



The Creative Mind

Henri Bergson , Mabelle L. Andison (Translator)

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Essay collection, sequel to Mind-Energy, including 1903's "An Introduction to Metaphysics."

The final published book by Nobel Prize-winning author and philosopher Henri Bergson (1859–1941), *La pensée et le mouvant* (translated here as *The Creative Mind*), is a masterly autobiography of his philosophical method. Through essays and lectures written between 1903 and 1923, Bergson retraces how and why he became a philosopher, and crafts a fascinating critique of philosophy itself. Until it leaves its false paths, he demonstrates, philosophy will remain only a wordy dialectic that surmounts false problems.

With masterful skill and intensity, Bergson shows that metaphysics and science must be rooted in experience for philosophy to become a genuine search for truth. And in the quest for unanswered questions, the spiritual dimension of human life and the importance of intuition must be emphasized. A source of inspiration for physicists as well as philosophers, Bergson's introduction to metaphysics reveals a philosophy that is always on the move, blending man's spiritual drive with his mastery of the material world.

The Creative Mind Details

Date : Published June 17th 2010 by Dover Publications (first published 1934)

ISBN : 9780486454399

Author : Henri Bergson , Mabelle L. Andison (Translator)

Format : Paperback 224 pages

Genre : Philosophy, Nonfiction, Metaphysics, Cultural, France

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From Reader Review The Creative Mind for online ebook

Alex Lee says

In this book, Bergson outlines the aesthetic intuition that characterizes his philosophy. Here Bergson grounds change as central to metaphysics, rather than some kind of ontological substance. It's not what he hasn't already said in other books, but this is his directed attempt to define exactly the role between intuition, change and concepts. Worth a look at, since this a directed refocusing of philosophy, memory and change.

What I do not get are some of the examples in the back of philosophers that Bergson admires. At the time of his writing perhaps this was relevant, but these examples are dated, and somewhat uninteresting to me. Oh well.

Christopher says

This is an unfortunate collection. Everything in it is essentially a restatement of the premises of the first introduction. In fact, it is nothing more than a compilation of various introductory essays written by Bergson. But, by providing a thorough overhead view of his thought and his concept of duration, it has made me feel as though I no longer have to bother with reading anything else by him. Taken by themselves (and only one!) the first introduction or the centerpiece of the book, "An Introduction to Metaphysics," would suffice. Everything else simply takes his formulations and moves them around. Which is ironic considering this is exactly what he complains about in philosophy - a sort of recomposition of dead concepts rather than an attainment of the plain of duration and artistic intuition. That Hegel is not mentioned once concerning some of the "brand new" ideas he has and that Plato's many discussions of the intuitive sight given Socrates by his "demon" are never acknowledged is really strange (omissions required if one is dedicated to denying the dialectical nature of philosophy - but of course, the dialectic cannot be suppressed and Bergson is repeatedly driven to use it). I'll skip anything else written by Bergson and read Deleuze's undoubtedly more interesting and idiosyncratic read of Bergson's thought. I would advise not reading this book through. Pick it up, read one of the two essays mentioned above, and move on.

Ryan says

Metaphysics is intuition

Tom says

I still shudder when I see this book on my bookshelf. Great ideas, if you are willing to sacrifice a lot of time rereading pages because you have no idea what you just read. A most unenjoyable read.

the gift says

070111: there is some beautiful, evocative, thoughtful writing in here, hence 4. but this is more a collection of essays or lectures rather than an argued work, though it is not hard to find bergsonian themes. this is probably not the best work to start. it helped to read guerlac before. interesting on pragmatism, i have never heard of ravaissou, but the continuing emphasis on intuition certainly bergson...

Marius says

Îmi plac filosofii care sunt clari și expliciți. Așadar îl așez pe Bergson alături de Schopenhauer sau Kierkegaard, Camus ori Sartre - foarte departe de obscuri ca Hegel sau Fichte.

Bergson este ideologul din spatele 'monstruoșității' de "În căutarea timpului pierdut" a lui Proust; am înțeles chiar că Bergson s-a căsătorit cu o verișoară a lui Proust.

Cele două introduceri la cartea de față rezumă ele singure aproape întreaga filosofie a lui Bergson. Am găsit în carte niște idei atât de interesante despre diferența dintre timp și durată, despre intuiție ca instrument de investigare a spiritului, despre memorie. Lucruri care-mi plac foarte mult. M-am plictisit de vechea filosofie cu "marele și micul", "unul și multiplul", "formă și substanță", "fenomen și lucru în sine" etc.

Ron Henderson says

A difficult book. I'm glad I read it, but much of it was forced reading. His ideas about time and the value of immediate experience are worthwhile, though. It is a useful counterpoint to a scientific skepticism that sees truth only in what can be measured and quantified. He sees intuition as a type of seeing from within that can lead one to a kind of truth that cannot be had by mere external observation.

Bergson gives us a creative universe that is not predetermined as a result of merely mechanistic functions. As a part of that universe, we have the chance to create. A new burst of creativity comes along when a person, in his own time and place, does something completely new and different, like Shakespeare creating Hamlet. It was not inevitable that Hamlet be written. It required a Shakespeare. Truth and reality is in a constant state of becoming that is far more subject to creative forces than it is to mechanistic ones.

I frankly don't understand his argument about duration. He seems to be saying each moment of time stands on its own, not having duration, and therefore never connecting with the next moment or event in an influential way. Therefore, we have the free will to point the next moment in any direction we want -- or something vaguely like that.

There may just be too much distance between his brilliant mind and my average one, but I still think he could do a better job of explaining his arguments in an understandable and less repetitive way. I find myself agreeing with the conclusions, but with only the foggiest notion of how he got there.

LuinGor says

Une lecture marquante bien qu'assez ardue. Certains passages étaient probablement tout à fait compréhensibles il y a un siècle mais sont plus obscurs aujourd'hui, ou réservés à de fins connaisseurs des grands philosophes du XIXème siècle.

Deux idées phares ressortent en tout cas :

- nous devons voir le mouvement comme une continuité fluide et non comme une succession de positions immobiles (chacune infiniment proche de la précédente)
- le réel de demain n'est pas contenu dans le champ des possibles d'aujourd'hui, mais c'est à partir du réel de demain (lorsqu'il sera avéré) que nous pourrons déduire le champ des possibles qui a permis ce réel => le réel crée le possible et pas le contraire

Évidemment il y a des répétitions et l'auteur tourne parfois longuement autour du pot, mais Bergson reste tout à fait actuel.

Mirco says

Toute vérité est une route tracée à travers la réalité.

Each truth is a path traced through reality.

HB

Reading Bergson's old french prose is not always a journey without sweat. Nor his frequent repetitions are easy to swallow. But, for the courageous reader, some gems lies scattered in this brilliant collection of essays: Bergson manages to turn upside down the unchallenged dogmas of western thoughts.

Possibility is less than reality? Wrong.

Eternity is more real than time? Wrong.

Movement is made up of static states? Wrong.

The list continues....So, if what you are after is genuine mind-expansion, you have no choices: read the old master, and enter the world of Living Time

Jacob Israel Chilton says

great intro to a brilliant philosopher.

Leonardo says

Ver Henry Bergson, "The Posible and the Real", en The Creative Mind, trad. Mabelle Andison (New York:

Philosophical Library, 1946), pp. 91-106. Ciertamente reconocemos la necesidad de insistir sobre los poderes creativos de la virtualidad, pero este discurso Bergsoniano nos resulta insuficiente en tanto también necesitamos insistir sobre la realidad del ser creado, su peso ontológico y las instituciones que estructuran al mundo, creando necesidad de la contingencia.