

What is at stake for Russell in espousing logicism? Peter Hylton has argued that Russell's motivations are narrowly metaphysical. He maintains that for Russell in the early years of the twentieth century "logicism was the basis for a complex argument against idealism, of both the Kantian and the non-Kantian varieties." In particular, Russell was interested in refuting certain Idealist views on the nature of truth. By contrast, I argue that Russell's aims are chiefly epistemological and mathematical in nature. Russell uses logicism to give an account of the character of mathematics and of mathematical knowledge that is compatible with what he takes to be the uncontroversial status of this science as true, certain and exact.