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Osaka University

Kuki Syuzo and His Metaphysics: The Problem of The Origin of The Universe.

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I aim to produce you the essence of Kuki-Philosophy throughout this presentation. It has two parts in order to fulfill this purpose.

At part one; I will try to introduce Kuki Syuzo. The introduction of Kuki tends to focus on his and his family's private life since there were too many troubles. It is true that we cannot neglect his life of hardship in order to understand the building of Kuki-philosophy, but you can get such information from some other books. Therefore, I focus on to give an overview of his philosophy. There are three topics of his study; the eternal return which came from eastern religion, the emotions of Japanese people and the coincidence. We tend to think that these three topics runs there respective courses; "the eternal return" objects metaphysical foundations of the world, "the emotions of Japanese people" objects to produce ethics and aesthetics of Japanese and "the coincidence" objects the essence of coincidence. Therefore, there are many interesting previous studies about each topic but we have not shown the great direction which consists in the whole Kuki-philosophy. I also cannot show it yet, but this presentation is the first step to approach it. In my opinion, we can find the system of Kuki-philosophy throughout reading of "The Problem of Coincidence". We tend to focus on only the last chapter which treats disjunctive coincidence, but if you read all three chapters and understand them, you will find that what this book objects is not only to study the coincidence but also to present the existence of human being and the foundation of the world which turned out from the analysis of the coincidence.

At part two; I will examine "Pontigny lecture" which is his starting point of his philosophy and deals with "the eternal return". This examination focus on the difference between "Pontigny lecture" and "The Problem of The Coincidence". Throughout the examination of the difference, I want to show some problems of "the eternal return" and a hypothesis why he had to study "the coincidence". The world of the eternal return is ruled only by causality and necessity. There is no room for coincidence. But in "The Problem of Coincidence" which is published after "Pontigny lecture", there are both necessity and coincidence. This difference is particularly notable when he expresses the opinions concerning "the origin of the universe". In "Pontigny lecture", he describes that the will is the cause of the universe. But in "The Problem of Coincidence", he develops a much more complex theory: for the Absolute, the cause of the universe is necessity, but

for the all other beings the cause of the universe is “primal contingency”: for the Absolute, there is no surprise for the being of the universe because he has created it, but for the all other beings, there are no reasons which explain the cause of the universe: the all other beings can only say that the cause of the universe is “primal contingency” because absence of reasons is a definition of contingency. He summarizes this characteristic of the origin of the universe as “necessity-contingency being”. I want to point out two reasons to change necessity to “necessity-contingency being”. First, Both “the eternal return” and the Absolute are what we can only believe in. Kuki was not able to be satisfied only to believe in since he was a philosopher. Second, “the eternal return” cannot explain others. I think these problems drove him to study contingency.