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Philosophy in the Epoch of Alternative Facts: An Invitation from East Asia

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Abstract

The primary aim of this essay was to elucidate the unique philosophical concept of “the non-interpretive”, which Masaya Chiba, one of the most prominent philosophers in East Asia, formulated mainly by bridging the theories of Quentin Meillassoux and Graham Harman, who have generally been reckoned as two of the most pivotal proponents in the contemporary philosophical movement dubbed Speculative Realism. In order to achieve the aim, the first part clarified the chief arguments and doctrines of Meillassoux’s Speculative Materialism and Harman’s Object-Oriented Philosophy. Thereupon, the second and main part investigated how Chiba invented the concept, what it precisely meant, and what insights it could offer for us. The concluding section summarized the chief arguments of this paper and sketched a worldview which we could adopt in order to survive the turbulent epoch of alternative facts and post-truth.

Keywords: *Philosophy, Speculative Realism, Quentin Meillassoux, Graham Harman, Masaya Chiba*

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Introduction: Purpose and Context of the Study

The paramount objective of this essay is dissecting the philosophical concept of “the non-interpretive”, which was invented by the Japanese philosopher Masaya Chiba. Supposedly, both the philosopher and the concept are not familiar outside of Japan. Hence, in order to properly situate this study in a wider context and to clarify why the concept deserves an explication, let me begin this introduction with a big question: “What should philosophers do?” Myriads of our ancestors have supplied their own answers since antiquity; some (e.g., Leibnitz, 2014; Whitehead, 1978) regarded it as exploring the fundamental principles of the world, while others like Quine (2013) averred that it should be logical analysis of language. Besides those stances, not a few philosophers have adopted a view that a task of philosophy was *to seek a novel worldview*. The French philosopher Merleau-Ponty (2006) spelled out the crux of this type of position, remarking: “True philosophy consists in relearning to look at the world” (p. xxiii). Put differently, one of the philosophers’ jobs is *to provide a new perspective*.

In this sense, such figures as Foucault, Derrida, and Deleuze were genuine philosophers. As standard-bearers of post-structuralism, a sweeping intellectual movement of the last decades of the twentieth century, they constituted immense contributions to revisions of diverse preconceptions that had been naïvely harbored for a long while. Though those post-structuralists tackled a variety of matters, one could deem it to be a commonly accepted fact that substantial emphasis was laid upon the notion of *difference* (Sajed, 2013; Schouten 2010), and that an orientation toward *relationalism* was widely shared (Murdoch, 2005; Sampanikou, 2017). Furnishing standpoints on which one can ponder issues with a different mindset, the arguments of those philosophers proved to be mighty

instruments to criticize an ideological regime and a dogmatic discourse, helping to correct social discriminations against minorities and to disseminate ethics characterized by words like co-existence, relationship, and diversity.

Whereas their cogent theories begot beneficial consequences for society, it has been pointed out that those who perverted them caused unignorable injurious effects (Ryan, 1989; Taylor, 1994). The most grievous of them is the absolutization of *relativism*. Relativism denotes an idea that “knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute.” (“relativism”, 2002, p. 1146); as one can facilely fathom out, a relativistic thought is quite useful as a tool to scrutinize existing, biased conventions. However, when it is exploited as a theoretical foundation for an illogical insistence, it can be awfully malefic, for, if each person has his/her own measure of all things, all normative criteria must be deprived of their authenticity. It means that one is required to grant equal rights to all evaluative statements, whether it is delivered on the basis of scientific evidence or made out of fanaticism. It is often maintained that we now live in such a *post-truth* world where there is no absolute truth (Hasian, 2018; Reinhoud, 2019).

Of course, philosophers have not turned a blind eye to this critical state in which one daily encounters arbitrary, *alternative facts*, namely “pseudo-information, presented as fact to entice a willing listener or reader into emotional connection with the writer or speaker” (Geiser, 2019, p. 9). In actuality, theories which strive to set forward a remedy for the situation have begun to gain traction recently, and one can adduce three conspicuous movements materializing in the philosophical sphere: New Materialism, New Realism, and Speculative Realism. Contra post-structuralist, relativistic approaches, which were indubitably *epistemological*, their denominations

manifestly bespeak that they all have an *ontological* inclination in common, which implies that an interest in *the real* and *hard reality* is mounting. The thinkers who have exerted probably the most significant impacts are Quentin Meillassoux and Graham Harman, who are usually held to be belonging to the camp of Speculative Realism. Their singular ideas have exercised marked influences not only on philosophy but also humanities in general.

These newfangled philosophies have affected the intellectual scene of the Far East too, and books which handle them have been produced in these years (see Shimizu, 2017; Imori, 2019). No one will gainsay that Masaya Chiba, who translated Meillassoux's masterpiece *After Finitude* with two peers, has contributed most to the promulgation of Speculative Realist theories in Japan and is the leading expert on them. Having studied Meillassoux's and Harman's philosophies since 2011 and written a number of papers more or less inspired by them (e.g., Chiba, 2012a; 2015; 2016), he has evolved his own philosophy which, albeit reflecting some influence of post-structuralism, has carved out an unconventional niche for itself. The cardinal keynote of Chiba's thought is, in a word, *non-relationality*. Certainly, non-relationality has been treated by a few eminent philosophers of the past like Badiou (2009); still, it was rarely a prime issue for a philosophical inquiry. The Japanese philosopher signalizes himself in that he has continued paying his primary heed to the apparently nihilistic topic since his doctoral dissertation (viz., Chiba, 2012b). One should be mindful that Chiba has never intended to bring forth pessimistic contentions by thematizing non-relationality. Rather, what his philosophy has endeavored to do is exploring and advancing a new perspective.

Chiba's method of achieving this aim is peculiar—namely, by creating original philosophical concepts that can

operate as lenses through which to critique the world from an uncommon slant. Amongst them, the concept of “the non-interpretive” appears to be possessing a promising potential to renovate our worldview by enabling us to be aware of the ubiquity of non-relationality in the world, to positively acknowledge the otherness of different beings, and thus to willingly embrace a surprise that another existence may give to us at any moment. This is why this paper has set a dissection of the concept as its foremost goal.

To attain the objective, the remainder of this paper is composed of three sections. The first section clarifies the chief arguments and tenets of Meillassoux’s and Harman’s philosophies since they offered vital impetus to Chiba’s creation of “the non-interpretive”. Thereupon, the second and main section investigates how Chiba invented the concept, what it precisely means, and what insights we can gain from it. The concluding section gives a rundown of the whole discussion, and then sketches a worldview that one can adopt to live through the turbulent epoch of alternative facts and post-truth.

Speculative Realism: Meillassoux and Harman

As I observed just now and as Chiba (2016b) himself indicated, he achieved the invention of “the non-interpretive” principally with the aid of perceptive arguments which he learned from two novel philosophies grouped under the generic label of Speculative Realism, though other thinkers who are not reckoned as its major constituents (e.g. Laruelle and Malabou) had also exerted some influence. The two Speculative Realists whose ideas offered Chiba the most substantial inspiration for the formulation of the concept are Quentin Meillassoux, the originator of Speculative Materialism, and Graham Harman, the Iowa-born mastermind of Object-Oriented Philosophy

(OOP). In the light of the circumstances, below I will provide a brief review of the marrow of their philosophical systems.

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For a starter, let us check out the term Speculative Realism, the meta-category that covers the Speculative Materialism and Object-Oriented Philosophy among its branches. We should note that it is an uncommonly extensive classification, so that the theories reckoned as being under the banner often differ remarkably from one another, say, in the agenda, in the primary objectives, and sometimes even in the fundamental principles. For example, there are some (e.g., Brassier, 2007) who advocate a nihilistic materialism, whereas others (e.g., Grant, 2006) pursue a vitalistic model.

Still, there is a handful of shared elements that loosely unite the batch of those sundry theorists. The most crucial of them is the will to refute, in Davies' (2017) phrase, "the dominant paradigm in post-Kantian philosophy" (p. 51), which Meillassoux (2008a) identified as "correlationism", scilicet, "the idea according to which we only ever have access to the correlation between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from the other" (p. 5). By contrasting it with other stances in philosophy, Harman (2011a) offered a limpid explanation of the common adversary for Speculative Realists:

What all have in common is their rejection of ... 'correlationism'. Whereas realists assert the existence of a world independent of human thought and idealists deny such an autonomous world, correlationism adopts an apparently sophisticated intermediate position in which human and world come only as a pair and cannot be addressed outside their mutual correlation. (p. vii)

This challenge to correlationism is, in fact, the very reason why Speculative Realism gathered huge momentum soon after its advent and has become a sensation, for, as Sparrow (2014) astutely stated, correlationism has been “the default attitude...of most continental, as well as some analytic, philosophy since Kant (p. 86), and, in Brassier’s (2007) words, “the reigning doxa of post-metaphysical philosophy” (p.50); in a nutshell, Speculative Realists have flung down the gauntlet to a presupposition of virtually all philosophies from Kant’s transcendental idealism to post-structuralist thoughts.

Some may want to ask why Speculative Realists consider correlationism so problematic that it should be disclaimed, remembering that those who would be reckoned as being trapped in it have pulled off undeniably respectable accomplishments. True, correlationist philosophers, unconsciously positing that “there is neither human without world nor world without human, but only a primordial correlation or rapport between the two” (Harman, 2011c, p. 78), have ever improved our knowledge of the world as it relates to us and vice versa, and we should not disesteem those feats like the corrections of inequalities fostered by social constructionism, for which post-structuralists—archetypical correlationists—purveyed effective theoretical devices.

Yet we should not overlook problems pertaining to it, and two of them are especially serious. The first is anthropocentrism. Meillassoux (2008a) revealed that, as long as one, whether implicitly or explicitly, accepts correlationism, he/she cannot literally understand a scientific statement describing a primeval occasion which happened before the emergence of human consciousness, while Harman (2010) showed that correlationism should, wrongly, incapacitate us from discussing interactions between existences “unless some human observer is on the scene to witness these interactions”

(p. 156). In short, all shapes of correlationism are, by privileging the human-world relation, bound to require a philosopher to focus on human-centered matters, interdicting him/her from philosophizing any reality in itself. The second and gravest problem is, as I intimated in the introduction, the radicalization of relativism; this is a natural consequence of an extreme form of correlationism, because it, alleging that each single subject can never gain access to reality beyond his/her experience of it, enjoins the subject to equate reality as it is experienced.

As Morton (2013) asserted with vehemence, the excessive predominance of correlationism and the attendant anthropocentric and relativistic bend in philosophy ought to be redressed now. Hence, along with the endeavor to confute correlationism, Speculative Realists aspire to “a return to speculating the nature of reality independently of human thought” (Le Grande, 2019, p. 3). To express it in another fashion, a philosopher who can be tagged as a Speculative Realist is purported to work to “decenter humans as the ultimate arbiters of what can be said to exist and have experiences” (Dudley, 2014, p. 329), and to “think beyond human finitude” (Ellis, 2018, p. 141). Briefly, Speculative Realists have sought to reinstate existences and phenomena that are not necessarily related to humans as proper themes for a philosophical exploration. Needless to say, both Meillassoux and Harman have pursued this target, and, as the segments below will clarify, each of them has demonstrated interesting axioms in the course of refining his own system.

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Keeping the commonality in mind, we should then identify the singular qualities which differentiate Meillassoux and Harman. In truth, they have more differences than similarities. One of them is the scale on which each of them has theorized to

invalidate correlationism. Allow me to quote their words which convey the gist of their orientations: for the former, what philosophers, after a lapse of scores of years, should do again is “to think a world without thought—a world without the givenness of the world” (Meillassoux, 2008a, p. 28), while the latter deems it necessary “to bring the things-in-themselves back into discussion” (Harman, 2011b, p. 171). To sum up, what has interested Meillassoux is the *world* without humans, whereas Harman’s OOP has been concerned with existences in general, which he has called *objects*, namely, in a lucid paraphrase, “individual entities of various scales” (Campbell et. al., 2019, p. 122). If there were ample room for discussion, I would fain elucidate their argumentations. Still, they are too convoluted to be thoroughly explicated by hundreds of words; wherefore the passage below expounds on only the cardinal theses which the two theorists substantiated with logical references.

Since the publication of his groundbreaking opus *After Finitude* in 2006, Speculative Materialism of Meillassoux has intrigued dozens of thinkers in both public and academic circles, and the past decade or so has seen a profusion of writings that dealt with it. In a breviloquent phrase, Speculative Materialism is the philosophy of *absolute contingency*. Though the ways in which people have interpreted Meillassoux’s thoughts vary considerably from each other, one can affirm that the proposition which has aroused people’s interest most is what he termed “the principle of unreason”, wherewith he issued a wondrous assertion: There is no reason for anything to be or to remain the way it is; everything must, without reason, be able not to be and/or be able to be other than it is” (Meillassoux, 2008a, p. 60). What decisively sets Meillassoux apart from religious gurus and dogmatic metaphysicians is that he succeeded in setting forth this glancingly preposterous thesis

with quite persuasive reasoning and coherent vindications (see Meillassoux, 2008a, pp. 50-81). Extremely simply put, Meillassoux, though limiting the scope of his discussion to the world and its laws, demonstrated that both ostensibly stable items are utterly outside of our hermeneutic grasp and *absolutely contingent*, and thus, that no one can deny a possibility that they could transform at any moment into any form.

Meanwhile, being a prolific writer, Harman has produced lots of works concerning OOP, which he first advanced in his doctoral dissertation published in 1999, and the philosophical system has indeed been greatly polished up and enlarged upon since that time. Nevertheless, without a doubt, the most crucial pillar, or, as Harman (2005) termed it, “a single basic tenet” (p. 20) of OOP has been unchanged; it is the concept of “withdrawal”, which Harman (1999) formulated with convincing solidity through an inventive construal of Heidegger’s famous tool-analysis (see pp. 103-216). Therewith he has proved that every single one of existences cannot be “reducible neither upward nor downward” (Harman, 2010, p.36), i.e. to its parts nor to its whole, and goaded us to heed, in a word, the inexhaustibility that is inherent in every entity. Mind that not only humans are unable to know every property of a being; instead, he has averred that “things withdraw from contact with each other in their mutual inexhaustibility” (Harman, 2013, p. 126). In sum, Harman has demonstrated that every one of the existences in the world, from an elementary particle through a chair to Jupiter, always retains and remains something *absolutely unknown* and *unknowable*.

Though I admit that the explanation above is patchy and in no way sufficient to bring the genuine spirit or comprehensive overtones of Speculative Materialism and OOP, let me repeat the most consequential point. In substance,

Meillassoux and Harman, by emancipating philosophy from the manacles of correlationism, have dealt a smashing blow to the human-centric tendency which has afflicted most philosophers for these two centuries and forcefully negated immoderate relativism that wayward post-structuralists has propagated. Given that their original arguments have stimulated people around the world and engendered new ideas in various spheres other than philosophy, one can deem Meillassoux and Harman to be authentic philosophers. Upon this basis, I will move on to the prime topic of this project: the anatomization of Chiba's "the non-interpretive".

The Non-interpretive

In the anterior section, we have taken a rough survey of the basal creeds of the two camps of Speculative Realism which acted as the vital catalysts for Chiba's creation of "the non-interpretive". Ahead of a detailed inspection of the concept, its purport ought to be clarified to make the following exposition more digestible. Chiba (2016b) once defined it in a memorably laconic manner as "what is absolutely non-relational to any interpretation" (para. 32); to couch it in more colloquial terms, it stands for what no one can ever make sense of, what is entirely outside of any understanding at all, and "what exists just there, being intrinsic to itself" (Chiba, 2015, p, 118). On first hearing, not a small number of people would adjudge the notion to be quite bizarre. What one would count as more eccentric is that the philosopher even went to maintain that everyone, everything and every phenomenon is, in one sense, "the non-interpretive", which he, in one sentence, enigmatically described as "an ontological schizoid or a psychopath" (Chiba, 2015, p. 125). I concede that many will have difficulty in

fathoming its significance; still, the concept contains, as I will evince, tremendous potential to expand our horizons.

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First off, let us examine how Chiba shaped “the non-interpretive” in his 2015 essay as a result of his study into Speculative Materialism and Object-Oriented Philosophy. Whereas one cannot dispute that Meillassoux and Harman had served as the most consequential guiding lights for the invention, it goes without saying that what he did in forging the unique concept was neither to plagiarize their ideas in an incautious manner, nor to amalgamate some of them into a linsey-woolsey. To cut a long story short, what he did was to ingeniously bridge what Meillassoux and Harman had demonstrated by identifying their fundamental common denominator as an orientation toward the *absolute non-relation*; he observed: “Both Meillassoux and Harman recognize the ‘absolute non-relation’ as the linchpin of their argument for things-in-themselves” (p. 114).

It would be natural for one to demand an additional explication as to why Chiba alleged that the absolute non-relation could be reckoned as the commonality between Meillassoux and Harman, and those who are conversant with the precepts of the two thinkers may suspect whether such an attribute can really be singled out as a shared strand of them, for their theories, as has been pointed out (Morgan, 2017, p. 162), will impress one as dissimilar from one another except for the intent to confute correlationism, namely “a recalcitrance to the habit of presuming that the world exists only insofar as humans exist to produce it” (MacCormack, 2014, p. 159). For instance, aside from the difference I alluded to in the previous section, they diverge on their paramount motive for philosophizing: Meillassoux’s *ultima Thule* was, though not

evident in *After Finitude*, to warrant the possibility that God, albeit being absent at present, may sometime come to the world and realize divine justice by resurrecting the dead who died horrible deaths (see Meillassoux, 2008b), whilst Harman's overt purpose has been to flatten the ontological status of all beings in the universe (see Harman, 2005; 2011d; 2018).

Truth be told, Chiba's dialectics with which he detected the absolute non-relation as the common element is, potent that it is, nothing less than an acrobatic masterstroke. Paying little attention to the specific Holy Grails of the two philosophers, he focused on drawing apodictic lemmas from the rationales wherewith they had demonstrated the validity of their contentions. Let me restate the underlying logic of Speculative Materialism and Object Oriented Philosophy; the former cogently attested to the reality that the world and the current set of natural laws (e.g. physical and logical) could suddenly, at any moment, due to the absolute contingency, viz. according to the principle of unreason, change into another form; meanwhile, by resorting to his extended notion of withdrawal, the latter proved that every one of the entities in the universe was, being similar to the infinite and absolute Other in the Levinasian sense, unable to be, in the crisp words of Whicker (2014), "exhausted by any list of its features, parts, capacities, uses, or any relation to any other objects" (p. 146). Even if compelled to do so, most people could hardly espy a way to connect them.

And yet, this is where Chiba revealed an astounding discernment. Let me get directly to the key point; though one would find his discussion in the essay intricate a bit, one can assume that Chiba put forward two propositions in essence: the first was that Meillassoux's demonstration of the unreason/contingency of the world as well as of its laws could be seen as proof that they were ultimately *non-relational* to

anything, and the second was that the incessant withdrawal of every object, which Harman substantiated with his reinterpretation of Heidegger's tool-analysis, should entail that each object must be, in a way at the least, *non-relational* to one another. Having glossed the two distinctive theories in this wise, he knit them together in the light of the key phrase the *absolute non-relation*. The following passage conveys the marrow of his judgement in a condensed style: "Meillassoux's *The Great Outside* [i.e. the domain of Kantian noumena] is absolutely non-relational to the correlation between our thought and the world. According to Harman, each one of the things is absolutely non-relational [with each other]" (Chiba, 2015, p. 114).

A natural conclusion which will ineluctably arise from coupling Meillassoux's and Harman's systems with the absolute non-relation as the central link is, as repetitious as it may sound, that, to the extent that this world itself, the laws, the phenomena, and the existences in it possess the *absolute non-relationality* as one of their inscapes, each single one of them is essentially beyond any relation, to wit, unable to be reduced to or spelled out by its bundle of relations. Certainly, the next step that Chiba took to the formulation of "the non-interpretive" does not look a bold one; however, it is a critical move. In precis and in substance, he insisted that *being non-relational should involve being non-interpretive*; to reword it more legibly, he was of the following opinion: that all the existences are literally non-relational, or more specifically, ultimately closed to themselves, must mean that each and every one of them should evermore keep an unreachable sphere like an impenetrable bedrock which categorically shuts out any attempt by others to access it; Chiba (2015) figuratively represented the realm as a "stone-secret", which, mark my words, "absolutely forces the relinquishment of *interpretation*" (p. 118). The sentences below

eloquently impart how Chiba fused Meillassoux and Harman, and then derived “the non-interpretive” therefrom:

Both the world in Meillassoux’s sense and an object in Harman’s sense are what are unfathomable, and no one can know what they will become or do. As for the reality that one cannot know what will become of an object or what it will do, one can do nothing except feel unrest, because *any interpretation of it is bootless*. (Chiba, 2015, p. 119)

Now one can comprehend why “the non-interpretive” has had those meanings I briefed above, how it is supported theoretically, and why it can be asserted that all creation is “the non-interpretive”. To summarize, by synthesizing the logical deductions of Harman and Meillassoux, Chiba first demonstrated that everything, in the broadest sense of the word, owns the absolute non-relationality among its quiddities, whereupon he made a leap of reframing being non-relational as being non-interpretive; hence, he concluded, all the existences were “the non-interpretive”.

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As anyone would apprehend with ease, Chiba’s argumentation is structured in a decently intelligible and rigorous manner, and few will venture to disprove the whole logic. Nonetheless, quite a few will feel like posing some questions of other kinds: Why did Chiba propound the concept which appears to be nihilistic? What new perspective will we acquire by acknowledging that everything and everyone is “the non-interpretive”?

Admittedly, in the paper Chiba advanced several suggestions that were more or less related to one another; yet, the spatial limitation does not allow me to enumerate them one by one. Let me get right down to brass tacks instead. He did not aim to set forward a pessimistic thesis by absolutizing the non-relationality/non-interpretiveness. His aim was, in the

minimum amount of words possible, to revolutionize our worldview, that is, to challenge our preconceptions and set up a new perspective from which one can reconsider oneself, others, and the world. This condensation will come across one as mundane; still, I trust that his inviting exhortation will be found really worth hearkening.

First, although you would have already realized this, we should be attentive to the fact that Chiba by no means recommended us to renounce all efforts to understand, i.e. interpret, other entities and incidents. In lieu, he urged us to adopt a twofold approach to society, stating: “Society can be considered in a bifold way – interpretively/non-interpretively” (Chiba, 2015, p.122). Let me encapsulate his argument. On one hand, it is undeniable that we, as social beings in a classical phrase, live with various types of bond and daily try to make sense of our experiences with others, implicitly presupposing that the universe is made up of relations, mutual access is possible, and we coexist; this outlook on the world, which can be described as an interpretive approach, will indeed impress one as a fairly moral and commonsensical one.

Yet, on the other hand, many will consider it also irrefutable that the mechanism of the world at large cannot be explicated in that interpretive way alone, as Chiba (2015) astutely illustrated: “Each one of us is, to put it in extreme terms, a *discrete stone*. In the face of each other’s fundamentally never penetrable stone-secret, we are driven to bafflement ad nauseam” (p. 125). By evincing that we and all others are “the non-interpretive” deep down, Chiba brought home to us the necessity to augment our worldview, or to reanalyze what the *unknowable* indicates in reality, by internalizing the non-interpretive perspective; it enjoins one to admit that “absolute secrets exist disjunctively; they are things and beings that are absolutely disrelated from causality and moral law, and

unilaterally emit their unique power which one cannot describe except as having come *ex nihilo*" (Chiba, 2015, p. 126). The titles of the third and fourth sections of the 2015 paper, "the unreason of plurality" and "the non-ethical parallel", concisely announce the kernel of Chiba's aspiration. When you do not understand some object, there is possibility that it is *not* due to your ignorance or finitude as a subject; you may just have come to the endmost deadlock, "the genuine termination, one which terminates your interpretation by confronting you with the principle of mental block in front of something absolutely factual" (Chiba, 2015, p. 126).

For all its ostensibly gloomy predilection, this protreptic of Chiba is far from nihilism. He, probably having been acutely cognizant of imperfections inhering in positive and moralistic views, spurred us to take our head out of the sand, and face up to a few facts at which most of us, albeit faintly aware somewhere in the recesses of our mind, generally do not want to look straight. Unquestionably, it is never comfortable to cop to the reality that our friends as well as nobodies are, in the deepest sooth, arrantly above our understanding, and may unilaterally betray us out of the blue, with no reason, and that the being we consider the dearest is on no account more accessible than a stone on the curbside. Notwithstanding, unless one accepts the ubiquity of the non-interpretive, one cannot appreciate the plurality, or diversity in everyday vocabulary, of existences, and, without the appreciation, one cannot have the slightest chance to gain a partial access to others in their own right; besides, and perhaps most importantly, Chiba (2015) brought forward an incisive case almost at the end of the paper, stating: "Resignation and forgiveness may be impossible unless one grants the reality of non-causality and non-ethicality" (p. 126).

This observation epitomizes what the absolutization of “the non-interpretive” can do for us. In brief, by apprehending it as a primary, inborn attribute of everything, we can attain a novel outlook, according to which, we, whereas being able to build up each other’s understanding to a degree, can say confidently yes to the given plurality of existences just the way it is and welcome a surprise which others may afford at any time.

Conclusion: Living in the Non-interpretive World

In advance of making a concluding comment, let me encapsulate the preceding discussion. The first section provided an overview of Meillssoux’s Speculative Materialism and Harman’s Object-Oriented philosophy; in the second, I elucidated the meaning of “the non-interpretive”, how Chiba created it, and what novel standpoint we could gain by accepting it as a substantial property of all existences.

Lastly, I would like to experimentally deliberate over how the concept of “the non-interpretive” can update our worldview which is currently needed to adjust to the world which, despite the claims lodged by the proponents of globalization, seems to be becoming more and more fragmented. In this relativistic, post-truth world, “where alternative facts abound, demonstrable evidence is increasingly losing its ability to impact people’s entrenched opinions” (Kashyap, 2020, para. 5), it is likely that many of the sociocultural norms which had been traditionally shared by most people will be discredited, and, in my estimation, the modern idea that when people argue against each other, the more rational and logical argument will prevail is not an exception; in other words, truth will *not* always prevail anymore. This proclamation will sound a defeatist retreat, and

some will protest by saying that any conflict between human beings, who have reason, can theoretically be resolved by an exhaustive debate. Nonetheless, the actuality of the world is not as such: there has rarely been a reasoned dialogue between, say, Keynesians and Marxists, Korea and Japan, and Trumpians and anti-Trumpians. Brawls of this kind occur upon the globe all the time.

Allowing for the state of affairs, we ought to change, or at least reorganize our mindset; more specifically, the post-truth world necessitates us to reconsider what we ought to do when we are confronted by other people who firmly hold an opinion incompatible with ours. I figure that Chiba's concept of "the non-interpretive" can offer many hints on how to handle such a situation. Let us recall the quintessence of his argument: every being and everything is "the non-interpretive", namely, "what is absolutely non-relational to any interpretation" (Chiba, 2016b, para. 32), and "what exists just there, being intrinsic to itself" (Chiba, 2015, p, 118). This involves that the life that each of us leads goes on according to a totally disparate system which is impenetrable to others; to express it radically, each single one of us lives, in a sense, in a different world. I suppose this is one of the worldviews which can be adopted to live through this epoch of alternative facts. This is never a form of correlationism or relativism, because both of them, albeit acknowledging the plurality of *reality*, postulate only one noumenal world whose dimensions are experienced and interpreted differently by existences.

If one takes the perspective I sketched above, he/she will descry another option to respond to those whose world is structured by a bundle of facts which is different from that which constitutes his/her world. It is neither imposition of personal values nor insistence on receiving our opinions; rather, it will be to *invite* others – denizens of different worlds – to visit

our world, and, simultaneously, to *welcome* the otherness of their worlds just the way it is. I admit this will strike some people as too optimistic to be valid in the actual society where individuals scarcely hear opinions which are not congruous with theirs; despite that, few will dispute that we should constantly fine-tune our worldview so as to adapt to the practical conditions. Presuming that literally *all* are “the non-interpretive” and that each one of the other beings lives in an independent world may, I speculate, help us to do that. As a matter of course, this is a proposal, or rather an *invitation* that I want to make in concluding this paper.

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