The Philosophy of Karl Popper

Karl Popper is one of the greatest and most influential philosophers of the twentieth century. Perhaps his greatest book, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, sets out his epistemology of critical rationalism, while his most famous book, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, applies the principles of critical rationalism to social philosophy.

Herbert Keuth’s book (first published in German in 2000) is a systematic exposition of Popper’s philosophy covering, in Part I, the philosophy of science; in Part II, the social philosophy; and in Part III, the later metaphysics, in particular the theses proposed by Popper to solve the indeterminism/determinism and mind/body problems, and the famous idea of a third world of objective thought contents.

This book is more comprehensive than any current introduction to Popper. Owing to its perspicuous structure and lucid exposition, it could be used in courses in both the philosophy of science and the philosophy of social science.

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The Philosophy of Karl Popper

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To Marianne
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Abbreviations

BJPS  The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science
CP   Peirce, Collected Papers
CPR  Kant, Critique of Pure Reason
EHU  Hume, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding
EPW  Enzyklopädie Philosophie und Wissenschaftstheorie
HWP  Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie
PI   Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations
PKP  Schilpp, The Philosophy of Karl Popper
Proleg. Kant, Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Present Itself as a Science

Works of Karl Popper

A      Intellectual Autobiography
CR     Conjectures and Refutations
EH     Das Elend des Historizismus
GPE    Die beiden Grundprobleme der Erkenntnistheorie
KBMP   Knowledge and the Body-Mind Problem
LdF    Logik der Forschung
LP     Alles Leben ist Problemlösen
LSD    The Logic of Scientific Discovery
OG     Die offene Gesellschaft und ihre Feinde
OK     Objective Knowledge
OS     The Open Society and Its Enemies
OU     The Open Universe
PH     The Poverty of Historicism
List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QTSP</td>
<td>Quantum Theory and the Schism in Physics</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAS</td>
<td>Realism and the Aim of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>A World of Propensities</td>
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Preface

In 2000, the German version of the present book, *Die Philosophie Karl Poppers*, was published by Mohr Siebeck in Tübingen. I have tried to provide a translation that is as close to the original as possible. A few minor errors, mostly bibliographical, have been corrected, and summaries have been omitted.

In Chapter 7, “Verisimilitude,” the original section 7.24, on attempts to rehabilitate Popper’s comparative definition of verisimilitude, has been reduced to a single paragraph at the end of section 7.23, because in the meantime the concept of “relevant consequence,” which was central in section 7.24, has been refined by its authors. In section 15.32, four paragraphs on Carnap’s methodological solipsism have been reduced to a very short paragraph, both because they are not essential to my argument and because it proved too difficult to provide an adequate translation of certain (more or less) phenomenalistic statements into English. The bibliography now includes more English and fewer German titles.

Many of the texts from which I quoted in the German original have been translated into English. Wherever possible, I now quote from the English editions. Unfortunately, a number of texts, even Popper’s *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Erkenntnistheorie,* are not (yet) available in English. Moreover, some of the translations were inaccessible to me. Thus I have had to provide some translations myself. Wherever I have considered the slightest misunderstanding possible, I have added “m.t.” for “my translation.” Where emphasis has been supplied, I have added “i.a.” for “italic added.”

I thank Mr. Thomas Piecha, who carefully looked through my translation and prepared the files for the diagrams.

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