

Session 6, Unit 18, Week 6
TSK 242-248; TSK Ex. 32

Transition and Orientation

First, a reminder: no phone call next Sunday, August 17. We will hold the final phone call on Sunday, August 24 at the usual time.

At the end of the Week 5 phone call, I said a few words about the difference between ‘ordinary knowledge’ and ‘lower knowledge’. It probably went by too quickly, so let me say a little more.

Ordinary knowledge is just that: what we ordinarily think of as knowledge. It is ordinary in the sense that we know how it functions (a subject knows and object), and it is also ordinary in the sense that it can only know what knowledge ordinarily knows (objects, thoughts, ideas, and so on.) Ordinary knowledge does not exclude the possibility that we can have special, extra-ordinary experiences, but those experience still stay within the range of the ordinary by the very fact that we identify them as ‘out of the ordinary’.

Lower knowledge is the knowledge that pervades the ordinary realm accessible to ordinary knowledge. (I will not try to duplicate here the discussion during the phone call about what it means to pervade.) It pervades both the subjective and the objective sides of experience, so it includes the knower, the kinds of knowing available to a knower, and the whole range of what is knowable. Another, broader term for lower knowledge is “the way things are.” Thus, physical objects are themselves “just [lower] knowledge,” without that meaning that reality is subjective, in the sense of belonging to a subject or bystander. (236) The particular (and “constrictive”) forms of time, space, and knowledge in operation are aspects of this ‘lower knowledge’.

I may be missing some subtleties, but I think it’s fair to say that this lower knowledge is equivalent to the ‘logos’, and that when we know with the knowing of the ‘logos’, a possibility raised in earlier readings, we are activating the opportunity that lower knowledge offers us. Last week’s reading suggested one way to do this: to see ‘ordinary knowledge’ as an aspect of ‘lower knowledge’ (241), which amounts to seeing the subject-knowing-object complex as itself a ‘knowing’. Ex. 29 is a step in this direction. Please practice Ex. 29 (Awareness as a Reflective Surface” as the walkabout over the next two weeks. It would be great to do it quite regularly.

The next reading, which closes out the chapter on ‘lower knowledge’, explores the consequences of “freezing” knowledge. (Notice that we usually think of knowledge precisely in the ‘frozen’ mode, which is why people tend to reject it as boring and restrictive. The TSK vision challenges that view.) When we freeze knowledge, we live in a ‘fictitious’ or ‘made-up’ world, and we lose our connection to time and space.

The reading suggests that we fail to ‘bear witness’ to Space and Time. You may want to return to LOK Ex. 47-48 with this challenge in mind. However, the Exercise for this coming week, TSK Ex. 32, offers a different approach. By activating ‘light awareness’ (a recurring theme in the TSK vision), we allow for the possibility of unfreezing knowledge. Ex. 32B is especially important here, so you may want to focus there.

In the discussion in the phone call, the question came up of whether thoughts automatically foreclose the possibility of an appreciative, open knowing. In that context, consider this statement (TSK 244): “The lower space we live in is not a solid and continuous place. It changes, becoming more or less open, with each single thought.” This quote also raises a separate but deeply important question: is each thought its own ‘logos’? Its own read-out?