

15 分間の魔術

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ご縁があって大河千弘先生の警咳にたびたび接することができたことは、私にとって無上の幸運でした。先生は「ぼくは 120 歳まで生きる」と豪語していらっしやったので、お別れするのはずっと先のこととばかり思っておりました。先生のご逝去はまことに残念です。物理の議論をしているときの先生は実に楽しそうで、論語の一節「之を知る者は之を好む者に如かず。之を好む者は之を楽しむ者に如かず」に出ている「学問を楽しむ」という境地に遊んでいらっしやるようでした。先生から教えていただいたことはたくさんありますけれども、そのなかでとくに印象深いものの一つをご紹介します。

どんなに優れた科学者でも、いったん高い地位につくと雑用や会議に多くの時間をとられ、論文を書くことから遠ざかってしまう場合がほとんどです。しかしながら大河先生は特別でした。GA で副社長に就任された後でも、独創的なアイデアの論文を次々と発表されたことは有名です。それは恰も魔術のようでした。もともと優れた素質を持ってお生まれになったのはもちろんですが、それにしてもずっと不思議に思っておりました。そこで、「忙しい中にもかかわらず業績をあげていらっしやるのには、才能のほかに、なにか秘訣はあるのでしょうか」と先生にお伺いしたことがあります。以下は先生のお答えです：

「知っているように、研究でも仕事でも勉強でも集中力が大事。どんなに忙しくても、15 分間ぐらいの小間切れの時間は一日に何回もあるはずだ。その 15 分間を無駄に過ごさないで集中して、それを続けることだよ。ぼくは、しばらく間が空いていても以前に検討したところにすぐ戻って続きを考えることができる。それは才能ではない。Training だよ。Boris (Boris Kadomtsev 博士。ロシアの著名な理論物理学者。クルチャトフ研究所の元所長) と、この話になった時に、Boris は『ぼくは、1 時間半ぐらいまとまった時間がないと物理を考えられない』と言ったので、『それは、training が足りないからだ』と言ってやったんだよ。それから物理を好きになり、楽しむことだ。そうすれば、どんなに大変なことでも続けられる。」

さすがは大河先生です。天賦の才能に恵まれた上に、独自の工夫と training を積んでいらっしやったのですね。「集中。Training。物理を楽しむ」という先生

の教えをこれからも大切にしていきます。

大河先生、長年ご指導くださり、まことに有難うございました。心からご冥福をお祈り申し上げます。

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Magic of 15 minutes

I was fortunate to know Dr. Tihiro Ohkawa for many years. As he was enjoying sports and his health, I was not surprised to hear him say "I'm sure I will live up to the age of 120." I didn't realize he would take a journey to heaven this early. I became very sad to hear the news of his departure. Dr. Ohkawa loved physics discussion a lot. When he was talking about physics, he was really happy. Confucius says "Those who just know the truth are no match of those who like it. Those who like the truth are no match of those who enjoy it." Dr. Ohkawa was a rare example of those who enjoy physics. I learned many things from Dr. Ohkawa; here I would like to share with you an anecdote among the most impressive and most precious to me:

Many distinguished scientists, once promoted to a high position, have to spend most of their time on administrative chores and meetings and are very often alienated from scientific work. Dr. Ohkawa was a rare exception. After he was elected vice president of GA, he continued to publish original papers, one after another. It is a famous story. It was like he was working a magic. Of course he was exceptionally talented. But still I was wondering how he managed to do that. So one day I asked him "Despite very busy schedule, you continue to publish many papers. I know you are exceptionally gifted, but still I wonder how you manage to do that. Perhaps you know some special trick?" Dr. Ohkawa responded as follows:

"You know concentration is essential for scientific work, administrative work and study. Even a busiest person can find quite a few short slices of time like 15 minutes long during a day. You shouldn't waste those slices of time but concentrate. I can easily go back to what I was working on and continue thinking. It takes no special talent. You can do that after some training. The other day I was talking with Boris (Dr. Boris Kadomtsev, famous theoretical physicist of Russia. Late Director General of Kurchatov Institute) about this subject. Boris said "I need a good chunk of time, at least one and a half hour long, to work on physics." I said to him "Boris, you need more training!". It is also important to love physics and enjoy it. That enables you to pursue even the hardest work."

I was very much impressed. Dr. Ohkawa was not only exceptionally gifted, but he was skilful in managing his time. He did a lot of training of his own. He loved and enjoyed physics.

Dr. Ohkawa, many thanks for your kind guidance through many years. I keep your precious words in my heart. May you rest in peace.

Michiya Shimada

(Japan Atomic Energy Agency, participant of Doublet-III collaboration, staying in US during 1979-1988)