

ON MATSUMOTO SHIRO'S THEORY OF TEMPORAL CAUSALITY IN CRITICAL BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT. *Matsumoto Shiro, a notable proponent of Critical Buddhism movement in Japan, proposes a new and unique understanding of causality in Buddhism. His theory of temporal causality is noteworthy in suggesting the possibility of teleological causality in Buddhism that creates a new understanding of the notion of impermanence in Buddhism. Matsumoto argues that the notion of impermanence can be understood properly when irreversible progress is introduced in the notion with the possibility of unexpected changes in causality that can be allowed by supposing that the flow of causality comprises certain durations of changeless states like a straight line and their bending in unexpectedly acute angles. Literally, incessant change produces no change, only leading to permanent and fixed circular movement without any progress. His new understanding of impermanence in Buddhism is noteworthy especially in relation to the Aristotelian “notion of the naturally telic and autonomic organism.” In other words, Matsumoto’s theory of temporal causality as a result of his critique against the established order of Japanese Buddhism is also noteworthy as a critique against contemporary trends of academia based upon the notion of “a materialist inanimate mechanism.”*

KEYWORDS: *Matsumoto Shiro, Temporal Causality, Spatial Causality, Critical Buddhism*

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О ТЕОРИИ ВРЕМЕННОЙ ПРИЧИННОСТИ МАЦУМОТО ШИРО, В КРИТИЧЕСКОМ БУДДИЗМЕ

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АБСТРАКТ: *Мацумото Широ (Matsumoto Shiro) является известным представителем критического буддизма в Японии, и он предлагает новое и уникальное понимание причинности в буддизме. Его теория временной причинности заслуживает внимания. Эта теория выдвигает возможность телеологической причинности в буддизме, и она создает новое понимание понятия временности (изменчивости) в буддизме. Мацумото Широ доказывает, что понятие временности понимается правильно, если понятие необратимого прогресса вводится в концептуальные построения, но с возможностью неожиданных изменений в действии причинных сил, таким образом допуская, что поток причинности включает в себя все периоды неизменных состояний, такие как прямая линия и ее непредвиденные (неожиданные) изгибы под острыми углами. В буквальном смысле, тогда, непрекращающееся изменение не производит никаких изменений, но, тем не менее, приводит к постоянному и фиксированному круговому движению без какого-либо прогресса. Его новое понимание изменчивости в буддизме, заслуживает внимания, особенно в отношении Аристотелевского «понятия о естественном целеорганизованном и автономном организме». Другими словами, теория временной причинности Мацумото Широ, являющаяся результатом его критики установленного порядка в Японском буддизме, заслуживает внимания также и как критика против современных академических тенденций, основоположенных на принципах «материалистического неодушевленного механицизма».*

КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА: *Мацумото Широ, временная причинность, пространственная причинность, критический буддизм*

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Заключение

Introduction

In modern science, among the four causes specified by Aristotle, the efficient cause is nearly the only cause that has survived, which might be regarded as illustrating the poverty of modern academia, severely narrowing the scope of the academic observation of the world, especially debilitating the human capacity to find a teleological meaning and purpose in the world. This narrowness results specifically into our limited observation of cosmos as a mechanical system with no direction. Further, in our understanding of human culture from such a mechanistic perspective, the peculiar humaneness of a human being as a free agent becomes unrecognizable due to the narrowness of modern science confined into determinism and randomness [Yuval Noah Harari, 2016]. In such a situation, there have been diverse efforts to recover a teleological meaning in the modern intellectual world. Among such efforts, for example, Mariusz Tabaczek's recent article [Mariusz Tabaczek, 2013] is noteworthy. In this article, he proposes the contemporary utility of "formal rather than physical (efficient) causality" for solving some tricky problems in the theory of emergence and downward causation. He expects that "This breakdown of causal monism in science opens a way to the retrieval of the fourfold Aristotelian notion of causality."

In the Buddhist academia, of course, there have been various efforts, including the comparison with the ideas of Aristotle.² Among such efforts, Critical Buddhism is noteworthy as one of such pursuits in that it attempts to recover a teleological meaning in the Buddhist world of Japan through historical critiques of Buddhist ideas in India, China, and Japan. [Jamie Hubbard, 1997] Of course, there have been many debates about the justifiability of the claims by the scholars of Critical Buddhism. For example, Vladimir Korobov [Vladimir Korobov, 2005] is noteworthy in his observation that "Buddhism in general and *Yogācāra* Buddhism in particular builds its epistemology on the basis of self-awareness and existential responsibility rather than on admission of Absolute Reality that denudes a person of the option and designates strata for different living beings." This observation is intriguing together with his focus on Kierkegaard's theory that "The more consciousness, the more self; the more consciousness, the more will; the more will, the more self. A person who has no will at all is no self, but the more will he has, the more consciousness of self he has also." His observation seems to compensate and reinforce the efforts by the scholars of Critical Buddhism in emphasizing the role of will in temporal causality.

According to Critical Buddhism, Buddhist ideas have often been wrongly interpreted in its own tradition and in modern academia as positing spatial causality as its central theme. Against such an interpretation, Matsumoto Shiro, a notable proponent of Critical Buddhism movement in Japan, proposes a new and unique understanding of temporal causality in Buddhism.

² Stephen McCarthy [Stephen McCarthy, 2001], among such efforts, is noteworthy in asserting that Buddhists, including the Dalai Lama, need to read and appropriate the works of Aristotle in that Aristotle may be useful for the Buddhist pursuits of classical and universal human rights in overcoming the recent debates over Asian values vs Western values.

1. Spatial Causality versus Temporal Causality

Generally speaking, in Buddhism, the theory of causality takes a central importance. The Buddha's focus on causality might have been possible due to his historical and socio-cultural context at India in the sixth century BCE. [Mavis Fenn 2012: 17] The development of iron tools due to the progress in ferrous metallurgy facilitated the urbanization of human community through the rapid development of economic productivity, which accompanied the disintegration of previous communities by the facilitated mobility through the invention of various vehicles and explosively increased trade. This urbanization relativized each community's cherished world-views, allowing people to criticize their own traditional values and to seek more rational ideals. Through such a process, the Buddha sought an absolutely reliable path toward happiness by overcoming our worldly sufferings in his observation of causality. So, he shattered previous obsession on our self by proposing the doctrine of no self.

It is even said that Buddhism is none other than the justification of causality in the world. Then, what kind of causality does it assert? The simplest principle of causality proposed by the Buddha was that "When A exists, B exists. When A disappears, B disappears." Here, what is signified by the A and what is signified by the B? In the history of Buddhist ideas, numerous scholars have proposed diverse theories of causality, interpreting the principle variously. [Paul Williams 2005: 61]

Broadly speaking, two types of causality have been recognized in Buddhism, spatial causality, and temporal causality. For example, spatial causality is observed in the case of the empty space in a room allowing the movement of sentient beings in it. The empty space does not cause the movement in a direct way of causing, but it is called a cause since it allows the movement so that it can be said to be an indirect cause for the movement. Further, when A is inside B, B is said to be a cause of A. The empty space of B allows the existence of the A inside it. Further, in the enumeration of 10 coins from the 1st coin to the 10th coin, the 1st coin is the cause of the 2nd coin in that the former causes the latter to be called "the 2nd coin." [Dan Lusthaus 1997: 44] This way of defining causality loosens and expands the boundary of causation. Matsumoto Shiro criticizes this way of defining causality in that it hinders the critical observation of temporal causation in the world, especially of social causation in a community in relation to social discrimination.

Matsumoto argues that the notion of impermanence can be understood properly when irreversible progress is introduced in the notion with the possibility of unexpected changes in causality that can be allowed by supposing that the flow of causality comprises certain durations of changeless states like a straight line and their bending in unexpectedly acute angles. [Paul L. Swanson 1997: 8] Thus, his understanding of impermanence introduces a sustained duration of 'permanent' states in order to suggest a genuine process of 'change.' Literally, incessant changes produce no change, only leading to permanent and fixed circular movement without any progress. His new understanding of impermanence in Buddhism is noteworthy especially in relation to the Aristotelian "notion of the naturally telic and autonomic organism." In other words, Matsumoto's theory of temporal causality as a result of

his critique against the established order of Japanese Buddhism is also noteworthy as a critique against contemporary trends of academia based upon the notion of “a materialist inanimate mechanism.” [Matsumoto Shiro 2002: 369]

The contemporary notion of cosmos as a “materialist inanimate mechanism” can be compared to the theory of dhātu-vāda posited by Matsumoto Shiro as the foundation of ancient Indian monistic thoughts. [Matsumoto Shiro 2002: 370] Matsumoto Shiro criticizes ancient Indian monistic thoughts in that they ascribe all the phenomena in the world to the one ultimate basis called “Brahman” just like deterministic modern scientists ascribe all the phenomena in the cosmos to the event of Big Bang as the ultimate source of our universe. According to Matsumoto Shiro, ancient Indian thinkers following this way of speculation thought that all the phenomena in the world are justified as the effects of the ultimate one cause. All the events in the world are regarded by them as occurring by the causation process from the one basis. Ultimately, therefore, any actions, including social discrimination, are destined to occur without any responsibility to the agents, ultimately being ascribed to the one basis, although this might be regarded by the followers of the ancient Indian monistic thinkers as thwarting the true import of their ideas. Responsibility, however, presupposes the free will of agents. If there is no free will, there is no responsibility.

Against cyclical redundancy, Matsumoto Shiro asserts that linear temporal progress is the proper course of causality. Matsumoto Shiro’s theory of temporal causality is noteworthy in suggesting the possibility of teleological causality in Buddhism that creates a new understanding of the notion of impermanence in Buddhism. Previously, the notion of impermanence in Buddhism had usually been understood by most Buddhists and scholars to suggest only that there are only incessant changes in the universe. He pinpoints that only incessant changes just result in a cyclical movement that is permanently redundant. If there is to be a truly progressive movement, this movement should be posited from the perspective of a combination of straight lines and their acute-angled turns. This combination is necessary so as to produce unpredictable changes that can be regarded as impermanent, while the above cyclical movement is ultimately permanent. Here, their impermanence is to signify not their redundant meaninglessness but their unpredictable progress that is full of meaningful moments. According to this interpretation by Matsumoto Shiro, the truth of impermanence by the Buddha does not signify the meaninglessness of the world for us but its meaningful and noteworthy quality. The causal process of the cosmos is to have a direction that is not only unpredictable but also ultimately meaningful in its progress. Cosmos is regarded no more as a mechanical system that is deterministic and cyclical and predictable but rather as an organic system that is open to unpredictable changes and has a teleological value.

2. The Case of Kisa Gotami from the Perspective of Temporal Causality

Concretely, the early teachings of the Buddha are full of diverse anecdotes that record the dramatic changes in the lives of the Buddha’s followers. For example, we

can focus on an exemplary story about a woman whose life reveals a dramatic turn through her encounter with the Buddha. Stephen J. Laumakis, the author of *An Introduction to Buddhist Philosophy*, introduces the beginning of this story as follows.

The story (in brief), whose origins are unknown, involves a woman named Kisa Gotami, who like Cinderella, manages to overcome a dreadful situation and eventually has everything she could want in life – i.e., a loving husband, a beautiful son, a supportive family, etc. [Stephen J. Laumakis 2008: 41]

Here, Stephen J. Laumakis reminds us of Cinderella, which forebodes, in an ironic way, another downfall of her journey in life that is epitomized as follows.

Unfortunately, and somewhat like Job in the Hebrew Scriptures, she suddenly and tragically loses her son, her family, and her mental health. She refuses to accept her son's death and carries his lifeless body about while asking her neighbors for medicine. [Stephen J. Laumakis 2008: 41]

Likewise, Stephen J. Laumakis reminds us of “Job in the Hebrew Scriptures.” His mention of Cinderella and Job in sequence illuminates respective characteristics of the first and second turns in Kisa Gotami's life. That is, her first turn can be characterized by her secular success, while her second turn can be characterized by her secular failure, which reaches its culmination in her own failure to maintain her own identity. Feeling beside herself with grief at the death of her own son, she tries to recover his life in vain. Thus, the loss or death of one's secular self leads to the recovery or birth of one's sacred self. In this way, one is awakened to another and transcendent dimension of life in the universe, which is introduced by a wise man recommending her to see the Buddha for help. This awakening requires her quest for an impossible item, as described in the following.

Eventually, a wise man recommends that she go to see the Buddha for help. The Buddha agrees to help her but only after she has visited every house in her town and obtained a mustard seed from those who have not been touched by death. [Stephen J. Laumakis 2008: 41]

Initially, Kisa Gotami does not realize the difficulty of obtaining “a mustard seed.” As suggested in the following, the absolute difficulty of obtaining a mustard seed suggests that awakening to the sacred dimension requires despair in the secular quest.

Kisa Gotami eagerly tries to fulfill the Buddha's command but sadly she soon realizes that she cannot collect any mustard seeds because every house has been visited by death. Finally, she returns to the Buddha and he heals her with the medicine of his teachings about the impermanence of

all things, the universality of death, and the necessity of compassion for all beings. [Stephen J. Laumakis 2008: 41]

Herein, “sadly” has a double implication. Kisa Gotami’s sadness includes a new hope for her transcendent leap beyond secular strivings. In short, Kisa Gotami, once a daughter-in-law of a wealthy man, after the death of her only son, suffers a great agony, and finds peace through being awakened to her freedom from the fixed destiny of most of contemporary women in ancient India by the Buddha’s request to obtain a mustard seed from a house where no one is found to have died.

In this story, the Buddha does not request her to accept her own destiny as a bereaved mother as other bereaved mothers. He requests her to observe similar cases of bereavement and conclude her own judgment accordingly. We usually do not think deeply and broadly enough to overcome our sorrowful experiences. We are usually absorbed into our own sorrowfulness so that we often forget that there are alternative possibilities.

Kisa Gotami, after her own observation of similar cases, decides to select her own path transcending the usual paths of most of the bereaved women in those days. When she observed the various cases of bereavement with focus on the bereaved people’s responses, although she could not obtain a handful of mustard seeds because of there being no one family without any deceased person, noticed that most of them have taken death and its influence on them for granted, and decides to refuse following their paths and seek an alternative path by joining the Sangha community founded by the Buddha. Unlike most of the contemporary ordinary daughters-in-law, she took a new path, leaving behind the customary destiny of a daughter-in-law without a son. In those days as well as in modern days in India, a daughter-in-law without a son is usually destined to live a hard life, without any respect from her own family. Kisa Gotami, however, leaving her own family behind, refuses to take the disrespect from them for granted, taking a new path of earning a new kind of respect from many others.

3. Matsumoto Shiro’s Understanding of Karmic Causality in Buddhism

Even noteworthy is the case of Angulimala. Angulimala had been a serial killer before meeting with the Buddha. [Satish Kumar, 2006] He became a faithful follower of the Buddha after being awakened to the truth that his worldview was static in spite of the fact that there is no necessity of its becoming static. Previously, he had been deterministic in his own life so that he had no choice other than killing numerous people. Now, he understands that there is another path toward real happiness. Usually, the Eastern idea of reincarnation is interpreted as follows.

In “New Age” thinking one often hears the view that if you are sick, it is because you “chose” it. This belief no doubt comes from the Eastern idea of reincarnation: whatever you are suffering from in this life is the karmic result of your sins in a past life. [John Sanford 1993: 202]

Matsumoto Shiro, however, repudiates this way of interpretation as a corruption

from the correct teaching of the Buddha. [Matsumoto Shiro 2002: 374] According to him, you are living this way because you take this way of life for granted. Your present situation is influenced but not determined by your past deeds in a past life. Your present life is also, more importantly, constructed by your own present choice and decision. You need not accept your present situation totally. You always have other alternatives to consider. The teaching of the Buddha about impermanence is important in that it makes us recognize other possibilities leading to a new way of life. By being awakened to these alternatives, our lives are open to transcending present limitations and shackles. In other words, if you are sick, it is not because you chose it but because you continue to choose it presently. You do not need to continue to choose it presently. You can choose other alternative courses, especially better alternative ways for yourself and others. Therefore, Angulimala chooses to stop killing people and join the Sangha community by following the teaching of the Buddha. The Buddha, having been awakened to the truth of impermanence for himself, found a direction in the process of causation within the cosmos. If the world is permanent and deterministically fixed, there is no possibility of such changes. In addition, there will be no improvement of human society.

Previously, Buddhism has often been interpreted to be a teaching that recommends aloofness toward the world. For Buddhists, our everyday world has been meaningless, full of sufferings. For them, impermanence has signified the meaninglessness of the world. For Matsumoto Shiro, however, impermanence has come to signify the openness of the world toward new and unpredictable influences. For him, impermanence is not merely an objective truth of the world but a subjective truth that needs an insight and practical application of it to everyday affairs of us. If we think that the world is full of meaningless and cyclical movements, we become static observers without any effort to improve our own lives in it.

Now, Matsumoto Shiro argues that this previous understanding is faulty in that it does not reflect justly the temporal process in causality that is essential, especially, in understanding the consciousness of sentient beings. Matsumoto Shiro suggests that the domination of this static understanding of impermanence in Buddhism has led to the failure of Buddhism in its efforts toward social and cultural improvements due to its complacent attitudes toward the established social order of any society without any progressive and telic strivings, further promoting the absurdly spatial understanding of causality without any critical observation of causality. According to Matsumoto Shiro, when impermanence is understood only in the dimension of incessant changes, the flow of consciousness cannot be regarded as having any progress since incessant changes without any duration of changeless state lead only to circular movement without any progress, which cannot be regarded properly as 'impermanent.'

4. Matsumoto Shiro's Introduction of Unexpected Changes in Causality

Our ideas do not alter the law of the natural world but actually influences seriously the course of human history. Fixation upon cyclical repetition contributes to the justification of social discrimination in the existing world order. In order to break

the shackles of social discrimination, we should repudiate the ideology of generative monism.

According to Matsumoto Shiro, the Buddha was awakened to the possibility of the unpredictable changes in life's direction, refusing to follow hereditary and customary ways of living.[Matsumoto Shiro 2002: 366] This new perspective might be explained to have been possible due to the social context of his period, when the strong grip of tradition upon human community was loosened by the radical change of social structure through migration of many people from rural life to city life, which resulted into the disintegration of existing social stratification, allowing many ambitious intellectual thinkers to think audaciously and creatively about the vision of their communal future, breaking free from the previous fixed thinking of their precursors. The Buddha found that what had been supposed as the eternal order of the world was totally groundless. He found that they had been sanctified by the accumulation of erroneous and vicious ideas devised by previous autocratic ruling elites.

For example, the traditional caste system was not a cosmological truth but just a fabrication of rapacious ruling elites. The system was not so strong as to be invincible. The system could be crushed by the collaborative efforts of conscientious intellectuals and oppressed people. The world was not an illusion to be avoided or transcended without any efforts to intervene in its organization. The world was full of potential changes. A new and equalitarian society was not just a dream but also a vision to be achieved by our own efforts.

Matsumoto Shiro, by introducing the concept of linear temporal causality, succeeds in clarifying the essence of the principle of causality proposed by the Buddha, illuminating its focus on the emancipation of humanity from self-imposed shackles of institutionalized ideologies. There is nothing natural and eternal that cannot be broken by us in the social customs of humanity, especially in discriminatory customs. They are just artifacts made by ill-willed ideologues.

For the Buddha, the natural world itself was not a perfect one to be modeled after. It was incomplete. It had to be corrected by our conscientious efforts toward improvement. The Buddha's emphasis was put on our artificial efforts against our natural propensities.³ The Buddha was sure that our natural state can be improved by our artificial efforts. However, even our artificial efforts begin with our agreement to the improvement. How can we come to agree to the state? We should be persuaded to do so. We should be confident of the positive character of the state. We should be awakened to the goodness of the state. How can we become awakened? How can we overcome our slumber? How could the Buddha enkindle the minds of his followers with the desire to become awakened like him? We should recognize the basic ability of ordinary people to perceive the bliss of the Buddha above the usual happiness of us.

³ We can find similar ideas in the thought of Xunzi, a great Confucian thinker in the Warring States Period of China. Usually, eastern ideas are regarded as just following the way of nature, although there are a few important thinkers who refuse to accept the way of nature, emphasizing our own artificial efforts. [Xunzi, 1994]

When a person is satisfied with his or her present state of affairs, the Buddha awakens him or her to disillusionment. How can he do so? It cannot be coerced. It should be awakened by himself or by herself. The Buddha can only nudge him. The Buddha has no absolute power to awaken anyone. The process of awakening occurs by the subtle collaboration of many elements including the efforts of the Buddha and the capacities of the followers. The Buddha observes keenly the psychological state of the individual follower. He can provide a small amount of help to those who are nearly ready to the awakening.

The Buddha makes it possible for the followers to see other possibilities beyond their own present fixated patterns of behavior. For example, Kisa Gotami was not persuaded directly by the Buddha. She was just requested to visit every home of her village to find a home with no dead family members. If she were overly obstinate not to hear the Buddha's words, she might have not been possibly awakened. The Buddha only provided appropriate conditions for her impending awakening. Importantly, however, the Buddha provided her with the environment where she can come to perceive her own destiny from a new and transcendent perspective.

Here, Matsumoto Shiro's emphasis on acute-angled changes in causation process is noteworthy. The Buddha's efforts might be interpreted to be the efforts to break open the closed hearts of his followers who have adhered to their hereditary patterns of behavior. Usually, people tend to continue their patterns of behavior until they are challenged severely by nearly catastrophic events. Ordinary people are usually obstinate in keeping their habitual patterns of living.

When there is no other option to select than changing their attitude and becoming open to other perspectives, they are ready to be awakened to the truth that their cherishing of old ways was futile and foolish. The unexpected hearty response of the Buddha toward Angulimala in spite of his heinous crime of killing numerous people awakens him to his own potential of becoming a new person, although he had given up his own life totally without any hope of improvement.

Thus, Matsumoto Shiro emphasizes that the truth of no-self is essential to the change of people's minds and hearts. When you are awakened that there is no fixed self, you are awakened to the truth that you are free to change your life. In other words, you are free to become a new person, a free person who does not just follow habitual patterns of ancestors but decide to choose an alternative way of life that is open to transcendent goals.

Our observation of the natural world in its causation process necessarily reflects and influences our subjectivity. When we objectify the natural world, we are reciprocally objectified. Our own objectification can lead to our own reification.⁴ When we think that the natural world is a closed system governed by an inexorable law of causation without any intervention from outside influences, we also tend to think of ourselves as subject to the law. In other words, our own subjectivity becomes accordingly mechanized. That is, we become a part of the inexorable causation

⁴ This process of reification is examined thoroughly by Wilfred Cantwell Smith in his several books and articles, for example, in his *Towards a World Theology: Faith and the Comparative History of Religion*. [Wilfred Cantwell Smith, 1981]

process, taking our shackles for granted without seeking freedom from them. When we see the cosmos from a teleological perspective, however, we tend to see ourselves as teleological beings. Thus, our static attitude toward nature is not just a requirement for objective observation of it, but it may be problematic in that it also reifies our own identity. The world appears to us as we perceive it. When we try to see it objectively, it appears to have objective existence. Without an observer, the world cannot be observed. The observer's perspective constructs the structure of the world in a significant degree.

Ultimately, the world might be inexorably determined from its beginning to its end. But we are living and experiencing it as an undetermined world that is open to our influences. We are living not as static observers without any feeling but as agents of various movements that sometimes fail to maintain self-confidence and sometimes become enchanted by their own imagination about the world. We dance with the world, sometimes becoming grief-stricken and sometimes becoming gleeful by elating achievements in the world.

Not only our calm and static observation but also our dancing and gleeful movements reveal something important about the world. The mirror never smiles first. When we see the world with a grim face, it also responds to us with a grim face. Of course, even when we see the world with a smiling face, the world might respond to us with a grim face, ridiculing us. However, even such a world might look different from the world observed from a static perspective without any engagement.

Conclusion

When our mind becomes empty, the world looks empty to us. There can be no phenomenon without any observer. Modern science has mainly pursued to observe the world objectively without any distortion by the influence and interpretation from the observer. Yuval Noah Harari, a historian and author of million seller books, even mentions the establishment of the "Data Religion," depreciating the value and significance of conscious observer in that such an observer is meaningless from the perspective of modern science [Yuval Noah Harari, 2017]. This pursuit, however, is was destined to fail since there cannot be any observation without a concrete observer. We are not lifeless observers. Our observation is influenced by diverse conditions. We cannot identify those conditions objectively. When another observer reports the same results as mine, we tend to think that our observation is objective, although both share the same limitations in actuality. We can never know all the influences.

Of course, the mechanical cosmos as observed by ourselves in a static state might be really important, but the dancing cosmos as observed by ourselves in a gleeful state might be as important. Our lives should be lived within time. We cannot remain as static observers. We have to decide numerous things every day, planning our future for a long term. The world might fail our expectations. This, however, does not mean that our expectations cannot be correctly justified.

The world has many dimensions. In spite of the fact that our body is composed of various chemical elements, we should not be regarded as chemical beings without

any spiritual elements. The world might be reduced to physical elements in its material dimension. But our immediate experience of ourselves within time as irreducibly spiritual and teleological beings should not be denied. Although our reduction of traditional stories into a limited number of elements might reveal something about them, it should not be regarded as exhausting the meaning of them. Smiling faces of our children and our happy feelings due to them are authentically existing truths that are worthy of our attention without any efforts to analyze and dissolve them into several objective elements. Reducing them into simple chemical complexes forming a data flow cannot be justified without endangering our humanity.

Further, the spiritual meaning of some mountains for a religious person, for example, cannot be examined by our scientific devices. Some scientists might rather depreciate such a meaning as valueless in that it should be regarded as a result from a hallucinatory state of mind. In fact, this dimension might exist only within our imagination. Our subjective imagination, of course, should not be accepted without any reserve. It should be subject to the critique of other observers. It should not claim its own absolute objectivity. Extraordinary people's interpretation and imagination about the cosmos, however, is as important as a scientist's.

In short, Matsumoto Shiro's theory of temporal causality, can be regarded as significant in that it enables us to perceive ourselves and the world around us from the perspective of humane growth unlike the prevalent mechanistic perspective in modern science. Since we can utilize various frames of observation in approaching our universe, including the mechanistic perspective that has been overly valued recently, we should be able to diversify our approaches to our universe, which will be also beneficial to our appreciation of it, colorfully enriching our lives in it. Matsumoto's perspective is surely worthy of our attention in such a process.

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