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On a Forming of a Method of Intuition

Abstract

The paper focuses on that part of Henri Bergson's philosophy, which is represented by its methodological consequences. The main objective of the paper is a difference between intuition and intellect in Bergson's work. His method of intuition is utterly connected with a duration. According to Bergson, intellect moves about a field of stability, rigidity, routine. It is characterized by misunderstanding of a duration and being. Intuition, on the other hand moves about a field of spontaneity and temporality. It is a direct understanding of matter. Bergson reasons, that there is not intuition without intellect and there is no intellect without a sign of intuition; these two types of understanding need each other in their demonstrations.

Key words

Intuition, Bergson, Method, Precision, Duration, Intellect, Instinct.

Sezgi Yönteminin Kuruluşu Üzerine

Özet

Bu çalışma, Henri Bergson'un felsefesinin metodolojik sonuçları üzerine odaklanmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, Bergson'un sezgi ve zeka kavramları arasındaki farka dikkat çekmektir. Bergson'un sezgi yöntemi bütünüyle süre kavrayışına bağlıdır. Bergson'a göre zeka durağanlık, kesinlik ve düzenlilik çevresinde dolaşmaktadır. Zeka, süreyi ve varlığı yanlış yorumlamaktadır. Diğer yandan sezgi ise zamansallık ve kendiliğindenlik sahasında iş görmektedir. Sezgi, maddenin doğrudan kavrayışını vermektedir. Bergson zekanın olmadığı bir sezginin, sezginin olmadığı bir zekanın varlığından söz edilemeyeceği sonucuna ulaşmıştır, bu iki anlama biçimi kanıtlamalarında birbirlerini gerektirirler.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Sezgi, Bergson, Yöntem, Kesinlik, Süre, Zeka, İçgüdü.

Henri Bergson had attempted in his work to form a philosophical concept which would be founded by *precision*. The most systematical version of this project could be found in his paper *Croissance de la vérité. Mouvement rétrograde du vrai*. „Precision is the thing which is missing in philosophy the most.“ (Bergson, 1969: 6) These

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introductory words express Bergson's critique of traditional philosophical systems, which are according to him not tailored at reality in which we are living. „They are too big for it.“ (Bergson, 1969: 6) These systems would be suitable for a world, in which are not except people any animals or any plants; people in it do not need sleep, eat or dream, an energy do not spend there, but otherwise grows and etc. Systems, which Bergson had criticized has been so abstract, that they can imply everything possible and even impossible. There used to be one philosophical conception, which about he had been confident, that it is an exemption and so he used to set upon this system when he had been young. These have been H. Spencer ideas, but Bergson had begun to breaking up with them. He had apprehended the groins of Spencer's *First Principles* and had been interested in this part of his work, to complete and fix it. Bergson had realised, that the time, which plays the key role in evolutionary philosophy, is escapeing mathematics. The spirit of the time is according to Bergson's expression to flow, any of its parts is not here and an other is being to show by now. Spencer's philosophy, evolutionary conception, which has been created for following reality in its dynamics, moving, process indeed has enclosed to change by itself. In these respect has come by desjunction of Bergson's evolutionary ontology with Spencer's ontology. Bergson had revised Spencer's evolutionarism with new looking on the problem of evolution of life, which had been interested in real time, duration, dynamics, changing. Mathematical time is a line, so something accomplished and figured; real time is for Bergson that, what is in duration, what is in producing. „But, this duration, which a science segregates, which is difficult to understand and convey, we feel and live.“ ((Bergson, 1969: 8)) The science is not interested in duration and that is natural, because its function is to puzzle a world for us. The world, in which we can cover the influences of time because of simplicity of action. Philosophy should approach time otherwise. Bergson had judged, that whole problem of abstract philosophical systems consists in setting up time and space at the same level. They relied too much on intellect, which receive from duration just an ensemble of individual possitions; it firstly impacts one point, then an other an other. When we try to controverse to intellect, that between these points is somethig happening, it just fills up missing possision immediately...and so on ad infinitum. It turns away from *the transition*. Look for stability, constancy, it watches where the object which is moving is, which way traverse and where it will be.

As far as metaphysics relies just on intellect, according to Bergson it stays only as a hypothetical construct. He had chosen an other way, he had broken up with associanism, agnosticism of Spencer, positivism of Comte and, he had gone so far, that he had negated Kant's conception of relativity of knowledge. (Bergson, 1969: 16) Bergson's philosophical concept is based on intuition, therefore his philosophy is known as *intuitivism*. Etymogically comes notion intuition from latin term *intueri*, which means *stare*, *fix*, or *intuitus*, which means *inner*, or *intus legere*, inside reading. Similary has been formed french and english equivalent l'intuition / *intuition*, italien l'*intuizione*, spanish *intuición*. In German fit french l'*intuition* the notions *die Anschauung*, thus *the sight* and Intuition, and German Intuition is contentually rather closer to Latine understanding. Hebrew denotes intuition with the term *sn'aem hc'ihw*, נִיּוֹן הַפְּזוּת, *instantaneity*, *flying*, *volitation*, *sharp view*. Bergson had distinguished his method of

intuition clearly from other authors meaning (he had differed explicitly from Schopenhauer's and Schelling's understanding of intuition).

Explicitly is intuition connected with Bergson's methodical reflections since moment, when he has started to understand it specifically „bergsonically“, particularly since *Introduction à la métaphysique* (1903). Dynamism of intuition's analyzes could we chronologically register since work *l'Essai sur les données immédiates de conscience* (1888), where he analyses intuition of homogenous space. (In french means the word even *sight*, and even introspective understanding. In listed paper is for the time being intuition understanding in first denotation, so like a sight. Methodical notion of intuition occurs in *Matière et mémoire* (1896) and in *L'évolution créatrice* (1907), but the strongest denotation secures intuition in papers *Introduction à la métaphysique* (1903), *L'intuition philosophique* (1911) a *De la position des problèmes* (1922). About psychological consequences of intuition handles *L'énergie spirituelle* (1919). In *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion* (1932) Bergson has not recorded explicitly, we find there indeed ethical and social consequences of intuition.

„Bergsonian“ intuition has too much common with an irrational prediction, which is very often connected with. Bergson himself, had hesitated long time, if he would use the notion intuition. (Hrdlička, 2003: 126) „Intuition“ is the word, which I wavered over for a long time. From all terms, which represent some mode of thinking is the word intuition the most suitable; and yet causes the uncertainties.“ (Bergson, 1969: 18) Initially Bergson had replaced *l'instinct* for *l'intuition* and *l'intelligence* for *conscience*, thus for consciousness. Instinct is usually considered for mechanical automatism, by Bergson is just instinct the closest to the origin unity, it is something miles distant to mechanism and automatism. Bergson had known the problem to define intuition, so except very heedful causing this term, he has stayed critical to language as well. The language is not able according to Bergson to catch intuition immediately, but neither to metaphorically refer to it: „whatever happens, anyone can demand an easy and geometrical definition of intuition.“ (Bergson, 1969: 20) The whole definition of intuition is not possible to articulate in language. Bergson consecutively had raised intuition to a method in his considerations. „Method of bergsonism is an intuition. Intuition is not some feeling, or an impulse, some fuzzy sympathy, but well-kneaded method, one of the most highly-developed philosophical methods even.“ (Deleuze, 2006: 7) His method of intuition requires a permanent effort to take a view anew and to take a view truly. (Chevalier, 1928: 115-116) „It has its strict rules, which create that, what Bergson calls „precision“ in philosophy.“ (Deleuze, 2006: 7) The often repeated methodological question is: how can intuition, which is primarily specific type of immediated knowledge be a method; after all method implies fundamentally one or more mediations? (Deleuze, 2006: 7) When we try to answer this question, we can assist with clarification, that Bergson presents intuition as simple act (what does not exclude qualitative multiplicity, different directions in which it forms) Illuminating of using term and method of intuition we can notice in following steps: the capability, which follows immediate duration, but does not have denotation *l'intuition* in dissertation thesis *Essai sur les données immédiates de conscience* (1889). Methodical approach is indicated in *Matière et mémoire* (1896) and he had enveloped further in *L'évolution créatrice* (1907). Completion of methodical ideas has brought *La Pensée et le*

Mouvement (1934), where Bergson started up intuition in relation to analyses and languages. In methodical part of his work *Matière et mémoire*, which is called *Méthode à suivre* he had formed basic principles of method of intuition – verdict (in this work is more suitable to translate l' intuition as verdict).

Duration

Bergson's method of intuition requires duration. It seems to be paradoxically, because by many other authors is intuition immediate looking for the eternity, leaving the time (for example Losskij, Descartes). For Bergson - on the contrary, when we would like to go beyond the intellect and get to truth itself, we need to move into duration, not to leave the time. So, the truth, and the reality can be hold just in movement; duration is the fundament of reality itself. The term duration is one of the key terms in Bergson's philosophy. French language translates as *durée*, the verb *durer* last, persist, what has the sense very close to the verbs be lying, be doing nothing, remaining on the spot. Bergson thinks opposite meaning of this word – when he uses the terms *durée*, *durer* speaks about constant changing, about evolution, about living. „Living being lasts essentially; it lasts, because produces without ceasing something new: this producing can not do without seeking and seeking without groping in the dark.“ (Bergson, 1969: 59) *To produce, to seek, to grope in the dark* are not the most commonly used synonyms to verb *last*. (Markoš, 2003: 166) Bergson even interprets the verb *durer* in meaning to live. We can find in his work for example the sentence: *vetu: L'organisme qui vit est chose qui dure*¹. Bergson's understanding of term duration is identical, or clarifying to the terms production, seeking, groping, living. Very important is to understand, that for Bergson is duration impartible, „...time succession can not be understood as distance between „before“ and „then“; it will mean, that we just put them next to each other, confusion for space.“ (Kouba, 2003: 92) *Instinct*, neither *intellect* are never in pure status, Bergson claims, there is no intellect in which we can not find trace of instinct and equally there is no instinct, in which we can not find intellect. Intellect suits perfectly for using and controlling of matter. Intellect, however skillful by treatment with unliving, treats with living unskillfully, because it uses rigidity, inflexibility and other deadening and violent methods. When intellect treats with things mechanically, about instinct says Bergson, that it develops organically. Intellect goes around the object which it investigates. Intuition gives us the thing itself, intellect takes from the thing just spatial transposition, or with Bergson's words metaphorical translation. (Bergson, 1969: 52) Bergson uses for clarification of difference between intellect and instinct comparison of intellect to a scubadiver and intuition to an aviator. A scubadiver on the bottom of the sea investigates the wreckage with the tacton; an aviator pointed out from the height a scubadiver for this wreckage. Intellect strengthens and makes static everything. It averts from duration itself. Duration according to Bergson we can not think, but we live it, feel it and experience it. It exceeds intellect. Bergson's intuition is in duration, it is duration itself, as we said by way of introduction. Intuition has to go from motion, it understands motion like reality itself.

¹ „The organism which lives, is a creature which lasts.“

The consciousness of human is primarily intellect. Perfect humankind would be according to Bergson humankind where intuition and intellect reached whole development. Intuition is of course participating in humankind (in *Evolution Creative* we find a notion about aesthetical intuition for example), but it exists dully and it is fleeting. According to Bergson philosophy has to overcome these fleeting intuitions, to hold them and extend them.

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