

A Disciplinary Horizon for Comprehending the Third Wave of Psychology
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Abstract

Thanks to Prof. Allwood for his long-term interest in my research. It enables me to understand some of my blind spots in the presentation of my thoughts to the international social science community, especially to those colleagues in disciplines other than (indigenous) psychology. It seems to me that an academic movement is mature once it finds its philosophical ground. I do believe that my approach of multiple philosophical paradigms in combination with the philosophy of Critical Realism (Bhaskar 1975; 1978) may provide a solid philosophical ground for the IP movement as the third wave of psychology. Therefore, I am willing to elaborate my works in more detail so as to constitute the necessary disciplinary horizon for facilitating its future development.

In his rejoinder to my article, “Science as a culture in culture with deep-structure across empirical studies in psychology” (Hwang 2013a), I realized that Prof. Allwood is rather displeased to be called an “empiricist” because he advocates for the “advantage of an empirically oriented cultural concept in indigenous psychology research” (Allwood 2013b). He argued: “... [H]e is wrong here. My stance on the epistemological dimension from (epistemological) empiricism to (epistemological) rationalism is somewhere in the middle of the dimension” (55).

Identity Crisis

As I am going to demonstrate in this article, my misclassification is caused by the identity crisis of his own stance on the philosophy of science:

Here my specific point was that, in order for IPs to be successful in their endeavor to produce knowledge that is applicable to their own societies it would help to identify the specific cultural understanding of the category of people and individuals addressed. In general, asserting (as I do) that a phenomenon, such as culture, is complex (e.g., cultures are always heterogeneous), is not the same thing as being an empiricist. In for example Allwood (1998, 2014), I discuss a general perspective, labeled anthropology of knowledge, on how understanding is generated in human societies (Allwood, 2013b, 55).

Here I find the sharpest difference between us: He discusses from a so-called *anthropology of knowledge* perspective, while I advocate for an emerging field of *indigenous psychology*. From the perspective of his disciplinary horizon, Prof. Allwood stated:

I would argue that both theory and empirical data are needed for good progress in research. A catchy version of this is Kant’s statement (the

translations of which differ somewhat) and argument that perception without conception is blind and conception without perception is empty.

Ontologically, I believe (but do not know) that most things point to the existence of an external world. Exactly where this would place me in Prof. Hwang’s rendering of Bhaskar’s three philosophies of science is not clear, but most likely in some combination of the three philosophies (Allwood, 2013b, 55).

Three Philosophies of Science

Most of Prof. Allwood’s questions can be answered by a clear distinction among Bhaskar’s three philosophies of science (see Figure 1). In order to elaborate on the sharp contrast between classical empiricism and transcendental idealism, I took logical positivism and Popper’s (1963, 1972) evolutionary epistemology as examples, respectively. I further proposed a table to compare the sharp contrast of their ontology, epistemology and methodology in *Logics of Social Sciences* (Hwang, 2001, Table 1).

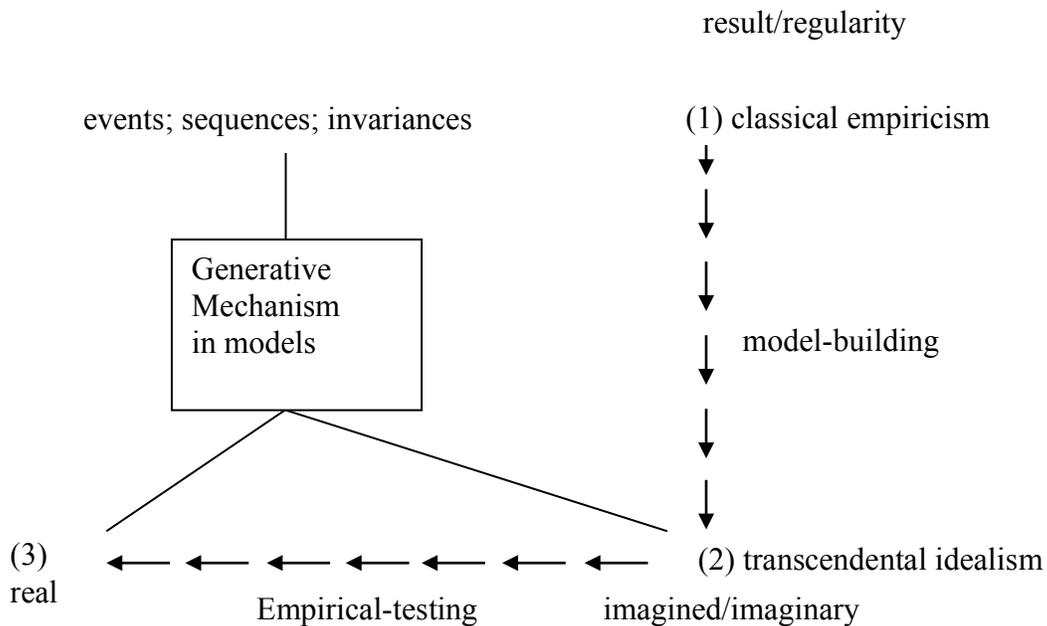


Figure 1: Philosophies for Scientific Discovery (adopted from Bhaskar 1975, 174)

	Logical Positivism	Evolutionary Epistemology
Ontology	Radical empiricism (Naive realism)	Scientific Realism
Epistemology	Truth	Approximation of truth
Methodology	Verification	Falsification

Table 1: Comparison of ontology, epistemology and methodology between positivism and post-positivism

In order to exclude all the metaphysics from the domain of science, logical positivism advocated *naïve realism* for its ontology and argued that the only reality is what can be experienced by one’s sensory organs. It is unnecessary for scientists to seek for the ultimate cause beyond the sensory experience of human beings. Such a position of *radical empiricism* urged them to advocate for an epistemology which views scientific theory as representation of *truth*, as well as a methodology which stressed that “the meaning of a proposition is the method for its *verification*” (Schlick 1936).

In contrast, neo-positivists adopted the ontology of *realism* that assumes there exists an ontological reality beyond our sensory experiences. A scientist has to construct theory for describing the objective world by conjecturing about the nature of its *noumenon*. Because theory is nothing more than the conjecture made by a scientist, the epistemology of neo-positivism views scientific theory as an *approximation to the truth*, but not truth in itself. In order to eliminate errors that might be contained in a theory, it advocates the methodology of *falsification* that attempts to falsify the major propositions of a theory by all means of dialectical reasoning as well as empirical examination.

Philosophical Switches

When Prof. Allwood argues for Kant’s statement that “perception without conception is blind and conception without perception is empty,” he is placing himself in the second camp of Kant’s *transcendental idealism*, but not “somewhere in the middle of the dimension from (epistemological) empiricism to (epistemological) rationalism,” or “some combination of the three philosophies” (2013b, 55). In other words, the philosophical switch from *classical empiricism* (or *radical empirical*) to transcendental idealism in Figure 1 (above) is so drastic that it is impossible for Prof. Allwood to identify his philosophical stance as “some combination of the three philosophies.”

His disciplinary horizon as well as the ambiguity of his philosophical stance make it very difficult for Prof. Allwood to understand the true meaning of the emergence of the indigenization movement in psychology even though he conducted a large-scale international survey on the origins and development of indigenous psychologies (Allwood and Berry 2006). It seems to me that the progress of psychology has gone

through three philosophical switches. The philosophical ground of behaviorism is *radical empiricism* of logical positivism. Cognitive psychology is grounded on *transcendental idealism* of post-positivism; while indigenous psychology should be grounded on *transcendental realism* advocated by Critical Realism (Bhaskar 1975, 1978) and my multiple philosophical paradigms (Hwang 2013). According to the principle of cultural psychology, “One mind, many mentalities” (Shweder et al., 1998), indigenous psychology is destined to construct culture-inclusive theories to represent the universal mind of human beings on the one hand, as well as mentalities of people in a particular culture, on the other. In the age of globalization, those theories may incorporate both intentional psychology and scientific psychology as advocated by Vygotsky (1896-1934), in order to resolve the problematic situation left by Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920) who failed to study cultural issues by the so-called scientific methods.

Science and Culture

For the issue of how science relates to everyday culture, Prof. Allwood argued:

My point with respect to the relation between theories, conceptions, etc., in science and in everyday life was meant to be *general*, namely that the difference between everyday life conceptions and conceptions in science is *a matter of degrees*, that is, they overlap (compare e.g., Cook & Campbell, 1979) (2013b, 56, original emphasis).

His argument is correct coming from a Western, Christian-Greek tradition. But, it is incorrect for non-Western cultures. His quotation of my words (2013b, 57):

For laymen or outsiders, “the difference between everyday life conceptions/culture and scientific theories is a matter of degree, not an either/or phenomenon” (Allwood 2013, 63). But for experts who are struggling for survival in a particular field of the scientific community, they have to learn not only the knowledge related to scientific microworlds constructed by other scientists, but also how to construct their own scientific microworlds in order to compete with others. This is why I argue that the distinction between scientific microworlds and lifeworlds (Allwood calls it “everyday conceptions”) is essentially necessary for IPs in non-Western cultures to make (38-39).

Please note the last sentence that the aforementioned arguments are applicable to “experts who are struggling for survival in a particular field of the scientific community” such as indigenous psychologists in “non-Western cultures.” My arguments were proposed in light of Bhaskar’s three philosophies of science. For non-Western psychologists, it is very easy to learn the philosophy of radical empiricism or positivism, but it is very hard to comprehend the philosophy of *transcendental idealism* or *transcendental realism*, which should be traced to the Greek tradition of seeking being behind *becoming*. Following such a tradition, Kant argued that thing-in-itself (or *noumenon*) is transcendent, while our knowledge about the *thing* is constituted by transcendental ideas behind the *phenomenon*.

Prof. Allwood is reluctant to be subscribed to the camp of “naïve” empiricism. He argued that:

[E]ven if this had been the case, even I can think outside of specific “paradigms”, just as Popper argued against Kuhn that people in general are not prisoners of specific paradigms “if we try we can break out of our framework at any time” (Popper 1970, 56). It is relevant to note that Popper’s point also serves as an argument for a culture concept where cultures are seen as dynamic and constantly changing (people can think outside of the “box” [framework]) rather than fairly constant and slow-changing (2013b, 58).

I agree that people in general are not prisoners of special paradigms, “if we try we can break out of our framework at any time” (Popper 1970, 56). Nevertheless, it seems to me that the ontological dualism between *being* and *becoming*, or *noumenon* and *phenomenon*, is a product of Western culture. Because it is alien to most non-Western culture, and because traditional Chinese science has been developed on the cosmology of *yin-yang* originated from *I-Ching*, but not the ontology of transcendent *noumenon*, it requires extraordinary efforts for Chinese (or other non-Western) social scientists to learn and to understand the progress of the Western philosophy of science in a systematic way. Otherwise, they will be “prisoners of naïve empiricism” and their culture of academic research will be stagnated in a state of “fairly constant and slow-changing.” This is exactly the reason I spent more than ten years in writing *Logics of Social Sciences* in Chinese (Hwang 2001).

Prisoner of Naïve Positivism

Prof. Allwood may remember Danziger’s Commentary on his international survey tracing the origins and development of indigenous psychologies (Allwood and Berry 2006):

When modern psychology was transplanted from its countries of origin to other regions of the world, not only specific items of knowledge and specific instruments travelled; certain norms for the conduct of psychological inquiry, and certain criteria for assessing the legitimacy of forms of psychological knowledge, travelled too. The application of these norms and criteria imparted a particular character to the export as a whole. Only insofar as indigenous psychology proceeds to a questioning of these norm and criteria does it represent a real challenge to the status quo in the asymmetric global circulation of psychological knowledge and practice.

However, for many representatives of indigenous psychology, as indeed for most of their Western colleagues, “science” continues to be an uncontroversial, unexamined, source of cognitive authority. As Allwood (2002) has pointed out, this is likely to create problems for the field. Insofar as indigenous psychologists emphasize the cultural embeddedness of psychology while proceeding as though “science” was entirely separate

form culture, they are likely to become deeply embroiled in paradox (see Harding 1998; Danziger 2006, 271-272).

To me, any psychologist who treats “science” as “an uncontroversial, unexamined, source of cognitive authority” entirely separate from culture is doomed to be a prisoner of “naïve positivism.” The only way to liberate them from the prison is a systematic indoctrination in philosophies of science. It is interesting to note that Prof. Allwood (2002) has pointed out that treating “science” as an uncontroversial and unexamined source of cognitive authority “is likely to create problems for the field;” he himself is still staying in an ambiguous state of “some combination for the three philosophies” (Allwood 2013b, 55).

Deep-Structures in Science?

Here I want to emphasize that, it is impossible to answer Prof. Allwood’s following question (2013b, 54) from the philosophical “prison” of naive empiricism or positivism:

Prof. Hwang argues that “there is an essential ‘deep-structure’ behind scientific knowledge” (41). It is not clear if he means that there is only one deep-structure, or many, in science, and if many: how many? Be that as it may, it seems that a structure would need to be around for quite some time in order for it to become an “essential ‘deep-structure’”. However, he does not specify any criteria for judging when a structure (theory, theoretical framework, philosophical background assumptions?) should be seen as a “deep-structure” nor how long time a “structure” has to be around for it to count as a “deep-structure”, or an “essential deep-structure”. This makes the issue of the existence of “essential ‘deep-structure/s’” behind scientific knowledge hard to discuss and even harder to draw conclusions about. It seems that Prof. Hwang would have to clarify these aspects of what he means by “essential ‘deep-structure’” before this issue can be meaningfully discussed.

It is very difficult for a psychologist in the second camp of transcendental idealism to answer those questions because they tend to speculate such variables as moderators or mediators to account for the phenomena under investigation. Nevertheless, it is quite easy to answer the questions from the perspective of *transcendental realism*. Though both transcendental idealism and transcendental realism grant the presupposition that *thing-in-itself* or *noumenon* is transcendent, transcendental idealism recognizes that scientists are proposing tentative solution or tentative theory to explain the phenomena (Popper 1963, 1972). A tentative theory might be elaborated as mechanism in some cases, or be refined as hard core and protective belt in some situations (Lakatos 1978), only Bhaskar’s (1975, 1978) Critical Realism highlights the importance of *generative mechanism*. His ontological position of transcendental realism also accepts Kant’s argument that human beings can construct knowledge to understand only phenomenon but not thing-in-itself; his transcendental realism posits that the generative mechanisms constructed by scientists must deal with some real objects. The domain of reality comprises whatever exists, be it natural or social in nature, and independent of whether or not we have sufficient knowledge about their nature.

Collier (1994, 62) stated that *generative mechanism* is “a technical term, designating a ‘real something’ over and above and independent of patterns of events. Power is ‘a non-technical term designating what something can do.’”

Generative mechanism certainly contains structure; its components also contain structure. We can examine the structures of those mechanisms that generate powers: To a certain degree, we can also predict the structures generating powers under certain conditions or inputs, leading to a change or event.

For the *noumenon* of a particular object, a scientist may construct his/her *mechanism* to explain the phenomena being investigated; therefore, there might be more than one mechanism being constructed. Those mechanisms should compete with one another and be examined by empirical research. In other words, several mechanisms might be constructed by different scientists to represent the deep structure of the same target object. Those objects can belong to the material nature like minerals, or social objects like bureaucracies. All subjects, material or social, have certain structures and powers. In the field of social science, structures are defined as sets of internally related objects or practices which can be used to refer to large social institutions, as well as to small structures at the interpersonal level, like my *Face and Favor* model (Hwang 1987, 2012), or at the personal level like my *Mandala Model of Self* (2011a, b). Those universal mechanisms deal with something real in our lifeworlds; such philosophical advocacy is called *ontological realism*.

In Chapter 5 of my book, *Foundations of Chinese Psychology* (Hwang 2012), I explained how I used the *Face and Favor* model as a framework for analyzing the inner structure of Confucianism. My analysis is the corpus of sayings by pre-Qin Confucians. My book, *A Proposal for Scientific Revolution in Psychology* (2011a), takes the *Mandala Model of Self* as a framework for analyzing Confucian texts about self-cultivation from the perspective of psychology. Both books examine sayings or speeches made by pre-Qin Confucianists when their generative mechanisms were activated by some powers. Both the *Face and Favor* model and *Mandala Model of Self* are universal and objective, while the isomorphic Confucian ethics for ordinary people and other culture-inclusive theories are culture specific and fallibilist. Therefore, my research works can be used as examples to illustrate the philosophical advocacy of Critical Realism on ontological realism and epistemological relativism.

Based on such culture-inclusive theories, we may examine sayings or speeches made by a particular Chinese actor at the socio-cultural interaction level (SC) when his/her mechanisms are activated by some internal or external powers. Conceiving in terms of the distinction between lifeworlds and scientific microworlds, they refer to events in lifeworlds which can serve as materials for qualitative research in social sciences.

I hope my interpretations have answered most of Prof. Allwood’s questions about deep-structures in science. If and only if Prof. Allwood is equipped with such a disciplinary horizon, we will be able to discuss the ultimate concern of his rejoinder to my article on “Science as a culture in culture with deep-structures” (Hwang 2013):

Hwang seems to equate deep-structures with generative mechanisms, but obviously there can be other types of generative mechanisms than deep-structures as this concept is used by Hwang, including mechanisms involving less deep structures or even shallow structures. The problem with Prof. Hwang’s approach to culture and science is that it is very general and abstract. By this it risks being somewhat simplistic. In general, it attempts to explain too much and thereby may explain, or predict, very little. This is also evident in his classification of me as a naïve empiricist.

Prof. Allwood is correct in saying that I equate deep-structures with generative mechanisms. He is also correct in indicating that there are other types of generative mechanism. But, I agree neither with his judgment that my approach to culture and science “is very general and abstract,” nor his argument that my approach attempts to explain too much and thereby, risks explaining very little. His misjudgment may be rectified by Bhaskar’s classification of ontological domains for scientific investigation.

Domain of Reality, Actuality and Factuality

Bhaskar (2008) argued that knowledge constructed by human beings to recognize the nature or the world are structured and can be differentiated. The objects of knowledge can be differentiated into mechanisms, events, and empirical experiences at the entity level (Bhaskar, 2008, 162-163), while their ontological domains can be differentiated into *the real*, *the actual*, and *the empirical* (Bhaskar, 2008, 56), which are replaced by *reality*, *actuality* and *factuality* in Table 2. The term empirical is also replaced by *empirical experience*.

Ontological Dimensions Entity Level	Domain of Reality	Domain of Actuality	Domain of Factuality
Mechanisms	√		
Events	√	√	
Empirical Experiences	√	√	√

Table 2: Bhaskar’s three ontological domains for scientific investigation
 (Adapted and revised from Bhaskar 2008, 13)

The domain of *reality* has been intensively discussed in my previous discourse on structures in science and generative mechanisms.

The domain of *actuality* pertains what happens if and when powers in mechanisms are activated. In the social sphere, when social structures and humans exercise their agentic

powers, *actuality* pertains to what those powers do and what eventually follows when those powers are activated.

By the same token, culture-inclusive theories can also be used to derive hypothesis for empirical research by taking into account realistic conditions in Chinese society. The quantitative data collected at the socio-cultural level belong to the domain of *factuality* which can be experienced directly or indirectly by dualist methods of empirical research; thus, they are termed as *empirical experiences* in Table 2.

Disciplinary Horizon of Indigenous Psychology

As I indicated before, Prof. Allwood's ambiguity of his philosophical stance makes it difficult for him to comprehend the philosophy of transcendental realism as well as the usefulness of my approach. I suppose this is why he concluded his rejoinder by saying:

Prof. Hwang appears to argue for the practical usefulness of research on cultural deep-structures. However, although of interest in other ways, it is very unclear why he thinks that abstract assertions on a very general level about assumed deep-structures in the cultural understanding assumed to be common for large geographical areas, such as China, can be of much help in solving people's daily problems in Non-western societies. For this, a more nuanced understanding of the understanding and life-values of the specific categories of people that the research is aimed to help would seem to be needed (Allwood 2013b, 59).

It is very easy to see the practical usefulness of research on cultural deep-structures if and only if Prof. Allwood has been indoctrinated with the disciplinary horizon of Critical Realism for the development of indigenous psychology.

In *Foundations of Chinese Psychology* (Hwang 2012), I explained how I used the theoretical model of *Face and Favor* as a framework to analyze the inner structure of Confucianism, reviewed previous researches on Chinese moral judgments, and discussed the features of Confucian ethics from various perspectives. In addition, I constructed a series of culture-inclusive theories to integrate findings of previous empirical researches on social exchange, face dynamism, achievement motivation, organization behavior, and conflict resolution in Confucian society. The aforementioned analyses indicate that insofar as culture-inclusive theories are constructed by indigenous psychologists, qualitative and quantitative researches should be complementary to each other.

Once an academic movement finds its philosophical ground, it is mature for the movement has found a clear "way" for its future development. Findings of many empirical researches can be explained in terms of the theories thus constructed, and the light of possible researches can be casted in the future. Thus my approach may be exempted from Prof. Allwood's worry that it attempts to explain too much and risks explaining very little.

Anti-Positivism

Though Prof. Allwood is unclear about his position on Bhaskar's three philosophies of science, fortunately, he is somewhat unhappy to be called an "empiricist." Prof. Allwood's reluctance of being identified as a naïve empiricist or positivist shares the same sentiment as my position of anti-positivism. Stated more clearly, the ontology of Critical Realism advocates for the stratified reality essentially different from the positivist assumption of reality. Accordingly, both the domains of actuality and factuality are subsumed within the domain of reality, i.e. $dr > da > df$ (see Table 2). In contrast, the positivist ontology assumes a relationship of $dr = da = df$, which collapses the three domains of reality into an empirical one and advocates that empirical fact is the only reality.

Conclusion

The difference of the ontological stance between Critical Realism and positivism has very important implications for non-Western psychologists. Because most psychologists take the position of positivism or naïve positivism when conducting empirical research, they generally assume that human beings are "passive recipients of given facts" and "recorders of their constant conjunctions" (Bhaskar 2008, 16), without differentiating the three domains of reality in constructing culture-inclusive theories. Eventually, most psychological researches conducted in non-Western countries are merely duplications of Western paradigms of mainstream psychology, resulting in the backward of academic research in non-Western countries as well as the destruction of their cultural subjectivities. It seems to me that this is the most important reason non-Western indigenous psychologists must attune to the philosophy of Critical Realism as their disciplinary horizon.

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