

Preface

With one exception (Chapter 8), the lectures and essays collected here have been written since the death of Karl Popper in 1994. Like its predecessor, *Critical Rationalism* (Miller 1994), the book is imbued with his thought, but here his personality is prominent also. I hope that the sections concerned with his life complement harmoniously the philosophical and logical sections.

Chapter 1 was written for a specific purpose, and it is not intended either as a biography or as an account of the full range of Popper's contributions to learning. In this reprint only minor amendments and corrections have been made. I have not attempted to re-evaluate, in the light of the many valuable discoveries and speculations of Hacohen (2000), ter Hark (2004), and others, Popper's well-known account of his early life and thought. My own view, for what it is worth, is that the progress of a young man's thinking, especially if it is quite out of the ordinary, may not be faithfully revealed in his formal writings, in particular those offered for examination, if only because his teachers will discourage, and may even forbid, the inclusion of risky and provocative digressions. Chapter 14 too is reprinted without major changes.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 were written as lectures for general audiences, and although I have removed some of the repetitiveness and oversimplification that are unavoidable in lectures, and have added a substantial amount of more specialized material, I have not done much to disguise their origins. Chapters 6, 7, and 12 are polemical, and Chapter 13 whimsical. Given the subject matter of Chapters 12 and 13, namely paraconsistent logic, I trust that the reader will not be too discomfited if they appear to contradict each other. The remaining chapters, Chapters 5 and 8 on induction, Chapter 9 on truth, and Chapters 10 and 11 on verisimilitude, return to central issues in the philosophy of critical rationalism, resolve some disputes and, it is hoped, initiate others.

My principal intellectual debts are gratefully recorded in the notes at the start of each chapter. As always, responsibility for errors is strictly reserved.

With its denial of the false security that other philosophies cherish, critical rationalism has never been an easy position to adopt. At a time when intellectual life is becoming more professionalized and more doctrinaire, it is as unfashionable as it is uncomfortable. It is fortunate that nonetheless there are many people determined to keep its dissident spirit alive. Should the precious insights of critical rationalism ever be lost, they will not readily be regained.

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