

## Research Article

### Conception of Philosophy Given in Broad-Spectrum Philosophy and its Significance

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**Abstract:** In this study, we have a research of the conception of philosophy given in broad-spectrum philosophy and its significance. “What’s philosophy” is a question at once ancient and new and regarding this question, different philosophical schools or philosophers have different answers. Based on a summary of modern scientific achievements, Broad-spectrum Philosophy gives this matter a new solution. What this thesis concerns includes the theoretical basis of the solution and the significance of it. As a research result, we clearly describe the conception of philosophy given in broad-spectrum philosophy and show the significance of this field.

**Keywords:** Broad-spectrum philosophy, philosophical conception, significance

#### INTRODUCTION

The matter “what’s philosophy” has experienced many times of development in history and different philosophers have different answers to it. Before China’s reform and opening up, the relatively agreeable view is that “philosophy is a theory regarding the universal law of nature, society and thought”, which is also the perspective of classic writers of Marxism, namely, “Theory of Universal Law”. However, after the reform and opening up, opinions become widely divided concerning the question “what’s philosophy”, for example, there are opinions that “philosophy is the study of human”, “philosophy is social science”, “philosophy is the study of reflection”, “philosophy is ideology” and so on. There hasn’t been a unified understanding about philosophy still now.

Broad-spectrum Philosophy adheres to the rational core of “Theory of Universal Law” held by classic writers of Marxism and at the same time, it brings up a new summary on philosophy of its own based on the new development of contemporary natural science, that is, it defines philosophy as the study on invariance under the joint replacement of concrete science-related contents (Zhang, 2009; Zhang, 2004; Lenin, 1974).

In this study, we have a research of the conception of philosophy given in broad-spectrum philosophy and its significance. “What’s philosophy” is a question at once ancient and new and regarding this question, different philosophical schools or philosophers have different answers. Based on a summary of modern scientific achievements, Broad-spectrum Philosophy gives this matter a new solution. What this thesis concerns includes the theoretical basis of the solution and the significance of it. As a research result, we clearly describe the conception of philosophy given in

broad-spectrum philosophy and show the significance of this field.

#### RELATION BETWEEN INVARIANCE AND OBJECTIVITY

As we know, since the German mathematician Klein read the famous thesis *Vergleichende Betrachtungen über neuere geometrische Forschungen* (called Erlanger Programm later) in University of Erlangen in 1872, Geometry has been considered as the set of propositions that studies the invariance under certain transformation group (invariant graphs, invariant property or invariants). For example, Euclidean Geometry studies the invariance under orthogonal transformation group, Affine Geometry studies the invariance under affine transformation group and Topology studies the invariance under topological transformation group, etc. In this way, Geometry is associated with transformation groups and invariance. At a later stage, people found that there are also similar circumstances in Mechanics and Physics. For instance, Newtonian Mechanics studies the invariance under Galilean transformations, (Special) Theory of Relativity studies the invariance under Lorentz transformation and such Miao and Juqin (2012), Chen (2009) and Ma (2008).

Transformation Group is a mathematics concept and is a kind of algebraic structure composed with “transformations” (one-to-one correspondence of elements in the same set) as the elements. Broad-spectrum Philosophy reveals that “transformations” represents certain observocontrol mode in which people understand or reform the reality, while “transformation groups” are the set of this observocontrol mode. Here the so-called “invariance” reflects the objectivity of

things under certain observocontrol mode. For example, orthogonal transformation groups stand for operation modes like translation, rotation, etc., under which the shapes (angle, radian, length, etc.) of Geometric objects don't change, therefore, this kind of invariance reflects the objectivity of the "rigidity" of Geometric objects. Similarly, Galilean transformation reflects coordinate transformation of two frames of reference in uniform linear motion with each other as reference; to find whether Laws of Mechanics have changed under the transformation is actually to find whether certain mechanical quantities, relations and properties have changed in conditions of macro low speed (a kind of observocontrol mode); therefore, what Newtonian Mechanics reflects is the objectivity of mechanical quantities in conditions of macro low speed, while there are also similar circumstances in Theory of Relativity (reflecting high-speed motions).

The relation between invariance and objectivity gives new enlightenment on the research of Broad-spectrum Philosophy. Broad-spectrum Philosophy holds that since all sciences studies the objectivity of things under certain observocontrol mode, while objectivity is at the same time the invariance under certain observocontrol mode, what all (special) sciences study are actually the invariance under certain observocontrol mode. Here, "all sciences" also include social sciences and thought sciences: the former studies the invariance of social relations, properties and laws; the latter studies the invariance of laws of thought. Upon that, Broad-spectrum Philosophy deduces the common character of all (special) sciences, that's, the invariance under certain observocontrol mode, from the research of the properties of classical sciences (Geometry, Physics) and through the bridge of objectivity i.e., invariance, hence realizing the first sublimation in aspect of understanding.

### **RELATION BETWEEN INVARIANCE AND PHILOSOPHY**

From the prospective of materialism, philosophy also studies objectivity, only that what philosophy studies is the most interdisciplinary and cross-field objectivity instead of the objectivity of a certain filed; just as referred by the classical writers of Marxism, philosophy is the summary and conclusion of the universal laws of nature, society and thoughts. Since objectivity is the invariance under certain observocontrol mode and philosophy can only indirectly observe and control the world through the joint observocontrol of all natural sciences, social sciences and even thought sciences, what philosophy studies is actually the invariance under the joint observocontrol of many and many special sciences and to put it specifically, is the invariance under the replacement of

all specific science-related contents, hence the objectivity (objective properties, relations, laws, etc.) of the maximum universality.

For example, the law of quantitative and qualitative changes of dialectics goes like this: under certain condition, the quantitative changes of things can result in the property changes of things when they reach a certain extent. It needs a large quantity of specific scientific reality to verify whether this law is a philosophical proposition. For instance, in Mechanics, a member bar will crack along with the increase of pressure when a certain value of pressure is realized; in Physics, water will change from liquid to gas when its temperature reaches 100°C in a standard atmosphere pressure; in Chemistry, the property of chemical elements changes with the change in number of nuclear charges, etc. Proposition changes won't be resulted if all these specific scientific realities are used to replace the proposition regarding laws of quantitative and qualitative changes, therefore, proposition regarding laws of quantitative and qualitative changes is a philosophical proposition. Another one for example, in his thesis *On Issues of Dialectics*, Lenin listed examples of dialectic contradictions in specific sciences as below to illustrate the Law of the Unity of Opposites: "Plus-minus and differential-integral in Mathematics. Action and reaction in Mechanics. Positive electricity and negative electricity in Physics. Combination and decomposition of atoms in Chemistry. Class conflict in Social Science".

Actually, infinite examples could be presented to support a philosophy proposition, which reflects the greatest universality of philosophy proposition. Broad-spectrum Philosophy summarizes this fact as two conclusions:

- **Conclusion one (equivalence relation):** The mechanism reflected by the philosophy proposition is one equivalence relation of all phenomena that shows this mechanism.

The equivalence relation herein is a mathematics concept, it's a binary relation that meets reflexivity, symmetry and transitivity and it also could be used to describe the sameness and similarity between matters and system. For example, "same gender relationship" is a equivalence relation, it meets "One and Oneself are the same gender" (reflexivity), "if person A and person B are the same gender, then person B and person A are the same gender" (symmetry), "if person A and person B are the same gender and person B and person C are the same gender, then person A and person C are the same gender" (transitivity). In the above examples of quantitative change and qualitative change law, all facts in the concrete science follow quantitative change and qualitative change law, for

the same reason, in the above examples of unity of opposites law, all facts in the concrete science follow law of unity of opposites, so in the sense of “following the same law”, it’s a equivalence relation that meets reflexivity, symmetry and transitivity.

- **Conclusion two (maximal equivalence class):** In the sense of “following the mechanism that is reflected by the same philosophy proposition”, all phenomena that show this mechanism form the maximal equivalence class.

This conclusion is actually an extension to the last conclusion. Mathematically, the function of equivalence is to classify specified set and every classification is an equivalence class. Again, take “same gender relationship” (equivalence relation) as an example, this relation could divide human beings into two classes (men and women), this is a equivalence with distinct boundaries. In philosophy, since “the mechanism reflected by philosophy proposition is an equivalence relation of all phenomena that show this mechanism” (conclusion one), so, this equivalence is certain to classify “all phenomena that show this mechanism” (set) into one equivalence class. Obviously, because philosophy has the greatest universality and widest interdisciplinary nature, hence, this equivalence is the biggest.

In this way, from the aspects of intension (equivalence relation) and extension (equivalence class), these two conclusions of broad-spectrum philosophy accurately describe philosophy’s essential characteristic-universality.

### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PHILOSOPHY NEW CONCEPTION**

The new conception about philosophy in broad-spectrum philosophy inherit the requirements of philosophy’s universality and objectivity from Marxist philosophy, among those, “all concrete science joint observocontrol” is about the universal applicability of philosophy. And “invariance” is objectivity, so it draws a clear line of demarcation with idealism, as well as with “nonphilosophy” and “philosophism”. Besides, it also has new important meaning.

First, it clearly says that the observocontrol method of philosophy is joint observocontrol mode. Any concrete science has its own observation and control mode, such as the astronomical observation method of astronomy, experimental method of mechanics, X-ray method of medicine, archaeological recovery method of archaeology, etc. If science is the knowledge that

reflects objective reality and (correct) philosophy is the knowledge that reflects general laws of nature, society and thought, then philosophy is also science. It’s just that the science of philosophy doesn’t have a specific study object, only the general mechanism and laws. As a science, this characteristic determines that only joint observocontrol mode of all other sciences could be its method. Identifying a specific observocontrol mode would mean so much to establishing the scientificness of philosophy and distinguishing philosophy and specific science.

Second, it affirms that the cognition of philosophy needs to go through the medium level of specific science. The study of philosophy can’t directly face nature, society, or thoughts; those are the study tasks of natural science, social science and thoughts science. Only after all specific sciences provide their respective natural, social and thoughts special laws, can philosophy generalize and summarize these special laws and then get the general laws that apply to all nature, society and thoughts. In ancient Greek when sciences are not differentiated and refined, this is impossible to achieve. So the European classic philosophy with ancient Greek as its representative carries the qualities of simplicity, abstraction and intuition. The process of differentiation and refining of modern natural sciences is also the true formation period of sciences (so-called the knowledge of certain discipline). Because people rely too much on the “Categorization” method, metaphysics and the philosophical thoughts method that partially, statically and separately observe and understand the world emerged. In the period of Marx and Engels, natural science had gone from the era of “Collecting materials” to the era of “Sorting materials”. Some comprehensive, extensive and interdisciplinary subjects began to come out, such as Kant’s nebula theory, Ryle’s geological gradualism, law of conservation of energy, etc., which provided new world view for the world outlook of dialectical materialism and this is the scientific base of dialectical materialism’s comprehensiveness and dialectical nature. The scientific technology of our era, namely modern scientific technology, bears brand new characteristics. Such as traverse and cross quality of systems science, the basic effect that structural mathematics has on all mathematics, the extensiveness and concreteness of theoretical frame and methods of Pan systems Methodology, globality of network technology, etc. these all offer new enlightenment for broad-spectrum philosophy’s birth. Hence, we should attach great importance to scientific technology and getting something good out of modern scientific technology is very important to promoting the study and development of philosophy.

Third, the philosophy concept of broad-spectrum philosophy provides the test criterion of truth of philosophy proposition. Philosophy proposition has the highest universality, so it cannot be tested with the fact from a specific field, but only could be tested with science facts from all specific sciences' related contents and this indirect test reflects the quality (namely highest universality) where philosophy proposition is different from specific science proposition.

The thing needs to be explained is that, "use all (or random) science facts of specific sciences' related contents to test" is a pretty strong requirement, because "all (or random) specific sciences" is developing, hence this criterion has relativity.

Actually, we could understand this rule from many levels. When using all sciences' related contents to replace a proposition, the proposition set that reflects the invariance (invariant relation, invariant law) of objective things constitutes the contents of "The first philosophy". When using natural science's related contents to replace a proposition, the proposition set that reflects the invariance (invariant relation, invariant law) of objective things of nature constitutes the contents of "Nature philosophy". Likewise, you could get the contents of social philosophy, historical philosophy and other philosophies. From this series all the way to the definitions of all sciences, this series fully shows the consistency (they are all invariance under the observocontrol mode) and hierarchy between philosophy and all sciences.

### CONCLUSION

In this study, we have a research of the conception of philosophy given in broad-spectrum philosophy and its significance. "What's philosophy" is a question at once ancient and new and regarding this question,

different philosophical schools or philosophers have different answers. Based on a summary of modern scientific achievements, Broad-spectrum Philosophy gives this matter a new solution. What this thesis concerns includes the theoretical basis of the solution and the significance of it. As a research result, we clearly describe the conception of philosophy given in broad-spectrum philosophy and show the significance of this field.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This study is supported by: Projects of Science and Technology of China.

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