

Session 6, Unit 16, Week 3

Transition and Orientation

I apologize for the technical difficulties in the phone call. I went through and edited out most of the blank spots in the recording of the phone call, but there will still be some gaps and leaps. Perhaps we can find a symbolic significance here, for it is in the gaps, the places of breakdown, that knowledge may most readily arise.

At the beginning of the last phone call, I made a special effort to point toward 'love of knowledge' as the radical transforming element that makes it possible to re-value and re-present all of the difficulties and obstacles we face. When love of knowledge operates, it is all-allowing and all-encompassing. I emphasize this again here, because, as we discussed, this seems to me the right response to the charge that TSK is abstract and removed from our lives. Nothing could be less true.

In this connection, here is a link to a video-conversation with the philosopher ('lover of wisdom') Cornel West, who invites us in a very lively way to embrace all aspects of life and examine all aspects of 'experience'. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfD3X3f5C_w. Notice his discussion of wholeness: he considers it to be out of reach, but it may be that he has a different understanding of what wholeness consists in. West speaks rapidly and with a slightly non-standard dialectic—my apologies if he is not always easy for the non-native speaker to understand.

Keep in mind as we go forward that as we explore a new vision of knowledge, activating the love of knowledge, the new vision of space and of time that has guided us these past months remain available as well. The three facets of the TSK Vision are not separate from each other (which is why it makes sense that we are reading a chapter on Time for this week). In practical terms, these interconnections mean that as you work with the walkabout, letting each position become an act of positioning, you can draw on the ways we have practiced in previous sessions with space (the feel of the field) and time (the inhabiting of the story).

The reading for this week consists of a chapter from the TSK book. The term 'logos' does not occur in that book, but in this chapter there is a strong focus on the read-out, and the reading for last week showed how read-out and 'logos' are linked. The language of the chapter also does not emphasize positions and positionings, but again the connection should be clear. Compare the discussion of 'taking place' on TSK 201 with the idea we explored last week of 'taking a position'.

The chapter we are reading has always generated a lot of excitement among readers of TSK, because it directly challenges our ordinary reality. "We are caught up in a kind of daydream," says the text (197), and such ordinary (and fundamental) structures as causality, the stability of experience, and even the properties of the physical world are only elements of specific read-outs, not otherwise established. There is nothing more fundamental than the read-out, and (198) "sameness is a matter of conviction within a read-out."

Be sure to read such statements in light of the many qualifiers. Reality is not being rejected. See the 3rd paragraph on 200 and also the last paragraph on 202. Just as important, do not let the focus in the chapter on physical reality (walking through walls) and the possibility of non-standard occurrences (precognition) distract you from an insight that may matter more in terms of our immediate experience: when we know with the knowing of the logos, our reactions to the events of our lives—our judgments, emotions, convictions, etc.—are also simply parts of the read-out, wholly unestablished and thus incapable of creating real obstacles and limitations.

Here is an assignment for those in the training program: On 204, Rinpoche tells us that we will have to "transcend meanings, speculations, and visions—even those which are 'timed-out'." Does this

reminder amount to a critique of the method we have been working with in the walkabout (which you should continue): viewing positions as 'acts of positioning'? Are 'acts of positioning' the same as 'timed-out meanings'?

In the phone call next week, we will try something different: we will start by practicing for a few minutes the assigned practice for the week, TSK Ex. 26, which is included in the reading.