

Symposium

Is Intentionality Real Enough?

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Abstract According to Crane intentionality is nothing less than the mark of the mental. Nonetheless, there are many issues raised by this concept, beginning with the problem of non-existent *relata*. In this comment-article I discuss the concept of intentionality in its generality, trying to state its ontological status and to assess its explanatory dispensability. In particular, I focus on the argument, addressed by Crane, whereby Wittgenstein eliminates intentionality, characterizing it as a grammatical fiction, a pseudo-entity created by the grammar of the language of mental states ascriptions. I will argue that: (1) although Crane's specific argument against Wittgenstein is not conclusive, Wittgenstein's linguistic strategy does not work; and yet (2) we should not be committed to a robust realist (that is, ontologically strong) account of intentionality.

KEYWORDS: Intentionality; Ludwig Wittgenstein; Mark of the Mental; Ontological Commitment; Realism/Anti-realism

Riassunto *L'intenzionalità è sufficientemente reale?* – Il concetto di intenzionalità è l'autentico cuore della filosofia di Tim Crane, secondo il quale l'intenzionalità è niente di meno che il marchio del mentale. Nondimeno, vi sono diversi noti problemi sollevati da questo concetto (a cominciare dalla questione della relazione a non-esistenti). In questo articolo-commento discuto il concetto di intenzionalità nelle sue linee generali cercando, da un lato, di determinarne lo statuto ontologico e, dall'altro, di valutarne la dispensabilità esplicativa. Mi concentro in particolare sull'argomento, discusso da Crane, con cui Wittgenstein elimina l'intenzionalità, caratterizzandola come una finzione grammaticale, una pseudo-entità creata della grammatica del linguaggio con cui attribuiamo stati mentali. Sosterrò che: (1) sebbene lo specifico argomento di Crane non sia conclusivo, la strategia "linguistica" di Wittgenstein non funziona e tuttavia (2) non dovremmo indulgere a una concezione realista "robusta" (ontologicamente forte) dell'intenzionalità.
PAROLE CHIAVE: Intenzionalità; Ludwig Wittgenstein; Marchio del mentale; Impegno ontologico; Realismo/Anti-realismo



DESPITE THE SLIGHTLY MISLEADING TITLE,¹ *Aspects of Psychologism* is essentially a sort of philosophical symphony on the theme of intentionality. It is a comprehensive picture

of mental facts centered on the idea that intentionality is the mark of the mental: all mental facts are intentional facts. The result is a truly impressive performance, given Crane's

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extraordinary clarity, the force of his arguments, and the depth of his insights.

I suppose that many would agree that, at least *prima facie*, the major problem faced by Crane's overall picture is the thesis that qualia, including feelings and moods, are intentional properties. On this point Crane clearly bears the burden of proof, and providing a convincing argument is an uphill task. However, since I have already had the opportunity, about ten years ago, of being a discussant of Crane on the problem of qualia, and it is very likely that this problem will be addressed by other commentators, I have decided to focus on a different, in a way more fundamental, matter.

This comment article is not so much a criticism, as, rather, a collection of reflections on the concept that occupies centre stage in *Aspects of Psychologism*: intentionality. My comment starts from a certain discomfort I feel when I try to figure out what my own view of intentionality is (though I hope I am not alone in this).

On the one hand, intentionality seems to be a notion we can hardly do without and, at least, of some use in a variety of explanatory contexts. On the other hand, the concept of intentionality faces such difficult problems that forgoing it could seem an attractive option. I have often heard my teacher and friend Diego Marconi – who has of course had a strong philosophical influence on me – saying that intentionality does not exist, being just a philosophical “cramp”. Thus, there seems to be an irremediable conflict on quite an important topic between two philosophers I admire enormously.

How can I get out of the trouble? Should I take sides or, perhaps, show that the two positions can be reconciled?

My final verdict will be that the view according to which intentionality is a concept without an object (i.e., there is nothing in the world to which, properly speaking, the concept applies – which is the view I am inclined to) is closer to Crane's own picture than it might seem to be at first glance.

The article divides into two sections: the first is specifically dedicated to the problems of the nature and existence of intentionality; in the second I seek to locate Crane's notion of psychologism relative to the metaphysical options on intentionality.

■ Can intentionality be explained away?

In the essay *Wittgenstein and Intentionality*, Crane offers a very interesting argument against Wittgenstein's effort to explain away intentionality.

In brief, the argument consists in showing that Wittgenstein's eliminative attitude towards intentionality is unable to account for the perspectivalness of mental states, their having an “aspectual shape”. Indeed, according to Crane, mental phenomena «are unified around the idea of the subject having a point of view on things».² Hence, we may say that, according to Crane, perspectivalness is necessarily implied by intentionality – the former considered as a primitive, intuitive notion – but there is no room for perspectivalness in Wittgenstein's account.

In the light of this argument, I will discuss: (i) whether Wittgenstein's attempt of explaining away intentionality succeeds; and (ii) what the ontological status of intentionality is: to what extent is Crane committed to a strongly realist account of intentionality? I start by setting out Crane's argument against Wittgenstein in detail.

As Crane correctly points out, Wittgenstein never talks about intentionality. However, he discusses a problem that could be labelled – in non-Wittgensteinian language – as a problem about intentionality. It is the problem of the nature of the relation between thought and reality.³ This problem can be expressed briefly in the question: what makes it possible for a thought to be about an object or a state of things? What, for instance, makes a thought of a cat a thought of that cat? And what makes the thought that it is raining a thought about the fact that it is raining? (Or, in general, what is the relation

between a thought and its truth-maker?) How on earth can thought “reach out to” reality?

Wittgenstein’s answer to these questions is – as usual in his philosophy – actually a *dissolution* of the problem: nothing, strictly speaking, can make a thought capable of reaching out to reality. Indeed, there is no metaphysical relation between thought and reality, yet there is an internal nexus between a thought and what the thought is about inasmuch as it is part of the “grammar” of mental terms that thoughts and other mental states necessarily have objects. In other words, according to Wittgenstein, the existence of a relation between mental states and their objects is not a contingent fact; the point is rather that we cannot conceive of a mental state without an object, and this gives us the wrong impression of the existence of an external relation. Let me clarify the point by an example.

Take the sentence “I expect he’ll come in”.⁴ What is the nexus or relationship between the expectation and what is expected? Of course, what is expected cannot be a *part* of the expectation, for two reasons. First, what is expected could not happen (could never come into existence), whereas the expectation exists. Second, supposing that an expectation is a mental entity, what is expected belongs to the domain of reality, not to the mental realm (what is expected is not “in the head” or in any other “mental space” whatsoever). This is even clearer in another example from Wittgenstein:⁵ if I see someone pointing a gun, I could say that I’m expecting a bang: is then the bang a part of my expectation? Of course not. As is presumably suggested in the somewhat cryptic paragraph 445 of *Investigations*, Wittgenstein’s point is that conceiving of the connection between an alleged mental state (such as an expectation, an intention, a desire, a belief, ...) and its object⁶ on the model of a relationship between the mental state and an extralinguistic entity is wrong, not to say senseless. As Crane points out, Wittgenstein’s (dis)solution consists in the suggestion that

we find the “contact” between expecta-

tion and fulfillment in the fact that we use the same words (“he’ll come in”) as an expression of what we expect and as a description of what fulfills it. If we look at how actually we use the language of expectation (the grammar of “expect”) then our puzzlement should be dispelled.⁷

This is what Crane calls a “grammatical” account of intentionality. The idea is that it is *in language* that thoughts are about reality; it is part of our use of the term “thought” that it is about reality. The alleged relations between states of mind and their fulfillment conditions are merely reflections of grammatical propositions – rules of language.⁸ More specifically, knowing the use of mental terms (or being able to understand mental terms) is knowing that, in order to talk about a particular mental state, one must specify its object; for instance, if one wants to speak about a particular belief, the belief that *p*, he will use the very same sentence he would use to specify what makes true the belief: the sentence “*p*.”

According to Crane, this is not a solution (nor, for that matter, a dissolution), for the following reason. An expectation can be fulfilled in a variety of ways: there are different events that can make the expectation satisfied. For instance, my expectation that the postman will bring my mail this morning is fulfilled either by the event that Mr. Smith (a postman) will bring the mail this morning or by the event that Mr. Jones (another postman) will bring the mail this morning. This is a familiar story: the truth conditions of a proposition are somehow open-ended, since many different facts (situations, events) can make the proposition true. A somewhat puzzling consequence results: my expectation can be fulfilled by an event that, in a certain sense, I did not expect to happen!⁹ if I did not know that Mr. Jones is a postman, I could not use the sentence “Mr. Jones will bring the mail this morning” as a description of the fulfilling event, and I would not recognize this event as a fulfillment of my expectation.

It could be replied that nothing in Witt-

Wittgenstein's account precludes there being several descriptions of the expectation corresponding to different fulfilling events. But note that it is not even required that there be different fulfillment events: the puzzling consequence also holds if there are different (say, two) descriptions of one and the same event fulfilling an expectation, but the subject recognizes the event as a fulfillment of his expectation *under only one of the two descriptions*: my expectation that p can be fulfilled by the event q , where, unbeknownst to me, p and q are different descriptions of one and the same event. Wittgenstein's analysis is unable to account for this possibility, since he assumes that the expectation and its object have to be described *by one and the same sentence*. There is no room for perspectivalness about what is expected.

Instead, Crane continues, we should distinguish between what ("objectively", as a matter of fact) fulfills the expectation – let us call it "the object of the expectation" – and how subjects think of or would describe this object. And the expression "what is expected" should better be used to denote the way subjects think about the object of their expectation, rather than the object itself.¹⁰ Since the way the object is thought about in the expectation is a *representation*, Crane's own solution of the problem is a representational account, according to which a thought is about something insofar as it *represents* that thing in a certain way.

In short, the argument runs as follows: in order to account for the relation between language and reality, the notion of representation is required, since (1) it is not possible to think about something without thinking about it under a certain perspective, or way of thinking; and (2) thinking of something under a certain perspective amounts to representing that thing. The argument succeeds against the Wittgensteinian linguistic account to the extent that the circumstances expressed by (1) and (2) are not matters of language – and indeed so it seems to be at least *prima facie*.

As I anticipated above, my discussion of this argument focuses on two separate questions. First I discuss whether Crane's argument succeeds, or, instead, Wittgenstein's linguistic account of intentionality works. Then I address the issue of the ontological status of intentionality, discussing what Crane's ontological commitments regarding intentionality are.

■ Does Wittgenstein's eliminative treatment of intentionality succeed?

Crane ascribes to Wittgenstein the (apparently false) thesis that «you can *only* describe the object of the expectation in the way it is specified in the description of the expectation itself».¹¹ However, the textual evidence for this ascription is thin, and it seems to me a bit uncharitable to ascribe it (at least as it stands) to Wittgenstein. It is true that Wittgenstein offers a couple of examples in which the expectation and what is expected are described in the same way, but this could merely be a consequence of the fact that using the same description is quite natural and the most typical case.

This is crucial, since, if Wittgenstein admits the possibility that two subjects can use different phrases to describe an expectation and what fulfills it – in general, different phrases to describe a mental state and its object –, then his account turns out to be at least compatible with perspectivalness. Indeed, it could be the case that my expectation that p is satisfied by the event q (with " p " extensionally identical to " q "), but I do not recognize q as a fulfillment of my expectation.

In other words, it seems to me that Crane *identifies* Wittgenstein's (dis)solution of one among the problems of intentionality – the problem of accounting for the apparent fact that mental states and their objects are in touch – with the thesis that one and the same linguistic description must be applied to both a mental state and its object. This seems to me a too strong requirement on a linguistic treatment of intentionality.

What a linguistic treatment requires, after

all, is that the source of our propensity to regard intentionality as a metaphysical relation between thought and reality is in the language; and, in order to get that, it is enough, for instance, to claim that we can entertain thoughts only provided that we have mastery of a language; and there are many places in the later Wittgenstein that suggest he would endorse this claim.

Arguably, perspectivalness can be explained in linguistic terms: very roughly, it is enough to conceive of different ways of thinking as different linguistic descriptions. I can think of an object or state of things this way rather than that way only insofar as I use different linguistic descriptions. Troubles with perspectivalness arise, rather, from purely truth-conditional views of meaning (or content), which of course do not have the resources to account for the subject's point of view, as the failure of compositionality in epistemic contexts has shown *ad abundantiam*.

More generally, it is anti-psychologism about semantics (i.e., the thesis that no mental factor whatsoever is relevant to the theory of meaning) that is the source of the problem with perspectivalness – and *this* could be a reason to think that Wittgenstein's strategy, after all, does not work.

In sum, I do not think that Crane's attack on Wittgenstein is conclusive, yet it is far from clear that the linguistic eliminative account of intentionality is correct, as now I explain.

It could be argued that the above-discussed Wittgensteinian strategy is motivated by two worries. On the one hand there is an anti-metaphysical worry: do not reify metaphysically suspect entities (such as the intentionality relation itself). On the other hand, an explanatory worry: do not confuse different levels of explanation. In short, do not conflate reasons and causes –normative facts with natural facts. Against this background, intentionality is explained away in two steps: first, mental contents are reduced to linguistic meanings; second, meanings are "eliminated" in favour of linguistic uses. Does this strategy work in all cases?

Perhaps Alberto Voltolini's distinction between reference intentionality and content intentionality¹² can be of some help here.¹³ The former is the case of a thought about an ordinary object. For instance, when I'm thinking of Laura's cat, I have a thought of that cat. The latter is the case of a propositional thought (thinking that *p*). Now, it could be argued that, in order to have a propositional thought, mastery of a language is required; up to the point, perhaps, that thinking that *p* is just a nonverbal articulation of a sentence.

This is exactly the later Wittgenstein's view, according to which for a thought to have content depends on a sentence's having meaning. But meaning is not a *thing*, not even a logical object. Hence, as we said above, intentionality is reduced to the ability to use a sentence appropriately, or, from a slightly different point of view, to the assertibility conditions of a sentence. The metaphysical worry is thus appeased: no metaphysical relation between thought and reality (or, for that matter, between language and reality) is involved. As to the explanatory worry, the proposed solution puts clearly thought into the normative domain of reasons, given that language is, according to Wittgenstein, intrinsically normative. Having a certain thought is a question of mastering (in language) certain normative connections.

However, even if one were ready to buy all this, one could still reject the idea that reference intentionality requires a language. Even a baby or an animal can think of an object, at least in the sense of having the object in their mind. If this remark is correct, there seems to be, after all, a kind of intentionality that can hardly be "reduced" to linguistic facts (first step) and then "explained away" (second step) in terms of referential uses.

If one makes the first step, the second will follow easily; but the first step is far from being justified. In fact, first, my ability to think of a cat seems to depend fundamentally on perception; and, second, since perceptual states are themselves intentional states, there

are at least some mental states whose intentionality does not depend on language.¹⁴ In this light, Crane's proposal is on the right track. Could we then conclude that intentionality is a *substantive* property, and indeed the most important mental property, what defines the mental realm? Or, in other words, could we say that intentionality exists in a full-blooded sense?

■ What is the ontological status of intentionality?

As we saw above, Crane's proposal is based on the idea that mental states can be about reality (can reach out to the world) insofar as they *represent* reality: the relation between the mind and world is a representational one. It is not entirely clear to what extent this is enlightening: in a sense, to say that mental states are representations is just another way of saying that mental states are intentional states.¹⁵ Yet, I think there is something in Crane's suggestion: to say that the world is present in thought *only as represented* accounts for the capacity of thought to "be in touch" with the world, while being at the same time fully distinct from it – a virtual presence, we might say.

Moreover the notion of representation fits well with the possibility that intentional objects do not really exist: it is possible to represent an "object" *o* or to represent that it is the case that *p* even if *o* does not exist, or it is not the case that *p*. To be sure, this does not solve the hardest problem of intentionality: how there can be a relation with non-existent objects, and what non-existent objects are, if they are anything. I will not discuss this latter issue here, since Crane addresses it in another book;¹⁶ yet there are some points that need to be considered because they are relevant to what I am concerned with here, the ontological status of intentionality.

Crane argues, convincingly, that intentional objects are *not* things of a certain ontological kind; rather, something only "becomes" intentional as it is thought. In other

words, nothing is an intentional object as such: «There can be no substantial conception of intentional object [...] Intentional objects, considered as such, have no nature».¹⁷ From this it does not follow that intentionality is not substantive; nevertheless, the possibility that an intentional object can be a non-existent object (whatever this exactly means) seems to imply that, strictly speaking, intentionality is not a relation, since nothing can be a relation without a *relatum*; and representation cannot be a relation either, for the very same reason.

So, what is it? A sensible suggestion is that, as there is no nature of being intentional, so intentionality has no metaphysical reality. But then to what extent should we take seriously the language of intentionality? Is Crane a genuine realist about intentionality?

In a certain sense, when Crane claims that mental states are intentional states, i.e., mental states have directedness and aspectual shape, he is expressing a couple of platitudes in philosophical terminology. Indeed, how on earth could one deny that mental states have objects, and that in a mental state an object is presented under a certain aspect or perspective? And yet, there might be nothing substantial underlying these philosophical platitudes: to say that mental states are intentional could be just a way of describing mental states. In order to assess this hypothesis, we need to clarify what is required by a substantive notion of intentionality.

It seems to me that the clearest way to defend a robust, substantive conception of intentionality consists in endorsing the standard version of intentional realism, the thesis according to which mental states are realized by computational (and ultimately cerebral) states. Common-sense mental states are representational states to the extent that their content is carried by certain subpersonal informational structures (such as the Fodorean language of thought, to take just one example). In other words, the easiest way to have "real" or substantive intentionality consists in taking intentionality as a natural property.¹⁸

Standard (e.g. *à la* Fodor) intentional realism, however, faces well-known difficulties. Familiar considerations from normativity (and holism) militate against it. Even discounting these considerations, intentional realism requires the existence of semantically transparent representations in the mind/brain, that is, mental (and ultimately cerebral) structures corresponding to sentences in a natural language or (more likely) in a logical language.

Now, when I raise doubts about the claim that intentionality is a substantive property, exactly what I mean is that you will hardly find in the head of a person who, e.g., believes that *p* a precise computational (or neuronal) correlate of the sentence “*p*” – what I called above “a semantically transparent representation”. Note that this is not a profession of anti-naturalism. It is a point that philosophers like Dennett or Quine would easily acknowledge.

What would Crane say on this point? Could he accept that intentionality is just a useful *concept* (as opposed to property) allowing us to account for familiar facts about rational explanation of behaviour and like? I think this question has to be answered in the negative, mainly because in this way he would not be able to vindicate the thesis that intentionality is the mark of the mental. At most, he could still defend Brentano’s thesis, but at the price of “de-ontologizing” even the category of the mental (in the sense that the mental turns out to be not a natural kind, but depends rather on certain conventional assumptions).

As far as I can tell, Crane does not take a definite stance in *Aspects of Psychologism*. His view seems to be more at home with standard intentional realism, yet at the same time he rejects a too metaphysically demanding theory of intentionality: «We should not assume that the “joints” of mental reality correspond to the distinctions made out in our ascriptions».¹⁹ Moreover, to the extent that standard intentional realism presupposes physicalism, which Crane clearly rejects,²⁰ it would be at the very least incautious to regard him as an outright realist.

My tentative conclusion is that Crane is a mild realist about intentionality. He takes seriously the language of intentionality, which is an explication of the common-sense view of mental phenomena. Intentionality is the property (possessed by mental states) of having a representational content.

However, this property, far from being a “real” feature of mental representations, physically realized in some way in our heads, should rather to be considered as a highly abstract property (comparable, but *not identical*, to the possession of truth conditions). I wonder to what extent this can be regarded as different from saying that intentionality is just an explanatorily useful concept, not a genuine “real” property. Intentional properties are *abstracta*, not *illata*. The strong emphasis on philosophical psychology and conceptual analysis of intentionality overshadow the mild character of his intentional realism.

In the following section, I relate this picture to the question of psychologism.

■ On the importance of being psychologists

Several kinds of psychologism are mentioned in *Aspects of Psychologism*. Crane is primarily interested in psychologism about psychology, defined as «the view that the study of mind should not be a purely conceptual investigation».²¹

We can make sense of this (admittedly unobvious) definition by looking at the history of analytic philosophy: historically, being committed to a conception of philosophy as conceptual analysis – specifically in the case of the mental domain – involves (at least *de facto*, if not *de jure*) a view of mental states as behavioural dispositions. In other words, representationalism is banned for those authors who endorse a view of philosophy as conceptual analysis; and anti-psychologism consists precisely in the rejection of representations (as is paradigmatically the case with Wittgenstein and Ryle).

In sum, on Crane’s reconstruction of the history of philosophical psychology, the so-

called cognitive turn is, at the same time, the rejection of the conception of philosophy as conceptual analysis, and the rejection of the existence of a *conceptual* relation between mental states and behavior.²² Mental states are instead tokens (=mental particulars) that *cause* behaviour. Cognitivism is a psychological psychology whereas logical behaviorism was an anti-psychological psychology; but anti-psychologism about psychology did not die along with behaviourism – and this makes Crane’s psychological investigation philosophically significant and worth to pursue.

Against this background, what Crane is specifically interested in is psychologism about intentionality. Psychologism about intentionality is a negative thesis: it is the denial of the claim that intentionality should be understood solely in semantic terms. Crane wants to defend psychologism about intentionality. I would like to make just a couple of remarks on this matter.

I start from an argument Crane offers against anti-psychologism about intentionality. According to Crane, anti-psychologism about intentionality amounts to saying that there is only one intentional property of a mental state, its intentional content. By contrast, Crane argues that even the *mode* of the mental state, that is, the kind of mental state (belief, rather than desire, perceptual experience etc.), is an intentional property.

Crane takes account of and dismisses the typical objection that comes to mind, according to which the mode or kind of mental state is the *vehicle* of the content, and not the content. Indeed, from a slightly different point of view, to say that the mode of a mental state is an intentional property is like saying that a string of letters – a word conceived as a syntactic object – is a semantic property. This seems to be quite strange since the syntactical characterization of a word is exactly what remains once its meaning has been subtracted.

How, then, does Crane deal with this objection? He replies that there is no distinction between vehicle and content that is neutral between psychologism and anti-psycholo-

gism. In other words, drawing the distinction between vehicle and content in terms of the distinction between syntax and semantics already presupposes an anti-psychological attitude. Arguably, however, there are further independent reasons for drawing the distinction in this way. If these reasons were compelling, one could say, so much the worse for psychologism.

Yet, it seems to me that Crane can resist this criticism in the following way. The core of Crane’s psychologism about intentionality is arguably the thesis according to which the intentional content is not only determined by the correctness conditions of the mental state, but also by the way things *seem* to the subject.

We could express the same point by saying that what has been called by many authors the “*phenomenal character*” of a mental state is a component of (i.e., partly constitutes or determines) the intentional content. It is hard to give an argument to this effect – much seems to depend on *intuitions* about what a mental content is – but this thesis strikes me as quite plausible, at least on an intuitive characterization of *some* mental states, for instance perceptual experiences.

In the light of this, the thesis that the mode of a mental state is an intentional property becomes clearer and more plausible: mode determines phenomenal character (for instance, seeing is subjectively or phenomenally different from hearing and from visualizing), which, in turn, determines intentional content. Problems arise, rather, with the alleged directedness of moods and feelings. Yet, as I said at the beginning, this is another story.

Notes

¹ Of course, Crane explains very clearly why he chose this title: what is the relation between psychologism and intentionality and, above all, what is psychologism about intentionality. Yet what one expects from a reading of just the title is a different subject matter. I have some words to say about Crane’s psychologism in the second section.

² T. CRANE, *Aspects of Psychologism*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA) 2014, p. 89.

³ It is worth pointing out that this does not mean that Crane takes intentionality to be a relation between thought and reality. It cannot be so, because there are cases in which thoughts are about non-existent objects. Such thoughts are nonetheless intentional (more on this below).

⁴ See L. WITTGENSTEIN, *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), translated by G.E.M. ANSCOMBE, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1958, § 444.

⁵ *Ivi*, § 442.

⁶ I'm using "object" to refer to what is expected, what is desired, what is believed, etc. (what fulfills or satisfies the attitude). At least in some cases, the term "content" seems to be more suitable for this purpose. However, for the moment I prefer not using the term "content", since it is too much theory-laden: it seems to commit us from the start to a realist view of intentionality.

⁷ T. CRANE, *Aspects of Psychologism*, cit., p. 50.

⁸ *Ivi*, p. 51.

⁹ *Ivi*, p. 55.

¹⁰ Here we can see Crane's *psychologism* at work: the objects of mental states are to be individuated from the perspective of the subjects.

¹¹ T. CRANE, *Aspects of Psychologism*, cit., p. 55 - italics added.

¹² See A. VOLTOLINI, *Was Wittgenstein Wrong about Intentionality?*, in: P. FRASCOLLA, D. MARCONI, A. VOLTOLINI (eds.), *Wittgenstein: Minds, Meaning and Metaphilosophy*, Palgrave, London 2010, pp. 67-81; A. VOLTOLINI, C. CALABI, *I problemi dell'intenzionalità*, Einaudi, Turin 2009, pp. 3-17.

¹³ Crane makes use of this distinction, but does not ascribe it much importance insofar as, in his view, even what Voltolini calls "reference intentionality" is directed to a content. This slight disagreement is

not relevant to what I am going to say.

¹⁴ Nevertheless someone could still argue that thoughts always have a propositional content. However, I take it for granted that perceptual experience (or at least some perceptual experiences) has a non-conceptual (or non-propositional) content.

¹⁵ See T. CRANE, *Intentional Objects*, in: T. CRANE, *Aspects of Psychologism*, cit., pp. 111-123.

¹⁶ See T. CRANE, *The Objects of Thought*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013.

¹⁷ T. CRANE, *Aspects of Psychologism*, cit., p. 116. From the point of view of solving what I called above "the hardest problem of intentionality", this leaves us where we were: to say that an object is intentional only when it is thought amounts to saying that a (possibly non-existent) object is intentional just in case it is an object of thought, a point that Crane definitely acknowledges in the essay *Intentional Objects* (see *supra*, fn. 15).

¹⁸ To say that intentionality is natural amounts to saying that mental states are identical to, or at least supervene on, computational states (in the standard version of intentional realism). Arguably, however, the notion of supervenience is too weak to allow intentionality to be a natural property. Indeed many evaluative properties supervene on physical properties, but they can hardly be regarded as natural properties.

¹⁹ T. CRANE, *Aspects of Psychologism*, cit., p. 17.

²⁰ *Ivi*, pp. 257-315; see also T. CRANE, *Elements of Mind*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001.

²¹ *Ivi*, pp. 3-4.

²² That is, of the idea that «connections between psychological phenomena and (say) their behavioral manifestations are in a certain way not contingent» (*ivi*, p. 3).