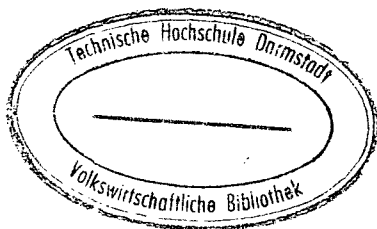


Beyond Positivism

Economic Methodology in the
Twentieth Century

Revised edition

Bruce J. Caldwell



London and New York

Contents

Preface to revised edition	ix
Acknowledgments	xvii
1 Introduction	1
PART ONE TWENTIETH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE	
2 Logical Positivism	
The Vienna Circle	11
The Logical Positivist Program	13
Notes	17
3 The Positivist Tradition Matures – The Emergence of Logical Empiricism	
Introduction	19
The Search for a Criterion of Cognitive Significance	20
The Status, Structure, and Function of Theories and Theoretical Terms	23
The Nature of Scientific Explanation	27
A Representative Logical Empiricist	30
Notes	32
4 The Philosophical Attack on Logical Empiricism	
Introduction	36
Confirmation, Induction, and Popper’s Methodological Falsificationism	38
Theories and Theoretical Terms	45
The Nature of Scientific Explanation	53
Summary	62
Notes	63
5 Contemporary Philosophy of Science – The Growth of Knowledge Tradition	
Introduction	68
Thomas Kuhn	70
Paul K. Feyerabend	79
Imre Lakatos	85
Contemporary Philosophy of Science – A Dilettante’s Review and Commentary	89
Notes	93

PART TWO SOME ESSAYS ON POSITIVISM
AND ECONOMIC METHODOLOGY

6	Robbins versus Hutchison – The Introduction of Positivism in Economic Methodology	
	Robbins's Essay	99
	Robbins and the Austrians	103
	Hutchison's Introduction of Positivism	106
	Philosophical Evaluation	112
	The Austrian Revival	117
	The Inadequacy of the Usual Attacks on Austrian Methodology	119
	Some Doubts about Falsificationism in Economics	124
	The Critique of Austrian Methodology	128
	Notes	135
7	Hutchison versus Machlup – On Indirect Testing and the Rationality Postulate	
	Machlup's Attack	139
	Hutchison's Ambiguous Response	142
	Philosophical Evaluation	143
	The Rationality Postulate – An Overview	146
	Some Questions Concerning the Rationality Postulate	147
	Summary and Conclusion	164
	Notes	168
8	Friedman's Methodological Instrumentalism	
	Friedman's Marketing Masterpiece	173
	Philosophical Evaluation	175
	A Restatement – Friedman as a Methodological Instrumentalist	178
	The Philosophical Rejection of Instrumentalism	179
	The Methodological Critique of Friedman's Position	181
	Summary and Conclusion	184
	Notes	186
9	Samuelson – Operationalism, Descriptivism, and Explanation in Economics	
	Introduction	189
	Samuelson's Operationalism and Machlup's Critique	189
	An Anachronistic View of Scientific Explanation	192
	Wong's Critique of Revealed Preference Theory	195
	Does Explanation Exist in Economics?	199
	Notes	205

PART THREE PROVISIONAL ANSWERS TO SOME UNSETTLED QUESTIONS

10	Is Philosophy of Science Useful for Understanding Methodology	
	The Benefits of Understanding the Philosophical Issues	211
	Can Philosophy of Science Make Economic Methodology Better?	215
	Can Other Approaches Be Taken?	216
	Notes	218
11	Prescription, Description, and Theory Appraisal Confirmation and Falsificationism	221
	The Theory Choice Problem and the Growth of Knowledge Tradition	223
	The Integration of Prescription and Description	228
	Notes	230
12	Confirmation and Falsificationism in Economics Confirmationism and the Practice of Economists	231
	Falsificationism and the Rhetoric of Methodologists	235
	Notes	242
13	A Program for Economic Methodologists – Methodological Pluralism	
	Methodological Pluralism	245
	Answers to Some Possible Objections	250
	Notes	252
	Notes for Further Reading – Philosophy of Science	253
	Notes for Further Reading – Methodology of Economics	256
	Bibliography – Philosophy of Science	258
	Bibliography – Methodology of Economics	265
	Index	275