# Beyond the Human Condition: An Introduction to Deleuze's Lecture Course



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# Beyond the Human Condition: An Introduction to Deleuze's Lecture Course[1]

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**Introduction**

Deleuze's 1960 lecture course at l'Ecole Supérieure de Saint-Cloud on chapter three of Bergson's *Creative Evolution* is of interest to us today for a number of reasons. The course can be read in the light of Deleuze's attempt from 1956 to 1966 to demonstrate Bergson's importance for philosophy (what we might call "the Bergsonian Revolution"). But it also provides a set of revealing insights into the development of Deleuze's own philosophical project. Not only does it display Deleuze's tremendous gifts as a pedagogue, it also contains in embryonic and germinal form some of the essential modes of thought that characterize his contribution in the development of philosophy in post-war France. My intention in this introduction is not to provide a commentary on the lecture course. Instead I want to illuminate two topics that occupy an important place in the Bergsonian revolution and which inform and shape Deleuze's interpretation of Bergson, both in the lecture course and in his published writings on Bergson: Bergson's relation to Kant, and the endeavour to think beyond the human condition.

Before examining these topics, however, let me note some significant and revealing features of the lecture course. By the time of the lecture course, Deleuze's main publications were his book on Hume published in 1953, an extraordinarily fresh and original study of empiricism and subjectivity, and an article published in 1956 on the concept of difference in Bergson.[2] In 1959-60 he had begun to give lecture courses on Nietzsche as well as Bergson, and one of the most interesting aspects of the present lecture course is that it shows there was a brief moment in post-war thought when Bergson was posited alongside Nietzsche as an ally in the overcoming of metaphysics. Bergson, Deleuze notes in the lecture of 28 March 1960, participates in the Nietzschean moment of philosophy. This consists in the abolition of the intelligible world, an abolition that signals the end of metaphysics (the division into real or true and apparent



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worlds), or what Nietzsche calls in *Twilight of the Idols* the moment of "the shortest shadow." However, there are some crucial differences: where Nietzsche tells the history or story of how the "true world" finally became a fable, which is also a story of the devaluation of the highest values and the advent of nihilism, Bergson seeks to reorient metaphysics, to bring science and philosophy into a new rapport, with the ultimate aim of re-connecting human thought and existence to, as Deleuze puts it, the "universal consciousness" of the Whole (*le Tout*). Perhaps the crucial difference is that while the Nietzschean can only invert Platonism and parody metaphysics, the Bergsonian has found a different path, one that is able to articulate a philosophy of pure becoming that enables thought to think beyond the human condition. As Deleuze points out in the lecture course, for Bergson, metaphysics begins not with Plato but with Zeno.[3]

As is well known, while Nietzsche's thinking has assumed an extraordinary importance for us today, Bergson's work has fallen into serious neglect. The manner in which Deleuze is able to demonstrate Bergson's importance for the future of philosophy – the lecture course is admirable in this regard – shows the injustice of this neglect. Perhaps the most significant feature of Deleuze's work on Bergson overall is its ability to see with tremendous clarity, and to pinpoint with accuracy, the significance of Bergson's project for philosophy. We see this in the very opening of the lecture course, where Deleuze indicates precisely where Bergson's importance lies, namely in the effort to radicalize the post-Kantian project commenced by Solomon Maimon and J. G. Fichte: the need to pass from a transcendental philosophy to a genetic one (Deleuze spells out the details of this move at the beginning of his opening lecture).[4] Exposing the "myth of the given" has, of course, been a preoccupation of a great deal of twentieth-century philosophy, with respect to both analytical and continental sources of thought. Deleuze's lecture course focuses attention in large measure on the nature of Bergson's singular contribution to this project. Neither the intellect nor matter can be taken as given (today the polarity is cashed out as one of "mind" and "world");[5] rather, there is a need for a double genesis. It is this conception of genesis that constitutes such an essential aspect of the Bergsonian revolution. If successful, it means that we will be able to enter into the Whole, or what Deleuze calls the universal consciousness of Life.

While many may find such an effort naïve in the wake of the linguistic turn in philosophy, to say nothing of deconstruction, Deleuze never appears to have seen it in these terms (and surely he was able to do so in

the 1950s and 1960s). For Deleuze, Bergson is not, as the typical portrait of him would have it, either an irrationalist or a naïve realist. Indeed, the significance of chapter three of *Creative Evolution* is that it is here that Bergson demonstrates the startlingly original character of his resolution of a truly core philosophical problem. In the lecture course, Deleuze aims to show how chapter three of *Creative Evolution* works in relation to the previous two chapters of the book and, moreover, that the problem it addresses "concerns the entirety of Bergson's thought and weighs on the whole of his philosophical system" (9 May 1960).

The Whole for Bergson is, in essence, "universal mobility" or the immanence of becoming (movement and change). As such, it is never, and can never be, given. Of course, this fact presents an extraordinary challenge to our ingrained habits of thinking (as Nietzsche noted, do not "knowledge" and "becoming" exclude one another by definition?). Bergson is the thinker *par excellence* of open systems. In the lecture course Deleuze stresses that the Whole enjoys neither interiority nor totality; individuated forms of Life have a tendency towards closure but this is never accomplished on account of Life. As Bergson puts it in *Creative Evolution*, "finality is external or it is nothing at all" (CE, 27). In his lecture course Deleuze fully appreciates the importance of this insight. Deleuze continues this new way of thinking the Whole in his 1966 text, *Bergsonism*. There he argues two things: (a) the Whole is only ever virtual and divides itself by being acted out, and in the actual we only encounter an irreducible pluralism; and (b) that the Whole is not given should meet with our delight – it is only our habitual confusion of time with space, and the assimilation of time into space, that makes us think the Whole is given, if only in the eyes of God (104). We could say: on the level of Life there is only actualization and differentiation, which amount to a genuine creation, but to make adequate sense of this we need to appeal to a conception of the Whole, and what matters is the conception of the Whole that we evince (for Bergson it is the *élan vital* conceived as a "virtual" power; for Nietzsche it is the will to power conceived as a *Vorform* or pre-form of life).[6]

That Bergson's thinking orients itself around a philosophy of life is not an incidental feature, but an absolutely fundamental aspect. It is from the primacy that is to be accorded to Life that adequate conceptions of the rest of philosophy can be developed, such as metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. One of the most interesting features of Deleuze's lecture course is the suggestion that this is also the case for our concern with history: if Life is to be conceived in terms of a principle of

differentiation (Bergson's rendition of the principle of sufficient reason), then is this not also valid for the domain of history? The move is a significant one in Deleuze's eyes, since it explains why Bergson is never doing a philosophy of history. Indeed, Deleuze claims in the course that Bergson refrains from doing a philosophy of history in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* precisely because of his appreciation of the open character of Life: there can be no overarching category or notion that would then allow thought to impose a teleology on history, be it Spirit or Reason. As Deleuze notes in the course, "The living is essentially a being that has problems and resolves them at each instant" (21 March 1960).[7] While this is valid for all forms of Life, it assumes a special particularity in the case of humanity. In spite of the break with the philosophy of history, and its attendant historicism – for Deleuze contingency is the norm of history[8] – a story of *freedom* is still being posited: duration is the condition of possibility of freedom and choice in Bergson, which contrasts with "relaxation" where moments of time exist outside each other in an un-synthesized manner. It is at this point in his lecture course that Deleuze reveals that he has assimilated not only Bergson and Nietzsche, but also Freud (who will also play an important role in the reading of Nietzsche on memory and forgetting in *Nietzsche et la philosophie* of 1962). For Deleuze, Bergson has the same idea as Freud with regard to freedom: the *more* past there is, the more *future* a living system has, and hence more freedom. Memory, then, is not simply "of'" the past but primarily a "function of the future" (21 March 1960).[9]

If history cannot be approached through the imperial claims of a philosophy of history, this does not mean, however, that we should take Deleuze to be claiming that it is completely random or arbitrary or that it is without a *subject*: in Bergson's schema, as Deleuze conceives it, the subject of history is *the brain*. At the end of the lecture course, Deleuze ventures the claim that history exists because the human brain, by its complexity, is a mechanism where the *élan vital* surpasses mechanism itself. We know that there is much here that will become important for the later Deleuze. In the course of the complex development of his thinking, his Bergsonian-inspired insights get repeatedly reworked. It is highly doubtful that the later Deleuze remains committed to the same story he outlines in this lecture course. It is difficult to see *What is Philosophy?,* for example, as concerned with the history of freedom; but, then again, it ends with a set of reflections on the fate of the brain. What does remain constant is Deleuze's opposition to the philosophy of history, and although it is not spelled out in the lecture course, what this refers to

for Deleuze, I think, are the projects of Kant and Hegel. In the chapter on "Geophilosophy" in *What is Philosophy?* what is placed under criticism is the historicism that runs from Hegel to Husserl and, for Deleuze, Heidegger too. The 1960 lecture course on Bergson is revealing in that it shows that Deleuze's antipathy towards the philosophy of history is at work in the early beginnings of his thinking.

The lecture course of 1960 contains other interesting aspects that can only be briefly mentioned: an indication that Deleuze is seeking a new thinking of individuation, but this will not bear fruit until *Difference and Repetition* (1968); there is an interesting engagement with thermodynamics, especially the law of entropy, which features in Bergson's text and which is also a feature of *Difference and Repetition*; and, finally, it can be noted that the concern with developing an adequate conception of the Whole is one that persists in Deleuze's writings.[10]

I shall now turn my attention to addressing the two topics I mentioned at the start of this introduction. My aim is to provide independent support for Deleuze's key claims, namely, that (a) Bergsonism is an important source for attempts to radicalize Kant's critical project and to challenge its construction of the relation between science and metaphysics; and (b) what this challenge opens up for us is the possibility of thinking beyond the human condition.

**Bergson and Kant**

> If you read the *Critique of Pure Reason* you see that Kant has criticized not reason in general, but a reason fashioned to the habits and exigencies of Cartesian mechanism or Newtonian physics…The doctrine that I defend aims to rebuild the bridge (broken down since Kant) between metaphysics and science…(*Mélanges*, 493-494)

In chapter three of *Creative Evolution,* Bergson advances the fundamental innovation on which rests one of his most important contributions to philosophy: the need to provide a double genesis of matter and intellect. Bergson makes two major claims contra Kant: the first is that the mind cannot be restricted to the intellect since it overflows it; and second, that duration has to be granted an absolute existence (it is not relative to our own inner sense of time), which requires thinking time on a different plane to space. According to Bergson, Kant considered

only three possibilities for a theory of knowledge: (i) the mind is determined by external things; (ii) things are determined by the mind itself; and (iii) between the mind and things we have to suppose a mysterious agreement or pre-established harmony. In contrast to these three options, Bergson seeks to demonstrate the need for a double genesis of matter and the intellect. It is not that matter has determined the form of the intellect or that the intellect simply imposes its own form upon matter, or that the two have been regulated with regard to one another by some mysterious pre-established harmony. It is rather, Bergson aims to show, that the intellect and matter "have progressively adapted themselves one to the other in order to attain at last a common form." He sees this adaptation as coming about naturally, "*because it is the same inversion of the same movement which creates at once the intellectuality of mind and the materiality of things*" (CE, 133).

Bergson accepts Kant's demonstration that time and space, understood as homogeneous media and situated on the plane of action, cannot be viewed as properties of things themselves, since this leads to all the difficulties of dogmatic metaphysics. However, instead of resting content with this critique of the dogmatic tendency of metaphysics, and uncritically privileging Newtonian mechanism, the effort should be made to recover the mind's contact with the real. This requires providing a generative account of the Understanding, which would serve to show that homogeneous space and time are neither properties of things nor essential conditions of our faculty of knowing these things; rather their homogeneous character expresses, in Bergson's words, "the double work of solidification and division which we effect on the moving continuity of the real in order to obtain there a fulcrum for our action, in order to fix within it starting points for our operation, in short, to introduce into it real changes" (MM, 211). In other words, Kant's conception of space and time as forms of sensibility is shown to have an interest, one that is vital and not merely speculative.

Two essential points need to be appreciated. First, Bergson's conception of metaphysics is not the same as Kant's in that it does not suppose that there is a completed task of knowledge (any system of knowledge that seeks to be open to experience and observation is necessarily incomplete). Second, the empirical study of the organic changes of life needs to concern itself not with the spatial results of the change but with the time taken by the change. Contra Kant, Bergson argues that the project of metaphysics can only be restricted if there is no other time or change than those which Kant made available to us.

This is why it becomes necessary to recover intuition. Bergson insists that intuition is neither instinct nor feeling, but *effort*. It involves not relaxing the mind but rather a method that supposes the mind capable of increasing tension and concentration, in which there is a "new effort" for "each new problem":

> Installed in universal mobility…consciousness contracts in a quasi-instantaneous vision an immensely long history which unfolds outside it. The higher the consciousness, the stronger is this tension of its own duration in relation to that of things. (CM, 89)

In this recovery of intuition, Bergson aims to save science from the charge of producing a relativity of knowledge (it is rather to be regarded as approximative), and metaphysics from the charge of indulging in empty and idle speculation.

The new metaphysics Bergson proposes will operate via differentiations and qualitative integrations, and in an effort to reverse the normal directions of the workings of thought, it will have a rapport with modern mathematics, notably the infinitesimal calculus. Metaphysics differs from modern mathematics (the science of magnitudes), however, in that it has no need to make the move from intuition to symbol. As a result, our contact with the real through intuition is potentially boundless. Metaphysics can adopt the generative idea of mathematics and seek to extend it to all qualities, to reality in general. The aim is to make it impossible to bring about another Platonism of the real: "*…the whole* Critique of Pure Reason *rests upon the postulate that our thought is incapable of anything but Platonizing*, that is, of pouring the whole of possible experience into pre-existing molds" (CM, 197). A form of knowledge can be said to be relative when it ignores the basis of symbolic knowledge in intuition and is forced to rely on pre-existing concepts and to proceed from the fixed to the mobile. Absolute knowledge, by contrast, refuses to accept what is pre-formed and instead seeks to cultivate fluid concepts, "capable of following reality in all its windings and of adopting the very movement of the inner life of things" (CM, 190). To achieve this requires relinquishing the method of construction that leads only to higher and higher generalities and thinking in terms of a concrete duration in which a radical recasting of the Whole is always taking place.

If Kant's critical project is to be completed, two things are necessary: one is to develop a genesis of the intellect (to show why we have the habits of mind we do, and to follow through the consequences of this for a philosophy of nature and a theory of matter), and the second is to counter the uncritical adoption of modern science into philosophy, where

it serves to unnecessarily limit our conception of metaphysics. In his important treatment of Kant in chapter four of *Creative Evolution,* Bergson argues as follows:

> If we now inquire why Kant did not believe that the matter of our knowledge extends beyond its form, this is what we find. The criticism of our knowledge of nature that was instituted by Kant consisted in ascertaining what our mind must be and what Nature must be *if* the claims of our science are justified; but of these claims themselves Kant has not made the criticism. I mean that he took for granted the idea of a science that is one, capable of binding with the same force all the parts of what is given, and of co-ordinating them into a system presenting on all sides an equal solidity. He did not consider [...] that science became less and less objective, more and more symbolical, to the extent that it went from the physical to the vital, from the vital to the psychical. (CE, 229-30)

Bergson's argument is that science has its source in our intellectual habits, which are primarily habits of acting upon inert matter, and not ones that have been designed for comprehending Life. Both science and the intellect for Bergson concern themselves with the aspect of repetition. The intellect selects in a given situation whatever is like something it already knows, so as to fit it into a pre-existing mold or schema; in this way it applies the principle that "like produces like." It naturally rebels against the idea of an original and unforeseeable creation of forms. Similarly, science focuses its attention on isolable or closed systems, simply because anything that is irreducible and irreversible in the successive moments of a history eludes it. In cases of organic evolution, Bergson insists that foreseeing the form in advance is not possible. This is not because there are no conditions or specific causes of evolution, but rather is due to the fact that they are built into the particular form of organic life, and peculiar to that phase of its history in which life finds itself at the moment of producing the form. It is clear that the tendency within contemporary science – for example, the focus on open, dynamical systems – is to approach the real in such terms.[11]

The difficult task Bergson leaves his readers with is one of determining the scope of the different levels or planes of thinking, and negotiating the rapport between them. In this respect Bergson remains Kantian. The difference, however, is that Bergson seeks to overturn the subjection of metaphysics to science that he believes Kant's Critique has effected, and to liberate it on its own plane. In so doing the aim, one might suggest, is to give back to metaphysics a good conscience. Although it is clear for Bergson that science is not simply relative, but bears on reality itself, it has to be educated into how to respect the limits of its own domain. This

critique of science does not prevent Bergson from appreciating its success; on the contrary, it is such insights into the specific character of science that enable him to appreciate the reasons for its success, namely, the fact that it is relative to the variables it has selected and to the order in which it stages problems. Bergson wishes to remain firmly on empiricist ground, and holds that "true empiricism" is "the real metaphysics" (CM, 175). His critical point, however, is that empiricism has to be situated in the context of an engendering of thought (this commitment alone is enough to indicate that Bergson was never a naive realist). The *élan vital* is offered as an image of thought, but not one without reference to experience. This is experience enlarged and surpassed, and is valid for both science and metaphysics. If science and metaphysics are to "meet in intuition," and the demarcation that Kant imposed is not to be accepted as given, then this requires putting more of science into metaphysics and more of metaphysics into science (CM, 192). The *élan vital* reminds us of our ignorance, and encourages us to go further with our inquiry into the real, free of pre-formed ideas and immediate intuitions. In this respect it can indeed act to regulate knowledge, but not because it has accepted mechanism as the unquestionable basis of our conception of life or nature. What is important is not the name we give it, but that we have such an image of thought. On previous occasions I have argued that it is in this respect that contemporary science, in some key aspects of its practice, is Bergsonian.[12]

**Thinking Beyond the Human Condition**

> Philosophy should be an effort to go beyond the human condition. (CM, 193)

In the lecture course, and then again in the text of 1966, Deleuze makes much of Bergson's commitment to thinking beyond the human condition. He is one of the first to develop this as a major theme in Bergson's philosophy. In addition, I would claim that this task and project inspires much of Deleuze's own oeuvre and guides his remarkable philosophical journey up to and including *What is Philosophy?* How is such a curious-sounding project to be understood?

There are a number of places in his writings where Bergson explicitly approaches philosophy as the discipline that "raises us above the human condition" ("*la philosophie nous aura élevés au-dessus de la condition humaine*") (*Oeuvres*, 1292; CM, 50) and makes the effort to "surpass" (*dépasser*) the

human condition (*ibid*., 1425; 193; translation modified). In *Creative Evolution* Bergson conceives philosophy as "an effort to dissolve again into the Whole." Moreover: "Intelligence reabsorbed into its principle, may thus live back again in its genesis" (CE, 123). Such a method of thinking has to work against the most inveterate habits of the mind, and consists in an interchange of insights that correct and add to each other. For Bergson, as Deleuze notes in his lecture course, such an enterprise ends by expanding the humanity within us and so allows humanity to surpass itself by reinserting itself in the Whole (21 March 1960; CE, 124). This is accomplished through philosophy, for it is philosophy that provides us with the means (methods) for reversing the normal directions of the mind (instrumental, utilitarian), thereby upsetting its habits. Deleuze stresses (rightly in my view), that in spite of what one might think, for Bergson this makes philosophy's task a modest one.[13] Deleuze's key insight is the following one: if we suppose that philosophy is an affair of perception,[14] then it cannot simply be a matter of correcting perception, but only of extending it. There is nothing at fault with the human condition, and its fundamental errors and habits do not require correction. Rather, the task is to extend the human present, which is the aspect of time in which the human necessarily dwells—a necessity to be explained through the dictates of evolution, such as adaptation: "The human condition is the maximum of duration concentrated in the present, but there is no co-exclusivity to being, that is to say that there is not only the present" (21 March 1960).

Of course, there have been other attempts in modern philosophy to expand the horizon of the present and to think outside what we can call "presentism." Nietzsche gives us much to think about in his conception of nature setting itself the paradoxical task, in the case of the human being, of cultivating an animal that is sanctioned to promise (a creature of time that anticipates the future); while Heidegger's attempt to conceive authenticity in terms of *Dasein*'s own most potentiality-for-Being establishes a conception of being in time in which it is the mode of the futural (*zukünftig*) that is given genuine prominence. If in Nietzsche's example it is the invention of causal thinking that brings time and its syntheses into being for the human animal,[15] in Heidegger's account of *Dasein* we are dealing with time's constitution as pure *existential* possibility. There is something unique and distinctive about how Bergson conceives the going beyond or surpassing of the human condition, namely, the ambition to restore the Absolute or the Whole as the legitimate "object" of thought's quest. However, does such a project not carry with

it all kinds of risks and dangers, for example, the risk of neglecting what is characteristically human in man? Bergson was, in fact, aware of the concerns that people might have over his project. In this regard it is perhaps Heidegger who best expresses the acute unease and anxiety many feel toward such a project – for example, his distrust of *Lebensphilosophie*, his criticism of biologism, and his concern with the special character of *Dasein* (the being of possibility *par excellence*).

It helps if one pays attention to the concerns and issues that guide and steer Bergson's intellectual project and its commitments. He was concerned about what he saw as the wandering and aimless nature of much of our research into the working of the mind, in which there is an absence of a guiding thread (CM, 53). The supposition he sees at work in psychology – and by extension, in what we today would call the philosophy of mind – is that the mind has dropped from heaven, and its subdivision into functions and faculties (memory, imagination, conception, and perception) needs only to be recognized. In short, the fundamental question of genesis – of how things have become what they are – is absent from research. It is his commitment to *thinking* life that seeks to correct this neglect. It is an inquiry into the fundamental exigencies of life that will enable us to ask some important questions, such as, for example, whether the ordinary subdivision into such and such faculties is natural or artificial. Should our divisions be maintained or modified? Moreover, if one of the results of the research conducted is that the exigencies of life are found to be working in an analogous fashion in humans, animals, and plants, what will be the consequences for all kinds of disciplines and modes of inquiry? Bergson's view is twofold: on the one hand, our unconscious metaphysics has led us to cut up and distribute psychological life in an inadequate manner, one that cannot do justice to the complexity of evolution and how it has taken place. There is, therefore, a need to dig down to sources and roots in order to detect the entwinement and interlacing of different modes of life. On the other hand, however, by digging down in this way, our conception of the human animal with respect to the domain of its possibilities, including superhuman ones, will be that much more adequate.[16] Like Nietzsche before him, Bergson is seeking to overturn the errors upon which humanity has constituted itself without being aware of its own self-constitution in such terms.[17]

Following Bergson, Deleuze argues that our human condition – which can be explained in terms of the sedimentation of habits and modes of living, thinking, and feeling acquired through evolution – "condemns us

to live among badly analyzed composites, and to be badly analyzed composites ourselves" (*Bergsonism*, 28). For Deleuze, man's superhuman possibility can best be conceived in terms of a capacity for "scrambling the planes, of going beyond his own plane as his own condition, in order to finally express naturing Nature" (*ibid*., 107).[18]

Why should we feel motivated by this endeavor to think beyond our human condition? Deleuze's lecture of May 2nd provides, I believe, the essential insight that is required here: we find ourselves born or thrown into a world that is "ready-made" and that we have not made our own. This world always goes in the direction of the "relaxed aspect" of duration, Deleuze argues (May 2 1960). It is because the human condition is one of relaxation that we have such difficulty in understanding the meaning of "creation" – precisely the notion that is essential for artistic invention, for new modes of ethical being, and for philosophical reflection, and that lies, of course, at the heart of Bergson's project.

**Conclusion**

In his various commentaries and writings on Bergson, and in this lecture course of 1960, Deleuze sought to show that Bergsonism amounts to an original philosophical practice that confronts thinking with a provocation to which it may or may not seek to be equal or wish to respond. There is a Bergsonian revolution, and it amounts to an upheaval in philosophy comparable in significance to the ones we are more familiar with, from Kant to Nietzsche and Heidegger, which make up our intellectual modernity. What we find in Deleuze's commentaries and writings on Bergson, however, is never a mere historical retrieval of a great thinker, but an attempt to give philosophy a future. Deleuze's "ethical" commitment to philosophy is, I believe, largely Bergsonian in its inspiration: philosophy's duty consists in showing that the future means nothing other than an opening onto new creations and inventions. Deleuze's lament in *What is Philosophy?* over our *lack* of creation today is heartfelt and comes from his deepest philosophical commitments:

> We do not lack communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. *We lack resistance to the present*. The creation of concepts in itself calls for a future form, for a new earth and a people that does not yet exist. (108)

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## Abbreviations Used

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|---|---|
| CE | *Creative Evolution* |
| CM | *The Creative Mind* |
| MM | *Matter and Memory* |

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## Notes

1. I am grateful to Michael Vaughan for casting his editorial eye over a draft of this introduction and making a number of helpful suggestions for its improvement.
2. G. Deleuze, *Empiricisme et subjectivité. Essai sur la nature humaine selon Hume* (Paris, PUF, 1953); *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. C. V. Boundas (New York, Columbia University Press, 1991). "La conception de la différence chez Bergson," *Les Études Bergsonnienes*, IV, 1956, pp. 77-112. Other relevant publications from this period include: with André Cresson, *David Hume, sa vie, son oeuvre, avec un exposé de sa philosophie* (Paris, PUF 1952); "Bergson 1859-1914" in M. Merleau-Ponty (ed.), *Les Philosophes célèbres* (Paris, Éditions d'Art Lucien Mazenod, 1956, pp. 292-9); "Sens et valeurs," *Arguments*, 15, 1959, pp. 20-8, This piece forms the basis of chapter one of Deleuze's *Nietzsche et la philosophie* (Paris, PUF 1962). Deleuze also edited a selection of texts by Bergson: *Mémoire et vie: texts choisis* (Paris, PUF 1957).
3. "Metaphysics dates from the day when Zeno of Elea pointed out the inherent contradictions of movement and change, as our intellect represents them" (*Oeuvres* 1259; CM, 17). And: "Metaphysics…was born of the arguments of Zeno of Elea on the subject of change and movement. It was Zeno who, by drawing attention to the absurdity of what he called movement and change, led the philosophers – Plato first and foremost – to seek the true and coherent reality in what does not change" (*ibid.*, 1376; 141).
4. For further insight into Fichte and Maimon based on recent scholarship see Frederick C. Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism 1781-1801* (Cambridge, Mass. & London, Harvard University Press, 2002), part II, chapter 1, pp. 223-40.
5. John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge, Mass. & London, Harvard University Press, 1994).
6. F. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York, Random House, 1968), section 36.
7. Compare *Bergsonism*, p. 16: "…the history of man…is that of the construction of problems...It is here that humanity makes its own history, and becoming conscious of

that activity is like the conquest of freedom." Of course, the source of this construction of problems is "Life" itself, the *élan vital*. As Deleuze notes, freedom for Bergson always has a physical sense: "'to detonate' an explosive, to use it for more and more powerful movements" (*ibid*., 107; Deleuze is citing from "Consciousness and Life," the opening essay in *Mind Energy)*.

8. Compare the later Deleuze: "The principle of reason such as it appears in philosophy is a principle of contingent reason and is put like this: there is no good reason but contingent reason; there is no universal history except contingency" (*What is Philosophy?* 93).
9. Bergson writes: "…my idea of integral conservation of the past more and more found its empirical verification in the vast collection of experiments instituted by the disciples of Freud" (*Oeuvres*, 1316; CM, 75).
10. For Deleuze's deployment of Bergson's notion of the whole in his later writings, see the opening chapters of *Cinéma , L'Image-Mouvement* (Paris, Minuit, 1983), *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. H. Tomlinson & B. Habberjam (London, The Athlone Press, 1992). Deleuze writes, for example: "Many philosophers had already said that the whole was neither given nor giveable: they simply concluded from this that the whole was a meaningless notion. Bergson's conclusion is very different: if the whole is not giveable, it is because it is the Open, and because its nature is to change constantly, or to give rise to something new, in short, to endure" (p. 20; p. 9); and, "…the whole is the Open, and relates back to time or even to spirit, rather than to content and to space" (p. 27; p. 17).
11. For an attempt to demonstrate the resemblances between Bergson's ideas and the work of complexity theorists such as Brian Goodwin and Stuart Kauffman see Robin Durie, "Creativity and Life," *The Review of Metaphysics* 56 (December 2002), pp. 357-83.
12. See, for example, in the argument of chapter five of *Philosophy and the Adventure of the Virtual: Bergson and the Time of Life* (London & New York, Routledge, 2002), and more recently, the Introduction to the Centennial edition of *Creative Evolution* published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2007.
13. On this modesty see Bergson, *Oeuvres,* 658; CE, 123. Compare Nietzsche: "What is needed from now one is *historical philosophizing*, and with it the virtue of modesty" (*Human, All Too Human*, section 2, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, Cambridge & New York, Cambridge University Press, 1986). In the 1886 preface to *Daybreak,* Nietzsche is keen to point out that part of what informs his desire for "the self-overcoming of morality" is a taste for more modest expressions when it comes to our knowledge of the human.
14. Compare Nietzsche's definition of philosophy as "spiritual/mental vision" (*geistigen Blicks*), *Beyond Good and Evil*, section 252.
15. Nietzsche is, in fact, following Hume's lead on this point, inasmuch as, for Hume, it is causal thinking that enables us to move beyond the narrow horizon of present sensory experience, from the observed to the unobserved, and in so doing, to construct conceptions of the past and the future. This is precisely how Nietzsche conceives of "culture," which, he stresses, means "learning to *calculate*, learning to think causally, learning to act preventively, learning to believe in regularity," *Kritische Studienausgabe* (Berlin & New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1987), ed. G. Colli & M. Montinari, volume 12, 10 [21]. For Nietzsche's account of the cultivation of the promise-keeping animal, see the opening section of the second essay of *On the Genealogy of Morality*.
16. The concept of the superhuman features in Bergson's writings in two places: toward the end of chapter three of *Creative Evolution,* and in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*. In a future study I propose to inquire into the different meanings Nietzsche and Bergson give to this figure of thought.

17. In section 115 of *The Gay Science,* Nietzsche notes that man has been educated by his errors, and he lists four of them: man sees himself only incompletely or partially; he endows himself with fictitious attributes; he places himself in a false rank in relation to animals and nature as a whole; he invents ever new tables of goods and accepts them for a time as eternal and unconditional.
18. Deleuze has more to say on "man's privilege" and how it can be justified in *Bergsonism*, pp. 107-9.