

REALISM FOR REALISTIC PEOPLE

In this innovative book, Hasok Chang constructs a philosophy of science for ‘realistic people’ interested in understanding and promoting the actual practices of inquiry in science and other knowledge-focused areas of life. Inspired by pragmatist philosophy, he reconceives the very notions of reality and truth on the basis of his concept of the ‘operational coherence’ of epistemic activities and offers new pragmatist conceptions of truth and reality as operational ideals achievable in actual scientific practice. Rejecting the version of scientific realism that is concerned with claiming that our theories correspond to an ultimate reality, he proposes instead an ‘activist realism’: a commitment to do all that we can actually do to improve our knowledge of realities. His book will appeal to scholars and students in philosophy, science and the history of science, and all who are concerned about the place of science and empirical truth in society.

HASOK CHANG is the Hans Rausing Professor of History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Cambridge. He is the author of *Inventing Temperature: Measurement and Scientific Progress* (2004), joint winner of the 2006 Lakatos Award, and of *Is Water H₂O? Evidence, Realism and Pluralism* (2012).

REALISM FOR REALISTIC
PEOPLE

A New Pragmatist Philosophy of Science

HASOK CHANG

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*To Gretchen Siglar,
for her curiosity, her insight and her love*

Contents

| | |
|---|----------------|
| <i>List of Illustrations</i> | <i>page</i> ix |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | x |
| | |
| Introduction | I |
| What Is the Problem? | I |
| Pragmatist Notions of Knowledge, Truth and Reality | 3 |
| Scientific Realism as Realistic Activism | 6 |
| What Kind of Book Is This? | 8 |
| A Note on Structure | 11 |
| | |
| 1 Active Knowledge | 12 |
| 1.1 Overview | 12 |
| 1.2 Epistemic Agents | 27 |
| 1.3 Epistemic Activities and Systems of Practice | 33 |
| 1.4 Operational Coherence | 40 |
| 1.5 Inquiry as Aim-Oriented Adjustment | 48 |
| 1.6 Pragmatism and Active Knowledge | 57 |
| | |
| 2 Correspondence | 68 |
| 2.1 Overview | 68 |
| 2.2 Correspondence Realism: Between Metaphysics and Semantics | 83 |
| 2.3 Can Reference Save Correspondence Realism? | 92 |
| 2.4 Faith in Science | 100 |
| 2.5 Real Representations | 111 |
| | |
| 3 Reality | 119 |
| 3.1 Overview | 119 |
| 3.2 How Mind-Framing Works | 131 |
| 3.3 The Achievement of Reality | 142 |
| 3.4 Ontological Pluralism | 148 |
| 3.5 Putting Things Together | 155 |

| | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| 4 | Truth | 163 |
| 4.1 | Overview | 163 |
| 4.2 | Different Kinds of Truth | 173 |
| 4.3 | Empirical Truth and Operational Coherence | 179 |
| 4.4 | Truth as a Quality | 186 |
| 4.5 | Plurality and Incommensurability | 192 |
| 4.6 | Rehabilitating the Pragmatists | 197 |
| 5 | Realism | 204 |
| 5.1 | Overview | 204 |
| 5.2 | Pragmatism and Realism | 216 |
| 5.3 | Internal and Perspectival Realism | 223 |
| 5.4 | Pluralism and Realism | 231 |
| 5.5 | Epistemic Iteration Revisited | 239 |
| 5.6 | Progress and the Scientific Realism Debate | 247 |
| | Closing Remarks | 252 |
| | A Humanist Vision of Knowledge | 252 |
| | The Road Ahead | 253 |
| | Bringing Philosophy Back to Life | 254 |
| | <i>Bibliography</i> | 256 |
| | <i>Index</i> | 275 |

Illustrations

| | | |
|-----|--|----------------|
| 1.1 | An experimental arrangement demonstrating the electromagnetic effect first discovered by Hans Christian Ørsted | <i>page</i> 52 |
| 1.2 | Faraday's compact rotation device | 55 |
| 2.1 | Ball-and-stick molecular models by August Hofmann | 112 |

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xi

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