

CHAPTER VIII

CONFUCIANISM, TAOISM AND
CONSTRUCTIVE REALISM

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INTRODUCTION

In order to understand science in a global context, that is, in respect to both philosophy and culture, it may be of interest to consider some philosophical theses which have emerged from a Western view of science and science education through the eyes of the two oldest Chinese philosophies, Confucianism and Taoism. By "response", I mean a way of conducting what I call "language appropriation,"¹ or, in other words, a way of translating the language of ones discipline into the language of another discipline, that is, from one micro-world to another micro-world. This could be termed alienating inter-disciplinarily (*Verfremdende Interdisciplinarität*), or "strangification" in the neologism of "constructive realism". But here this is taken not only as between interdisciplinary micro-worlds, but between different cultural worlds.

On the one hand, constructive realism² is based upon the European tradition of philosophy of science from Kant. Since the decline of logical positivism, it was proposed in Vienna as applicable to the domain of the philosophy of science. For my part, I see the process of translating languages between worlds as potentially helpful also in the domain of inter-cultural understanding. On the other hand, Confucianism and Taoism are two schools of philosophy developed in the context of

Chinese culture. What I am going to do here is to take Confucianism and Taoism from their original context in Chinese culture, in order to conduct a philosophical reflection on constructive realism. In doing this I am trying to enlarge the strategy of translating languages from its original application to scientific micro-worlds, to the larger domain of cultural worlds. But in this I will retain the same spirit of conducting reflection by changing the cognitive contexts. The philosophical principle implicit in both micro-world and cultural-world translation is that we cannot fully understand ourselves except by placing ourselves to the context of other world and understanding others first.

I will not enter here into the details of both Confucianism and Taoism, except when they are relevant for my philosophical reflection on constructive realism. I must point out also that when I speak of Confucianism and Taoism, I do not envisage them as they were in the history of Chinese philosophy. They are presented here as already creatively interpreted through my appropriation of both Western and Chinese philosophical languages.³

There exists a long tradition of interpretation both in Confucianism and Taoism in which creative interpretations were considered as a way of philosophical development. Therefore I will place my interpretation of Confucianism and Taoism within the context of my philosophy of contrast, putting them into a confrontation with such contemporary Western philosophies as structuralism, phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical theory and constructive realism, as my way of developing them.

Generally speaking, we can characterize both Confucianism and Taoism as systems of philosophy with practical orientations. Confucianism emphasizes more the philosophy of man and moral philosophy, and is less interested in metaphysical speculations. Taoism emphasizes more the philosophy of nature, and is intensely interested in metaphysical meditations, especially concerning ontology and cosmology; it is critical of the anthropocentrism, human values and ethical norms contained in Confucianism. On the other hand, constructive realism has been proposed, up to now, as an approach in philosophy of science, with epistemological as well as social interests. Its development into a system

of philosophy is still to be desired.

Therefore, the moment we try to conduct a translation of language between Confucianism, Taoism and constructive realism their difference and mutual need appear. On the one hand, Confucianism and Taoism do not have their philosophy of science, though their philosophy of knowledge in general is quite well developed. In this perspective, constructive realism, with its origin in European philosophy of science, is quite helpful in developing Chinese theories of knowledge into a philosophy of science. On the other hand, constructive realism, which is limited to philosophy of science, needs to be measured also in the context of general philosophy; it can also be translated into the context of other cultures; otherwise some of its potentialities would be neglected and remain unrealized. Here, some philosophical principles of both Confucianism and Taoism would be very helpful.

In the following, I will first present briefly the philosophical positions of constructive realism. Then I will conduct some reflections upon them one by one referring to the philosophical resources of both Confucianism and Taoism.

PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONS OF CONSTRUCTIVE REALISM

Constructive realism, as conceived by Fritz Wallner and his Viennese colleagues, is a recent philosophical alternative to Logical Positivism which denied any meaning to metaphysical discourse and refused to talk about reality. Instead, constructive realism considers it inevitable to talk about reality. The first concern of constructive realism is therefore to respond to this fatal lack in logical positivism by taking into account the truth contained in Wittgensteins philosophy of language in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, namely, that we can speak about reality only in language, and therefore that there is no need of meta-language.⁴ Besides, constructive realism also assimilates Wittgensteins position in the *Philosophical Investigations* that to each language game there corresponds a form of life (*Lebensformen*).⁵ Together these problematics give birth to a theory of two types of reality.

The second concern of constructive realism is to envisage the need of an epistemological strategy in present day interdisciplinary research. For social as well as epistemological reasons, interdisciplinary research work now has become indispensable in science. But up to now there is no epistemologically well founded strategy for the organization and self-understanding of interdisciplinary research. Out of this concern, constructive realism proposes a strategy of translation.

The third concern of constructive realism is to develop an understanding of science based upon an inside knowledge of what scientists really are doing and which can react properly to the need for action in the environment. Very often philosophy of science neglects the practice of scientists, so that the results of their research have no impact upon scientists. Constructive realism maintains that a philosophy of science should base its discourse on the actual practice of scientists and be able to guide their practical actions. Such practical concern leads to a pragmatic view of science.

To sum up, there are three essential positions in constructive realism:

First, the theory of two types of reality, which distinguish between *Wirklichkeit* and *Realität*; the one represents the reality itself, the other represents constructed reality.

Second, the strategy of translation of languages ("strangification") for interdisciplinary research work. This is of three kinds: linguistic, sociological and ontological.

Third, a pragmatic vision of science and its role in the society.

In the following, I will explain each position point by point and in the meanwhile conduct my reflection upon each position by referring to the philosophy of Confucianism and Taoism.

THEORY OF REALITY

Constructive Realism distinguishes *Wirklichkeit* from *Realität*. *Wirklichkeit* represents reality itself, whereas *Realität* represents a

constructed reality. This distinction reminds us of the Kantian distinction between *Ding an sich* (the thing itself) and phenomena, but without presupposing Kants transcendental philosophy which posits the correspondence of *Ding an sich* to a transcendental ego. But like Kants *Ding an sich*, *Wirklichkeit* according to constructive realism is unknowable. What is knowable is the micro-worlds constructed by our scientific as well as non-scientific experiences and languages. Although unknowable, *Wirklichkeit* is posited by constructive realism as the environment (*Umwelt*) in which we live and practice science. This environment is identified with the life-world; no conceptual distinction is made by constructive realism between these two concepts.

On the other hand, *Realität* is seen as the sum total of micro-worlds. The idea of a micro-world comes to constructive realism as a philosophical consequence of Wittgensteins thesis that we can speak about reality only with our language and that to each language game corresponds a form of life. The term "micro-world" is therefore invented by constructive realism to designate the reality constructed by different kinds of language. But Constructive Realism supposes that there is a sum total of all micro-worlds which could be named the "*Realität*".

The theory of two types of reality constitutes an ontology in constructive realism. The distinction it makes between *Wirklichkeit* and *Realität* has the following consequences:

1. Philosophical discussions about reality itself and about question such as whether reality itself is knowable or not does not bring us any new knowledge. It suffices to posit a reality itself.
2. In this situation, we had better address one to another and to interact one with another through the strategy of translation; this brings us new knowledge about other micro-worlds and help to construct together the *Realität*.
3. Thus, the theory of two types of reality offers an ontological foundation for the strategy of translation or alienating interdisciplinary, and encourages it. This strategy of translation (strangification) will be

analyzed in the next section. Now, we will reflect upon this theory in terms of Taoism and Confucianism.

Taoism

Apparently speaking, Taoism seems to accept the distinction between reality itself and a constructed reality. Lao Tzu said, "Tao could be said, but that which is already said about Tao is not the Eternal Tao."⁶ The distinction between Tao and the said seems to confirm the distinction between reality itself and constructed reality. But, in Taoism, this distinction is not posited for negation of the epistemological status of micro-world. It is rather posited, on the one hand, to point out the necessity of tracing back the origin of those micro-worlds to Tao, the creative resource of all knowledge and action. On the other hand, this distinction points out the insufficiency of all languages. In this perspective, Taoism is quite different from constructive realism.

Compared with the ontology of two types of reality in constructive realism, Taoist ontology is much richer in philosophical meaning. Tao is a spontaneous creative Being Itself which gives birth to all beings through the process of self-manifestation and self-differentiation. But there is an ontological difference between Tao, the self-manifesting Being Itself, and beings. If we say Tao equals what is said, then in that moment Tao becomes a "being said" (or loosely a conceptual being), not Being Itself. Although Tao is understandable, its understandability does not equal an ability to be spoken; thereby Taoism sets a limit to our language. Where Wittgenstein's thesis, "that which cannot be said should be kept in silence", is interpreted by constructive realism as positing a constructed reality in language and the denying of all meta-language, Taoism would add the thesis that what should be kept in silence is still understandable; it is not to be "said", but is rather to be "shown".

Tao manifests itself in Nature, which is a spontaneous process not to be determined by human beings technical intervention. Human beings are considered by Taoism as only part of nature. Their ontological status is like plants, animals and others beings in nature; "all are taken to be sons of the same Mother Tao. This vision of human being and nature is

quite different from modern science and technology.

In modern times, science defines nature as the totality of phenomena to be explained and predicted by natural laws; technology treats nature as the totality of material resources to be manipulated and transformed by technical process. The consequence of this concept of nature is that ecological disequilibrium, pollution and other environmental problems now become ever more serious and even menace human existence.

Taoism teaches us how to respect the spontaneous process of nature. The knowledge by human beings should be constructed in such wise as to unfold the spontaneous dynamism of nature.⁷ We should avoid human centered or even egocentric constructions of knowledge. This position is more ecological and tends to construct knowledge and the *Umwelt* in a natural way. To sum up, we can reformulate Taoist propositions in the following manner:

1. Tao, as Reality Itself, nature as the manifestation of Tao, and human beings in nature, all three are co-related and co-natural.
2. Tao, as co-natural to human beings, is understandable to human beings through a cognitive procedure worthy of Tao.
3. What we understand should not be considered equal to what is said.
4. Human beings should be aware of the limit of their language and keep their mind open to the spontaneous dynamism of nature.
5. A human being should construct his or her knowledge and life-world, not according to the structural constraint of his or her language, but according to the rhythmic manifestations of nature.
6. The micro-worlds, as constructed by different languages, should not be identified with the life-world, which is partly constructed by human beings and partly constructs itself spontaneously with the rhythm of nature. Neither micro-worlds nor life-world could be identified with Tao, which is Reality Itself.

Confucianism

Confucianism is an open humanism, which takes the human being as the center of cosmos. Nevertheless Confucianism is also open to the dynamism of nature. This openness is based on the fact that human beings are interconnected to others, to nature and to Heaven. This interconnectedness, which Confucianism expresses by the term "Jen", serves as the ontological foundation of the understandability of reality itself and the possibility of communication. Based upon this interconnectedness, human beings could have a sympathetic understanding of other human persons, of nature and even of Heaven.

Confucian philosophy of language is quite different from that of Taoism, which looks at language from the negative perspective and underlines the limits of language. On the contrary, Confucianism would take language in its positive aspect. According to it, language, as human linguistic construction of reality, should also be seen as a mode of manifestation of *Wirklichkeit*. This could be achieved through semantic correctness and sincerity of purpose; the same is true of science and technology. Contrary to the Taoist critique, Confucianism would look at science and technology as capable of being integrated into the process of constructing a humanized world. The process of human intervention into the process of nature is seen by Confucianism as humankind's participation in, and assistance to, the creative transformation of Heaven and Earth.

Confucianism emphasizes therefore the process of human construction of the Life-world, which should be to the better and not to the worse. But what is the criterium for judging the better construction from the worse? Confucianism would say that the criterium lies in the principle that the human construction of the *Lebenswelt* should participate in the creative rhythm of heaven and earth, but not dominate it. Therefore Confucianism distinguishes participative construction from dominative construction. Human construction of the life-world should be participative one, not dominative.

To sum up, we could say that a Confucian reflection upon the theory of

two types of reality could be expressed in the following propositions:

1. There is universal relatedness and co-naturality between human beings, nature and Heaven which serve as the ontological foundation for the understandability of *Wirklichkeit*, for human construction of knowledge about reality, and also for translation and communication.
2. reality itself is understandable through sympathetic understanding based upon the interconnectedness of human beings with other beings, by which there is a tacit understandable content liable to be expressed through language.
3. Since there might be better as well as worse constructions of the life-world, depending on whether the construction is participative or dominative, life-world should not be identified with *Umwelt* (which is identified with *Wirklichkeit* by constructive realism).
4. Life-world is to be considered partially as a human construction, and partially as emerging spontaneously from the dynamism of reality itself.
5. It could be suggested that the theory of two types of reality be modified into a theory of three levels of reality: reality itself, constructed reality and life-world.

Interdisciplinary Translation as A Strategy of

Interdisciplinary Practice

In order to envisage the need of an epistemological strategy for interdisciplinary research work in science, constructive realism has proposed the act of going out of ones own cognitive context into the context of others (which it terms "strangification"). For example, we could take the propositions of our most cherished findings from one discipline and put them into the context of another discipline, translating them into the language of that discipline. Doing this, we can make our own propositions understandable to another discipline. This translation of our propositions means their universalization, which bestows more value on the knowledge contained therein. If the translation does not

succeed, this indicates the lack of universalizability of these propositions. This calls us to check over the methodology and principles by which I conduct research work in my own discipline, which requires reflecting on ones own discipline.

Translation between disciplines, being a strategy for interdisciplinary research, has the following functions: first, it helps each micro-world to understand the other; second, by translating between disciplines we can reflect on the methodology and principles of our own discipline; third, through such translation we can correlate different micro-worlds into a coherent *Realität*. In other words, inter-translation is a strategy of interdisciplinary work by which different disciplines can coordinate for a common construction of *Realität*.

This is not limited only to micro-worlds, but can be conducted also between different cultural worlds. We make our own world understandable to others by translating our language into that of others; correspondingly, we learn also from others language. Such inter-translation is therefore a kind of what I call, more generally, "language appropriation". By strangification, we appropriate others languages not only to translate and thereby make understandable our own language, but also to enrich it by the same token.

We find two cases of language appropriation in contemporary Chinese philosophy, the neo-Confucians such as Mou Tzong-san and Tang Chün-yi appropriate the philosophical language of German Idealism; and the Chinese neo-Scholastics appropriate neo-Thomistic philosophical language. Both have the intention of articulating Chinese philosophy in a philosophical language understandable to Western philosophical traditions. By the same act of language appropriation they also make German Idealism and neo-Thomism understandable to Chinese philosophy.

Such inter-translation (or strangification) is a very useful strategy not only for different scientific disciplines, but also for different parties in communication, for example, different political parties, different ideological settings, different schools of philosophy, different cultural

worlds, etc.

This is more feasible and fruitful than Habermas concept of "communicative action". Habermas communicative action is a process of argumentation in which the proposition-for and proposition-against, by way of *Begründung*, search for a consensus in a higher proposition acceptable to both parties. Habermas proceeds on the supposition of an ideal situation of communication with understandability, truth, sincerity and legitimacy. Unfortunately, in the actual world of communication, very often there occurs either total conflict or compromise, without any real consensus. Habermasian argumentation tends to fail if in the process of *Begründung* and in the act of searching for consensus, there is no effort at translation for then there will be no real mutual understanding and no self-reflection during the process of argumentation. Therefore, inter-translation as proposed by constructive realism could be seen as prerequisite for any successful communication and coordination.

According to constructive realism, there are three types of inter-translation or alienating inter-disciplinary: the first is linguistic, by which we translate one language from the context of one particular discipline into the language of another discipline to see whether it works or becomes absurd thereby. If the latter, reflection must be undertaken concerning the methodology and principles by which one has established the first language.

The second is pragmatic, by which we draw science from one social and organizational context, to put it into another social and organizational context in order to make clear its pragmatic implications and to enlarge its social and organizational possibilities.

The third is ontological, which, according to Fritz Wallner, is the movement by which we transfer from one micro-world to another.

I consider both linguistic and pragmatic inter-translation well articulated, very useful and pertinent in interdisciplinary research work as well as in the communication process in general. But constructive

realism does not yet have any clear articulation of the meaning of ontological inter-translation. The fact of moving from one micro-world to another does not by that mere fact become ontological. In Heidegger's terms, it is still ontic, not ontological. In order to make clear the meaning of authentic ontological inter-translation clear, we can refer to Confucianism and Taoism as follows.

Confucianism: From the Confucian point of view, the fact that we can enter into other worlds (micro-worlds or cultural worlds) presupposes that there are some ontological relations existing between them. In other words, Confucianism would ask about the ontological condition of possibility which renders feasible and legitimate the act of inter-translation as well as the communication and self-reflection it makes possible. The Confucian answer to this question is that it is the interconnectedness and co-naturality between them, a kind of ontological relation, which makes inter-translation possible. Confucianism even takes a further step to say that, upon the interconnectedness and co-naturality of human beings with each other, with nature and even with Heaven, there could be a sympathetic mutual understanding one with another. In other words, for Confucianism, inter-translation presupposes human sympathetic interconnectedness.

We need not even go so far, in a philosophy of science, as to assume the existence of this sympathetic interconnectedness between human beings or between human beings and other beings; it is still legitimate and necessary to ask the question about the ontological condition of possibility of inter-translation. In positing the existence of a "sympathetic interconnectedness" as an ontological condition of possibility of translation Confucianism has elevated it to the ontological level. According to Confucianism, there is ontological inter-translation based upon our sympathetic interconnectedness with others.

Taoism: From the Taoist point of view, in order to know another world through inter-translation, it is not enough to appropriate other language and to translate our language into other language. It is necessary also to communicate with reality itself and to enlarge our knowledge of it. In Lao Tzu's word, "Having grasped the Mother (Tao, reality itself), you

can thereby know the sons (beings, micro-world); Having known the sons, you should return again to the Mother."⁸ Here Taoism posits an ontological detour to the *Wirklichkeit* as condition *sine qua non* for the act of inter-translation into other worlds (micro-world and cultural world). Since the reality itself is understandable, the ontological detour is thereby made possible.

We will not go into the details of those epistemological operations, negative as well as positive. In terms of Lao Tzu, we understand *Wirklichkeit* by the process of a "retracing regard", an act of intuition of essence in returning to Tao. The process of formation of our experience is therefore seen by Taoism as a process back and forth between the act of interacting with beings (sons) and the act of returning to Tao (the Mother). The act of returning to reality itself and communicating with it is therefore considered by Taoism as enriching through inter-translation with other micro-worlds. This ontological detour to reality itself bestows an ontological dimension to inter-translation. When this is done with an ontological detour, it becomes thereby an ontological inter-translation. We can represent the ontological detour in the following figure:

M1

Wirklichkeit

M2

Realität

M1: Micro-world 1

M2: Micro-world 2

Direction of ontological detour

This concept of an ontological detour can be very suggestive for constructive realism. In doing inter-translation between micro-worlds sometimes another micro-world and its language are not easily accessible and here an ontological detour to reality itself is very helpful. In order to understand in an easier way a treatise on music, that of Adornos *Philosophie der neuen Musik* for example, it would be better to listen to the music of Schönberg and Stravinsky. In order to understand a treatise on sociology, it is helpful to look at the social phenomenon in question. In order to understand a particular scientific treatise on nature, it is better to experience once more nature itself. The ontological detour, will not only render more easy the language and the accessibility of another micro-world, but can also serve as a remedy to the limit of language, which is essential to the Taoist philosophy of language.

3. Inter-translation between micro-world does not by itself clarify the ontological situation of different micro-worlds in relation one to another. By the mere act of inter-translation we cannot figure out their ontological status in a possible synthesis of *Realität*. But, according to a paradigm of contrast which has its historical background in the philosophical wisdom of Confucianism and Taoism, they are in a situation of contrast. In other words, in the act of inter-translation and in the act of constructing *Realität*, those disciplines and their micro-worlds are different, but at the same time complementary. This ontological situation renders necessary the act of inter-translation and makes it possible. Being based upon this ontological situation of contrast it is thereby an ontological inter-translation. Hence, the status of disciplines and micro-worlds in the resulting construction of *Realität* could also be defined by the philosophy of contrast.

CONSTRUCTIVE REALISM,

A PRAGMATIC VISION OF SCIENCE

In order to connect the enterprise of philosophy of science with the actual activities of scientists and to determine the role of science in the social and physical reality, constructive realism maintains a pragmatic vision of science. This means that, for constructive realism, the construction of a micro-world by scientific activities offers us a new possibility of action and is judged by this criteria. "As soon as they are invented, they offer new possibilities of activity; in this sense they are real. We could convert this argumentation: If they did not open new possibilities of action, they would not be scientific inventions."⁹

This pragmatist vision of science is sound and helpful for the understanding of both the activities and the function of science. "Pragmatism" means a way of thinking which attaches itself to the dimension of human action.

But, in our philosophical reflection, two questions might be asked of this pragmatic vision of science.

First, what is the criteria of action in science?

Second, in addition to understanding science, whence comes the ideal incentive for the development of science?

Concerning the first question, we can think of the following criteria.

1. *The criteria of efficiency* We can judge actions in science according to their efficiency in bringing out the desired end. Although this is important for measuring science, it falls under the category of instrumental rationality. In the case of modern Western science and

technology, the excessive and abusive use of instrumental rationality has led to mans exploitative domination over nature and society. This is against the intention of conserving and constructing a better life-world.

2. *The ethical criteria* This means a criteria which refer to ethical norms of action and to the ethical responsibility of human beings. This is the kind of criteria that Confucianism would emphasize. According to Confucianism, three ethical norms are most important for human action.

- First, action should be conducted in such a way that it leads to the fulfillment of human potentiality.

- Second, action should be conducted in such a way that it leads to the unfolding of the object acted upon or under scientific investigation.

- Third, action should be conducted in such a way that it leads to the harmonization of relationships between one human being and other human beings, between human beings and nature.

3. *Ontological criteria* Both constructive realism and Confucianism, in the eyes of Taoism, are too human-centered. In Nietzsches terms, they are "human, much too human". Taoism, on the other hand, is more natural-centered, but with an ontological foundation. This means that for Taoism, human action should be situated in the cosmic process; it should be conducted in such a way that it is not human-centered, but situated in the global context of nature and Being. In other words, action should be conducted with respect for the dynamism of nature and serve for the manifestation of Tao, reality itself. In this way, there is no particular action. Compared with any ontic and dominative action, it is rather a kind of non-action, but by which nothing is left undone.

Concerning the second question, constructive realisms pragmatic vision of science is sound in helping us understand the activities of science, yet it offers no ideal incentives for the development of science.

Today, the world is full of all kinds of pragmatisms. More urgent problems such as ecological crises, economic profit, management,

joblessness, etc., need more efficient actions. A worldwide pragmatic spirit is now also having its corrosive effect in the domain of science. For example, some theoretical or pure research in the natural and human social sciences are now being neglected and sacrificed by such secular pragmatism.

Of course, constructive realism is not a kind of secular pragmatism. It is pragmatism in the sense that it emphasizes the dimension of action in science. But since constructive realism emphasizes also the role of reflection in the construction of knowledge, it should include in itself also a certain detachment from action in order to reflect. Reflection demands always some detachment from action. Although the notion of *theoria* in Greek philosophy is now gone for good, since science is now always related in its essence to action, I would call for a new spirit of *theoria* for this world menaced by nihilism. Not a *theoria* which quests for knowledge for knowledge's own sake, but *theoria* as reflexive self-understanding of action, that is, a *theoria* in intimate interaction with action.

Science seems now to be losing its ideality; it has no long term goal for development. Science needs to renew ideals such as truth to serve as idealizing incentives for its own development. Otherwise, science is falling more and more into the darkness of nihilism, in which human beings have no ideal values for existence and hence life becomes meaningless. To help humankind get through this nihilist valley of darkness, constructive realism should take up such rich spiritual resources of Western philosophy and Eastern philosophy as Taoism and Confucianism in order to work out, besides the pragmatic aspect of science, the ideal dimension of the future development of science and society.

CONCLUSION

As I have presented elsewhere,¹⁰ the paradigm of contrast is based upon the philosophical wisdom of both Confucianism and Taoism. This wisdom is best illustrated in the traditional representation of the Great Ultimate, Tai Chi, which is the common philosophical background of

both Confucianism and Taoism. I develop it into a paradigm of contrast, which is constituted of structural contrast and dynamic contrast, both of which are also in global contrast interaction. On the one hand, "structural contrast" is constituted of interacting elements, different but related, opposing yet complementary. On the other hand, "dynamic contrast" is constituted of moments characterized by continuity and discontinuity, sedimentation of the past and creation of future novelty. Both are in a global contrasting movement so as to constitute the structure and the dynamism of history. With this paradigm of contrast in mind, we can propose the following propositions as conclusions to this essay on Confucianism, Taoism and constructive realism:

Concerning the Theory of Two Types of Reality

Proposition 1. Reality itself (*Wirklichkeit*) and Constructed Reality (*Realität*) are different but complementary, continuous yet discontinuous one with another, and they have to be mediated by the construction of life-world.

Proposition 2. The construction of life-world (*Lebenswelt*) in the process of time, which serves as the mediation between reality itself and constructed reality, should take into account the contrast tension between the two types of reality; this leads to a better, not a worse, construction.

Concerning the Strategy of Inter-translation Between micro-world

Proposition 3. *Inter-translation* presupposes that different micro-worlds constructed by various disciplinary languages are different yet complementary one with another, and therefore render possible and necessary the act of translation between them.

Proposition 4. Besides linguistic and pragmatic inter-translation, ontological inter-translation which bases itself either on the ontological relation between different worlds or is effected through an ontological detour to reality itself, is also necessary and feasible.

Proposition 5. In interdisciplinary research work, no individual

discipline should dominate other disciplines in constructing *Realität*. Nevertheless, guiding disciplines and subsidiary disciplines are required in the construction of a specific aspect of reality. Different and contrasting disciplines exist which can be coordinated for a synthetic construction of *Realität*.

Concerning the pragmatic visions of science

***Proposition 6.* Both scientific action and ethical action belong, although in a contrasting way, to human action in the life-world.**

***Proposition 7.* Human action, although it is to be integrated into the cosmic process, is nevertheless in a contrasting relation with the latter, that is, they are different yet complementary, continuous but also discontinuous one with another.**

***Proposition 8.* Finally, theory and action are also in a contrasting situation. In order not to let action in science be secularized and become the servant of the optimization of economic profit, science should not be too pragmatic. The spirit of *theoria*, not the one in Greek philosophy searching knowledge for knowledges sake, but the spirit which sets up theoretical ideals for the development and the self-understanding of science, should be renewed today.**

***Proposition 9.* With the renewal of this spirit of *theoria*, science would not fall in the darkness of nihilism. On the contrary, in moving by contrasting theory and action science will progress in self-understanding. Together with other ideal values offered by different cultures, it could eventually lead human beings beyond the dark valley of nihilism to the light of truth.**

NOTES

1. Vincent Shen, "Creativity as Synthesis of Contrasting Wisdoms: An Interpretation of Chinese Philosophy in Taiwan since 1949," *Philosophy East & West*, 43 (1993), 279-287.
2. For introductions to Constructive Realism, see Fritz Wallner, *Acht Vorlesungen über den Konstruktiven Realismus*, (Vienna: Vienna University Press, 1992), pp. 96; Fritz Wallner, Joseph Schimmer and Markus Costazza, eds, *Grenzziehungen zum Konstruktiven Realismus* (Vienna, Vienna University Press, 1993), pp. 236.
3. For Example, "What I have Done Regarding Confucianism" in *The Rebirth of Tradition* (Taipei: Yeh-Chiang, 1992), pp. 207.
4. This is how I interpret the last sentence of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, "That which can not be said should be kept in silence."
5. L. Wittgenstein, *Logical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), p. 11.
6. Lao Tzu, *Tao Teh Ching*, ch. 1.
7. Vincent Shen, "Annäherung an das Taoistische Verständnis von Wissenschaft. Die Epistemologie des Lao Tses und Tscuang Tses," in Fritz Wallner, Joseph Scimmer, eds, *Grenzziehungen zum Konstruktiven Realismus* (Wien: WUV-Univ., 1993), S. 183-199.
8. Lao Tzu, *Tao Teh Ching*, ch. 52.
9. Fritz Wallner, *Aspects of Constructive Realism* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1994), p. 14.
10. Vincent Shen, "Method, History and Contrast, Introduction to the Philosophy of Contrast," in *Essays in Contemporary Philosophy* (Taipei: Lih-ming Press, 1985), pp. 1-28, also my "Attempting Paradigm of Contrast," paper presented in the Annual Conference of International Association of Communication, 1985, Honolulu, Hawaii.