

The Boundaries of the Unconscious: The Issue of the *Psyché-soma* Difference

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Abstract

The psyché-soma difference (Bartoš 2006) is one of the structuring themes not only of Western thought but also of modern psychology, which inherits this debate from the philosophical tradition and the religious tradition. Through a journey with early texts by Henri Bergson, including the psychology and metaphysics classes he taught at the Lycée de Clermont-Ferrand in 1887-1888, as well as the psychophysical parallelism of 1901, we address the difficulties pointed out in the monist position and its reverberations in contemporary psychology, which are commanded by neuroscience and cognitive psychology. We intend to highlight the impasses of the monist position that continue to be re-edited. In fact, despite countless technological advances concerning the issue of the nature of this duality, the debates seem to have stopped at the assertions that Bergson already denounced at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, which denotes the strong presence of ontological options that largely overlap with the empirical inspiration of modern science. What are the determining lines in the resistance to this debate? Why do advances in research technologies not correspond to advances in the argument about this duality? Are there practical consequences for the reading of reality when adopting the monist principle, which remains sovereign in

Western thought albeit unproven? These questions will guide the reflection we begin in this work.

Keywords: materialist monism, dualism, *psyché-soma*, unconscious, Bergson.

En psychologie, le monisme n'a pas de sens.

Georges Dwelshauvers

Since his courses on psychology and metaphysics at the Clermont-Ferrand lyceum, in 1887-1888, the problem of the unconscious was already posed to Bergson and permeated his work in various formulations. At the time of these courses, however, under the influence of an academic worldview for which the idea of the unconscious was not yet well established, Bergson dedicated himself to deconstructing the possibility of this concept, applying to this end the equivalence of *classical psychology* between psychic and consciousness (Bergson [1887-1888]¹ 2014; Dwelshauvers 1908). On the one hand, Bergson makes a rigorous qualitative differentiation between the psychological fact and the physical/physiological fact; but, on the other hand, he does not find an intensity for the unconscious among psychological facts, which leads him simply to deny it, or to reduce it to physical facts.

In the seventh class of his psychology course, in which the subjective method is discussed, presenting it as the method par excellence of psychology, Bergson states that

¹ The date in brackets indicates the year of the original publication of the work - only indicated in the first citation of the work in the text; in the following cases, only the date of the edition consulted by the author will be recorded.

a psychological fact only exists under the condition that it is known through inner reflection, through consciousness. How can we imagine a sensation, a feeling, of which we were not aware? It would no longer be a sensation or a feeling because we cannot feel without realizing that we feel. It was in vain that some psychologists imagined unconscious psychological facts – later shown as an unintelligible hypothesis or a badly done expression (Bergson 2014: 18, our translation).

The fact that Bergson refers here to sensations and feelings reveals his affiliation, at this moment, with the aforementioned *classical psychology* and with the founding injunction in Cartesian thought of the equivalence between thinking, feeling, wanting, and imagining as psychic phenomena of a conscious nature. This articulation places consciousness at the center of the epistemic operation, in a broad sense, as it is responsible for the appropriation of life as a whole. Hence the need to reject the unconscious as a psychological instance.

In class 16, whose central theme is consciousness, Bergson resumes the issue of the unconscious to reaffirm the thesis of its impropriety, now opposing authors such as Eduard von Hartmann and Wilhelm Wundt². Accepting the risk of succumbing to impasses that are

² Although Wundt gradually abandoned the idea of the unconscious from 1874 onwards, Bergson did not consider this update of his theory in the *Psychology and Metaphysics Classes*, the first reason was the time because, until Bergson's courses, Wundt had not yet fully carried out the modification of his thinking, which led him to relegate the unconscious to the domain of physiology, as Freitas Araújo (2018) points out. Bergson continues referring to Wundt at the beginning of his work – in *Leçons d'histoire de la philosophie moderne et contemporaine* (1893-1894), *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (1889), and *Matière et mémoire* (1896). In all these cases, the text that Bergson refers to almost exclusively is the *Grundzüge der Physiologischen Psychologie* (1874), in addition to some mentions of texts published in the journal *Philosophische Studien*. Caterina Zanfi (2013) states that, after the publication of *L'évolution créatrice* (1907), Bergson leaves aside, in part, the study of famous authors who nurtured the elaboration of his first psychological work, including Wundt and Fechner.

frankly contradictory to his initial statements about the psychic, Bergson (2014: 85, our translation) claims that “the unconscious psychological fact is in reality only a physiological fact, a physical fact”. If one wants to make the unconscious a physiological fact, this would be to some extent defensible, as can be seen in neuroscientific attempts to reintroduce this concept, both from a historical point of view – as an *ancestor* of current discussions (Higgins 2005; Dehaene 2009a; Evers 2009; Farisco & Evers 2017) – and as an updated conceptual device, as we find in the debates on the notion of subliminal or non-intentional (Ahmed 2017; Bas-Hoogendam, Van Steenbergen, Van der Wee & Westenbergh 2018; Chan, Tang, Gucciardi et al. 2018). The examples used by Bergson – that of Leibniz’s *petites perceptions*, that of somnambulism, and especially that of memory – provoke a certain distance from his initial argument.

Since the beginning of his psychology classes, Bergson tried to affirm the legitimacy of psychological and physical facts, highlighting that there would not be, between the two, a relationship of causality, but of correspondence. However, in his eagerness to discard the idea of the unconscious, his argument slips into a type of epiphenomenalism, which would be the very denial of the *radical difference* between the psychological fact and the physical fact.

Each memory corresponds to a change in the state or grouping of nerve cells in the brain. This is what remains of the memory, and the idea awakens in us when some excitement transforms this purely physical, purely physiological state of the brain into a psychological fact, into a fact of consciousness. Therefore, there are no unconscious memories: there are physiological states that can give rise,

in certain cases, to psychological states (Bergson 2014: 86, our translation).

For those who, a few classes before, declared that the idea of the brain secreting thoughts would be an *unintelligible proposition* (class 6), the statement above can be seen as a *relapse* into causality. Even if we admit a correspondence between memory and brain modification, it does not imply that this correspondence necessarily has a physical origin, hence the need to admit, nine years later, in *Matter and Memory*, unconscious psychological states (even if it is a way of talking about non-conscious aspects of perceptions and memories³); and hence one might think that, at this initial moment in his work, Bergson (2021: 63, our translation) inadvertently gave in to “metaphysics unconscious of itself”, attributed to materialism upon his inauguration as president of the *Society for Psychical Research*.

The position expressed in the psychology classes will change, and there are signs of this transition in the courses when addressing the issue of recognition (11th class), inclinations (12th class), and mainly

³ In this specific moment of *Matter and memory*, it is not about a dynamic unconscious. In the debate with Georges Dwelshauvers (on November 25, 1909), at the French Philosophy Society, despite his criticism of the *ad hoc* uses of the concept of unconsciousness, he also opens up the possibility of an unconscious that would refer to a gaping aspect of the conscious functioning: “this unconscious consists of a certain gap in the currently conscious psychological state, but a gap that has a positive character and is much more than a simple void, as we feel it acting” (Bergson 2023: 30, our translation). We must mention that, at the time of this debate, Bergson had recently published *Creative Evolution* (1907) and had advanced his dynamic conception of life. Fernando Meireles Monegalha Henriques (2016) presents a different thesis in this regard, stating the possibility of thinking about a dynamic unconscious in *Matter and memory*. He defends the effectiveness of unconscious action in the conscious activity – as opposed to the idea of an unconscious that would be inert – based on the effectiveness of the past on the present, which places us in a zone of opacity between metaphysical intensities and the dynamics of the unconscious. The problem of the unconscious in Bergson, as we understand it, needs to be thought of in the same way as monism/dualism, that is, based on a dynamic key of intensities. However, this does not imply the non-existence of modulations on the same theme within the author’s work, as shown by the issue of the unconscious, and, in this sense, *Creative Evolution* is perhaps an important turning point.

in the criticism of empiricists (18th class), a moment in which he introduces the idea of a *substance self*: “a permanent background, so to speak, on which psychological facts show off, follow one another, and leave a mark” (Bergson 2014: 101, our translation). The kind of substance and mark we are dealing with here is something that will undoubtedly require Bergson to make theoretical efforts – whose direct results are *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1889), *Matter and Memory* (1896), and *Creative evolution* (1907). In the psychology classes, what we see in a first approach is the shifting of the underlying problem: of the psychological fact, the index of indeterminacy shifts to the *substance self*. In other words, forcing the psychological fact to emerge from a physical fact – as we highlighted, in clear contradiction with the initial thesis of the course – requires the underlying problem to be shifted to a metaphysical plane, without transitions, as the affirmation of a psychological fact that would emerge from the physical fact sends us, even if unaware, back to the materialist monism⁴ and, thus, to the inevitable epiphenomenalism, criticized in Clermont-Ferrand’s classes and throughout his work.

This is a slip in the already consolidated disposition of the spirit to complete the gaps between physical and psychological processes, always in a one-way road, which would necessarily go from the first to the latter, and never the other way around. This provision aims to

⁴ "Monistic materialism" is used here in its canonical conception, in which the two terms can be thought of almost as synonyms, especially in modern scientific thought (Abbagnano, 2007). This article proposes a discussion whose starting point is metaphysical but aims to question the practical consequences of assuming, more or less explicitly, this ontological, epistemological, and methodological perspective. In this sense, contemporary readings of materialism and/or monism, insofar as they assume positions such as dual-aspect theories, property dualism, emergentism, biological naturalism, or even certain pragmatic stances that propose the suspension of ontological judgments due to the indeterminacy of metaphysical viewpoints (Hill, 2015), are an integral part of the problem proposed in this reflection, starting from the psyché-soma difference, considered in its radicality.

obscure the indeterminacies and non-correspondences between the physical and psychological intensities of human action. It is at this crossroads that the concept of the unconscious begins to receive more attention, and a place for a heuristic hypothesis to, if not eliminate, at least give a status of positivity to the gap between the psychic and physical.

On May 2, 1901, in a debate at the French Philosophy Society on *Psychophysical Parallelism and Positive Metaphysics*, Bergson took a set of arguments presented in *Matter and Memory*. Responding to his interlocutor, Gustave Belot, about the differences between old and new spiritualism, Bergson replaces the unconscious in this panorama, not without a kind of *mea culpa*:

The idea of the unconscious could serve as a verification of what I said earlier, that is, that an idea becomes intelligible through its application. It was openly said twenty years ago (and I am conscious of having taught it myself for a long time) that a psychological state is by definition a conscious state, and that the idea of an unconscious psychological state would be, consequently, a contradictory idea. However, I believe that it has become very difficult for anyone who has been following the progress of psychology in recent years not to give the unconscious its due place in psychological explanations, and even not to recognize that the idea of the unconscious, to the extent that it is manipulated, tends to become an increasingly clear idea, our spirit expanding, forcing itself and ending up accepting this initially refractory representation (Bergson 1972: 475, our translation).

We see here a profound change in attitude toward Clermont-Ferrand's classes, and what is reestablished is precisely the notion of

indetermination, of the non-coincidence between psychic and physical, and, above all, the non-reduction of one to the other, reinstating the radicality previously affirmed. The terms of the debate change. Resuming the problem of aphasia, Bergson now speaks of a fact of consciousness that will associate (*se doubler*) with a cerebral concomitant, and of a psychological fact that adds (*se surajouter*) to brain activity. Instead of reinforcing the monist drift, the nuances inserted by *se doubler* and *se surajouter* show Bergson avoiding reducing the radical difference between the psychic and somatic, which is no longer thought of in terms of degrees, but rather of nature⁵. This is a qualitative difference, on which, by the way, Bergson insists several times in *Matter and memory*, not without highlighting the danger of a certain fetishism in the handling of *qualitative* and *quantitative* terms, which would lead to compartmentalized views of the soul and the body⁶.

We could think that this is a dated discussion and that advances in depth psychology gave rise to the resolution of dilemmas typical of the foundations of a science that was then incipient. What happens, however, is precisely the opposite, and, in a semantic slide that goes

⁵ It is also interesting to note the contrast of these two terms, *se doubler* and *se surajouter*, with the idea of *supervenience* used by the philosophy of mind (Donald Davidson, Jaegwon Kim), since it indicates "that mental characteristics are in some way dependent, or supervening, of physical characteristics" (Beckermann 1992: 11, our translation).

⁶ "The obscurity of this problem [the union of soul and body], in the dualist hypothesis, comes from considering matter as essentially divisible and every state of soul as strictly inextensive, so that one begins by cutting the communication between the two terms. Deepening this double postulate, one discovers in it, concerning matter, a confusion of concrete and indivisible extension with the divisible space that subtends it, as well as, about the spirit, the illusory idea that there are no degrees or possible transition between the extensive and the inextensive. But, if these two postulates cover up a common error, if there is a gradual passage from idea to image and from image to sensation, if, as it evolves in the direction of the present time, that is, of action, the state of soul approaches the extension, if, finally, this extension, once reached, remains undivided and therefore does not in any way contradict the unity of the soul, it is understood that the spirit can place itself over matter in the act of pure perception, consequently uniting itself to it, and which nevertheless differs radically from it" (Bergson 2011: 258-259, our translation). The issue of dualism in Bergson's thought is referenced in footnote 9.

from the historical *psyché-soma* duality to the new body-brain dualism, this problem is repeated without ceasing, in different academic areas. The introduction of the unconscious into the *psyche-soma* equation recovers part of the vivacity in the basic problem; however, this concept alone is not necessarily a counterpoint to materialist monism, often disguised in different forms of property dualisms. In effect, one can take the unconscious, as Bergson did for some time and as cognitive sciences generally do (Simanke 2011), as an expression of the physiology of the brain, as a minimum degree of consciousness, or yet another postponement in confronting this uncomfortable difference between the quantitative and qualitative aspects of action in the world⁷.

Stanislas Dehaene, holder of the chair of Experimental Cognitive Psychology at the *Collège de France*, did not hesitate, during his inaugural class in 2006, when posing the problem in the following terms:

With a hundred trillion processors, a million billion connections, this structure has no equivalent and it would be a big mistake to think that the computer metaphor can be applied [to the brain] without modifications. We could say that neurobiology is interested in the “material”, and psychology in the “logic” of the brain: the *hardware* and *software*. This reductionist dichotomy is inappropriate. All levels of organization, from the molecule to social interactions, conspire to determine our mental functioning. There is,

⁷ As previously stated (footnote 3), in 1909, Bergson tells us about an *ad hoc* way of handling the notion of the unconscious, which would be in opposition to what he calls the metaphysical way of conceiving this concept: “There is also a nominalist point of view about the unconscious: if I am not mistaken this is the point of view of psychologists who resort to the unconscious every time they come across a phenomenon about which we cannot say whether it is psychological or physiological. The unconscious, in this case, is nothing more than a comfortable term, intended to designate this or that category of facts about which the explanation is provided” (1909: 24, our translation).

therefore, no tight compartmentalization between biology and psychology. On the contrary, psychologists and neurobiologists, in different ways, come together in the task of understanding how a cognitive function emerges from the hierarchical and consecrated architecture of the nervous system (Dehaene 2006: 13, our translation).

In this manifesto in defense of *stricto sensu* psychological science, not only the idea of a one-way road, which goes from the somatic to the psychological, is reaffirmed but so is the *passage to the limit* that is revealed in emergentism. Dehaene states, in this same class, that all experiments with the most modern artifacts of contemporary science are *still* insufficient to overcome the status of correlation between physical and psychological facts; they are, therefore, *still* incapable of establishing a causal relationship, and that this is an obstacle to be overcome in order to reach an objective science of psychic functioning. Similar to Bergson from the psychology course, Dehaene slides into causality, factitious and fictitious, by affirming, without a shadow of embarrassment, emergentism, recovering the idea of the *explanatory gap* and attributing the overcoming of this impasse to a promising future.

It is worth noting that Dehaene creates some rhetorical devices that can divert our attention from the central problem of the surreptitious passage of explanatory level: by posing the problem of *hardware versus software* as an inadequate reductionist dichotomy, he fails to carefully analyze the fact that we are, in this metaphor, talking about a mere dualism of properties, without this arrangement of *opposing* elements being an opposition in the radical sense of the term. It is easy to dismiss this dualism since it is not actually a dualism. The underlying problem persists, which is why the author resorts to the ever-renewed hope of reaching an adequate solution to the *gouffre*

explicatif, and the consequent escape from what he calls the “dualism dilemma” (Dehaene 2006: 52, our translation). Why dualism would be an impasse and monism would not, this does not even deserve a single comment from the author, not even to evoke Ockham’s famous razor, so often used as an *ad hoc* strategy to point out the illusion – in the Freudian sense of the term – of the dualist position.

Later in his inaugural class, Dehaene makes his starting point explicit: “In the future, the demonstration of a relationship of causality, and ‘*in fine*’ of identity, between neuronal states and conscious mental states will involve the use of interference techniques with brain activity” (2006: 52, our translation). In addition to a question of techniques available or about to be made available, the manifest trace of epistemological optimism reveals the worldview that supports all his arguments and which, perhaps it is not too much to say, continues to be the basis of the scientific crusade, mixing Platonism and messianism, not without an aura of perfect rationality.

A few years after joining the *Collège de France*, in his book *Le code de la conscience*, Dehaene keeps debating the issue of the theoretical foundation of consciousness, practically in the same terms. Faced with the inevitable and empirical observation of the difference between brain processes and states of consciousness, neurosciences reveal their doctrinal dimension by giving up the only skeptical position par excellence, which would be a radical suspension of judgment regarding the ultimate foundation of the psyche. “Although neurosciences have empirically identified numerous correspondences between brain activity and mental life, a conceptual abyss constantly seems to separate the states of the brain and those of the spirit” (Dehaene 2009a: 206, our translation). So far, the phenomenological posture remains impeccable, but, in the end, the explanatory gap is admitted only at an operational level:

A simple observation of a systematic correlation between these two domains would not be enough. What we need is a theoretical framework that encompasses both phenomena, [and] a series of laws that explain, step by step, how the states of brain activity produce mental states (Dehaene 2009a: 206–207, our translation).

Similar to his inaugural class, the background posture remains steady, as it is not about thinking how mental states arise, but rather how they arise from brain activity. It is no surprise that dualism is automatically seen as an impasse, without any analysis of the impasses that the monist position also evokes. There is a process of naturalization of materialist monism, which makes it practically invisible, even under the analysis of critical reason. In this context, emergentism, which could be taken as a tribute to the experience, also ends up emerging as a metaphysical hypothesis whose function is to mask the impotence of the positive spirit in the face of the abyss between *psyché* and *soma*, which remains unchanged, despite all technical paraphernalia that surrounds it.

As much as the panorama drawn by Dehaene is, at the whim of contemporary sensibilities, that of a transposition of the boundaries between sciences, a nod to the multiple forms of theories of complexity, and also an invitation to overcome old but persistent dichotomies, the fact is that the background hierarchy largely overlaps with the platform of the good neighbor policy between knowledges. There is no place for “tight compartmentalization between biology and psychology” (Dehaene 2006: 13, our translation), as long as it is admitted that the cognitive function emerges from the nervous system.

There is no reason to admit this. There was none in Bergson’s time, and there is still none in our times, even though this idea is a kind of *obsessor spirit* in modern and contemporary thoughts, and has, directly

or indirectly, permeated even the depth psychology: sweeter or less sweet, materialism transpires between the lines of attempts to explain the origin of consciousness, or memory, or thought, based on physical facts. No matter how far we reach the interpretation of neuronal processes, thinking in terms of neural networks, synapses, contact barriers, and facilitations (Simanke 2023; Niro 2023), it will never be possible to explain, in continuistic terms, the passage from the quantitative dimension, specific to brain operations, to the qualitative aspects introduced through memory. No matter how many levels of complexity are inserted⁸ into the argument, the starting point is not anodyne, as can be seen in Stanislas Dehaene. If it is determined that the starting point is materialist, the entire argument is constructed under this guideline, and the arguments are folded along the way. The notion of the unconscious, as we saw before, is also captured in this circuit, giving rise to the possibility of thinking about a cerebral and not a psychological unconscious.

When resuming the problem of *psyché-soma* duality, in the 15th class of the metaphysics course, Bergson (2014: 400, our translation) concludes: "They will never make us understand how a movement of molecules can be an idea. The identification between things that have no relationship is absolutely unintelligible, no metaphysical system is obscure to such an extent". This surreptitious passage from the quantitative to the qualitative, present in all forms of materialist monism, is rejected by Bergson and exemplifies, in his argument, the

⁸ When debating the form of naturalism adopted by Freud, Simanke (2023: 272, our translation) adds that the author "makes it clear, in the *Project*, that a psychological theory needs at least three languages to be adequately formulated and substantiated: the language of physics (the 'mechanical point of view'), the language of biology (the 'biological point of view'), and the language of psychology itself". This is in line with what was stated by Dehaene (2006: 13, our translation) in his inaugural class, in the sense that "all levels of organization, from the molecule to social interactions, conspire to determine our mental functioning". This, however, still does not resolve the passage of the explanatory level. And, since it is about language, why would the language specific to psychology come last in enunciating the problem?

dogmatism of the scientific position, a dogmatism that absolutely erects the factitious unity of science, in its many materialist expressions – from eliminist reductionism to emergentism. This passage is present in Freud, but before him in other authors such as Cabanis (1757-1808) and Exner (1846-1926), according to an article recently published by Leonardo Niro (2023). Despite all the tensions that surrounded the debate on energy conservation and vital force, the monist perspective, in its varied masks, dragged mentalities with it, beyond specific debates, given the *positive spirit* predominant then and now. As Niro recalls, energy models were ubiquitous in psychological sciences, from the end of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century. This ubiquity can be extended to the *positive spirit* that permeated modern thought, as well as to the forms of materialism that are consolidating in the wake of scientific research and the trade of ideas.

If it were not for the consequences of this line of facts, this could be just another academic quarrel, in the wake of the quarrel of materialism, the quarrel of methods, or the *mechanical sphinx*, as Georges Duhamel (1933) says. The problem of changing order, however, has quite eloquent practical implications, not only in the reading of reality that emerges from this prestidigitation but also, and above all, because, when deeply inscribed in our culture as a legitimate epistemic operation, it ends up convincing us that this position would be the most obvious, the most evident; the *positive* position par excellence, from which the burden of proof is imposed on the other. Bergson does not give in to the seduction of consensus and, in *Fantômes de vivants et recherche psychique* ([1913] 2013), he suggests a reversal of the burden of proof which, in other words, refers to the problem of the orders of facts, psychological and physical:

if the facts, studied independently of any system, lead us, on

the contrary, to consider mental life as much broader than cerebral life, survival becomes so likely that the burden of proof will lie with those who deny it, much more than those who affirm it (Bergson 2013: 79, our translation).

This statement once again shifts the psychological fact problem, placing it back in the classical terms of the *psyché-soma difference* (Bartoš 2006), emphasizing that, despite the apparent erasure of this terminology, the underlying question remains and, we have seen, until nowadays. It is not about proposing a collective conversion to any panpsychism, but rather following the contours of the real to highlight the credulous attitude that is already being assumed, without necessarily realizing it, when operating the materialist worldview. In another conference, this one from 1904, entitled *Brain and thought: a philosophical illusion*, Bergson pointed out that the idea of equivalence between the psychic state and the cerebral state permeates *much of modern philosophy*, and that often, as was the case, in his understanding, of the adherence to psychophysiological parallelism, it was no longer a scientific rule but rather a metaphysical hypothesis: if we easily attribute the condemnation of being a metaphysics to dualism, materialist monism is attributed with much more resistance this *imperfection*; and such resistance, Bergson would still agree, is an operation of the unconscious fringe of the psyche, the finished manifestation of the unconscious metaphysics of itself and, if one accepts the proposition of Dwelshauvers, and also of Jung, the negation of psychology.

In his text *Psychic Energy*, from 1928, Jung points out:

A psychology that treats the psyche as an epiphenomenon would better call itself brain-psychology, and remain satisfied with the meagre results that such a psycho-physiology can

yield. The psyche deserves to be taken as a phenomenon in its own right; there are no grounds at all for regarding it as a mere epiphenomenon, dependent though it may be on the functioning of the brain. One would be as little justified in regarding life as an epiphenomenon of the chemistry of carbon compounds. (Jung [1928] 1981: 8).

This argument, repeated countless times by Jung throughout his work, and in various forms, also reverses the burden of proof, even though the idea of a *relative* autonomy of the psyche, an insistent highlight in his work, serves as a protection – insufficient and ineffective – to avoid accusations of being a spiritualist, or an *enlightened* person (Freud [1914] 1996).

The type of bond between the psyche and brain function remains imponderable. Highlighting, here, the relevance of analyzing the *psyché-soma* difference in its radicality only serves to emphasize a point of fracture in the monolithic discourse of materialist monism, which leads to various forms of attenuation or denial of the psychological fact, even when introducing the concept of the unconscious as a mediator between *psyché* and *soma*: in this kind of distant boundary between experience and speculation, the unconscious is also captured by strategies of spatialization, and, consequently, of reduction to the somatic dimension of the problem. Thus, emergentism and all the corollary of epistemological difficulties that accompany it are reinstated.

If monism is meaningless in psychology, this is because it reduces the psychological fact to a secondary phenomenon, and thus loses sight of the radicality of what the term autonomy means. The *relative autonomy* advanced by Jung is also a form of rationalist drift and occupies the space of property dualism, which is camouflaged under the modes of appropriation of psychic functioning.

When Bergson⁹, Dwelshauvers, and Jung point to the difficulties inherent to materialist monism in psychology, even with reticence and retreat, they reveal how much this perspective has spread in modern thought, to the point that we no longer see the strategies for naturalizing the psychological fact, as well as its subsumption to the materialist worldview, thereby erasing the dogmatic character of this ontological perspective.

Concerning the practical implications of this procedure, we are still far from understanding them, as the very visualization of this difficulty seems to still be covered by the nebulous cloak of instrumental reason. Or, to use the terms of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro ([2009] 2018), the consequences of our materialist Western worldview have not yet caused the necessary *intellectual disturbance* to become a problem.

⁹ The question of Bergson's monism/dualism/pluralism has already 'spilled a lot of ink' from his commentators – from the referential position of Deleuzian Bergsonism to more updated versions, carried out by, among others, Jankelevitch, Montebello (Paz Monteiro 2018). Although there are divergences regarding the place of each of these terms in Bergson's thought, there is a strong convergence not only in the fact that Bergson's thought is structured based on the dynamic unity of duration but also in the fact that this unity folds itself in multiple ways in reality; dualities being part of this manifestation. As Joël Dolbeault (2012) reminds us, Bergson assumes a dualist position, albeit with an unusual dualism, which cannot be reduced to stagnant elements, since duration is mobility by definition. Nor can monism be thought of in a vulgar way in Bergson, as Arnaud François (2013) states. Geovana da Paz Monteiro adds: "by defending the unity of duration, Bergson does not exclude the qualitative multiplicity that is characteristic of it" (2018: 93, our translation). This qualitative multiplicity, it is worth highlighting, is worked through countless dualities, including in his last work, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, from 1932. With this in mind, Deleuze's statement seems pertinent when stating that, although élan vital leads to the unity of duration, this does not occur without a moment in which "dualism is rediscovered, dominated and, in a certain way, engendered" ([1966] 1998: 96, our translation). If we do not consider these epistemic poles to be either substances or tendencies of an abstract unit, they present themselves as operators, or as a minimum phenomenological structure for managing reality. We can also say, with Arnaud François, that classical *dualism* is not the opposite of *monism*, it participates in it, as the consequent result of its antecedent. However, the author also states that "one cannot definitively understand anything about the Bergsonian problem of monism and dualism if we continue to place it in classical terms, that is, in terms of substance" (2013: 136, our translation).

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