

Aspects of Psychologism

Tim Crane

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Aspects of Psychologism is a penetrating look into fundamental philosophical questions of consciousness, perception, and the experience we have of our mental lives. Psychologism, in Tim Crane's formulation, presents the mind as a single subject-matter to be investigated not only empirically and conceptually but also phenomenologically: through the systematic examination of consciousness and thought from the subject's point of view.

How should we think about the mind? Analytical philosophy tends to address this question by examining the language we use to talk about our minds, and thus translates our knowledge of consciousness into knowledge of the concepts which this language embodies. Psychologism rejects this approach. The philosophy of mind, Crane contends, has become too narrow in its purely conceptual focus on the logical and linguistic formulas that structure thought. We cannot assume that the categories needed to understand the mind correspond absolutely with such semantic categories. Crane's claim is that intentionality--the "aboutness" or "directedness" of the mind--is essential to all mental phenomena. He criticizes materialist doctrines about consciousness and defends the position that perception can represent the world in a non-conceptual, non-propositional way, opening up philosophy to a more realistic account of the mind's nature.



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