, p. 23.

2 The term perception is frequently applied by Bergson in a broad and flexible sense. However, in most instances in this text he appears to be alluding to external perception inclusive of either spatial conceptualization, or physical limitation. In many instances he does not specify whether he means diminution as the result of conceptualization or physical limitation. In other instances, e.g. in a 'broader' sense, he may consider the 'act itself,' so to say, such as when he applies the term perception sans exigencies and limitation. The sense here seems to be ideal. For instance, when he speaks of a "total reflexion" of reality, I interpret him as meaning perception as total and unqualified, such as would be the case, not in reality, but in an ideal sense. And, it is also in this latter context that I interpret the following: "Perception is just a phenomenon of the same kind. That which is given is the totality of the images of the material world, with the totality of their internal elements." (Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 22).

3 When Bergson speaks of an image as simply "being" in contrast to "being perceived" (see. p. 23 Matter and Memory) he means the real, of itself, in relation to the real as perceived. An image, in this former sense, is frequently referred to as a "present image."

noted, freedom of choice. Consciousness, in this context, can be said to develop accordingly.

> Consciousness - in regard to external perception - lies in just this choice. But there is, in this necessary poverty of our conscious perception, something that is positive, that foretells spirit; it is, in the etymological sense of the word, discernment.[1]

If conscious perception in the form of discernment diminishes the action of the real when representations are acquired, then conscious perception corelates with an activity - diminution - intrinsic to the perceiver.

> We note, in the first place that a strict law connects the amount of conscious perception with the intensity of action at the disposal of the living being.[2]

With the proviso that consciousness requires choice, i.e. of images, and, consequently, of images which become my representations, conscious perception can be said to be indeterminate and its action virtual. As long as indetermination prevails the "real action" of the perceiver is deferred. In this instance man is not entirely subject to the exigencies of nature, and, consequently, to that biological action which is the equivelant of 'brute' time. Thus, it can be understood that "perception is master of space in the exact measure in which action is master of time."[3]

Up to now we have seen that conscious perception develops in accordance with action. Action upon the material continuum has the effect of diminution. A material object is a represented image, namely it is 'my' representation

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 23.

[2]Ibid, p. 16.

[3]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 17.

by way of diminution.[1] Although it is a represented image it is also "self-existing." Bergson would thereby disagree that the material object "exists only for mind, as Berkeley held."[2] But since it is a "representation by way of diminution," it is also a 'picture' which must, to some extent, exist for mind. In this context we are speaking in terms of space and conceptualization, in that "perception is master of space." The "amount" of consciousness attained by the subject corresponds here to a perception which divides the real in terms of homogeneous space in preparation for action.[3] If the reader has not yet posed the question, he need only to compare these descriptions given by Bergson of consciousness and perception. For example, does the development of consciousness strictly depend on a mutual development of spatial conceptualization? Furthermore, does this imply that consciousness cannot be actualized without the conceiving of space? To answer this correctly, and here I limit myself to the latter question,[4] we must examine the conditions which Bergson attaches to these descriptions of consciousness and perception. To begin, he specifies that consciousness in such instances[5] is related to perception, i.e. "conscious perception."[6] To further specify the matter, he explains that consciousness limits itself to certain aspects of reality. This is to say that certain images of interest are chosen out of the "aggregate of material images."

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[1] Ibid, p. 20; [2] Ibid, p. xii; [3] Ibid, p. 16

[4] The first is more pertinent to a later work of Bergson, Creative Evolution.

[5] I am speaking in reference to action.

[6] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 16.

Hence, he is quite explicit when he states that:

> Consciousness - in regard to external perception - lies in just this choice.[1]

The amount of conscious perception, here meaning 'external' perception, coincides with an act of diminution or choice, i.e. an act which divides the continuity of the real.[2] 'Externality,' here, can only be understood, as I see it, in terms of quantity and "divisible space." Is, however, the conscious perception of our world always diminutive and thereby "fragmented?" What is not specified is the status of consciousness excluding external perception in a quantitative sense. Since Bergson does not specify, in the above, the actualization of consciousness under all circumstances we may, tenatively, assume that the above description does not exclude other forms of conscious perception. Compare the following texts to those texts quoted immediately above. Is not the appeal in the following a rather strong one in favor of interpreting a practical and action oriented perception as simply one 'kind' of perception?

> But suppose that my conscious perception has an entirely practical destination, that it simply indicates, in the aggregate of things, that which interests my possible action upon them: I can understand that all the rest escapes me, and that, nevertheless, all the rest is of the same nature as what I perceive..... Here we seem to return to realism.... Inversely, realism fails to draw from reality the immediate consciousness which we have of it.[3]

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[1] Ibid, p. 23; [2] Ibid, pp. 34-35.

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 226.

The difficulty, for example, is seemingly resolved if we refer to the "perception of extensity." Bergson gives many such examples in this text. He leaves no doubt as to the relation of "extensity" to perception. Extensity is the most salient quality of perception.[1]

The nature of extensity remains the same in this text as it was in Time and Free Will. "Perceived extensity" is qualitative as opposed to quantitative. It is an "unbroken extensity."[2] Perceived extensity is "material extensity," an "undivided extension" similar to consciousness;[3] it is "concrete extensity," a continuum, though diversified and organized.[4] But what is the nature of, or I should say, what is the object of the "immediate consciousness" which Bergson has just referred to? It is a "real duration" and a "real extensity (which really belongs to things and are directly manifest to the mind.)"[5] Here, Bergson states, unequivocally, that real duration is in things, i.e. the material world. Both the continuity of consciousness and the continuity of matter are subjects of pure, intuitive knowledge.

Pure intuition, external or internal, is that of an undivided continuity.[6]

"Pure intuition" has no resemblance to a Kantian form of a priori. An intuition of "the continuity of material extensity," is, for Bergson, experiential as in contrast to "an object of pure reason;" this continuity is

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[1] Ibid, p. 241; [2] Ibid, p. 34; [3] Ibid, p. 176; [4] Ibid, p. 181.

[5] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 208.

[6] Ibid, p. 177.

"given in primary perception."[1] The following text is quite clear on this point.

> The relativity of knowledge may not, then, be definitive. By unmaking that which these needs have made, we may restore to intuition its original purity and so recover contact with the real.[2]

Bergson immediately follows this statement with a lengthly account of the "method" by which reality as such may be perceived. So as to further substantiate this issue, but not to belabor it, I offer instead a brief but concise text extracted from the same Chapter, IV, in which Bergson vividly describes the result of this method.

> In short, try first to connect together the discontinuous objects of daily experience; then resolve the motionless continuity of their qualities into vibrations on the spot; finally fix your attention on these movements by abstracting from the divisible space which underlies them and considering only their mobility (that undivided act which our consciousness becomes aware of in our own movements): you will thus obtain a vision of matter, fatiguing perhaps for your imagination, but pure, and freed from all that the exigencies of life compel you to add to it in external perception.[3]

Thus,in response to the question raised in section one, the "sectionings" of the material continuum into discontinuous "present moments" result from our needs and the artificial concepts required to fulfill them, whereas our "immediate consciousness" is of a continuum. But how, we may ask, does this "vision of matter" compare with "inner consciousness." Are we justified in distinguishing the two? And, what is Bergson's position? I shall delay my response to the latter questions so that, in this section, I might give full consideration to the import of the first. Let us analyze, in this regard, the following text.

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[1] Ibid, p. 192; [2] Ibid, p. 179; [3] Ibid, pp.204-205.

Extended matter, regarded as a whole, is like a consciousness where everything balances and compensates and neutralizes everything else; it possesses in very truth the indivisibility of our perception; so that, inversely, we may without scruple attribute to perception something of the extensity of matter. These two terms, perception and matter, approach each other in the measure that we divest ourselves of what may be called the prejudices of action: sensation recovers extensity, the concrete extended recovers its natural continuity and indivisibility.[1]

If "extended matter" is "like a consciousness" where everything "neutralizes everything else," my enquiry should turn to Bergson's account of 'consciousness of self.' I shall, in this section, limit my enquiry to what could be considered the experiential or psychological level of Bergson's philosophy.

Bergson approaches the problem by first justifying our belief in an external world. For Bergson, experience begins at the "periphery" of existence.[2] The externality of the world, in the context of Matter and Memory, is not a projection of consciousness.

My belief in an external world does not come, cannot come, from the fact that I project outside myself sensations that are unextended: how could these sensations ever acquire extension, and whence should I get the notion of exteriority?[3]

The initial appeal, it would seem, is to common sense, since what

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 216.

[2]Ibid, pp. 32-33. As a note of interest I add the following statement by Jean Piaget. "That the child shows a keen interest in himself, a logical, and no doubt a moral, egocentricity, does not prove that he is conscious of his self, but suggests, on the contrary, that he confuses his self with the universe, in other words that he is unconscious of his self....For us, an idea or a word is in the mind and the thing it represents is in the world of sense perception. For the child, images and words, though distinguished to a certain degree from things, are none the less situated in things." (Jean Piaget, The Child's Conception of the World, trans. by Joan and Andrew Tomlinson, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. 1967 , pp.125-126)

[3]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 32.

we have to begin with, he says, are, precisely, extended sensations, not the "idea" of unextended private sensations resulting from "homogenous and mechanical movements occuring in space."[1]

> Hence, as a conclusion, the idea of cutting our perception into two distinct parts, thence forward incapable of uniting: on the one hand homogeneous movements in space, and on the other unextended sensations in consciousness.[2]

The dichotomy which Bergson speaks of, of two distinct perceptions, one internal and unextended and the other external and extended, is rooted in the Representative Theory of perception.[3] Bergson evidently implies that the two perceptions, one signifying externality and the other consciousness, are capable of uniting. The 'medium' through which this unity or reconcilation is to be accomplished is none other than extensity. Both realism and idealism, Bergson says, contend that there is nothing in common between extensity and pure quality, i.e. consciousness.

> We maintain, on the contrary, that there is something common between qualities of different orders, that they all share in extensity, though in different degrees, and that it is impossible to overlook these two truths without entangling in a thousand difficulties the metaphysic of matter, the psychology of perception and, more generally, the problem of the relation of consciousness with matter.[4]

The qualities of one order, affective sensations, appertain to the "centre" of our experience in contrast to the "periphery".[5] The "real action of our body," the "centre," is commensurate to sensation.[6] The centre's "possible or virtual action concerns other objects.[7] This "virtual action" is perception.[8] Affective sensation is thereby manifested within the

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[1] Ibid, p. 37; [2] Ibid; [3] Ibid, pp. 38-39.

[4] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 309.

[5] Ibid, p. 33; [6] Ibid, p. 43; [7] Ibid; [8] Ibid.

body's "own substance."

> And this is why its surface, the common limit of the external and internal, is the only portion of space which is both perceived and felt.[1]

In this part of his text Bergson seems to be contending with the postulate that "we pass by insensible degrees from the representative state which occupies space, to the affective state which appears to be unextended."[2] What can Bergson mean by degrees here? Do degrees refer simply to a gradual transition from one state to another? Examine these texts thoroughly and you will see that he is not referring to a transition such as takes place in a color spectrum between violet and blue. The "orders" of quality alluded to are distinguished by the terms "external" and "representative", as pertaining to one state,[3] in contrast to another qualitative state, a sensation,

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[1] Ibid, P.44; [2] Ibid, pp. 38-39.

[3] As I have indicated in Chapter I a "representative sensation, looked at in itself, is pure quality." (Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 90.) Bergson, in the above text from Matter and Memory, is specifying a perception which is further specified by the term "external." However, as we shall see, this perception is tactile. I have already noted that it is representative. Consequently, an external perception, in this instance, is the equivalent of a representative sensation, which is, essentially, a "pure quality." If Bergson were here referring strictly to a perception characterized by the concept of space from which, hypothetically speaking, there is no transition to a sensation, then he would merely be proving that the 'self' could only be distinguished as the result of this conceptualization, which would amount to a reductio ad absurdum. But Bergson has confirmed above that "an external world" cannot be a projection, as would be the case in conceptualization.

distinguished by the terms "affective" and "internal." Bergson, in short, is distinguishing between the external and the internal. Neither does he contend that an effective sensation is "unextended."[1] This, in fact, is one premise of a conditional sentence - actually, a literary foil - in which the main clause is that "we pass by insensible degrees." Although Bergson has established that "all qualities" of different orders "share in extensity, though in different degrees," the two states which he refers to, qualities of different orders, are differentiated by the terms external and internal. Thus, I am able to conveive of no other meaning in relation to the word "degrees" here, except that degrees mean "degrees of extensity." As we shall see, it is not Bergson's 'intention' to deny this "sharing" of degrees of extensity among qualities. His contention is that "it is not merely a difference of degree that separates perception from affection, but a difference in kind."[2] As it turns out, the real difficulty is that it makes little difference whether some thing is more or less extended, if we are limited to defining it in terms of extension. Apparently, Bergson's reasoning is that there must be a difference in "kind" if we wish to maintain a duality. The difficulty, in Bergson's view, is that a perception may, when the action of the object upon the subject is increased, give rise to an affection.[3] This leads to the illusion that there is merely a difference in degree.

> Thus we may pass insensibly from the contact with a pin to its prick.... So it does seem, then, as if there were a difference of degree and not of nature between affection and perception.[4]

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 46

[2] Ibid, p. 42; [3] Ibid, p. 39-40; [4] Ibid, p. 40.

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A gradual increase of pressure upon the body's surface, imperceptible in terms of specific intervals or degrees, as it were, culminates in an "essentially personal" affective state. The initial pressure of the pin "is both perceived and felt."[1] The eventual experience of pain is an affective sensation. A tactile sensation, apparently, "is both perceived and felt." But does being perceived and felt mean a combination of visual perception and tactile sensation? If this were the circumstance there would be little cause for concern that a perception and an affective sensation merge imperceptibly. The fact remains, therefore, that Bergson is speaking, precisely, of the passage from a perception to an affective sensation in terms of increasing pressure applied to the body's surface, i.e. he is speaking in terms of what is tactile.

> There is hardly any perception which may not, by the increase of the action of its object upon our body, become an affection, and, more particularly, pain.[2]

Although the subject could hardly calculate the gradual increase of pressure, that is, calculate this pressure into precise moments or degrees, as Bergson would readily agree,[3] Bergson nevertheless contends that the subject experiences a precise moment of pain.

> There is then, there must be, a precise moment when pain intervenes.... And it is not merely a difference of degree that separates perception from affection, but a difference in kind.[4]

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 44.

[2] Ibid, pp. 39-40.

[3] Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 65-66.

[4] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 42.

Bergson bases this "difference of kind" on the eventual repulsion of an organism to a stimulus of increasing pressure.[1] One question is, what of like stimuli which effect a considerable reaction within the organism, and which the organism readily accepts? Furthermore, and of much more importance, a difference in "kind" here is meant to distinguish the internal from the external. It is difficult to see the coherency in this argument if we consider that both states, the affective and the perceptual, "share in extensity, though in different degrees," one state being more extended, the other less. It is not infeasible to propose a "difference in kind" in these circumstances, if we simply mean the difference between an external and internal state which share in degrees of extensity; however, it is quite difficult, under these same circumstances, to conceive of a "precise moment" when the external becomes internal.[2]

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 42.

[2] I find the following excerpts from Time and Free Will conflicting with what Bergson has to say above. "Assume that I experience a sensation S, and that, increasing the stimulus continuously, I perceive this increase after a certain time... No doubt the modification consists in the fact that the original state S has changed: it has become S′; but the transition from S to S′ could only be called an arithmetical difference if I were conscious, so to speak, of an interval between S and S′ ... Either you keep to what consciousness presents to you or you have recourse to a coventional mode of representation. In the first case you will find a difference between S and S′ like that between the shades of a rainbow...." (Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 65-66). Is a "precise moment" the equivalent of an "arithmetical difference"?

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The problematical relation between internal and external perception is the problematical relation between consciousness and matter.[1] Bergson reduces the problem to the relation of body and soul.

> Thereby also some light may be thrown upon the problem towards which all our enquiries converge, that of the union of body and soul. The obscurity of this problem, on the dualistic hypothesis, comes from the double fact that matter is considered as essentially divisible and every state of the soul as rigorously inextensive, so that from the outset the communication between the two terms is severed. And when we go more deeply into this double postulate, we discover, in regard to matter, a confusion of concrete and indivisible extensity with the divisible space which underlies it; and also, in regard to mind, the illusory idea that there are no degrees, no possible transition, between the extended and the unextended.[2]

We have seen that "extended matter" is "like a consciousness" where "everything neutralizes everything else."[3] Perception is attributed with the "extensity of matter" and matter possesses "the indivisibility of our perception."[4] But pure perception alone is "a part of things."[5] And, "conscious perception" corresponds to the action of memory which "prolongs a plurality of moments into each other, contracting them into a single intuition."[6]

> Consciousness and matter, body and soul, were thus seen to meet each other in perception.[7]

We see here that Bergson refers to memory as an act which "contracts a plurality of moments." The moments which he speaks of are of matter.[8]

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 216

[2] Ibid, p. 217.

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 216.

[4] Ibid,; [5] Ibid, p. 51; [6] Ibid, p. 216; [7] Ibid; [8] Ibid, p. 217.

Thus, spirit, acting as memory, synthesizes the past and present moments of matter and is distinguished from matter by this very act.[1] It is not entirely in the context of extensity, therefore, that Bergson seeks to maintain a duality between spirit and matter.

> We were right, then, when we said, at the beginning of this book, that the distinction between body and mind must be established in terms not of space but of time.[2]

However, I have indicated that in "conscious perception" we are speaking in terms of the internal and the external, i.e. we are speaking in terms of a perceptible "extensity" shared in differing degrees.

In the preceding discussion I have delineated Bergson's doctrine of internal affections and external perceptions, and the related problem of a duality. Bergson, in stating that the duality is to be established in terms of time, is giving preferrence to his notion of duration, the basis of his philosophy, in lieu of his theory of extensity. In the following section I shall examine the relation of his "metaphysic of matter"[3] in relation to his doctrine of perception and, again in particular, to that content of perception which Bergson names the "unconscious."

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[1] Ibid; [2] Ibid.

[3] I again remind the reader that Bergson applies the term "metaphysic of matter" in referrence to his understanding of the real nature of matter. When Bergson speaks of matter as a continuum, or an undivided extensity, he refers to its real nature. The same can be said of his theory of vibrations. However, when he speaks of matter as a "present which is always beginning again," or "simultaneity," he is making an allusion to matter in the context of the "psychology of perception," which, in this instance, is external perception functioning in accordance with the concept of space.

MATTER AND MEMORY

3. The Unconscious and Perception

In Section 1 of this Chapter I indicated concern as to the role of the "present moment," i.e. that "sectioning" of duration which Bergson describes as the "material world" or "matter,"[1] in relation to perception. In this section I shall analyze this issue in light of Bergson's tentative[2] definition of matter, "a present which is always beginning again." Furthermore, I shall examine two other, quite different, descriptions of matter. Bergson has stated that what we know in perception "are the moments of our consciousness." In this respect, we have already seen that "extended matter, regarded as a whole, is like a consciousness where everything neutralizes everything else."[3] This "perceived matter" possesses the "indivisibility of our perception." However, in consideration of this close comparison between conscious perception and matter the aspect of a duality seems to dissolve. But "pure perception is in things," rather than in us, that is, it is not a constituent of consciousness. My object, here, is to determine what reality, if any, Bergson assigns to "the unconscious." If it can be shown that Bergson does confirm, in a positive sense, a reality which is not a constituent of conscious perception, does this amount to sufficient ground for establishing a duality between spirit and matter, in this instance, an "unperceived continuum"? At least one

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p.131.

[2] On page 13 of his text Bergson defines matter as "a present which is always beginning again." Whereas on page 182 he says: "We must confine ourselves to mere suggestions; there can be no question here of constructing a theory of matter."

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory. p. 216.

critic does not think so.[1] The relation of this question to Bergson's doctrine of perception will constitute the major theme of this section. In my final analysis I shall once again raise one other question, that of the role which Bergson ultimately designates, in this work, to "simultaneity," known in this instance as "the mathematical instant of conscious perception."[2]

Bergson, in that portion of Chapter III subtitled "What the Present Is," speaks of perception as if it were determined by the limitation of the organism, man, to be a "section" or "fragment" of reality. He refers to the human body as if it were a point in space.

> Sensations and movements being localized at determined points of this extended body, there can only be, at a given moment, a single system of movements and sensations. That is why my present appears to me to be a thing absolutely determined, and contrasting with my past.[3]

Perception,here, appears responsible for the separation of "my present" from "my past," or memory, and, subsequently, for that sectioning of the real called the "present moment."

> More generally, in that continuity of becoming which is reality itself, the present moment is constituted by the quasi- instantaneous section effected by our perception in the flowing mass; and this section is precisely that which we call the material world.[4]

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[1]William E. May, "The Reality of Matter in the Metaphysics of Bergson," International Philosophical Quarterly, 10 (1970), 616-617.

[2]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 229.

[3]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 131.

[4]Ibid.

But let us examine these texts, and attempt to determine, once again, whether Bergson has set certain conditions to their meaning or, whether these statements are, in effect, unconditional. We notice in the first text that he applies the term "appears," in that "my present appears to me to be a thing absolutely determined." In the second text he refers to the sectioning of "that continuity of becoming which is reality itself." Reality, here, an allusion to matter, is actually a "continuity of becoming."

One might logically assume that a condition, if any, were it attached to this "sectioning" of the "continuity" would be contained in Bergson's definition of a 'perceived' material world. Indeed, this is where it is found.

> If matter, so far as extended in space, is to be defined (as we believe it must) as a present which is always beginning again, inversely, our present is the very materiality of our existence...[1]

The condition is, "so far as extended in space." The word space, for Bergson, entails conceptualization. This was amply demonstrated in my first chapter. By conceptualization Bergson means "to set in

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 131-132

juxtaposition," to divide "what is essentially undivided."[1] What of the character of "our present"? I repeat what I have quoted in section 1.

> The psychical state, then, that I call 'my present,' must be both a perception of the immediate past and a determination of the immediate future.[2]

We see here that Bergson is not speaking in terms of an apparent "contrast," or separation between my "immediate past," i.e. memory, and

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[1]Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 94-95. Thus, the importance of having made a close analysis of Bergson's understanding of the term space in relation to external perception, in the context of that work which emphasizes this issue, Time and Free Will. It is more keenly appreciated in these proceeding chapters. I have criticized Augustin Fressin on this subject. It is nevertheless surprising to find another contemporary commentator fall into the same basic error of interpretation. For example, William May, in his article "The Reality of Matter in the Metaphysics of Bergson" says: "In his first major work, Time and Free Will, Bergson apparently denies that matter endures in any way whatsoever. That inert matter, or the physical world, is completely different in kind from conscious life is indeed implicit throughout this entire work..." But Bergson, as we have seen in Chapter I, does not, "throughout this entire work," refer to it as "inert" or "completely different in kind from conscious life." May adds: "And the difference is more explicit whenever Bergson is led to make his fundamental distinction between 'two different kinds of multiplicity.'" (William E. May, "The Reality of Matter in the Metaphysics of Bergson," The International Philosophical Quarterly, 1970, p. 614). It should, however, be clear upon reading that section of Time and Free Will subtitled "Space and Homogeneity," that one kind of multiplicity referred to is "clearly conceived by the human intellect," while the other is "heterogeneous, that of sensible qualities." (Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 87, 97).

[2]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 130.

what he refers to here as "a determination of the immediate future."

"....what I call 'my present' has one foot in my past and another in my future.[1]

Again, I repeat as I did in Section 1, the "present moment," as defined, is not a constituent of my 'actual' present. "My present" is actually a continuity. Note here that the "very materiality of our existence" refers to our "body," which, in its actual state, is not inert.

Thus it indeed represents the actual state of my becoming, that part of my duration which is in a process of growth.[2]

Evidently, "my present," as it "appears" to me, represents the "present moment," i.e. that "quasi - instantaneous section effected by our perception in the flowing mass." It represents, in effect, one 'kind' of duration.

The duration wherein we see ourselves acting,.....is a duration whose elements are dissociated and juxtaposed.[3]

Bergson goes on to define the difference between appearance and actuality.

The duration wherein we act is a duration wherein our states melt into each other.[4]

Can this duration be perceived? Only if the conditions which

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[1] Ibid; [2] Ibid, p. 131; [3] Ibid, p. 181.

[4] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 181.

determine that duration "wherein we see ourselves acting" are not necessary to perception.

> Homogeneous space and homogeneous time are then neither properties of things nor essential conditions of our faculty of knowing them: they express, in an abstract form, the double work of solidification and of division which we effect on the moving continuity of the real....[1]

We have, therefore, two durations, one primarily conceptual, the other real, both of which are within the realm of conscious perception. The two notions of duration are comparable to two contrasting perceptions of matter. Real duration is, in this instance, similar to "concrete extensity." It is "like a consciousness where everything neutralizes everything else."[2] The other, primarily conceptual, notion of duration, is partly[3] the result of marking out "divisions in the continuity of the extended."[4] Matter, here, is conceptualized in terms of space.[5]

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[1] Ibid, p . 207; [2] Ibid, p. 216.

[3] I specify "partly" here in allusion to "inner states" of consciousness, such as our affections, which, if they are "set in juxtaposition," also account for the concept of homogeneous time. Bergson would likely include affections "in the continuity of the extended," but in this specific referrence he is obviously referring to matter.

[4] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 206.

[5] Ibid.

To perceive matter, in this latter sense, is "to be in the present and in a present which is always beginning again."[1] But this, as I have indicated is an "appearance." I shall return to this point in my conclusion to this section. At that time we shall have a clearer appreciation of Bergson's notion, "the mathematical instant of conscious perception." As for now I shall continue my analysis of Bergson's "metaphysic of matter,"[2] and show how it relates to the "unconscious" as an element of perception.

Bergson has stated that memory, that is, "my past," appears to contrast with "my present." However, an external perception always coincides with a "memory-image," since "every attentative perception involves a reflexion."[3] Bergson goes on to say that "perception is a circuit, in which all the elements, including the perceived object itself, hold each other in a state of mutual tension."[4] In reality, therefore, memory is never separate from "my present."

> ....from the moment that it becomes image, the past leaves the state of true memory and coincides with a certain part of my present.[5]

Nevertheless, "my present" does not coincide, in fact, with a material world described as the "present moment." Bergson, as we have seen, designates this understanding of matter conceptual. The 'content' of my conscious perception, "a perception of the immediate past,"[6] is memory. The other constituent of "my present," "a determination of the immediate future," is not relative to consciousness.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 209.

[3] Ibid, pp. 91-92; [4] Ibid, pp. 94-94; [5] Ibid, p. 133; [6] Ibid, 130.

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Practically we perceive only the past, the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future.[1]

It was demonstrated in section one that "pure perception" is that constituent of our "concrete perception" which is a contact with the real.[2] Likewise, it was shown that "there is for us nothing that is instantaneous."[3] This remark, made in reference to pure perception, was intended by Bergson to confirm that our "perceptions are never the real moments of things, as we have hitherto supposed, but are the moments of our consciousness."[4] Our consciousness is our memory.[5] What of "the real moments of things?"

....to perceive consists in condensing enormous periods of an infinitely diluted existence into a few more differentiated moments of an intenser life, and in thus summizing up a very long history.[6]

Here we have another form of duration, if you wish, a form which "taken in itself, spreads over an incalculable number of moments."[7] Its reality is not dependent on our consciousness of it.

....if you abolish my consciousness, the material universe subsists exactly as it was;.....[8]

This unperceived material universe is differentiated from the "condensed" moments of my consciousness in respect of its "infinitely diluted existence." But it is, in essence, like the condensed moments of consciousness, a continuity.

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[1] Ibid, p. 143

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 63.

[3] Ibid, p 56; [4] Ibid; [5] Ibid; [6] Ibid, p. 204; [7] Ibid; [8] Ibid.

> Matter thus resolves itself into numberless vibrations, all linked together in uninterrupted continuity, all bound up with each other, and travelling in every direction like shivers through an immense body.[1]

Hence we have three explanations of matter, and the two that are given preeminence, in the scale of reality, are continuous and undivided. That is, they possess the basic characteristic of real duration. Thus, the example[2] which I gave in section two, which was intended, on my part, to depict Bergson's method of actually perceiving the true nature of the material world, was not specified, on Bergson's part, as to whether this vision corresponds to the "moments of matter condensed within consciousness," or whether it is a vision analogous to the actual "rhythm of the flow of things." Evidently, if what we perceive are always "the moments of our consciousness," and never "the real moment of things," then an "external intuition," at best, may only 'approach' that particular modality - rhythm - of an "infinitely diluted existence;" it may never duplicate it. Furthermore, that duration which we 'know,' an extended continuum perceived as the condensed moments of our consciousness, must differ somehow from that material continuum as it is, of itself, and unperceived. Bergson, does, in fact, make allowance for "different rhythms"[3] of duration.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 204-205.

[3] Bergson applies the term "rhythm" as a synonym of "tension." He says that there are, conceivably, "different rhythms which, slower or faster, measure the degree of tension or relaxation of different kinds of consciousness, and thereby fix their respective places in the scale of being." (Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 203).

To conceive of durations of different tensions is perhaps both difficult and strange to our mind, because we have acquired the useful habit of substituting for the true duration, lived by consciousness, an homogeneous and independent time;.....[1]

I stated in the beginning of this section that, insofar as having established a duality between spirit and matter, at least one critic denies that Bergson was successful. His reasons are as follows:

Thus by attributing duration to matter Bergson actually aggravates the problem of its reality, for if it is precisely by participating in duration (=memory, spirit), then how can it be in any meaningful way 'real' independently of spirit?[2]

If Bergson attributes duration to matter, he, nevertheless, does not say anywhere in Matter and Memory that the duration of matter is synonymous to spirit. In point of fact Bergson says of "pure memory" alone that "we are in very truth in the domain of spirit."[3] Furthermore, Bergson exclaims that the "planes of consciousness" which belong to pure memory are not to be confused with active states of consciousness which possess the characteristic of extensity.

Rather they exist virtually with that existence which is proper to things of the spirit.[4]

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[1] Ibid, p. 203. Take notice that Bergson qualifies consciousness, the source of "true duration," by the term "lived," as if the "flow" of consciousness were indeed different from the state of being conscious itself. At this stage it may not be too presumptuous on my part to anticipate Bergson's positing the "flow of inner consciousness" as the primary source of perceiving, not merely "my duration," but also, the "flux" of existence in general.

[2] William E. May, "The Reality of Matter in the Metaphysics of Bergson," International Philosophical Quarterly, 10 (1970), 616-617.

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 237.

[4] Ibid, p. 238.

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If Bergson is to be comprehensively analyzed, we must distinguish carefully between his usage of the terms "spirit" and "duration." The "unconscious" state of pure memory is thereby "unextended."[1] It is at opposite poles with the extended, i.e. matter. The term "duration" in Bergson, therefore, seems more consistent with various modalities of existence determined by equally various degrees of "tension." Rather than attribute a "homogeneous" duration to Bergson's philosophy, I am more inclined to accept the position of another commentator, Jacques Chevalier, who sees within Bergson the significance of "different rhythms of duration."[2]

> This is a philosophy of duration assuredly, but still more one of tension.[3]

May, however, acknowledges Bergson's statement that "the humblest function of spirit is to bind together the successive moments of the duration of things."[4] May adds that:

> The implication is certainly that real, inner duration, is possible only in virtue of an activity of a spiritual order. Nowhere in the Bergsonian corpus does 'pure' matter have the ability or function of linking together the moments of duration.[5]

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[1] Ibid, p. 133.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 203.

[3] Jacques Chevalier, Henri Bergson, Authorized trans. by Lilian A. Clare (London: Rider and Co., 1928), p. 320.

[4] In "The Reality of Matter," p. 614; In Matter and Memory, p. 218.

[5] May, "The Reality of Matter," p. 614.

May presents this as an objection against the duality. Why should it not be applied in favor of the duality? Since spirit is evidently "distinct from matter" by this very act.[1] As to matter being the source of its own duration, I should not think that Bergson is denying either proximate casuality or a duality if he omits referrence to this point made by May. May's suggestion is that matter must be the source of its flux, or duration, if it is to be distinguished from spirit. Bergson, however, is speaking in a metaphysical context, and may be suggesting that spirit is the ultimate source of material duration. For example, the very text from which May partially quoted Bergson seems to contain this suggestion.

> But if, in fact, the humblest function of spirit is to bind together the successive moments of the duration of things, if it is by this that it comes into contact with matter and by this also that it is first of all distinguished from matter, we can conceive an infinite number of degrees between matter and fully developed spirit - a spirit capable of action which is not only undetermined, but also reasonable and reflective. Each of these successive degrees, which measures a growing intensity of life, corresponds to a higher tension of duration....[2]

A "fully developed spirit" capable of action is of course consciousness. This is the "higher tension of duration" which Bergson refers to. Matter is of a lower tension of duration. Although Bergson is alluding to the unity of body and soul, it would not be entirely removed from the context of his thought to anticipate some spiritual force behind the flux of things.

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 217.

[2] Ibid, pp. 218-219.

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The manner by which spirit "unites" with matter is in the act of pure perception.[1] This unity which Bergson speaks of is not exclusively that of body and soul, but is, in this particular instance, referable to the "contact" through which spirit binds "together the successive moments of the duration of things."[2] Spirit is, "even then, memory.....it contracts the moments of this matter."[3]

The reality of an inactive form of spirit, such as we find in the definition of pure memory, is not at all confined to some state of virtual limbo.

> But, if consciousness is but the characteristic note of the present, that is to say of the actually lived, in short of the active, then that which does not act may cease to belong to consciousness without therefore ceasing to exist in some manner. In other words, in the psychological domain, consciousness may not be the synonym of existence, but only of real action or of immediate efficacy;....[4]

The same can be said of pure perception, our initial "contact" with matter. If we exclude memory from perception, we exclude consciousness. This is not to say that our "contact" is not real.[5] Bergson hypothetically envisions the role of consciousness if pure perception were capable of consciousness.

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[1] Ibid, p. 217; [2] Ibid, p. 218; [3] Ibid, p. 217.

[4] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 134.

[5] Ibid, p. 51.

Such is our simplified, schematic theory of external perception. It is the theory of pure perception. If we went no further, the part of consciousness in perception would thus be confined to threading on the continuous string of memory an uninterrupted series of instantaneous visions, which would be a part of things rather than ourselves.[1]

As contrasting, though integral features of our "concrete" or actual perception, therefore, we have spirit in the form of pure memory, and pure perception, our "primordial" contact "whereby we place ourselves in the very heart of things."[2] In 1908, twelve years after the publication of Matter and Memory, Bergson engaged in a discussion with M. A. Fouillée centered on the efficacy of perception. I quote Bergson.

-Cette critique implique que la conscience n'atteint que le subjectif, et que l'immediatement donné est necessairement de l'indivuel. Mais un des principaux objects de Matiere et Memoire et de l'Évolution creatrice est précisément d'établir la contraire. Dans le premier de ces deux livres, on montre que l'objectivité de la chose matérielle est immanente à la perception que nous avons,pourvu qu'on prenne cette perception à l'état brut et sous sa forme immediate.....[3]

This "immediate" and "unfinished" form of perception is pure perception. We perceive matter "de facto" in ourselves, "compelled" by a memory that is "inseparable in practice from perception."[4]

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[1] Ibid, pp. 51-52.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 54.

[3] Henri Bergson in Ecrits et Paroles, texts rassembles par Rose-Marie Mosse-Bastide (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957-1959), p. 302.

[4] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 60.

The "immanency" of the "objectivity of the material thing" does not fall within the realm of consciousness. Thus, it is only "de jure" that we "perceive matter within matter."[1]

> Theoretically, we said, the part played by consciousness in external perception would be to join together, by the continuous thread of memory, instantaneous visions of the real. But, in fact, there is for us nothing that is instantaneous. In all that goes by that name there is already some work of our memory, and consequently, of our consciousness.[2]

Elsewhere, Bergson refers to pure perception as "a fragment of reality, detached just as it is."[3] But this, of course, is to detach a living "being" from its "affections" and its "memory."

> In other words, we have, to begin with, and for the convenience of study, treated the living body as a mathematical point in space and conscious perception as a mathematical instant in time.[4]

Similarly, we found Bergson treating "my present" as "a thing absolutely determined and contrasting with my past," and the material world regarded as "the present moment," that "quasi-instantaneous section effected by our perception in the flowing mass."[5] Yet this limitation of our perception may be delayed indefinitely.[6] Since conceived space provides us with "the diagram of our near future," it must "recede indefinitely."[7] An essential property of space, therefore, is that it

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 60.

[2] Ibid, p. 56; [3] Ibid, p. 229; [4] Ibid; [5] Ibid, p. 131.

[6] Bergson in Ecrits et Paroles, p. 303.

[7] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 137.

remain "indefinitely open." A conscious perception is contained within an infinite though unconscious experience.

> It is, then, of the essence of our actual perception, inasmuch as it is extended, to be always only a content in relation to a vaster, even an unlimited, experience which contains it; and this experience, absent from our consciousness, since it spreads beyond the perceived horizon, nevertheless, appears to be actually given.[1]

The role of the unconscious in Bergson has a positive character.[2] It is within this context that we have our "contact" with the real, wherein "the successive moments of the duration of things" are, in consequence, bound together in memory.[3] In "concrete perception" it is "never the real moments of things" that we know, "but the moments of our consciousness."[4]

> For if we follow out to the end the principle according to which the subjectivity of our perception consists, above all, in the share taken by memory, we shall say that even the sensible qualities of matter would be known in themselves, from within and not from without, could we but disengage them from that particular rhythm of duration which characterizes our consciousness.[5]

However, if what we perceive are "but the moments of our consciousness" are we justified, on the level of perceptual experience, in distinguishing our consciousness, the source of our duration, from the duration of things? This, I would say, will depend on the manner in which Bergson develops his

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 137.

[2] Bergson in Ecrits of Paroles, pp. 326-327.

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 218

[4] Ibid., p. 56; [5] Ibid.

notions of matter and consciousness in the works which follow. For example, he does not, in Matter and Memory, confine himself to a strict theory of matter.[1] Furthermore, he sees in the difference of rhythms of duration pertaining to our consciousness and that of the material universe the basis of maintaining a separation between "our duration" and matter. He asks, can the moments of matter be mathematically deduced?

> We have throughout this work, and for the convenience of study, supposed that it was really so; and such is, in fact, the distance between the rhythm of our duration and that of the flow of things; that the contingency of the course of nature, so profoundly studied in recent philosophy, must, for us, be practically equivelant to necessity. So let us keep to our hypothesis, though it might have to be attenuated.[2]

I remind the reader that it is not the actual rhythm of "the flow of things" that we consciously perceive, but "that particular rhythm of duration which characterisizes our consciousness." Mathematical deduction and simultaneity are products of conceptualization. A tenable solution may be in what is merely a tendency toward division and mathematical difference in the development, or evolution of matter.

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 182.

[2] Ibid, pp. 244-245.

All the living hold together, and all yield to the same tremendous push. The animal takes its stand on the plant, man bestrides animality, and the whole of humanity, in space and in time, is one immense army galloping beside and before and behind each of us in an overwhelming charge able to beat down every resistance and clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death. (Henri Bergson, Creative Evolution, trans. by Arthur Mitchell, New York: The Modern Library, 1944, p. 295).

CHAPTER III

CREATIVE EVOLUTION

Whereas Matter and Memory has been considered Bergson's major work by so notable an enquirer into perception as Maurice Merleau-Ponty,[1] it is in Creative Evolution, first published in 1907 that we find that richness of poetic expression that eventually gained for Bergson the Nobel prize for literature in 1927. Although this latter work, which we will presently analyze, is not quite as explicit as the former in regard to perception, it does contain valuable insights which will enable the reader to better comprehend that doctrine. One such insight involves Bergson's notion of a life, or evolutory "tendency." To state this in simple terms, we are here mainly concerned with a dual tendency in existence toward "geometricity" and consciousness. Life tends toward material divisibility and eventual geometrical interpretation on one hand, and the development of consciousness in the form of intellect and intuition on the other. The issue is whether a tendency in the material toward geometricity suffices to account for a duality experientially expressed in an external perception of matter, and an internal perception of consciousness. Or, does an essentially 'univocal intuition'[2] that sees the "material world melt back into a simple flux, a

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[1]Maurice Merleau-Ponty in The Bergsonian Heritage, ed. by Thomas Hanna (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. 137.

[2]Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 260-261.

continuity of flowing, a becoming,"[1] conflict with this duality?

1. The Tendency of Evolution.

In this section I shall determine the meaning of "tendency" in Bergson's text. To begin, Bergson attributes physical similarities in varying "lines of evolution" to an "original impetus."[2] The direction of life, this impetus, is not predetermined; thus, we cannot find in matter data which will enable us to predict what new forms of life might evolve. In this sense, matter is a recipient.

....life is, more than anything else, a tendency to act on inert matter.[3]

Bergson applies the terms "act" to life, and "inert" to matter so as to emphasize a duality in which the material forms a resistance to the force emitted by life, or spirit. It does not mean, as we shall see, that he considers matter inert in the strict sense. The "original impetus is a common impetus" that expresses itself in life forms which retain this emitted force or "energy" in their own interest in the course of adaptation.[4] Harmony, therefore, is not a factual state of individual or group existences, it is seen rather as an overall "complementarity" exhibited in tendencies. The idea which Bergson wishes to get across here is that life tends toward

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[1] Ibid, p. 401; [2] Ibid, p. 107; [3] Ibid; [4] Ibid, p. 58.

dissociation instead of association.

> ...the real and profound causes of division were those which life bore in her bosom. For life is a tendency, and the essence of a tendency is to develope in the form of a sheaf, creating, by its very growth, divergent directions among which the impetus is divided.[1]

Matter forms that "barrier" to "all the living" in the metaphor which opens this chapter of my text. Life tends to dissociate, to create "divergent directions" in order to open new avenues of progress.[2] Thus, Bergson views evolution as a "conflict" between the "vital impulse"[3] and matter.[4]

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 110.

[2]Ibid, p. 111.

[3]Elan Vital.

[4]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 277.

2. The Inverted Movements of Consciousness and Matter.

Bergson utilizes an image depicting the "scission" (schism) in evolution which Mme. Mosse-Bastide calls, in Bergson's terms, a "mediating image." She attributes this image to Plotinus.[1] The image concerns a vessel out of which steam is escaping at high pressure. I quote Bergson.

> The steam thrown into the air is nearly all condensed into little drops which fall back, and this condensation and this fall represent simply the loss of something, an interruption, a deficit. But a small part of the jet of steam subsists uncondensed, for some seconds; it is making an effort to raise the drops which are falling; it succeeds at most in retarding their fall. So from an immense reservoir of life, jets must be gushing out unceasingly, of which each, falling back, is a world. The evolution of living species within this world represents what subsists of the primitive direction of the original jet, and of an impulsion which continues itself in a direction the inverse of materiality.[2]

However, Bergson goes on to say that a "more exact representation of matter" is the image of an uplifted arm which falls back, yet subsists, through the action of the will, in a movement the inverse of the fall.[3] The origin of matter is due to "a creative action which unmakes itself."[4] The upward movement which "subsists" represents consciousness, the downward matter. The extent to which matter inclines downward is the extent that it approaches simultaneity, an existence "devoid of real duration, nothing but the instantaneous which dies and is born again endlessly."[5] Bergson asks, "Is the existance of matter of this nature?"

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[1] Rose Marie Mosse-Bastide, Bergson et Plotin (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959), pp.6-7. In a later work, Mind-Energy Bergson makes explicit reference to Plotinus' Enneads, which work also seems to have been the source for the subject matter discussed here. I shall examine this at greater length in my following chapter.

[2] Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 269-270.

[3] Ibid, p. 270.

[4] Ibid; [5] Ibid, p. 220.

> Not altogether, for analysis resolves it into elementary vibrations, the shortest of which are of very slight duration, almost vanishing, but not nothing. It may be presumed, nevertheless, that physical existence inclines in this second direction, as psychical existence in the first.[1]

Bergson's enquiry now reaches an important dimension in regard to his doctrine of perception. If matter is not "devoid of real duration" - and thereby cannot be considered, of itself, inert - can it be, he asks, that matter, as we ordinarily understand it, is "this very movement pushed further, and that physics is merely psychics inverted."[2] Bergson's answer is yes.[3]

> Thus, the space of our geometry and the spatiality of things are mutually engendered by the reciprocal action and reaction of two terms which are essentially the same, but which move in the direction the inverse of the other.[4]

The two terms which Bergson refers to are intellect and matter.[5] Intellect is a modality of consciousness, matter tends towards divisibility and geometricity. In the following section we shall see how matter and intellect "are essentially the same," that is, how they correspond.

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[1] Ibid; [2] Ibid, p. 221; [3] Ibid, p. 222.

[4] Bergson, Creative Evolution. p. 222.

[5] Ibid, pp. 222-223.

3. The Developmental Correspondence of Material Geometricity and Intellect.

In the preceding sections we have seen that the geometricity of matter is, in fact, no more than a tendency. Man, Bergson says, treats matter "as inert."[1] Bergson makes it clear that the concept of inert matter is a fabrication.[2] He is quite frank in expressing his opinion of those of us who should hold to the existence of an "ordered world" consisting of the "inert" and the "solid."

> We should then be dupes of an illusion like that of Spencer, who believed that the intellect is sufficiently explained as the impression left on us by the general characters of matter: as if the order inherent in matter were not intelligence itself![3]

Bergson again criticizes Spencer in the conclusion of his text. There he offers, in précis form, his theory of the mutual development of intellect and matter, a matter which tends toward increasing divisibility alongside a consciousness which must accordingly externalize itself [4] in order to obtain a more distinct idea of things.

> So when a philosopher arose who announced a doctrine of evolution, in which the progress of matter toward perceptibility would be traced together with the advance of the mind toward rationality, in which the complication of correspondences between the external and the internal would be followed step by step, in which change would become the very substance of things - to him all eyes were turned.[5]

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[1] Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 169.

[2] Ibid, pp. 169-185; [3] Ibid, pp. 168-169; [4] Ibid, p. 221; [5] Ibid, p. 395.

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Bergson indicates that the "very substance of things" is becoming, or change. Therefore, the "form" of things are veritably "snapshots" of that becoming which is real duration.

> The Forms, which the mind isolates and stores up in concepts, are then only snapshots of the changing reality. They are moments gathered along the course of time; and just because we have cut the thread that binds them to time, they no longer endure. They tend to withdraw in to their own definition, that is to say, into the artificial reconstruction and symbolical expression which is their intellectual equivelant.[1]

Bergson accords these pictorial stoppages in the becoming of reality to the "cinematographical tendency of perception."[2] Immobility, Bergson says, is the result of the needs of intellect for precision and clarity.[3] He adds that when we acknowledge space we are merely affirming the "power" of the intellect to immobilize.

> A medium of this kind is never perceived; it is only conceived.[4]

The geometricity of matter can be regarded as partly the result of a real evolutionary tendency in matter toward dissociation and divisibility. This tendency nevertheless corresponds - in part - to that movement which is the inverse of matter. This follows since that inverse movement, consciousness, is primarily manifested in man as intellect. Intellect performs the function of clarifying and distinguishing; its "medium," or

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 344-345.

[2]Ibid, p. 354; [3]Ibid. pp. 170-173; [4]Ibid, p. 172.

instrument in this function is space.

> Abstract unity and abstract multiplicity are determinations of space or categories of the understanding, whichever we will, spatiality and intellectuality being molded on each other.[1]

It is space which accounts, in one sense, for the intimate relation between intellect and material geometricity. It is matter understood as tending toward "distinct multiplicity" and the commensurate function of intellect which Bergson refers to when he speaks of "two terms which are essentially the same."[2] Although consciousness moves in a direction the inverse of matter there are also, within "the work of consciousness" itself, movements which Bergson identifies as being inverse to one another.

> Intuition and intellect represent two opposite directions of the work of consciousness: intuition goes in the direction of life, intellect goes in the inverse direction, and thus finds itself naturally in accordance with the movement of matter.[3]

Now the question is, of course, is intuition capable of contacting the actual duration of matter? Intuition seems to remain within the context of consciousness as regards both its origin and its object. For example, "life," in the above instance, pertains to the "vital," a movement which Bergson says "conflicts" with matter.[4] The "vital impetus" passes through matter. It is made manifest primarily in conscious being,

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[1] Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 280-281.

[2] Ibid, p. 222; [3] Ibid, p. 291; [4] Ibid.

the "animal kingdom" as opposed to the "vegetable."[1] However, Bergson also tells us that intuition reveals the "intention of life;" it gives us "the key to vital operations" thus enabling us to correctly interpret the "vital process."[2] The "vital process" is in things. The "intention of life" manifested by a living being "runs through the lines" that bind it together.[3] Consequently, in view of this intuition, we are instead seemingly placed in the very process which "runs through" matter and apart from which process matter is incomprehensible. Nevertheless, in view of a duality, we understand matter primarily in terms of a consciousness that is radically distinct from matter. If we are capable of perceiving the vital in matter, then what we perceive is a movement that coincides with the undivided flow of consciousness as compared to the tendency of matter toward dissociation and division. Thereby, I am inclined to believe that an external intuition, for Bergson, will have as its precise object the continuity evidenced within consciousness itself - if such were indeed

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 277.

[2]Ibid, pp. 194-195; [3]Ibid, p. 194.

possible[1] - not my consciousness of that geometric tendency which is intrinsic to matter. Similarly, the vital process is most clearly evidenced in the movement of the whole, not in our limited visions of the individual. External perception would, permitted that what I anticipate is correct, fall short of a direct intuition of the vital. The difficulty might very well epitomize itself in an inescapable reversion to an entitive concept of consciousness. If such is the case, the real flow of matter, its particular rhythm of duration, its tension, or, for that matter, its tendency, is not the object of intuition.

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[1] In other words, is it possible to distinguish 'my' consciousness from my consciousness of matter? This problem was raised within the context of section 2, entitled "Conscious Perception," of Chapter II of my text. There my purpose was to determine whether Bergson was justified in positing a radical difference between affective sensations and representative states of consciousness - in terms of a "precise," perceptible moment - within the context of his precept that all sensations share in varying degrees of extensity. The ability to perceive a "precise moment" as such, would actually mark the difference between two different rhythms of time, of duration - the representative being a "virtual action," or the equivalent of an external perception, and the affective being a "real action" intrinsic to the individual. But the difficulty is that perception and affection constitute my consciousness; and, the source of my knowledge of real duration is my consciousness. Whatever "tension" or "rhythm" of duration Bergson assigns to matter, the fact remains that my perception of matter falls within that particular rhythm of duration that constitutes my consciousness. If the reader recalls, there are no "precise moments" within duration; duration is an "undivided flow."

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4. Intuition and Perception

Creative Evolution is rather limited, relatively speaking, in its treatment of perception. Although the theory of intuition is an important element of this work, it is not developed as thoroughly by the author in relation to perception as we find in his last major work, The Creative Mind. Therefore, the reader should be prepared not to expect, in this section, an assessment of all the issues which have been raised in the preceding chapters of my text. This shall be reserved for my concluding chapter.

The key issue which I will treat here concerns the possibility of an intuition which places us in the very process which "runs through" matter. Bergson, in previously quoted instances,[1] speaks of the presence of the "vital" in matter in such a manner that one might be compelled to interpret him as meaning that intuition is fully realized within external perception. However, the feature of any interpretation really depends on where Bergson places, in effect, the source of our intuition. Needless to say, the determination of this source will be the object of this section.

In his discussion on the nature of instinct Bergson says that "sympathy" gives us "the key to vital operations - just as intelligence, developed and disciplined, guides us into matter."[2] The insect has access to an "inner" knowledge which enables it to perform functions it could not very likely have learned through an external process.

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[1] Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 194-195.

[2] Ibid, p. 194.

> The Ammophila, we imagine, must learn, one by one, like the entomologist, the positions of the nerve-centres of the caterpillar - must acquire at least the practical knowledge of these positions by trying the effects of the sting. But there is no need for such a view if we suppose a sympathy (in the entymological sense of the word) between the Ammophila and its victim, which teaches it from within, so to say, concerning the vulnerability of the caterpillar. This feeling of vulnerability might owe nothing to outward perception...[1]

"Instinct," Bergson says, "is sympathy."[2] If "sympathy" gives us "the key to vital operations," it is also, as I have noted, an "inner" knowledge. It is imperative, therefore, that we have as clear an understanding as possible of what Bergson means by an "inner" knowledge which enables us to perceive the "vital," a knowledge otherwise known as intuition.

Bergson traces the development of intuition in man to instinct.

> But, though instinct is not within the domain of intelligence, it is not situated beyond the limits of mind. In the phenomenan of feeling, in unreflecting sympathy and antipathy, we experience in ourselves - though under a much vaguer form, and one too much penetrated with intelligence - something of what must happen in the consciousness of an insect acting by instinct.[3]

Intelligence accomplishes no more than the relating of spatial points to one another; "it applies to all things, but remains outside them; and of

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[1] Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 191.

[2] Ibid, p. 194; [3] Ibid, p. 192.

a deep cause it perceives only the effects spread out side by side."[1] In other words, intelligence proceeds by way of superficial juxtaposition. It would seem that Bergson has the internal in mind when he says that the metaphysical "must be sought along quite another path, not in the direction of intelligence, but in that of 'sympathy.'"[2] Yet the reader might ask what, precisely, does sympathy bring us in contact with when the object of intuition relates to some external creature or thing? What form does the "vital" assume in this instance? Bergson indicates the answer in the opening sentence of his book.

> The existence of which we are most assured and which we know best is unquestionably our own, for of every other object we have notions which may be considered external and superficial, whereas, of ourselves, our perception is internal and profound.[3]

In Creative Evolution Bergson emphasizes that we perceive duration within ourselves.[4] He adds that a perception of the psychical is a "supra-intellectual intuition."[5] It is thus that intellect is transcended and we enter into the domain of intuition.

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 192.

[2]Ibid, p. 193; [3]Ibid, p. 3; [4]Ibid, p. 393; [5]Ibid, 391.

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> Let us then concentrate attention on that which we have that is at the same time the most removed from externality and the least penetrated with intellectuality. Let us speak, in the same depths of our experience, the point where we feel ourselves most intimately within our own life. It is into pure duration that we then plunge back, a duration which the past, always moving on, is swelling unceasingly with a present that is absolutely new.[1]

Consciousness is the source of our intuition of pure duration. It is also the apparent source of our intuition of the "vital." I say apparent since Bergson does make reference in this regard to an external intuition. For example, he argues that intellect extracts data from the life which surrounds it and draws it into itself. Intuition, however, performs the reverse of this action upon its object.

> But it is to the very inwardness of life that intuition leads us - by intuition I mean instinct that has become disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely. That an effort of this kind is not impossible, is proved by the existence in man of an aesthetic faculty along with normal perception.[2]

It is quite apparent that the "object" which Bergson refers to above pertains to the external world. It should follow, therefore, in as apparent a manner, that we come into intuitive contact with "vital operations"[3] within matter, that is, through external perception. For example, Bergson goes on to say that the artist tries to recapture "the intention of life"

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 218.

[2]Ibid, p. 194; [3]Ibid.

which we miss in "normal perception." The artist does this by "placing himself back within the object by a kind of sympathy."[1] Now compare this text with one in which Bergson makes reference to the "vital process." In this section, "The Meaning of Evolution," Bergson tells us that "consciousness, in man, is pre-eminently intellect."[2]

> Intuition is there, however, but vague and above all discontinuous. It is a lamp almost extinguished, which only glimmers now and then, for a few moments at most. But it glimmers wherever a vital interest is at stake. On our personality, on our liberty, on the place we occupy in the whole of nature,.....[3]

If the "vital," as we perceive it, is "our personality," "our liberty",our place"in the whole of nature," in what context, mind or matter, are we to understand that these "processes" are revealed to us? "Liberty," in Time and Free Will, is based on the real duration which comprises our consciousness.[4] In Matter and Memory "my personality" refers to the "interiority" of real actions, my affections, in contrast to the "exteriority" of my perceptions.[5] Our place "in the whole of nature" is a "privileged" one.[6] But this "privileged" place, this "infinite distance between man and animal" is centred on the existence in man of a soul "capable

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution,p. 194

[2]Ibid,p. 291; [3]Ibid, pp. 291-292.

[4]Bergson, Time and Free Will, pp. 236-240.

[5]Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 32-33, 43-48.

[6]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 293.

of independent life."[1] The soul, as understood in this particular passage, can, in regards to its life, relinquish its dependency upon matter. It is of natural consequence, in this instance, that the soul is essentially other than matter. Furthermore, if intuition provides us with knowledge of a spiritual dimension in man, the object of a "philosophy of intuition" will "no longer have to do with definite living beings."[2] Note here that the individual is not the precise object of intuition. Intuition centres upon "Life as a whole."[3] It is the spiritual, or mind understood in this sense that Bergson alludes to when he says that "intuition is mind itself."[4] Now, with this in mind, let us return to "Life and Consciousness," that section of Creative Evolution in which Bergson discusses "the existence in man of an aesthetic faculty."[5] Whereas all that I have quoted from that passage would lead one to believe that the "aesthetic faculty" provides us with an authentic intuition such as Bergson describes in "The Meaning of Evolution," he nevertheless, in one undenyable instance of that former passage, delimits, if not nullifies, that specific intuitive content in regard to the aesthetic.

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[1] Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 293.

[2] Ibid; [3] Ibid;

[4] Ibid, p. 292. This idea will be covered more extensively in the first sections of Chapters IV and V of my text. These sections are titled "The Plotinian Heritage" and "The World Soul" in that respective order.

[5] Ibid, p. 194.

It is true that this aesthetic intuition, like external perception, only attains the individual.[1]

The "individual" or the equivelant of "definite living beings," as I have noted above, is not the object of a philosophy of intuition. It is clear, nevertheless, that the aesthetic or external does provide us with a form of intuition, however limited. This must be at least true in regard to the artist's capturing the "intention of life, the simple movement that runs through the lines" of an individual, The "intention of life" corresponds to the "vital" in the form of "our personality."[2] But the vital, insofar as it is more than an individual personality, must be attained in a manner other than the aesthetic or external perception. Hence, we next find Bergson proposing a metaphysics "which would take life in general for its object,"[3] in precisely the same manner that he proffers "Life as a whole" as the object of a "philosophy of intuition."[4] The study of "life in general" is to be assumed through a working relationship of intuition and intellect.[5] Thus, it is also reasonably clear in this text that Bergson does not establish a means of acquiring a direct vision, that is, an external intuition of the creative movement that is the duration of the material world. Both movements, that of consciousness and that of matter are, then, quite similar in respect of their creative nature.

Matter or mind, reality has appeared to us a perpetual becoming. It makes itself or unmakes itself, but it is never something made.[6]

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[1] Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 194.

[2] Ibid, pp. 194, 291-292; [3] Ibid, p. 194; [4] Ibid, p. 293; [5] Ibid, pp. 194-195.

[6] Ibid, p. 296.

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Matter is the result of the spiritual "unmaking itself," that is, within the process of its "fall" which is the inverse to the "subsisting" movements of the elan and consciousness. It is never "something made," which for Bergson is "immobility." However, in the process of "unmaking itself" matter tends toward immobility. The reason for the inability of consciousness to fully achieve a direct vision or intuition of matter seems to lie in the opposing tendencies which these two movements assume. For example, in order to acquire this intuition consciousness would need be identified with the very movement of matter.[1] That is, de facto, achieved by intellect.[2] But it is not intellect that provides us with intuition. The difficulty is essentially that which I indicated in Matter and Memory. There we were concerned with two diverse "rhythms" of duration, matter and consciousness; the "real moments" of the former are never perceived by the latter. In the following chapters my intention will be of course to determine whether or not this difficulty is resolved. With this in mind, I call the attention of the reader to the role which the "inner consciousness" may assume in the confirmation of the "perpetual becoming" and continuity of matter.

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[1] I should also emphasize that the object of intuition is the vital, the movement of which is the inverse of the material toward geometricity.

[2] Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 291. I also call to the reader's attention Bergson's shift of position in Creative Evolution - in Matter and Memory our "immediate consciousness" of matter was said to be of an "undivided continuum" - as regards the intuitive capability of external perception.

CHAPTER IV

MIND - ENERGY

Before entering into an analysis of the doctrine contained in the present text, I should say something of its geneology. Mind - Energy, unlike the preceding three texts, and similar to The Creative Mind, was not originally published by the author as an integral work. It is composed of a series of lectures, articles and one address published or delivered from the period between 1901 and 1913. Those texts of interest to us are, "Life and Consciousness," originally the "Huxley Lecture" delivered at the University of Birmingham in 1911; "Dreams," a lecture delivered at the Institut Psychologique in 1901; and "Memory of the Present," an article which appeared in the Revue Philosophique in 1908. The three texts have consistent themes. Consciousness is a movement which is adverse to matter, and consciousness is equivalent to memory. From what has been said in the conclusions to the previous chapters the reader is well acquainted with the difficulties that they pose to external intuition.[1] My intention is to examine the source of the basic idea[2] contained in the two previous works of Bergson. That

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[1]Bergson speaks of the external intuition of a continuum in Matter and Memory, p. 177. My use of the term intuition is the same; and, I am referring here to the problem of acquiring a knowledge of real duration through external perception. Accordingly, the reader must keep in mind that matter, as we have seen, was said to possess its own, real duration which is of a different "rhythm" than that of consciousness.

[2]In Matter and Memory that idea is expressed in the theory of different "rhythms" of duration; in Creative Evolution it is the "inverse movements" of consciousness and matter.

idea was aptly cited as a "mediating image" by Mosse-Bastide; it is the inverse movements of consciousness and matter. Its ramifications lead directly to the second section of this chapter entitled, "The Non-existent Present."

MIND ~ ENERGY

1. The Plotinian Heritage

In Creative Evolution Bergson describes the "ideal genesis of matter" as follows:

> In this image of a creative action which unmakes itself we have already a more exact representation of matter. In vital activity we see, then, that which subsists of the direct movement in the inverted movement, a reality which is making itself in a reality which is unmaking itself.[1]

That which subsists of the "direct movement" is consciousness. It may also be understood as the "impulsion" of the elan toward life and creativity. Bergson identifies the "unmaking" process of the "direct movement" with matter; it is described as a "strictly determined evolution."[2] This is the tendency toward geometricity in matter. The "original" impetus, or "direct movement" - not the elan, or "that which subsists of the direct movement" - is God.

> ....I speak of a centre from which worlds shoot out like rockets in a fire-works display - provided, however, that I do not present this centre as a thing, but as a continuity of shooting out. God thus defined, has nothing of the already made; He is unceasing life, action, freedom.[3]

We see in this image of life and creation that the "inverse" movements of matter, an "unmaking" process tending toward geometricity, and consciousness, an "action that is making itself,"[4] are, veritably, two 'adverse' movements. We have already seen that the development of intellect corresponds with the tendency of matter toward geometricity.[5] Intellect

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[1] Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 270.

[2] Ibid, p. 271; [3] Ibid; [4] Ibid.

[5] Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 291

and intuition comprise the two basic forms of consciousness. Intuition is identified with the inverse movement, i.e. the vital.[1] Limiting this image to this description, therefore, the overall movements of consciousness and matter seem to present, in regard to intuition, two realities that are worlds apart. However, Bergson does explain that the creative element of evolution, which effects the "unforseen forms which life cuts out in it,"[2] is "the action which is making itself,"[3] i. e. matter under the impulse of the "elan vital."[4] Thus, matter does in fact possess a creative aspect about it due to its relation to the elan. Bergson develops this relation in one segment of Mind-Energy.

> If, as I have tried to show in a previous work, matter is the inverse of consciousness, if consciousness is action unceasingly creating and enrichening itself, while matter is action continually making itself or using itself up, then neither matter nor consciousness can be explained apart from one another.[5]

Whereas matter is described in Creative Evolution as the process of the "direct movement" unmaking itself, it is here described, of itself, as that which is "continually making itself" in unison with consciousness. But the question which I raise is not whether matter and consciousness may or may not be explained apart from one another. It involves rather an external intuition, or perception, if you will, of the real movement of

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[1] Ibid, pp. 193-194; [2] Ibid, p. 271; [3] Ibid; [4] Ibid, pp. 270-271.

[5] Henri Bergson in "Life and Consciousness," Mind - Energy, trans. by H. Wildon Carr (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920) p. 23.

matter , be it a movement toward geometricity, or a vital movement. If this were possible, then the real movement of consciousness, and, in consequence, its "rhythm of duration," as described in Matter and Memory, becomes identifyable with the real movement and rhythm of matter. Bergson's developed position on the problem is not contained in the text now under study, Mind - Energy. It will, however, be a topic of concern in my following chapter which is based on an analysis of The Creative Mind. At any rate, it is evident that the main idea contained in the previous quote is that of movement. Consciousness and matter move in inverse directions. The idea itself is derived from Plotinus.

> In a poetic pase of the Enneads Plotinus explains to us how men are born to life. Nature he says, sketches living bodies, but only sketches them. Left to her own forces alone, she could not complete the picture. On the other hand, souls dwell in the world of the ideas. Incapable of acting, and moreover not even thinking of acting, they lie at rest above time and outside space. But among bodies there are some which by their form respond more than others to the aspirations of certain souls. And among souls, there are some which find their own likeness, so to say, in certain bodies. The body, unfinished, as it has been left by nature, rises towards the soul which can give it complete life. And the soul, looking down on the body and perceiving it as the reflexion of itself in a mirror, is fascinated, leans forward and falls. This fall is the beginning of life.[1]

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[1]Bergson in "Dreams," Mind - Energy, pp. 117-118. I wish to add that Mosse-Bastide does not cite the reference in this passage in her work, Bergson et Plotin. Andre Robinet does cite the reference to this passage as VI, 7, 5-7 in his "Notes Historique" to the centenary edition of Bergson's Oeuvres. However, upon examination of this section of the Enneads, it is my judgment that it does not provide us with the precise image which Bergson portrays. The Enneads, as a whole, do contain the ideas which Bergson employs in his image. Aside from V1, 7, 5-7 which does contain matter resembling Bergson's images, I refer the reader to V1, 3, 22 and IV, 8, 1-8 of the Enneads.

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The falling down, in relation to the image of rhe steam vessel given in Creative Evolution,[1] is equivalent to the condensing of the steam vapor, which, as the original rising steam represents in its rise the original creative spirit or "direct movement." The condensed droplets falling downward is matter. The original source of matter is spirit. Spirit becomes united with matter, it becomes matter - body and soul - in the inverse movement downward, that is, the fall. "The beginning of life" is the beginning of consciousness. Consciousness then, tends to rise in comparison to the fall. Within the context of duration consciousness is distinguished from matter "in that it is, even then, memory, that is to say a synthesis of past and present with a view to the future."[2] But if our "perceptions are never the real moments of things," and if "there is for us nothing that is instantaneous,"[3] what becomes of the present? This enquiry, therefore, turns to the "real moments" of matter.

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 269-270.

[2]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 217.

[3]Ibid, p. 56.

2. The Non-existent Present

Ordinarily, we understand the "instantaneous" to be the present. We found in Matter and Memory that "there is for us nothing that is instantaneous,"[1] since in order for there to be consciousness there must be memory.[2] Consciousness, its moments, are in this manner distinguished from the moments of matter. The present, therefore, in the context of perception, represents matter.[3] Now in an article published in 1908 Bergson says the following:

> ...let us agree to call 'perception' the consciousness of anything that is present, whether it be an internal or external object.[4]

The "present" may appear to suggest - as regards an "external object" - the moments of matter rather than the moments of consciousness.

Bergson, however, applies the term "present" as if to signify something that merely exists, be it "an internal or external object." If we wish to determine Bergson's usage of the term "present" here, the following, extracted from the same text, should render its meaning clearer.

> ...the formation of memory is never posterior to the formation of perception; it is contemporaneous with it.[5]

Thus, as late as 1919, the year in which he authorized the publication of Mind - Energy Bergson retains the doctrine contained in Matter and Memory

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 56

[2] Ibid, pp. 56, 143; [3] Ibid, p. 131.

[4] Bergson, in "Memory of the Present," Mind - Energy, p. 157.

[5] Ibid.

that "every perception is already memory."[1] The implication is, of course, that matter - provided that matter is represented by a present which is never perceived - is perceived only in terms of the past, the moments of my consciousness. If we make of matter an element of existence belonging to a realm outside of our duration, then what we consciously perceive, inevitably, are the "moments of our consciousness."[2] In another place Bergson asks whether the "coming instant," or future, belongs to the past along with the "present instant."[3] His answer is no. The "coming instant," he says, is only the "form" of knowledge without matter.[4] It cannot, in fact, exist. Furthermore, the "present instant," as far as consciousness is concerned, can only belong to the past if Bergson remains consistent with Matter and Memory. At least this is what the title of the article, "Memory of Present," suggests. In support of this, Bergson, during the Huxley Lecture given at the University of Birmingham, England in 1911, says that consciousness is, "before anything else, memory."[5] If consciousness is memory, it is obvious that perception is likewise of the past.

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 143.

[2] Ibid, p. 56.

[3] Bergson, Mind - Energy, p. 168.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Bergson, in "Life and Consciousness," Mind - Energy, p. 2.

For consciousness there is no present,....It may, in the strict sense, be conceived, it is never perceived.[1]

Since the "present" is merely a concept, it is, in terms of existence, zero.[2] Of the present - understood as matter - we can say nothing in terms of conscious experience. But what does an unconscious experience of matter, acquired in "pure perception," mean to us in terms of knowledge, and, for that matter, in terms of verification? In contrast 'to what' do we understand the past?[3] Chapter IV confirms the difficulty which I call to the reader's attention in my conclusion to Chapter III. We are concerned with the confirmation, on the level of experience, of the nature of matter's "real moments." Can we, in other words, penetrate the real nature of matter in external perception? Bergson may offer us a solution in the internal perception of consciousness. The question remains for Bergson to answer. How does the nature of consciousness compare with the nature of matter?

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[1] Ibid, p.8.

[2] But this is not to imply that that which the "present" represents, matter, does not exist; since Bergson qualifies his definition of matter "as a present which is always beginning again" by the condition "so far as extended in space." (Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 131). To be extended "in space" means to be conceptualized through external perception.

[3] In other words, if the "present" or instantaneous is factitious, how do we justify it as a criterion for confirming the past, and, consequently, for distinguishing memory, in terms of duration, from matter understood as the present"?

CHAPTER V

THE CREATIVE MIND

This text, like Mind-Energy, is a "collection," as Bergson says in his Preface, of two introductory essays written especially for it, and a number of articles and lectures. The material contained in The Creative Mind dates from the period between 1903 and 1923. It was first published in France in 1934; thus, as Bergson's final and authorized work, it represents his most developed position regarding the doctrine of perception.

1. The World Soul

The notion of a world soul is a rather provocative aspect of Bergson's philosophy. It might seem, at first, to be a departure from the rigorous scientific trend evident in his former works. Not oblivious to the spectre of monism, however, Bergson, as I have noted, has insisted on maintaining a duality. Besides, if mind does in fact differ from matter, there is nothing which prevents us from speculating that it is mind, or spirit which animates the material. The elan fits this function very well.[1] In this section we shall analyze Bergson's philosophical affiliation with the idea of a world soul as derived from, or in affinity with, William James, Plotinus, and Bishop Berkeley. For example, in Berkeley's Siris we find what Bergson refers to as a "mediating image," a vehicle employed by philosophers for the transmission of a virtually

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 270-271.

incommunicable "concrete intuition."[1] Bergson speaks of it as "an image which is almost matter in that it allows itself to be seen, and almost mind in that it no longer allows itself to be touched."[2] Through its "transparancy" we are able to see God.[3] Thus, in this segment of my Chapter, I will follow Bergson's thought on similar ideas expressed by James and Plotinus, concerning the presence of spirit in matter. As a result the reader should acquire a preliminary and basic understanding of Bergson's comparison of consciousness and duration in respect to matter. It will serve as an introduction to a more comprehensive study of this subject in the proceding section, in the context of its relation to perception and intuition.

Bergson wrote his essay "On the Pragmatism of William James" to be included as the preface to a work by James. This work, entitled Pragmatism , was first published in French along with the preface, in 1911. The two thinkers were commonly known to be good friends and to have maintained a correspondence.[4] Granted this, the tone of Bergson's comments regarding James' notion of a world soul divulges an interest on the part of Bergson that is more an expression of personal affinity with the ideas

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[1]Henri Bergson, The Creative Mind, trans. by Mabelle L. Andison (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 128. Bergson applies the term "concrete" as an adjective expressing the experiential, or actually perceived. As I have noted, in Matter and Memory he applies the term quite frequently in relation to perception, e.g. an actual or "concrete" perception.

[2]Ibid, p. 139.

[3]Ibid, p. 140.

[4]For Bergson's correspondence to James see Ecrites et Paroles.

involved than it is an expression of indulgence toward a friend.

> Considerable surprise has been expressed at the importance James attributes, in one of his books, to the curious theory of Fechner which makes of the Earth an independent being, endowed with a divine soul. He did so because he saw in it a convenient means of symbolizing - perhaps even expressing - his own thought. The things and facts which make up our experience constitute for us a human world, no doubt connected with others, but so far removed from them and so close to us that we must consider it, in practice, as sufficient for man and sufficient unto itself. We are an integral part of these things, and these events, - we, that is to say, all that we are conscious of being, all that we experience.[1]

Our experience, all that we perceive, is an integral part of a world which is "sufficient unto itself," which means to say that a world subsists and acts of its own accord. We are a part of "events" that transcend our experience. This movement expresses a "divine soul," James observes. Bergson likely agrees. James, Bergson adds, says that the "forces" which affect mens' souls do not find their origin in men, and are just as real as any physical force.[2] It is important for us to know just how these "great spiritual currents"[3] compare with the nature of matter.[4] This is not indicated in this essay, but in the 1911 Bologna lecture entitled "Philosophical Intuition," and in the 1920 Oxford lecture entitled "The Possible and the Real." I will examine the latter first

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, pp. 251-252.

[2] Ibid, p. 252; [3] Ibid. Although the words "great spiritual currents" belong to James, Bergson is in evident agreement.

[4] I am referring to the duality of spirit and matter. Although the "great spiritual forces" affect mens' souls, these "forces" also constitute a "world soul ." Now if the properties of spirit are part and parcel of the nature of matter, then so is duration. Likewise we would also have a corresponding affinity between consciousness and matter. The question here is to determine the extent of this affinity in regards to (1) intuition and external perception, and (2) the maintenance of a duality.

since it is quite clear and will facilitate our apprehension of the propensity of Bergson's thought in the 1911 lecture relating to Berkeley's "mediating image."

In "The Possible and the Real" Bergson discusses the objection that, although the mind is capable of originality, matter itself is "repetition," and that it "yields to mathematical laws." Thus, a "superhuman intelligence" could calculate "any future state of this universe."[1] This possibility is dependent on the existence of an "inert world." Bergson replies that "this 'inert' world is only an abstraction."[2] There are living, "conscious beings," he says, "enframed" within the inorganic. Bergson extends the term "conscious" to organic matter such as vegitative, since their evolution, progress, aging and "all the external signs" of duration which they possess characterize consciousness.[3] Bergson, in characterizing consciousness, calls our attention to the properties of duration. We see, therefore, a real affinity between consciousness, which one must suppose lies within the realm of spirit,[4] and matter.

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 108.

[2] Ibid.; [3] Ibid.

[4] I am referring here to Bergson's having extended the term consciousness to the material. Mind, or consciousness, as found in man, certainly corresponds to that element which Bergson calls spirit. This is stated in particularly clear terms by Bergson when he refers to "pure memory" and the "unconscious," as I have indicated in section three of my third chapter. (See also Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 237-238.) But in respect of a duality the extension of the properties of 'spirit' to matter poses an obvious problem. This point will be discussed at greater length in the proceding sections, especially section three.

The medium through which the two elements of Bergson's duality are related is duration. And I say the two elements meaning in their entirety, since in reference to matter Bergson by no means excludes the "inorganic" from the realm of consciousness.

> The ancients had imagined a World Soul supposed to assure the continuity of existence of the material universe. Stripping this conception of its mythical element, I should say that the inorganic world is a series of infinitely rapid repetitions or quasi-repetitions which, when totalled, constitute visible and previsible changes.[1]

These "infinitely rapid repetitions or quasi-repetitions" correspond to Bergson's theory of "vibrations" which travel " in every direction like shivers through an immense body."[2] The "immense body" is the "material universe" quoted above. The "previsible changes" are the "moments of this matter."[3] They are the vibrations which constitute the actual rhythm of the material universe prior to perception and that "condensation" of memory that translates them into the rhythm of our consciousness.[4] Bergson's point is that the inorganic possesses its own continuous movement which forms a continiuty with the movement of the entire universe. Let us now turn to Berkeley.

Bergson discusses Berkeley in the 1911 lecture entitled "Philosophical Intuition." The resemblances to Berkeley in Bergson's philosophy are evident. Berkeley calls matter a "cluster of ideas;" matter, for Bergson,

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, pp. 108-109.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 204.

[3] Ibid, pp.56, 217; [4] Ibid, p. 204.

is an "aggregate of images."[1] Berkeley's notion of matter, Bergson says, is linked with his idealism.[2] Bergson "concedes" a degree of idealism in that "every reality has a kinship...with consciousness," and is thus an "image."[3] In another text in which Bergson seems to be agreeing with Berkeley's doctrine, we have what amounts to, if this agreement actually represents Bergson's position on the subject, an ambiguity. It contrasts with what Bergson has said in his earlier work, Matter and Memory. It involves Berkeley's "new theory of vision."

> ... it is clear in fact that one cannot extract something from what contains nothing, nor consequently make a perception yield something other than the perception itself. Color being but color, resistance being only resistance, you will never find anything in common between resistance and color, you will never discover in visual data any element shared by the data of touch. If you claim to abstract from the data of either something which will be common to all, you will perceive in examining that something that you are dealing with a word: therein lies the nominalism of Berkeley; but there also, at the same time, is the 'new theory of vision.' If an extension which would be at once visual and tactile is only a word, it is all the more so with an extension which would involve all the senses at once; there again is nominalism, but there too is the refutation of the Cartesian theory of matter.[4]

Although Bergson tells us that he is describing the philosophical doctrine of Berkeley, Bergson's words, "it is clear in fact," imply a personal confirmation of the subject matter entailed. The literal content of this passage is a contradiction of two of Bergson's basic propositions:

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[1] Berkeley in Bergson's The Creative Mind, p. 134; Bergson in Matter and Memory, p. 6.

[2] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 134.

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. xii, 225.

[4] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 137.

(1) "All sensations partake of extensity;" (2) "Extensity is the most salient quality of perception."[1] Thus, if this passage were to be considered a revision of his former doctrine, it would have to be considered one of major proportion. The continuity between the external world and consciousness would be severed.[2] Bergson is relatively explicit, however, in regard to his own position, when he next repudiates unity of substance.[3] The "unity of a substance," he says, is attributed to the word existence "hypothesized."[4]

> ...; let us simply note that in view of the structure of language the two expressions 'I have this perception' and 'this perception exist' are synonymous, but that the second, introducing the same word existence into the description of totally different perceptions, invites us to believe that they have something in common between them and to imagine that their diversity conceals a fundamental unity, the unity of a 'substance'...[5]

In the second sentence Bergson is substituting the term perception for what we would normally call an object or a thing. The conclusion can only be that objects do not exist, if, in fact, Bergson means that the existence of an object is no more than a grammatical attribute, a word. But the condition which Bergson applies to existence here is existence in reference to a "unity" or "substance". In making this point he is employing

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 213, 241.

[2] Ibid, pp. 209, 217.

[3] Notwithstanding its being done in the context of explaining Berkeley's doctrine.

[4] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 138.

[5] Ibid.

Berkeley's theory of distinct visual and tactile sensations, distinct in that extensity is a property of tactile sensations alone,[1] which is not necessarily, in this lecture, Bergson's own position. The words "it is clear in fact" may be a confirmation of the remainder of the above passage[2] only in the sense that his confirmation is hypothetical. This would be more in accord with Bergson's evaluation of English idealism as contained in Matter and Memory.[3] Furthermore, it is not necessary that Bergson, like the English idealists, withold extensity from the sensations other than the tactile in order to repudiate, in his Bologna lecture, the unity attributed to substances. The idea of a "distinct object," or "substance," as I have indicated in section two of Chapter II is the result of an "arbitrary sectioning" of the real. The "division of matter," and the resulting idea of substance is "artificial."[4] It is "concrete extensity," that is, the

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 209.

[2]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 137.

[3]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 209. Here Bergson says that "The essence of English idealism is to regard extensity as a property of tactile perceptions ...it sees nothing in sensible qualities but sensations...It is therefore constrained to account for this parallelism by a habit which makes the actual perceptions of sight, for instance, suggest to us potential sensations of touch. If the impressions of two different senses resemble each other no more than the words of two languages, we shall seek in vain to deduce the data of the one from the data of the other. They have no common element; and consequently, there is nothing common between extensity, which is always tactile, and the data of the senses other than that of touch, which must then be supposed to be in no way extended."

[4]Ibid, p. 192.

extended continuity of the material universe which is real.[1] Bergson's affinity to Berkeley is evidenced mostly in the relation to the latter's corresponding theories of matter and perception. Bergson speaks of it as:

> ...; a strange negation of the reality of bodies that which is expressed by a positive theory of the nature of matter, a fertile theory, as far removed as possible from the sterile idealism which tries to assimilate perception with dreaming!... What Berkeley's idealism signifies is that matter is co-extensive with our representation of it.[2]

What becomes very clear in this discourse is that objects remain, for Bergson, veritable "fragments" of an extended continuum. The "matter" which we perceive is "co-extensive with our representation of it" because that which we call a "thing," i.e. a material object is in reality an "idea."[3] The "idea," which is "our representation" of matter, is "completely realized" of itself. There is nothing beyond our "representation";[4] thus, we cannot "extract" from it "something other than the perception itself."[5] In respect of his own doctrine, Bergson is of course alluding to the impracticability of their being a "noumenon" beyond the "image" which we extract from matter.[6]

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 181.

[2] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 136.

[3] Ibid, p. 137.

[4] The term "representation" is frequently applied in the French as the equivalent of a perception. See authorized translators' note. Matter and Memory, p. 3.

[5] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 137.

[6] Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 226-227.

THE CREATIVE MIND

For Berkeley, the object "exists only for mind."[1] For Bergson, the object is an "image" which has a "kinship" with consciousness.[2] This is the essential difference between the two philosophers. In the context of the object's "kinship" with consciousness, as "image," the object is "pictorial, as we perceive it: image it is, but a self-existing image."[3] In this sense the representation which we have of matter is a "completely realized" representation; it is, "as we perceive it," as represented within consciousness, but it is "self-existing" because its reality is not entirely relative to consciousness; its reality is "that of the part to the whole."[4] Berkeley, Bergson goes on to say, "places God behind all the manifestations of matter."[5] Perceptions, or "ideas" as Berkeley calls them, are imprinted in man by

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. xii; [2]Ibid, p. 225; [3]Ibid, p. xii.

[4]"But suppose that my conscious perception has an entirely practical destination, that it indicates in the aggregate of things, that which interests my possible action upon them: I can then understand that all the rest escapes me, and that, nevertheless, all the rest is of the same nature as what I perceive. My consciousness of matter is then no longer either subjective, as it is for English idealism, or relative, as it is for Kantian idealism. It is not subjective, for it is in things rather than in me. It is not relative, because the relation between the 'phenomenon' and the 'thing' is not that of appearance to reality, but merely that of the part to the whole."
(Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 226).

[5]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 139.

God. This imprint is accomplished through the action of two wills, the human and the divine. The human will is continously limited by the action of the divine will, but the "meeting place" of the two wills "is precisely what we call matter."[1]

Human mind, matter, divine mind therefore become terms which we can express only in terms of one another.[2]

Berkeley, according to Bergson's interpretation, attributes the material world, or, I should say, our perception of matter, to the interaction of two wills, the divine and the human, both of which are definitively spiritual.[3] Thus, if an entelechy could be attributed to Berkeley's philosophy, it would undoubtedly, in the context of this interpretation, be an entelechy motivated by the discretion of a divine will. Furthermore, Bergson interprets matter as described by Berkeley as "a language which Gods speaks to us."[4] The "mediating image" which Bergson understands Berkeley to have employed in regard to matter is described by the former as "a thin transparent film situated between man and God."[5] If we compare this text with a certain text in Matter and Mmeory[6] in which Bergson speaks of matter, prior to perception as an "infinitely diluted existence" there is little difficulty in seeing the resemblance which Bergson's corresponding theories of matter and perception have with

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[1]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 139.

[2]Ibid.

[3]They are spiritual, or 'immaterial,' in accordance with the definition of matter, i.e. the "meeting place" of the divine and the human will.

[4]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 141.

[5]Ibid, p. 140.

[6]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 204.

Berkeley's mediating image. Both speak of matter as something quite unique from the ordinary idea which one has of it. For Bergson, this matter, of itself, and prior to the effect of our exigencies, is "like a consciousness where everything balances and compensates and neutralizes everything else."[1] The idea of a transparancy or neutral field is quite evident. Now in Chapter II I noted that it is not the "moments of things" that we perceive, but the "moments of our consciousness," that "particular rhythm of duration that characterizes our consciousness."[2] In Chapters III and IV one question which I posed was whether the real nature of matter could be penetrated in external perception. In the following section I propose to answer this question. In doing so close attention will be paid to the extent that Bergson posits the properties of consciousness and real duration in matter. My primary intention in section two, then, will be to determine, if possible, the precise object of an "external intuition."[3] Does an "external intuition" attain its object within matter, or is intuition essentially a reversion to consciousness?

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 216.

[2] Ibid, p. 56.

[3] "Pure intuition, external, or internal, is that of an undivided continuity." (Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 177).

THE CREATIVE MIND

2. External Perception and Intuition.

The thesis of section one is that there is a close relationship between the real nature of matter and spirit.[1] This theory is embodied in Bergson's notion of a world soul. Therefore, if matter does in fact possess a spiritual dimension,[1] that is, if it manifests the properties of pure duration, i.e. qualitative heterogeneity, indivisibility, continuous flux,[2] then an external intuition within matter seems possible. The thrust of Bergson's thought as presented in Chapters I and II of my text tend to confirm this. However, in Chapter III, which dealt with Creative Evolution, we find Bergson speaking of a "tendency" in matter toward "geometricity." The essential object of intuition, in that text, is consciousness.[3] The "vital," which is also referred to as the object of intuition in Creative Evolution,[4] is, in The Creative Mind, identified with an all embracing consciousness. For example, in this instance, consciousness, as I have noted in section one of this chapter, is extended to all organic matter, and, also, to the "inorganic."[5] As a preview of this,

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[1] I remind the reader that Bergson, as I have noted in section three of Chapter II, does not wholly identify the spiritual with duration, e.g. he speaks of the "virtual" state of "that existence which is proper to things of the spirit." (Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 238). I shall return to this point once again.

[2] Bergson, Time and Free Will, p. 229.

[3] Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp. 218, 391-393.

[4] Ibid, p. 194.

[5] Bergson, The Creative Mind, pp. 108-109.

we found Bergson saying in Creative Evolution that "matter of mind, reality has appeared to us a perpetual becoming."[1] What we have then, in Creative Evolution, is a matter which actually"tends" toward "geometricity" and divisibility, but which is nevertheless "a perpetual becoming," a description - the latter - which Bergson reserves for duration.[2] Likewise, in that same text, we observed that Bergson offers us the possibility of an intuition that leads us "to the very inwardness of life," and which is "capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely."[3] The reference in this passage to an "external intuition" is confirmed when he adds that this kind of intuition is possible due to "the existence in man of an aesthetic faculty along with normal perception."[4] But the difficulty in this, as I have indicated throughout my text, is the assimilation of the "perpetual becoming" of matter with that of consciousness. Since, it is primarily within the context of duration,itself a perpetual becoming, that Bergson first of all distinguishes mind from matter.[5] However, in Matter and Memory, Bergson told us of "durations of different tensions,"[6] and that the duration of the material world,in this instance,its sensible qualities,"is spread and diluted in an incomparably more divided duration "

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 296.

[2]Bergson, Creative Evolution, pp.373-374; The Creative Mind, p. 173.

[3]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 194.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 217.

[6]Ibid, p. 203.

in contrast to our "particular rhythm of duration."[1] Thus, in that text, Bergson emphasizes that it is never "the real moments of things" that we perceive.[2] "Spirit," which in effect is "memory" in the act of perception, "contracts the moments of this matter."[3]

> In short, then, to perceive consists in condensing enourmous periods of an infinitely diluted existence into a few more differentiated moments of an intenser life, and in thus summing up a very long history.[4]

This "infinitely diluted existence" marks that duration of "different tension" which is matter. Would it not suffice, therefore, for the purpose of acquiring an intuition of matter, a real knowledge of it, that we perceive in matter a duration of a different tension than our own? No. The reason being that what we perceive are but the "moments of our consciousness."[5] If we were capable of perceiving "the real moments of things" these moments would be identified with, precisely, the moments of my consciousness, that "particular rhythm of duration" that distinguishes mind from matter.[6] Now can this objection which I raise to external intuition in the context of Matter and Memory retain its justification in the context of a much later work,

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 204.

[2] Ibid, p. 56; [3] Ibid, p. 217; [4] Ibid, p. 204; [5] Ibid, p. 56; [6] Ibid, p. 21.....

The Creative Mind ? Before answering this, let us return for a moment to this issue as promulgated in Creative Evolution. There, I quoted Bergson as saying that an external intuition of matter is possible due to the presence of an "aesthetic faculty" in man.[1] Now let us say, for sake of argument, that Bergson rendered himself totally oblivious to the content of Matter and Memory as he wrote Creative Evolution. Could he not have said that an external intuition is possible simply because we are capable of perceiving a duration, that of matter, which is of a different tension than our own? Or, to put it more simply, could we not perceive a duration other than our own? What we are concerned with here, however, are the essentials of Bergson's theory of knowledge. What I perceive within consciousness is my duration, that is, real duration. Mind is distinguished from matter in terms of duration. In terms of what duration? Essentially, my duration.[2] But can not 'my' duration differ from my consciousness of matter? Not if 'my' duration is 'my' consciousness. But what if I maintain throughout that external intuition does not quite make the mark? Then I could say that a real duration exists - the material - which is other than my own, but which I do not intuit directly. My intention here is not to be fecitious. Why, for example, does Bergson, in Creative Evolution, say that an intuition "of this kind is not impossible" - in reference to matter - -

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 194.

[2]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 217.

and then modify this by stating that "aesthetic intuition, like external perception, only attains the individual"?[1] "The individual," for Bergson, is not the equivelant of "life in general."[2] "Life in general," here, corresponds to the "vital process."[3] This implies that external perception is confined to a portion of reality, and cannot acquire direct knowledge of real duration.[4] In that same text Bergson does say that intuition may supplement intellect in the acquisition of such knowledge.[5] In analyzing the Creative Mind, my expressed purpose will be to determine, in this section, precisely, to what extent external perception shares in intuition.

"Philosophical Intuition" is the title of a lecture which Bergson delivered during 1911 at the Philosophical Congress in Bologna. In it he tells of a correspondence of intensity of intuition with 'degrees' of philosophical depth.[5] Thereby, he says, the mind is capable of being "brought back to real duration."[6] He makes a rather strong suggestion in this text that "real duration" is perceivable within matter.

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[1]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 194.

[2]Ibid; [3]Ibid, pp. 194-195; [4]Ibid, pp. 194-195;

[5]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 150.

[6]Ibid.

No more inert states, no more dead things; nothing but the mobility of which the stability of life is made. A vision of this kind; where reality appears as continuous and indivisible, is on the road which leads to philosophical intuition.

For, in order to reach intuition it is not necessary to transport ourselves outside the domain of the senses and of consciousness.[1]

This suggestion is reinforced in "The Perception of Change," a two-part lecture given at Oxford during 1911, the same year of the Bologna lecture. At Oxford Bergson tells his audience that the "vision" which Kant thought to be impossible is in fact quite possible. This "perception of metaphysical reality"[2] implies an intuitive contact, of course, with real duration.[3] The "faculties" of perception are, as indicated in the previous quote, confirmed elsewhere as the "senses" and "consciousness."[4] Thus, the drift of Bergson's thought is not, apparently, to some etherial dimension of consciousness. To the contrary, his explicit intention is to ground his philosophy in the material world, not in the world of ideas.

More precisely, for Plato and for all those who understand metaphysics in that way, breaking away from life and converting one's attention consisted in transporting oneself immediately into a world different from the one we inhabit, in developing other faculties of perception than the senses and consciousness.[5]

Now the question here is what Bergson means by the "senses," on the

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[1]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 151.

[2]I have noted in section one of Chapter II of my text that Bergson, in Matter and Memory, applies the term "metaphysic" in reference to his understanding of the real nature of matter. Generally speaking, metaphysics, for Bergson, centres on real duration. The implication is that real duration is present in matter; this point will be made clearer as I continue.

[3]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 164.

[4]Ibid, p. 156; [5]Ibid, pp. 163-164.

one hand, and "consciousness." For example, an intuitive perception of the external world is to be achieved through an "education of the attention" from specific needs, to a disposition of disinterest.[1] In this manner we may free ourselves from that "contraction" demanded by the exigences of life.[2] But is this freedom possible? We have seen in his previous works that it is memory that "contracts" the real moments of matter.[3] Consciousness is memory;[4] thus, what we perceive are but the "moments of our consciousness."[5] Can it be, therefore, that Bergson is indicating two forms of contraction, one, a necessary "condensation" by memory of the moments - in this instance "vibrations" - of matter, thus, translating them into consciousness;[6] the other, an artificial "carving out" of "crystalized" forms from the continuity of our "immediate consciousness" of matter, effected in accordance with the demands of intellect?[7] Rather than impose an interpretation based on earlier works at this point, it would be more efficacious to follow Bergson's trend of thought within the present text. But the question raised is clear. In the context of Matter and Memory the "faculties of perception", the "senses"

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, pp. 160-164.

[2] Ibid, p. 164.

[3] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 204.

[4] Ibid, pp. 217. Also see Bergson, Mind-Energy, p. 2

[5] Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 56, 217.

[6] Ibid, pp. 201-205; [7] Ibid, p. 194:

and "consciousness," signify one specific duration, the "moments of our consciousness."[1] In order to acquire a real intuition[2] of the duration of the material world, there must be a perfect coincidence of the moments of my consciousness and the moments of the duration of matter. But if such were achieved could a duality be maintained, and if so, on what grounds? Can the same issues be raised in the context of The Creative Mind? Let us turn to this text and see for ourselves. The most advanced segment of The Creative Mind is "Introduction II." It was written in 1922, with additions to the text in 1933 and 1934. Bergson's discourse concerns the scientific notion of "repetition" of identical events.[3] Science breaks down physical qualities such as color into "elementary physical events." Bergson, as we shall see, interprets these "events" in accordance with his theory of "vibrations."[4] Science, then, posits the existence of an "immense field of frequencies" - the "events" mentioned - in which all "frequencies" are "everywhere and always realized."[5] This "repetition of the identical," the presence everywhere of the "elementary physical events" which constitute colors, is supposed to account for the possibility of our perceiving these colors at all times and in all places.[6] These identical and elementary events of matter are thus thought to be determined to repeat

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p.56.

[2]By real intuition I wish to signify Bergson's description of intuition as presented in Creative Evolution and The Creative Mind, i.e. an actual contact, an identification with the object known.

[3]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 68.

[4]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 204.

[5]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 68.

[6]Ibid.

themselves. But if all the possible frequencies of colors are everywhere present, Bergson asks, how is it that we perceive, and in particular, perceive certain colors.

> I have answered this special question in an earlier work by defining living being as a certain power to act, determined in quantity and quality: it is this virtual action which extracts from matter our real perceptions, information it needs for its own guidance, condensations within an instant of our duration of thousands, millions, trillions of events taking place in the enormously less drawn-out duration of things. This difference of tension exactly measures the interval between physical determination and human liberty, at the same time that it explains there duality and coexistence.[1]

The work which Bergson refers to is Matter and Memory; there, as I have noted , Bergson speaks of the virtual action of perception which "measures our possible action upon things."

> And, consequently, our perception of an object distinct from our body, separated from our body by an interval, never expresses anything but a virtual action.[2]

Our "real actions" are our "affective sensations."[3] The "interval" is the distance that I place between the object and myself. The "trillions of events"spoken of above are the "real moments" of matter, which when condensed within memory, constitute "things." These "events," prior to perception, are "infinitely diluted."[4] The "enormously less drawn-out duration of things" are constituted by the "elementary events" contracted within memory. The "duration" of "things," perceived thus corresponds

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, pp.68-69.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 43.

[3] Ibid; [4] Ibid, p. 204.

directly to my duration, i.e. the "moments of my consciousness."[1] Bergson suggests in his note[2] to this passage that "elementary facts" are in actuality"indetermined." He implies that "the necessity supporting things" is really their duration. Perception "leans upon and is measured by" the duration of things, in terms of its "condensation of their duration." Albeit, a being measures itself, that is, it quantifies its virtual action, to the degree that it "stops at a certain condensation of elementary events." This is how the "interval" or distance between "physical determination" and "human liberty" are exactly measured.[3] If this "condensation" of "elementary events" were not possible, the implication is that our consciousness, as such, would be determined by the "real moments of things." Further on Bergson tells us that we conceive "immutability and immobility" so as to set them up as supports to language and social communication.

> To convince onself of this, it will be enough to compare to our duration what one might call the duration of things: two rhythms vastly different, calculated in such a way that in the shortest perceptible interval of our time are contained trillions of oscillations or more generally of external events which repeat; this immense history that would take us hundreds of centuries to unfold, we apprehend in an indivisible synthesis.[4]

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory. p. 56.

[2]Bergson, The Creative Mind, n. 6, p. 303.

[3]Ibid, p. 69; [4]Ibid, p. 82.

Instead of perceiving "numberless vibrations, all linked together in uninterrupted continuity," - that "immense body" which is the material world[1] - we perceive "things" which possess, in themselves, "trillions of oscillations" that mark a rhythm of duration "vastly different" from our own. It is explicit, here, that it is not possible for us to perceive the moments of this matter. Although we are unable to come in contact with the precise moments of matter, does this mean that intuition in regards to external perception is unattainable?

At the end of "Philosophical Intuition" Bergson urges us not to remain in a superficial present, but rather, we should perceive the external world in depth, "sub specie durations."[2] In "The Perception of Change" he says that instead of "rising above our perception of things" we should try to "expand our vision of things" through an insertion of the will.[3] The task of philosophers, he adds, is to enlarge our perception "in a common direction."[4] Thus, the "same perception" will account for the reconciliation of all thinkers.[5] What we ordinarilly miss in perception, therefore, is the fluid movement of things. The artist, however, has always performed the function of providing us with something of the nature of the intuitive perception. For example, Turner presents us with glimpses of a "brilliant" but "vanishing vision."[6] From my own observation the paintings of J.M.W. Turner (1775-1851), the English forerunner of the great French impressionists of

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 204.

[2]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 152.

[3]Ibid, p. 158; [4]Ibid, pp. 158-159; [5]Ibid, p. 159; [6]Ibid, p. 160.

the 19th and 20th centuries, have that misty quality in which color and light blend to form a singular but highly varied movement, much like Bergson's "vision" of matter depicted in Matter and Memory.[1] The artist,because of his contemplative approach to existence, an approach which expresses "disinterest," sees something in itself, not for himself.[2]

Bergson wrote his essay, "The Life Work of Ravaisson," in 1904. The multi-talented Ravaisson wrote treatises on Aristotle and was himself a painter and art historian. Ravaisson's debatable though highly regarded - by Bergson - interpretation attributed to Aristotle a theory of intuition through which the senses are directly utilized instead of transcended in penetrating the materiality of things.[3] The object of this intuition was the unity of being.[4] Here Bergson alludes to a vision of the inter-penetrability of all existing things through the intuition of an individual existence.[5] Bergson follows this with a concise description of Ravaisson's vision.

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[1]Bergson, Matter and Memory pp. 204-205.

[2]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 162.

[3]Ibid, pp. 265-266; [4]Ibid, p. 266; [5]Ibid, p. 168.

There is, in Leonardo da Vinci's Treatise on Painting, a page that Ravaisson loved to quote. It is the one where the author says that the living being is "characterized by the undulous or serpentine line, that each being has its own way of undulating, and that the object of art is to render this undulating distinctive. 'The secret of the art of drawing is to discover in each object the particular way in which a certain flexuous line which is, so to speak, its generating axis, is directed through its whole extent, like one main wave which spreads out in little surface waves.' It is possible, moreover, that this line is not any one of the visible lines of the figure. It is not in one place any more than in another, but it gives the key to the whole. It is less perceived through the eye than through the mind. 'Painting,' said Leonardo da Vinci, 'is a mental thing.' And he added that it is the soul which creates the body in its image.[1]

To perceive more "though the mind" than "through the eye" is an obvious allusion to the primacy of consciousness over the senses. Also notice that the above image is confined to the "individuality of the model."[2] Although the "fundamental aspiritation of the person" is captured in "all the indefinite richness of form and color,"[3] what is not revealed is the all important access to the material continuity of life in general in which the individual is only a facet. In "The Perception of Change," which was delivered seven years after the essay on Ravaisson, Bergson does allude to, as mentioned, the overall interpenetration of qualities in the paintings of Turner. But in that very essay Bergson limits the scope of this kind of intuition considerably.

Art enables us, no doubt, to discover in things more qualities and more shades than we naturally perceive. It dilates our perception, but on the surface rather than in depth. It enriches our present, but scarcely enables us to go beyond it.[4]

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, pp. 272-273.

[2] Ibid, p. 273; [3] Ibid; [4] Ibid, p. 185.

The "present," if we recall, was referred to by Bergson, in "Philosophical Intuition," as "superficial." In order to "go beyond" the present, our perception must evidently turn elsewhere. Now the essence of the material, he says, is movement.

> But nowhere is the substantiality of change so visible, so palpable as in the domain of the inner life.[1]

The substantiality of change corresponds to the fluxual continuity of existence. The "inner life" is, of course, consciousness. If consciousness becomes the real object of intuition, how will Bergson manage to include a real knowledge of matter, and thereby a real duality within his philosophy? The nature of consciousness in comparison to the nature of matter will apparently play an important role in this issue. We have seen in this section that Bergson retains his theory of "vibrations," and that, consequently, we cannot possibly perceive material duration itself, that is, its "trillions of oscillations."[2] They "would take us hundreds of centuries to unfold."[3] Furthermore, Bergson seriously limits the scope of intuition in art, and consequently, in external perception,[4] which is no less than reaffirming that we do not perceive the actual duration of matter. The most plausible explanation of this overall position taken by Bergson is that he cannot justifyably identify the duration of matter with the duration of consciousness and at the same time pretend to maintain

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p.175.

[2] Ibid, p. 182; [3] Ibid; [4] Ibid, p. 185.

a duality constructed on his notion of duration. The duration which Bergson does claim intuitive access to, consciousness, will evidently provide us with what real knowledge we may acquire of the duration of matter.

3. Internal Perception and Intuition.

Real or "pure knowledge," for Bergson, is a knowledge of duration.[1] Duration, Bergson says, is "reality itself."[2]

> To metaphysics, then, we assign a limited object, principally spirit, and a special method, mainly intuition.[3]

It would seem that spirit comprises duration and any reality attributed to the material world. However, Bergson says that the object of metaphysics is "principally spirit." In consideration of this qualification of the specified object of metaphysics the reader may well anticipate the degree of flexibility required for Bergson to retain a duality. For example, matter, that necessary constituent - along with spirit - of Bergson's duality, could very well possess a spiritual dimension, as I have said in section one. This would allow for the possibility of perceiving duration within matter. Nevertheless, Bergson's trend of thought in this text is to identify duration with consciousness. Now if matter really exists as an object of external perception, on what grounds does he posit this existence? We know that we always perceive that particular rhythm of duration that pertains to our consciousness. Yet "extensity" must somehow come from things, since mind could not possibly

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. 194, 227.

[2] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 38.

[3] Ibid, p. 42.

create extensity through projection.[1] Furthermore the existence of matter for Bergson is a common sense fact.[2] On these grounds a real duration, the criterion of "reality itself" can conceivably be attributed to matter. But then the question of a true intuitive knowledge of this duration immediately comes to fore. For the moment I shall defer this question and turn to Bergson's text in order to examine his formulation of the issue.

To begin, Bergson clearly posits the primacy of consciousness in intuition.

> The direct vision of the mind by the mind is the chief function of intuition, as I understand it.[3]

Now Bergson may mean to include more in this notion of "mind" than we might foretell. At least it provides him, within the framework of his thought - especially in regard to intuition - with a direct and inner knowledge. For Bergson it is the "one reality which we all seize from within by intuition."[4]

> In this sense, an absolute internal knowledge of the duration of the self by the self is possible.[5]

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[1] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 32.

[2] Ibid, p. xii.

[3] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 48.

[4] Ibid, p. 199; [5] Ibid, p. 199.

Is it possible to extend this intuition to the real duration present in matter? Possibly, one might think, if an all encompassing duration which manifests different rhythms possesses common properties. In this vein, Bergson poses the question to himself.

> But if metaphysics is to proceed by intuition, if intuition has as its object the mobility of duration, and if duration is psychological in essence, are we not going to shut the philosopher up in exclusive self-contemplation?[1]

The above text is taken from Bergson's "Introduction to Metaphysics," an essay which he wrote for the Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale in 1903. In that text he says that logically speaking we may have no reason to believe that diverse durations do exist.[2] Bergson's reasoning seems to be that in reference to duration we are indeed in the realm of the psychical. The remaining possibility is that our consciousness is "a presentiment of a whole spectrum," analoguous to the perception of the colors red and yellow, and in which we nevertheless anticipate all the intermediate colors.[3] Our intuition of "our duration" is similarly supposed to put us "in contact with a whole community of durations."[4] Indeed, there is also a property common to all duration, and this is "mobility."

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 217.

[2] Ibid, p. 220; [3] Ibid, pp. 220-221; [4] Ibid.

There is an external reality which is given immediately to our mind.... This reality is mobility.... 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.[1]

In the same manner by which we imagine the spectrum of colors between our actual perceptions of red and yellow, we imagine the existence of other realities apart from the intuition of our consciousness. This position is repeated elsewhere in what was originally a series of lectures delivered at Columbia University in 1913. These lectures comprise "Introduction I" to the Creative Mind. There, however, Bergson suggests a real bond between consciousness and the material world.[2] The material world, he insists "must be bound in some way to real duration."[3] However, the rhythm of the perceived world "corresponds to a certain duration of inner life - to that one and to no other."[4] Thereby the actual "rhythm" of duration of the material world seems beyond our grasp. What we know is our duration.

Does it not go even further? Is it merely the intuition of ourselves? Between our consciousness and other consciousnesses the separation is less clear-cut than between our body and other bodies, for it is space which makes these divisions sharp. Unreflecting sympathy and antipathy, which so often have that power of divination, give evidence of a possible interpenetration of human consciousnesses.[5]

The appeal here is to the spiritual capacity of man. In contemporary jargon Bergson is speaking of extra-sensory perception. His inclination,

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 222.

[2] Ibid, p. 20; [3] Ibid; [4] Ibid., p. 21; [5] Ibid, p. 36.

however, is to extend beyond individual consciousness and to posit the properties of consciousness in matter.

> It may be that intuition opens the way for us into consciousness in general. But is it only within consciousness that we are in sympathy?[1]

Intuition "opens the way for us" to the presence of spirit in what we ordinarily consider to be "inert" matter. Bergson's thesis is that everything is permeated with the spiritual, in this instance, real duration. Through the medium of the spiritual therefore, the duration of "unorganized" or "inert" matter can be known.

> Either it endures, or it is bound up in our duration. Whether it is connected with the mind by its origins or by its function, in either case it has to do with intuition through all the real change and movement that it contains.... In short, pure change, real duration, is a thing spiritual or impregnated with spirituality. Intuition is what attains the spirit, duration, pure change. Its real domain being the spirit, it would seek to grasp in things, even material things, their participation in spirituality.[2]

Real duration may be "impregnated with spirituality;" it is not necessarily the exact equivalent of spirit. Material things "participate in spirituality," and thus manifest a real duration. What we have then is a diversity of rhythms of duration that participate in spirituality in varying degrees. Either form of existence, consciousness or matter, possess their own, real duration. There is a duality of different rhythms of duration that possess the characteristics of spirit to a more or less degree. But is knowledge of that particular rhythm of duration that

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 36.

[2] Ibid, p. 37.

pertains to matter obtained through "divination?"[1] For example, Bergson seems emphatic in excluding external perception from intuition.

> The truth is that existence can be given only in an experience. This experience will be called vision or contact, exterior perception in general, if it is a question of a material object; it will take the name of intuition when it has to do with mind.[2]

Although he qualifies external perception here by referring to the perception of material objects rather than a material continuum, the object of intuition is confined to mind. In "Philosophical Intuition," he does say that by "probing its own depth" consciousness is capable of penetrating the interior of matter. But one might ask how this is possible, especially in consideration of a duality. Bergson's duality, however, does not consist of two contradictorily opposed elements.

> One could dispute this if consciousness had been superadded to matter as an accident; but I believe that I have shown that such a hypothesis, according to the way in which it is generally taken, is absurd or false, self-contradictory or contradicted by the facts....the matter and life which fill the world are equally within us; the forces which work in all things we feel within ourselves; whatever may be the inner essence of what is and what is done, we are of that essence.[3]

So we have, in spirit, a common element shared by consciousness and matter. Consciousness, and consequently, spirit, are actually present in matter in differing degrees.[4] Consciousness is a medium which can transcend the limitations of matter, strictly speaking. In knowing consciousness one is capable of knowing the duration of matter. In

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[1] Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 36.

[2] Ibid, p. 57; [3] Ibid, p. 417; [4] Ibid, p. 37.

"Introduction II," which, as I have said, is Bergson's latest product, the author gives account of a "supplementary attention" through which the external perception of matter and the internal perception of mind interact.

> It represents the attention that the mind gives to itself, over and above, while it is fixed upon matter, its object. This supplementary attention can be methodically cultivated and developed. Thus will be constituted a science of the mind, a veritable metaphysics which will define the mind positively instead of simply denying, concerning it, all that we know about matter.[1]

To know the mind is to know matter. Berggon, however, is not simply referring to the efficacy of external perception. He is substantiating that it is necessary to continually revert to consciousness, understood as the source of duration, that is, "reality itself," apart from my perceptions of the external world. If it were otherwise, then external perception would of itself be capable of transporting us intuitively into the duration of things. The method of procedure for the above "metaphysics" is none other than that method which he once proposed during a discussion on the inadequacy of aesthetic intuition.[2]

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[1]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 92

[2]Bergson, Creative Evolution, p. 194.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion I reiterate what I have said in these remaining sections of my thesis. Bergson cannot justifyably posit intuition within external perception, to do so would be to identify the duration of matter with that of consciousness. It is through intuition that we acquire a knowledge of duration. Were intuition indigenous to external perception, a duality of mind and matter could not be formed in accordance with his theory of duration, a duration which, as an object of perception, exemplifies mind in distinction to matter. Since consciousness is the fundament of my knowledge of duration, since all that I know corresponds to the actual rhythm of my consciousness, and not to the rhythm of the duration of things, I cannot acquire a concise external intuition of the duration of matter. The resulting difficulty of Bergson's doctrine of two kinds of perception can be summized as follows. In order to substantiate a rhythm of duration other than consciousness, e.g. matter, appeal must be made to "imagination" and "analogy". We must compare the characteristic of our duration to that rhythm of duration which we cannot intuit externally. Duration, it must be remembered, is"reality itself."[1] By explicit intention, therefore, Bergson places himself "halfway" between idealism and realism.[2] For this purpose he proposes a duality. By his own admission, idealism subjugates "every reality" by way of "analogy" to consciousness.[3] Certainly the propensity of his thought is in this latter direction.

We have seen, throughout the corpus of Bergson's thought, that his initial inspiration was an "inner" conviction regarding the freedom of man

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[1]Bergson, The Creative Mind, p. 38.

[2]Bergson, Matter and Memory, pp. xii-xiii.

[3]Ibid, p. 225.

and the independence of mind, or spirit over matter. To this effect, Bergson's chief concern was the maintenance of a duality between mind and matter which would permit these two factors to coexist in such a way that the two, while remaining distinguishable, would retain a real relation, thus dissolving the bonds of the Kantian Critique and the epistemological paradoxes fostered by Kant's intellectual proteges, the positivists of the 19th and the early 20th Centuries. The intuition which Kant thought impossible was quite possible in the eyes of Bergson. This perception of the true nature of existence, or real duration, has its origin, however, within consciousness in contrast to matter. It is within the domain of consciousness and duration that Bergson first sought to overthrow the barriers of determination with his book Time and Free Will, which he published in 1889. The emphasis in this work lay on the independence of the psyche from matter and on the inclination of external perception toward analysis and division. The independence of the psyche denotes the freedom of our will. In consequence, we have two kinds of perception. In Time and Free Will they are described as follows. External perception is prone to spatial conceptualization and the quantification of matter. The other kind of perception, described by Bergson as either "internal" - usually when dealing with the psyche - or "immediate" - when dealing with either the external world or the psyche - is of a qualitative nature. Here we are speaking in terms of the "immediate data" of our consciousness. In the case of the world the "immediate data" of consciousness

is of an 'extended'[1] qualitative continuum. Thus we have a qualitative "perception of extensity" which contrasts with the quantitative "conception of space." The propensity of Time and Free Will was, in fact, to regard the external world as a true continuum. Extensity, therefore, became that qualitative property of all things material. Homogeneous and divisible space was an "empty diagram," a concept. Extensity appeared to be, in essence, that common property which would account for the conciliation of the knowing consciousness and matter. But if mind and matter are in essence qualitative and continuous, and quality and continuity are characteristic of a specific notion of duration, on what grounds do we distinguish consciousness from our sensations of matter? How, precisely, do mind and matter relate in these circumstances? These questions which I raise become the focal point of my analysis of Matter and Memory (1896). Having established a relation between body and soul in terms of extensity, Bergson, nonetheless, sought here to distinguish them in terms of duration.[2] Consciousness, or mind, is now understood as memory, that is, in regard to time, the past. Matter is now understood as the present. But in contrast to the continuum of consciousness and memory, the material becomes a present which is always beginning again, a simultaneity of inner sensation and external cause. What, then, becomes of our "immediate consciousness,"

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[1] I recall to the reader's attention Bergson's notion of a qualitative "perceived extensity" in contradistinction to "extension" or "extensity" understood as the quantitative result of conceptualization.

[2] Bergson, Matter and Memory, p. 217.

in external perception, of the material continuum. The "immediate" knowledge of a material continuum is retained in Matter and Memory. Simultaneity and causality are designated products of spatial conceptualization. But the problem of a duality comes to fore once again, since if Bergson assigns the divisibility of matter, that factor which distinguishes matter - on the experiential level - from the indivisible flow of consciousness to conceptualization alone, then the basis of a duality formulated in terms of duration is itself conceived, not perceived. Furthermore, if what we perceive as "immediate knowledge" are the moments of our consciousness, or memory, then we do not, as I have indicated above, perceive the real moments of matter. Bergson offers the following solution. Our "contact" with matter is pre-conscious: it is acquired in a theoretical "pure perception." The "diluted," actual "rhythm" of the duration of matter remains unperceived. The maintenance of a duality is thus constructed on the basis that duration manifests different "rhythms," or "tensions." The 'greater' tension of consciousness condences that of matter in perception. On the experiential level, however, the difficulty remains that we always perceive that particular rhythm of duration that pertains to our consciousness. There appears the need to posit some criterion in order to verify a distinguishable mind-matter duality. Nevertheless, would it be possible for Bergson to say in future works that my consciousness of matter differs from my consciousness in itself? We find, in Creative Evolution (1907), a tendency in matter toward geometricity, but not an actual identification of matter with geometricity. In that text, however, there is an increasing emphasis on consciousness as the object of intuition. In Mind-Energy (1919) Bergson calls the "present" a concept which is never perceived in actuality. The Creative Mind (1934) seems to

abandon the idea of an external perception of the material continuum. Why is this so? An analysis of the situation will conclude that as a logical consequence the external perception of an extended qualitative continuum comprises an intuition of "duration." For example, if a "perceived extensity" - such as we find in Time and Free Will and Matter and Memory - comprises consciousness, we cannot reasonably exclude such a notion of extension from a notion of time that finds its source in consciousness. If an intuitive perception of an extended, qualitative continuum were achieved, it would adversely affect our ability, I should say Bergson's ability, to differentiate mind from matter 'in terms of duration,' since such a perception characterizes, in fact, an intuition of duration, i.e. a qualitative continuum. There is no perceived criterion which enables us to differentiate that which qualitatively and indivisibly extends itself ad infinitum, let us say, a physical world, from a continuum which endures, i.e. consciousness. It would perhaps suffice to say - in respect of a duality - that we perceive two durations, our own and that of matter. But the truth of the matter is that as long as we are speaking in the context of our consciousness, understood as our duration, we are merely speaking of modalities of our duration. My duration, in accordance with Bergson's premises, must be distinguished from the duration of matter. Mind is thereby distinguished from matter in terms of duration, a duration that, having its very source - as a direct and concise object of knowledge - within consciousness, is, inversely, a modality of consciousness. Thus, we fail to achieve an external intuition of the duration of matter; and, because the immediate object of our real knowledge regarding matter is consciousness and not matter, the real nature of matter remains,in terms of "concrete" experience, remote.

CONCLUSION

The preceding critique is not a repudiation of the whole of Bergson's philosophy, nor does it call into question its straight forward, and much to be respected intentions, e.g. the defence of free will, the conciliation of the subject-object problem in knowledge, the establishment of the primacy of man's spiritual capacity. It has simply succeeded in indicating a fundamental weakness in Bergson's epistemological theory. Its value, I should think, is not so much contextual as it is one of content. What stands to fore then, is the inadequacy of a theory of knowledge that gives to modality a preference above any other consideration. This is evidenced in Bergson's having enthroned duration as "reality itself." The difficulty is reduced to the manner in which we define duration, and whether or not the world - in this case a duality of mind and matter - is a multiplicity which conforms to this definition. If we speak of multiple durations, we must nevertheless seek a 'criterion' for distinguishing mind from matter. The problem that we must face here is that the duration which we are inextricably limited to in perception is that of consciousness or mind. How then do we prove that matter exists independently of mind? However, if we chose, as does Bergson, to speak of multiple durations we might also, in defering the modal characteristics which he ascribes to duration, render the primacy that belongs to a duration, i.e. its existence.

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This thesis was intended to clarify Bergson's doctrine of internal and external perception, and to indicate the difficulties involved. It has succeeded in showing that as early as 1889, the year in which his first work, Time and Free Will was published, Bergson considered the material world to be a continuum, and that matter, consequently, could not be considered as entirely extraneous from real duration, a qualitative and continuous flux. External perception, in its "immediacy," and in the context of that work, was shown capable of acquiring an intuitive knowledge of this material continuum. Consciousness, however, was shown to be the object of an "internal perception;" and, it is increasingly within the scope of the internal perception of consciousness that Bergson, in his later works, posits intuition. Consciousness, then, will become the primary source of our intuitive knowledge of duration. Matter will become identified with extension. It is on this basis that Bergson initially forms a duality between mind and matter. However, Bergson's expressed purpose in Matter and Memory (1896)is to point out the relation between mind and matter, or body and soul, and to prove that the two are not in contradistinction. A qualitative extensity, Bergson says, provides us with grounds for positing a real and efficacious relationship between mind and matter, since both mind and matter, he adds, share in extensity, though in differing degrees.

Through an analysis of Bergson's five major texts which treat perception, I indicate the difficulty in maintaining the above position in respect of Bergson's alternate wish of maintaining a distinguishable duality. To the extent that mind and matter possess common characteristics, they must be considered less distinguishable. Thus our experience, if stated in terms of intuitive internal and external perceptions, merges into a univocal intuition. This difficulty is met by Bergson with further philosophical developments.

ABSTRACT

For example, duration may still be regarded as the essence of existence, and certainly in regards to matter, if we distinguish mind from matter in terms of the past and present respectively. Thus, Bergson says, our perceptions are always of our subsequent consciousness, not of the precise "moments" of things. The real duration of matter, its actual rhythm, remains other than the rhythm of duration that constitutes our consciousness. The difficulty in this is that we can never have an actual perception of the duration of things, we can only know that duration which pertains to our consciousness. We cannot establish, therefore, that material duration is a fact. Thus, external perception or aesthetic intuition is incapable of providing us, of itself, with real knowledge concerning material duration.