

Matter and Memory Chapter 2: "On the Recognition of Images"

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- I) Intro: role of body leads to three hypotheses [81 / 77]
 - A) Role of body as conductor
 - 1) Receives movements
 - 2) Transmits them to motor mechanisms
 - B) Three hypotheses
 - 1) Past survives in two forms / memory functions in two ways
 - (a) Motor mechanisms / automatic triggering of mechanism
 - (b) Independent recollections / effort of mind to find useful representations
 - 2) Recognition of a present object has two forms
 - (a) The two forms:
 - (i) Effected by movements when coming from object
 - (ii) Effected by representations when coming from subject
 - (b) Discussion of temporality of body
 - (i) At any one moment, body is conductor of movements
 - (ii) In flow of time, body is
 - (i) "ever advancing boundary btw future and past, as a pointed end, which our past is continually driving forward into our future"
 - (ii) "always situated at the very point where my past expires in a deed"
 - 3) We pass by imperceptible stages from temporally organized recollections to movements indicating possible action in space. Brain lesions affect movements, not actions.
- II) The two forms of memory (procedural and episodic) [83 / 79]
 - A) First statement of the distinction: with regard to habit [83 / 79]
 - 1) Procedural-memory: having learnt a lesson by heart: habit
 - (a) Repetition of same effort
 - (b) Decomposition / re-composition of whole action
 - (c) Stored up in a triggered mechanism
 - 2) Episodic memory: singular memory of each training session: non-habitual
 - (a) Imprinted all at once in memory as different from other sessions
 - (b) Event-character; dated; unable to be repeated
 - (c) Later recalls will not affect its nature
 - B) Focusing on time shows difference in kind btw two forms [84 / 80]
 - 1) We might at first see only difference in degree
 - 2) But if we focus on time, we see a difference in kind
 - (a) Episodic memory is a representation and can have varying duration
 - (b) Procedural memory is an action and requires a definite time to play out
 - (i) No mark of the past
 - (ii) Belongs to present
 - C) Second statement of the distinction: with regard to past and present [86 / 81]
 - 1) Episodic memory stores up past [in itself] w/o regard to present utility
 - 2) Procedural memory stores up past in modified body w/ view to utility
 - (a) Doesn't represent past but acts it

- (b) Prolongs useful effect of bygone images into present moment
- D) Relation of the two forms of memory with regard to utility [87 / 82]
 - 1) Procedural memory can replace and be mistaken for episodic bcs of utility of procedural memory qua bodily mechanism
 - 2) Episodic memory is *spontaneous*; procedural is *automatic*
 - 3) Repetition does not convert episodic into procedural
 - (a) It only organizes the movements involved in episodes to create habits
 - (b) Thus procedural memory is only habit interpreted by memory; it's not really a form of memory at all
 - 4) Adaption to life is the aim of procedural memory / habit
 - (a) Episodic memory can drift to dreams
 - (b) But cness selects past images that are useful to current situation
 - 5) Thus habit inhibits image-memory or at least filters out non-useful images
 - 6) Dream quality of image memory allows cness to reach them by *effort*
 - (a) So we need not wait for accidental repetition of a situation
 - (b) Thus we can actively construct our own habits by *training*
 - 7) Hypothesis of three relations
 - (a) Exaltation of image memory when sensorimotor equilibrium is disturbed
 - (b) Inhibition of non-useful image memory in normal state
 - (c) In training, a "latent intervention" of image memory
- E) Mutual support of two forms of memory in training [91 / 86]
 - 1) Evidence from pathological cases shows "complex mechanisms, subtle enough to imitate intelligence, can work by themselves"
 - 2) During training, we have a vague / evanescent sense of whole to be made
 - 3) This spontaneous recollection vanishes with voluntary memory
- F) Summary: 2 pure forms: procedural/habit vs episodic/spontaneous memory
- G) Critique of philosophical reliance on impure or mixed forms of memory [95 / 88]
 - 1) Mixing of localized image and cerebral mechanism leads to hypothesis of recollections stored in brain
 - 2) Since they think repetition of episodic images ends in motor habit tied to brain mechanism, they assume brain is an organ of representation generating images
 - 3) We have to instead distinguish different kinds of memory in mixed states
- III) Recognition in general: memory-images and movements [96 / 90]
 - A) Associative theory of recognition [96 / 90]
 - 1) First statement:
 - (a) Recognition = association of present perception with contextual images formerly given w/ it
 - (b) Objection: but this implies recognition of resemblance of former image w/ present image (so you have presupposed what you're trying to explain)
 - 2) Restatement:
 - (a) Recognition = blending of perception and memory
 - (b) Objection:
 - (i) Often recollection (memory) only comes after recognition (perception of resemblance)
 - (ii) This can only be explained by brain traces, w/ obscure mechanism

- (c) Facts of pathology bear out B's objection
- B) Bergson's theory of recognition: between perception and mechanism [100 / 92]
 - 1) In intermediate state perception is followed by "impending" mechanism
 - 2) Thus recognition is founded on cness of organized motor reaction
 - 3) Thesis: no perception not prolonged into movement
 - 4) "we commonly act our recognition before we think it"
- C) Interlude / forecast of Ch 3: survival of the past in itself [103 / 95]
 - 1) This memory ("pure memory") awaits disruption of sensorimotor link
 - 2) Need effort to disengage from present to find dated/personal memory-image
 - 3) Movement (done / nascent) prepare choice of image or mark out area of past
 - 4) Movement both hinders and encourages image-memory
 - (a) In principle, present utility discourages conscious memory-images
 - (b) But memory-images resembling present perception can slip in
- D) Bergson's theory explains two kinds of psychic blindness [104 / 96]
 - 1) Statement of the two types
 - (a) Memory image can no longer reappear
 - (b) Disruption of link of motor habits and perception
 - (i) Facts supporting this reading
 - (i) Loss of sense of direction
 - (ii) Manner of drawing
 - 2) Conclusion as to primary condition of recognition
 - (a) Habit of distinguishing articulations of perceived object
 - (b) That is, completing perception by a motor tendency
- E) Transition to last section: active recognition [107 / 98]
 - 1) Automatic recognition takes us away from object (to useful habits)
 - 2) Attentive recognition brings us back to object to dwell on striking features
 - (a) Analogous images to present perception will come easily
 - (b) But they have to give up much of their detail to do so
- IV) Gradual passage of memories to movements: recognition and attention [107 / 99]
 - A) Question of relation of perception and memory [107 / 99]
 - 1) Statement of the question:
 - (a) Does perception determine memory?
 - (b) Or do memories spontaneously go to meet perception?
 - 2) Presupposition of the question: relation of brain and memory
 - (a) If brain action causes image generation
 - (i) Then memory is function of brain
 - (ii) And brain lesions would destroy memory storage
 - (b) If brain action is only motor adaption
 - (i) Then memory is independent of brain
 - (ii) And brain lesions would only affect motor mechanisms
 - (i) Hinder body from taking attitude that would call back image
 - (ii) Hinder body from acting and hence stop actualization of image
 - B) Cyclical relation of perception, attention and memory [108 / 100]
 - 1) Attention
 - (a) Intellectualist definitions
 - (b) Bergson: attention = adaptation of body

- 2) Memory: doubles present perception with images in cyclical process
 - (a) Attention is like “telegraph clerk”
 - (b) Analysis by attention via series of attempts at synthesis (finding resemblance of memory-image and perception)
- 3) Perception
 - (a) Is not just impressions
 - (b) But attentive perception involves reflection
 - (i) Projection outside ourselves of an actively created image
 - (ii) Identical with or similar to object on which it comes to mold itself
 - (iii) Mixture of memory and perception in actual life
 - (iv) Closed circle: perception-image and memory-image running alongside
- C) Restatement to emphasize cyclical nature [113 / 103]
 - 1) Two conceptions of mind
 - (a) Perception / memory is not a linear / mechanical process
 - (b) But a circuit, a state of mutual tension: “solidarity” of mind and object
 - 2) Diagram of circuits
 - (a) Whole of memory in each circuit, but at different degrees of tension
 - (b) Same psychical life is repeated at different stages / stories [*étages*]
 - (i) Personal memories at last and largest stage [cf. cone image in Ch3]
 - (ii) Less personal / more general forms of those recollections make up tighter / more contracted stages, able to fit into present perception
 - (iii) In this way, memory attains greater practical importance
 - (i) Personal memories are like dream images
 - (ii) Acting shrinks these memories to a knife’s edge, fit into present
 1. Perception as motor mechanisms provide a sketch of object
 2. Into which memory-images fit, providing color and detail
- D) Confirmation of hypothesis by examination of facts [117 / 107]
 - 1) Expected results:
 - (a) Memory pathology not due to destruction of brain-stored memory
 - (b) Rather, by two causes
 - (i) Sometime body cannot adopt attitude leading to motor mechanism
 - (ii) Sometimes memories cannot become actual
 - 2) Confirmation by pathology: two kinds of psychic / word deafness or blindness
 - 3) Limitation to example of language recognition, which depends on
 - (a) An automatic sensorimotor process: “motor diagram” [*schème moteur*]
 - (b) An active / excentric projection of memory-images