

Conclusion

Throughout this book I have tried to look at the physical world from the point of view of what allows it to continue. We see objects and events. PDT asks about the relations that could sustain the objects and make the events definite. That change of starting point is the thought I most want the reader to take away.

An ordinary object presents us with an easily overlooked puzzle. It keeps an identity while its surroundings change and while activity continues within it. We usually explain what happens to it after granting its existence. I have asked whether that continued existence should itself be part of the explanation. In the picture I have developed, matter is a persistent organisation whose relations remain capable of supporting it.

The same thought gives phase snap its place in the theory. A definite event would arise through the physical restriction of possible continuations, with a lasting record formed when only one admissible continuation survives. Apparent randomness could then reflect something about the conditions available to us, rather than exhaust the explanation of what occurred. That is the possibility I find compelling. Establishing it requires a physical law that explains the exclusions and the observed frequencies together.

Seen this way, measurement is closely connected with persistence. The occurrence of an event and the endurance of its record belong to a world that carries consequences forward. An observer encounters that world from within it. There is no need to place the observer outside the physical account in order to describe a detector, a memory or a comparison between clocks.

The discussions of gravity and cosmology have followed the same ambition. I have explored whether the geometry we measure, the behaviour of matter and the larger history of the universe could arise from a common relational foundation. A shared vocabulary helps us ask those questions. It becomes an explanation when the relationships produce the right physical behaviour with their assumptions made clear.

The mathematics has given parts of the proposal a precise form. It has also exposed work that the physical picture still requires. A representation of phase must be connected to actual matter. Admissibility needs dynamics. A geometry must acquire the meaning of distances and clock readings. These are substantial tasks, and a successful account must bring them together within compatible assumptions.

My confidence in the philosophical starting point is a reason to pursue that work. The theory must remain open to an answer I would not prefer. If an indispensable consequence fails, it cannot be protected by changing the meaning of the claim after the event. The appendices set out the distinctions that matter when judging such a failure.

I hope the book leaves the reader with a clearer sense of why I think this approach is worth taking seriously. The things around us may owe their apparent separateness to the ways their relations persist. What we call an event may be inseparable from the conditions that allow its consequences to remain. PDT is my attempt to make that view of the world understandable and precise enough to be examined.