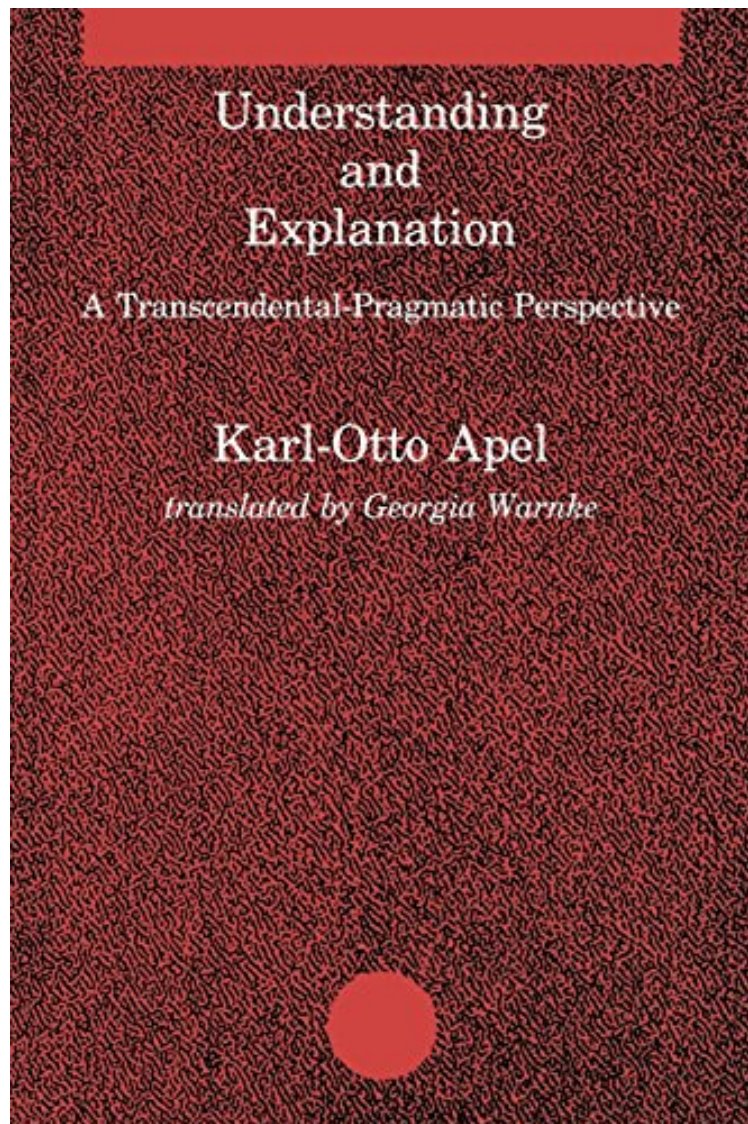


[Mobile pdf] Understanding and Explanation: A Transcendental-Pragmatic Perspective (Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought)

Understanding and Explanation: A Transcendental-Pragmatic Perspective (Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought)

Karl-Otto Apel

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Apel's little known and under-appreciated classic. Apel brings his Peircean inspired linguistic transformation of Kantian philosophy into a deep and rewarding confrontation with Von Wright's text, *Explanation and Understanding*. An extremely rewarding work of 'constructive' philosophy. Those who have read and appreciate the writings of Jurgen Habermas will appreciate this text, and indeed anyone interested in the linguistic turn in philosophy and yet does not want to subscribe to some of the more nihilistic conclusions of many modern day philosophers (and their parroting of some of Carl Schmitt's political philosophical views) will appreciate this text as well.

The explanation versus understanding debate was important to the philosophy of the social sciences from the time of Dilthey and Weber through the work of Popper and Hempel. In recent years, with the development of interpretive approaches in hermeneutics, phenomenology, and language analysis, the problematic has become absolutely central. The broad literature to which it has given rise, while still split along "analytic" versus "continental" lines, shows increasing signs of a reunification in philosophy. G. H. von Wright's important book, *Explanation and Understanding*, originally published in 1971, is a good example of this trend. In *Understanding and Explanation*, Karl-Otto Apel takes von Wright's work as a point of departure for a rigorous, penetrating analysis of the issues involved. After reviewing the failure of earlier discussions to resolve these issues, Apel develops his own approach in light of the turn from logico-semantic to pragmatic analysis of language in post-Wittgensteinian philosophy. In doing so, he constructs bridges that reach back to themes and positions of the German tradition of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, but from strikingly new angles. Karl-Otto Apel holds the chair for social philosophy at the University of Frankfurt. His book is included in the series *Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought*, edited by Thomas McCarthy.

"Of special interest to the English-language audience is the opportunity to see familiar (and hotly disputed) issues of action theory and the philosophy of (social and natural) science reflected in a framework deeply embedded in the tradition(s) of Kant, Hegel, Max, Dilthey, Max Weber, and the critical theory of the Frankfurt School." John Connolly, *Inquiry*
Language Notes
Text: English, German (translation)
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Karl-Otto Apel holds the chair for social philosophy at the University of Frankfurt.