

Session 12, Week 3

TSK 281-86, DTS 199-208; Ex. DTS 21

Transition and Orientation

This past week, the theme was embodiment. As we discussed in the phone call, the chapters we read offer a number of quite specific practices for embodying the TSK vision. On the one hand, these practices do not ask us to engage our bodily sensations in the usual way, because the text makes very clear that the Body of Knowledge is a “no body Body.” On the other hand, the invitation made in these practices is to directly engage our senses. The key example, which we did not have a chance to practice, but which I suggested you use as a workaround for the week, is found at KTS 441. I will recast, rephrase, and expand it here as a more formal exercise:

Attune your senses to the world around you, with the intention of becoming more aware of a body of knowledge more encompassing than your physical embodiment. As appreciation for this wider body of knowledge grows, align it with the subtle energies that shape your inner experience, both mental and physical. Be sensitive to knowledge arising in three different domains: the senses, the mind, and—ultimately—throughout the realm of physical space and linear time. How do these three domains interact? In investigating this question, allow rigid dichotomies to dissolve and loosen. Let appearance and experience arise in ways that are more open and allowing, and let knowledge present itself more actively. Let yourself appreciate the energy within all presentations; at the same time, cultivate a quality of lightness related to the openness of space. Such an approach loosens the grip of ‘lower-level’ presentations, allowing you to deal more creatively with stress and difficulties.

Notice that while focus is on being embodied in the world, the intention is to disclose the knowing inherent in all appearance. Ask yourself how this contrasts with the description (in the paragraph that starts at the bottom of KTS 440) of our ordinary style of embodiment, limited by the operation of first-level time and space. (This paragraph, by the way, provides a very nice summary of the limits that the TSK vision of reality can challenge.) Consider also the invitation (KTS 442) to “embody with our being” questions about the patterns and momentum of conventional space and time. Can you explore using ‘embodied questioning’ to engage with this kind of “multidimensional ‘knowability’?”

It’s important to take seriously the suggestion at KTS 446 that the appearance or manifestation Great Knowledge may not seem meaningful in terms of ordinary knowledge. As the text says, Great Knowledge is not an antidote, it does not make sense of things, and “it does not resolve conflict or work toward solutions.” What matters is the aliveness inherent in Great Knowledge. Through this aliveness, “knowledge is free to give any interpretation” (KTS 447), meaning that the sense of being ‘confined’ by lower level structures has no reality as such. The discussion of ‘co-existence’, which we touched on briefly in the phone call, can help clarify why this should be so.

The reading for this week from TSK was already assigned two weeks ago, so this is a review. The intervening reading last week from KTS may help illuminate what is being discussed: a clarity more fundamental than the kind of knowledge available to a 'mind and things' orientation. The idea that knowledge is 'in everything' should not be understood as a kind of panpsychism, a view currently popular that holds that all objects or things possess mind or are conscious; such a view, to simplify, is probably best understood as a variation on a 'mind and things' first-level understanding.

The reading from DTS is the first chapter in a three-chapter sequence that we will continue to work with the following week. The focus is on the relationship between knowledge and light, a rich topic for inquiry. The investigation starts with speculation and imagination; as we have seen before, both can be gateways to knowledge (See DTS Ch. 8 and Session 10, Week 6 of this program). Notice also the theme of multidimensional arising (and multidimensional inquiry), also discussed in DTS Chapter 8; and spend some time reflecting on the Comment to the Exercise assigned for this week.

In the end, light links to beauty, and for some of you this may be a powerful way into Great Knowledge. Could the link between knowledge, light, and beauty also be a point of entry for the arising of Great Love? That seems to be the message of the closing paragraph in this week's reading.