

Henri Bergson- Duration

Was a French philosopher in the first half of the 20th century. His theories dealt with intuition instead of science for understanding reality. He wrote *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. The essay uses the problem of free will to introduce his theory of Duration.

Bergson became aware that as soon as someone tries to measure a moment, its gone. For a person, time may speed up or slow down. So Bergson decided to explore the inner life of man, which is a kind of duration. Duration is indefinable and can only be shown indirectly through images.

He used duration is used as a defense of free will in a response to Immanuel Kant, who believed free will was only possible outside of time and space. Bergson said that free will is possible within duration where time resides. Nothing within a duration can be the cause of anything else within it. So that means determinism is impossible.

The first is of two spools, one unrolling to represent the flow of ageing, the other rolling up to represent the continuous growth of memory which he called consciousness. No two successive moments are identical, for the one will always contain the memory left by the other. Someone with no memory of consciousness can experience two identical moments because their memory is in a constant state of death and rebirth.

Plane of experience

A= event/incomprehensible

B=virtual recollection of the event