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Carnap, Kuhn, and revisionism (II): On "Structure" and the philosophical change

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to sketch an historical analysis of the change in the philosophy of science that took place in the 1950s and 1960s around the time of the publication of *Structure* by Thomas Kuhn. I offer an alternative to the revisionist interpretation that this change is marked by ignorance or neglect, on the part of Kuhn and others, of logical positivism in its more mature form, in this way serving the revolutionary strategy. Countering this conception, I present good reasons for the philosophy of science community, in that historical context, to have used the logical positivist project as their reference and target of criticism rather than the later work of Carnap. I suggest that, faced with the original version of the project, the critics saw Carnap's "liberalizations" as degenerative. I hold that the revisionists, in turn, neglected the historical context surrounding the philosophical change in question, and touched up the image of positivism from a contemporary perspective.

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