

The Mind OF A Mnemonist



A LITTLE
BOOK
ABOUT A
VAST
MEMORY

A. R. LURIA

WITH A NEW FOREWORD BY

Jerome S. Bruner

Crown Publishing

The Mind of a Mnemonist - A Little Book about a Vast Memory

Aleksandr Luria, Lynn Solotaroff, Jerome Bruner

A distinguished Soviet psychologist's study of a young man who was discovered to have a literally limitless memory and eventually became a professional mnemonist. Experiments and interviews over the years showed that his memory was based on synesthesia (turning sounds into vivid visual imagery), that he could forget anything only by an act of will, that he solved problems in a peculiar crablike fashion that worked, and that he was handicapped intellectually because he could not make discriminations, and because every abstraction and idea immediately dissolved into an image for him. It is all fascinating and delightful. (New Yorker)

Luria's essay is a model of lucid presentation and is an altogether convincing description of a man whose whole personality and fate was conditioned by an intellectual idiosyncrasy. (Times Literary Supplement)

A compassionate and vivid portrait. (Los Angeles Times Book Review)

A welcome re-issue of an English translation of Alexander Luria's famous case-history of hypermnestic man. The study remains the classic paradigm of what Luria called 'romantic science,' a genre characterized by individual portraiture based on an assessment of operative psychological processes. The opening section analyses in some detail the subject's extraordinary capacity for recall and demonstrates the association between the persistence of iconic memory and a highly developed synaesthesia. The remainder of the book deals with the subject's construction of the world, his mental strengths and weaknesses, his control of behaviour and his personality. The result is a contribution to literature as well as to science. (Psychological Medicine)