

Session 9, Week 4, February 1
DTS 19-28; TSK Ex. 28

Transition and Orientation for Week 4

In the image that opened last week's reading, Rinpoche imagines a box filled with all possible experiences, and asks: if experiences became transparent, wouldn't the box also become transparent? He doesn't really tell us why this should be so; he just says it seems probable. The rest of Chapter 2 can be read as working out why this should be so.

As we saw in the phone call, the approach he takes is to analyze the possible foundations for our "intuition" that what we experience is in some sense substantial. He moves from individual objects to their interrelations, and this in turn leads him toward patterns shaped by meaning. Meaning in turn is based on the whole—a field of interactions that (16) communicates the whole of what manifests, its own availability as a field, and "a structure and patterning that characterizes field operations." This is the field communiqué.

The field communiqué bestows on whatever emerges from the field a special intimacy with everything else that emerges, together with a proclaimed authenticity (You might think of TSK Ex. 7 as the practical exploration of the field communiqué.) It also bestows substance, provided that we understand the claim of substance as (18) "simply an output of appearance." This is what it means to render 'transparent' the experiences that fit into the box. Sub-stance turns out to be (as Michael suggested) what we understand on the basis of what the field communicates. We find ourselves somewhere between the emerging science of information theory (which makes information the basis of substance) (Souidi) and the limitations imposed by the 'logos', as Eliana pointed out. Knowledge and appearance prove to be deeply connected.

We can now see that although we have been challenging the claims of substance, we have also begun to open the freedom inherent in space. We can see why turning the substance of what we experience into something ghostly (that is, showing that substance is an attribute proclaimed by the communiqué) brings space, as the allowing matrix that manifests as the field, into intimate contact with all that is 'said' to be.

In this week's reading, we ask why it is that the message communicated by the field communiqué is the substantiality of substance, the realness of the real? Why do we insist on this? As the reading sets out to explore, the answer seems to be related to the role that the communiqué establishes for you and me as individuals. Within the communiqué, we (19) "emerge in the role of manifestor, the one who knows." For us, this role is all-important, and if it carries with it the claims of substance, we really have no choice but to go along.

It is this 'having no choice' that the reading sets out to challenge. Can we give up our commitment to our role as the one who knows? Can we be in the world more lightly, based on understanding (21) "that reality is the translation of words, concepts, and images into another

dimension.”

How could this be done? Rinpoche mentions the power of art, but he focuses mostly on the approach that seeks to put us in touch with experience directly, or with a ‘higher reality’. For many of us, this means meditative practice. We’ll look carefully at the concerns he raises.

For those of you in the teacher training, please write something in response the questions raised in the paragraph at the bottom of When It Rains, p. 118, continuing to 119.