

Transition and Orientation for Week 3

Last week we began to work with the very careful and rich presentation in KTS of a ‘space-as-field’ orientation. We continue to engage that presentation this week.

Before saying anything to bring last week and this week into closer contact, here as promised is a link to a video about change-blindness: "<http://tinyurl.com/ml349r6>". This is from a broadcast on a commercial show, so it aims for entertainment value. But it works well. The point here is that our interests and concerns determine what space we inhabit: what fails to engage our concerns is ‘not allowed’ (to use the KTS vocabulary). It simply ceases to exist—not when viewed in terms of object-centered space, of course, but in terms of the shifting fields that we inhabit.

Of course, that is only half the conclusion to be drawn. When we ‘tune out’ some aspects of experience, as in the change-blindness experiments, we are tuning in other aspects. In other words, we always (perhaps with rare exceptions) inhabit a field. It is just that the field is always shifting, or that we are shifting from one field to the next. Reality is not the relatively stable construct we imagine it to be. The reading points out that this point is acknowledged in various ways: the truth of impermanence or interdependence, the law of entropy, etc. A field orientation is consistent with such observations, but it opens up a rich field of inquiry that such insights may not.

In the reading for last week, there was a brief discussion about the relation between the field and the different ‘levels’ of space as these are identified in the first TSK book (KTS 186-87). This question is raised again at the beginning the reading from WIR. I won’t try to comment on it now, but perhaps in the phone call. As an initial way into such considerations, consider the central point that by engaging field dynamics and mechanics—rather than accepting field presentations as ‘the way things are’--we can gain access to a different kind of knowledge. This way of understanding leads in the end to a focus on space, or Great Space, as fundamental. The field-orientation, however, does not have to go that far. Instead, it offers a way into the availability and power of space, and that in itself marks a radical shift from our ordinary understanding. As WIR suggests, the link between a field-orientation and Great Space is the sense of intimacy.

WIR 63 describes the reading at KTS 191-194 as a kind of ‘creation myth’ for how experience arises. The intention in calling it a myth is to remind us not to take it too seriously, for any *account* of how experience emerges only makes sense within a given field. Could you understand this material differently? What difference would this difference make?

Exercise

The assigned exercise for this week is Ex. A, “Expanding and Condensing,” a practice often used in TSK intensives even though it was never published in any of the TSK books. It is described at WIR 21-22. For this week, I suggest you work with it in terms of fields. WIR 64-65 already offers a number of different ways to do this, but I have something more simple in mind: when you focus on an object, a thought, a feeling, etc. and expand it, let

this expansion be equivalent to expanding ‘out into’ the *field* of the object. When you condense, let the whole field return back into the object: the field remains available ‘within’ the presentation.

Variation

Let yourself appreciate how everything arises within a field in which each element, whether mental or physical, internal or external, and so on interacts with all other elements, and even participates in all other elements. When you have activated this appreciation—even just a little—go on to the next natural step, which is to consider all appearances (and even all structures and dynamics) as field presentations.

Following Ron’s suggestion during the phone call, you might ask how this variation relates to TSK Ex. 16.

Walkabout

Appreciate the active allowing and accommodation of space. KTS 186 gives some specific advice here: “Within the first-level ‘field’, this will mean appreciation for vastness and openness, and for the creative aliveness that flows in waves throughout all appearances.”

Assignment

Read and if possible practice DTS Ex. 3. Write a brief reflection on the discussion there of the ‘gravity’ of thinking. How does it relate to the ‘gravity field’ introduced at KTS 180-183?

About the Retreat

The dates of the retreat are currently June 9-13; they may shift by a day or so. The retreat is intended for people enrolled in the online course; however, if you know people who are involved seriously in TSK who might like to participate, have them contact me.