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«Herbart's theory of the categories and the reformation of Kant's deduction»

Abstract

Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776–1841), who held Immanuel Kant's chair in Königsberg in 1809–1833, envisaged realism as the true development of the Kantian philosophy, in opposition to German idealism. In his approach, Kant's critical philosophy is revised and combined with psychology, which is itself understood in a new scientific key. Examining Herbart's theory of the categories means, firstly, to question his reformation of Kant's critical philosophy and, secondly, to understand the positive circularity that, in Herbart's system, holds between philosophy (and especially general metaphysics) and psychology. This report focuses on the core aspects of Herbart's theory of the categories so as to shed light on Herbart's elimination of the transcendental and the philosophical import of his establishment of scientific psychology from a realist perspective.