

Non-relationality Unbound: A Critical Investigation into the Concept of “the
Non-interpretive” and its Applicability in Literary Studies

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Throughout his career as a scholar of contemporary French thought, Masaya Chiba has put forward a diversity of interesting intellectual concepts. For example, in an essay in his book published last year, he coined the notion “nonsense without sense” (Chiba, 2018). Indeed, he once stated that one of the tasks a philosopher is expected to perform is fabricating concepts that can be used as “tools” (Chiba, 2016, para. 2).

While many of his coinages like “para-mound” and “the un-uncanny” are fairly thought-provoking, it has often been the case that he has ceased utilizing a newly minted term before its critical potential was fully developed or duly recognized. One of those conceptions which appears to be still underdeveloped is “the non-interpretive”, which the theorist propounded in a succinct but outstandingly incisive paper (Chiba, 2015).

Being of the opinion that the concept is worth a revisit and further examination, I will provide a three-fold discussion. To begin with, I will give an outline of the Speculative Materialism and the Object-Oriented Ontology because these philosophies, which are usually counted as the two mightiest branches under the larger category of Speculative Realism, served as the theoretical substratum upon which Chiba formulated the notion of “the non-interpretive”. Thereupon, I will probe into his abovementioned 2015 study in order, first, to illuminate how he had invented it by analyzing and deriving inspiration from Speculative Realists and, second, to clarify what it exactly denotes.

In closing, I compare the concept with other similar ones concocted by him to bring both their similitudes and the idiosyncrasies of “the non-interpretive” into relief, and then reflect the ways it can function as a useful device for those in my discipline: my hypothesis is that the notion, enabling us to view literary texts from a fresh outlook, will enrich the vocabulary wherewith we explicate the complexities of the texts.

References

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