

Supplement to the discussion above (Week 4: Transition and Orientation)

A lot of people didn't hear the last class. I tried to remedy that by including notes on the phone call in the orientation. Under the circumstances, however, I'm going to respond to two questions by Hayward that he presumably would have asked had he been able to do so.

The first question concerned the difference between field mechanics and field dynamics. The two terms are often used together in KTS. But field dynamics are open (dynamic!) in a way that field mechanics are not. Mechanics have to do with structures, with what shapes the field. Dynamics have to do with the act of shaping. In KTS, it is linked to the notion of rhythms and to the aliveness of time.

The second question concerned the not-not-not. Now, in the phone call, I reminded everyone that WIR advises us to read the complex discussion of this point lightly. This is not only to avoid being discouraged if we don't understand, but also because a 'heavy' reading based on wanting what we read to 'make sense' turns us in the direction of accepting and applying a particular logic. Logics operate *within* fields; they are of little use in understanding field dynamics and mechanics as such. So please also read what I say below lightly. Perhaps it will help.

In being aware of the field as field, we turn away from existence. But we do not turn toward non-existence. That what be self-defeating, since what does not exist depends fundamentally on the very possibility of existence: the two modes arise together. Instead, turning toward the field means allowing for a special kind of negation: a negation that allows what appears within the field, but does not establish that appearance as existing. This 'field not' becomes available when we understand the field as field and thus free ourselves from a focus on field content, on bystanders and outsiders.

This is why it makes sense to say that what manifests in the field arises through or as 'the negation of its impossibility' (KTS 197). The field 'is' this negation. A given field allows some possibilities and not others, but it never establishes. It is the not not-existence of the possibility.

Suppose now that there is an obstacle to something appearing. For instance, in the field of our conventional understanding, something cannot be in two places at once. This obstacle is part of the field mechanics. The field in which that obstacle manifests is the not not-not existence that constitutes the obstacle: the obstacle manifests, but it manifests within the 'not' of the field. As a practical matter, this means that we are aware of the obstacle as arising within the field, but do not accept its claim to be the fact of the matter. Finally, if that obstacle is non-operative, that non-operation, which is a kind of field-allowing, is the not not-not-not possible of what manifests.

By underlining the first 'not' in each of these cases, I am trying to point toward the operation of the field. Again, the 'field not' is not a not that establishes a non-existence. It is a condition for appearing or not appearing. That is all. Its essence is not to negate, but to allow. But from a conventional perspective, you can say that the field negates whatever appears in it, by virtue of allowing it; it also allows whatever appears in it, by virtue of negating it. Each implies the other.