

Psychosymbiosis

An Introduction

As far as I have been able to determine, the term "psychosymbiosis" has not been used before, so I am coining it for use in describing a meta-theoretical approach to psychology:-

Psychosymbiosis - Individual mind as part of a system stretching over space-time.

As with any new word or label its reason and purpose is to facilitate discussion that otherwise would be difficult.

History

In the headstrong rush of modernism after the Industrial Revolution, the allegorical nature of the writings of prior knowledge came to be seen as childish and risible. While they appeared simplistic and ignorant, they were complex and profound and losing them has meant the loss of the understanding they contained. Independent mind, the current foundational concept for modern psychology, is a creation of modernism, an appropriation of the ancient concept of "psyche" - which originally meant soul or breath. It seems to me that this application of empiricism to the psyche has led to the absence of a coherent conceptual foundation in modern psychology.

Premises

In contrast to the concept of independent mind, the following four premises seem to me to show that our psyche is dependent, both for its existence in the moment and its development across time, on its environment.

1

The transitions and transformations of our persona, namely the personal non-physical characteristics and attributes by which each of us can be identified, stand in contrast to our continuing and continuous sense of the "Unchanging-I".

2

We know that our inherited genetic makeup only accounts for the building blocks that our psyche is developed from and that it is our environment, both before and after birth, that shapes it across time.

3

We know, that in the absence of the feedback of others, we increasingly turn inwards until we pass across the boundary of madness. Solitary isolation is classed as a torture and babies can die without such feedback.

4

Our psyche cannot be identified. It can only be expressed, and it can only be known via its expression, either that of others or our own. As with any other, its expression is contingent upon the "audience" for which it is intended, and the language and culture in which it is made.

Conclusion

Our psyche individually, and also collectively - as expressed in the group-psyche of "culture", is formed out of and moulded by its environment. It creates both the significance of our environment and also what we understand by its feedback on our actions and existence.

Our individual psyche exists as part of a system, like a neuron in our brain, in a symbiotic relationship with the psyche of others; our social group; our culture(s); and our general environment.

I hope that this concept of psychosymbiosis will help the development of understandings of both personal and social issues, and would be grateful for your comments.

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