Logos in the Garden of Souls (Part 2)

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Just to pick up where we left off when we said that if we're going to forge a conceptual framework, then there are many elements of our existence that it needs to account for, include, make sense of, give vital place and purpose to, and tie together.

Very quickly, repeating what we said: we're acknowledging its historical place—it's historically conditioned, contingent. We're not devising or discovering some kind of ultimately true grand conceptual framework or theory that's completely ahistorical. We're recognizing there's always a way of looking, which includes the concept, and the way of looking and the concept shapes, determines, gives rise to experience and vice versa. It needs to support soul-making.

It needs to support a fertility and widening of experience and also of ideation. It must support a widening and an opening of other ways of knowing, not limiting that in some kind of epistemicide. It's opening embodied ways of looking without pre-prescribed limits to it. We're not shrinking down to a claim that there's just one right way of looking called whatever it is—mindfulness or science or whatever—and some kind of naive notion that there's only one way of looking and it reveals one reality. Even if we don't use the word truth, we're not shrinking down to any kind of monotheism in that way.

We're incorporating dependent origination, the idea of ways of looking and the whole fact of emptiness of things. We're even including the idea that logoi break, conceptual frameworks break, shatter, melt, need to expand. And that we can never fully understand something like eros because of that.

So all that's quite a lot, and we even said more about other aspects of our existence that need to be included. But if we just pick out for now, to pick up our thread again: we need a conceptual framework that supports soul-making.

If we pick these up individually, we've said before, the logos needs to support, needs to allow the psyche, the image, and the eros. If we want a logos that supports soul-making, if we take that aspect, somehow we want a conceptual frame that supports soul-making. Then the logos that we have of whatever it is we are in relationship to needs to support the imaginal perception that's happening and needs to support the erotic connection.

So, for example, back to that idea of the divinity of eros. That conception, that logos in the moment functions—if I'm really incorporating, if I'm really bringing it into the way of looking—that will affect what happens, what I actually experience and how I actually live, how I relate to life. It's supportive of soul-making.

The idea of discrepancy-based processing that I mentioned earlier—to me, that's not... I mean, it might be to a very limited extent because it helps kind of discern between different things. Maybe it creates a bit of letting go or something. But its potential as a soul-making, supporting logos is very, very limited. And there's a way that thinking too much with those kinds of ideas actually will really constrain the whole eros-psyche-logos dynamic, the whole movement of soul-making, the whole potential of soul-making.

Because wrapped up in a logos like that is, either explicitly or implicitly, and in most logoi as well: what is a human being, like I said, and what is important? What is actually important? Discrepancy-based processing—what does it tell me about, what does it almost imply in the kind of subtext and the quality of the idea? What does it imply about what a human being is and what's important?

Included, wrapped up in a logos is ontology—the question of what's real, the assumptions about what's real—epistemology about what's a valid way of knowing, cosmology, metaphysics. And all of this wrapped up in there affects the experience.

So we want a conceptual frame of conceptual ideas that actually support soul-making, that open soul-making. Support and open and support the opening of soul-making. And also that allow the increase, because soul-making is that increase in the psyche, in the image, the growth, the expansion, the widening, the deepening, the complexifying of the image and of the eros.

In other words, the logos needs to be able, at certain points, to support and allow that expansion of the whole soul-making dynamic, which means the logos needs to not be so fixed. It needs to be able to break and be replaced by something else.

You can see the logos of eros, logos, the view of desire. Just compare, oversimplistically: "Desire is a defilement. It's not okay." If that's the kind of logos and the subtext, that's how we're viewing desire. Compared to: "Desire is okay, it's just another thing, everything's okay"—a kind of loose, slightly sloppy, maybe non-dual kind of teaching. "Desire's okay, everything's okay." Or a little more nuanced: "The desire that leads to the end of suffering is good, but the desire that leads to an increase in suffering is bad." Is that enough of a delineation? Or: "Desire is something beautiful and divine."

Four ideas, although in the last one you can say, well, it gets diverted or constricted or contracted. That's possible. Too simplistic. But you can see how differently the different ideas, the different logoi and conceptions about desire would shape the experience.

This is something we're going to come back to again. We've said it already, but we're going to come back to it. If you are in love and you have the sense or you play with the idea that my being in love, our being in love is somehow mirroring the divine eros. We are somehow, through our being in love, participating in a divine in-loveness, in a divine eros. And that becomes the way of looking and the way of looking at your beloved and the way of looking at your life and this moment. What does that open?

What does that lead to?

There are many other variations we've already mentioned about how to view desire or the possible ways of viewing desire, but they all have different effects. We made that distinction—eros is a subset of desire and craving is a different subset and all that—but there are other variations too. The view, the logos, affects the experience. I have to really acknowledge this and find out how, what, why.

I've said this before, and I'll say something else that I've said before as well, just because I think it's so important. If our whole Dharma conceptual frame of thought, if our whole edifice of Dharma conceptually is too narrow or not subtle enough or not sophisticated enough and not making the right distinctions—if it's maybe what might pass nowadays for a sort of typical Dharma conceptual framework—if it's too narrow, and it doesn't have the right kind of levels of subtlety and sophistication and openness, then this can get quite entrenched, unquestioned and kind of stagnant. We don't realize that it's just one possible way of looking, one possible conceptual framework, one possible set of conceptual distinctions. You know: "Be with what is, everything's impermanent, everything's just flowing, so let go because you can't hang on and this is it, this is it now."

That kind of simplistic dharma can very easily become just entrenched, unquestioned, a stagnant kind of dogma and not realize this is just a way of looking. This is just a set of conceptions that informs a way of looking, one among many possible others. It will have its effects. Others will have their effects.

But if that happens and it does become something too narrow, not subtle and sophisticated enough, does become entrenched in that way, then what happens is we look at life that way and our hermeneutics, our interpretation of existence is constrained by that conceptual framework. We might think, "I'm not into conceptual frames, I'm not intellectual, I'm just—this is really simple, this is just really basic, true, not conceptual at all." It's a conceptual framework, and it constrains the interpretation of experience and existence.

And it also then constrains experience—I've said this before—experience of what? Of self, of other, of world, of cosmos, of time, of desire, of eros, certainly experience of soul-making. It constrains the range of freedom that's available to us and the depth of freedom, both wide and deep, the kinds of freedom. It constrains our creativity in all kinds of ways. It constrains our sense of beauty and again, the range and the diversity of the senses of beauty.

Now, if you ask, "Well, what is the relationship with, let's say, Pali Canon—the Pali Canon of what you're saying, or this conceptual framework of all this business that we're talking about? What's the relationship then with Pali Canon Dharma?" I would ask in response, I would say quite a lot in that, so I just want to say some things right now.

One question I would ask in response is: whose Pali Canon? Whose interpretation of the Pali Canon? The Pali Canon, just like any other text, is always approached with an agenda and always approached with assumptions as well, with certain conceptual frameworks in place already, certain ways of looking in place or a way of looking in place and available, a certain ontology, a certain epistemology, certain

cosmology. Whose Pali Canon? Whose agenda? Whose assumptions? Whose conceptual framework?

If I approach the Pali Canon with the agenda and the assumptions and the conceptual framework and the limited range of ways of looking and ontology, epistemology, cosmology of, let's say, secular modernism—sort of based on classical science and a sort of materialistic view of reality and a kind of existential one-dimensional universe and humanism—what am I going to get? What am I going to see? I'm going to see a secular modernist Pali Canon. And then curiously, the Buddha seems like a guy just like me, because I'm looking that way. I have an agenda.

What would it be, we might ask—I think more interesting—to bring a post-modern critique of modernism, a post-modern attitude and kind of agenda, if you like, to the Pali Canon? What would that give rise to? To me, that's actually much more interesting.

But we bring an agenda, we bring a set of assumptions. What happens is we ignore this or that aspect of, in this case, the Pali Canon. We give a centrality of place to this and something else. And dependent on our agenda, and dependent on our assumptions, we have a certain fantasy of the Buddha, and a fantasy of, as well as conception, of what awakening is. All of this comes into creating, if you like, the Pali Canon—creating, discovering the Pali Canon. I need to see this, and I need to admit it.

So, a scholar, so-called, and actually, I have to point out that scholarship itself is part fantasy.

Scholarship itself is part fantasy. And again, I can say that from personal experience, but scholarship itself is part fantasy. What goes on for the scholar that keeps them at it, that makes it alive for them? There's soul-making going on in scholarship and it involves fantasy.

But anyway, a scholar without a practice related to the Pali Canon, a Pali Canon scholar, so-called scholar, without a practice and without really a lived engaging of that material in their life, in their practice, can't understand what the Pali Canon is about. They cannot claim that they understand it. Someone who doesn't have practice and a kind of really passionate engagement with it can't understand it.

And at the same time, yet a scholar who does have a practice that really matters to them and is engaging that material in their life, in their practice, they already have a fantasy and a conceptual framework. They already have an investment and an agenda and a perspective. So here, again, is a kind of version of, I don't know if it's the hermeneutic circle so much as a hermeneutical conundrum, hermeneutical situation about interpreting the Pali Canon.

If I try and have this objective, almost quasi-classical scientific methodology there, because I don't practice, because it doesn't mean anything to me, I don't really care about it, I'm not engaging it, I'm not really going to understand it. And if I do, I'm already bringing everything that I bring to it. And even someone who's supposedly not engaging brings their whole historical situation to it, and the assumptions of modernity and post-modernity, whatever it is. So here's a hermeneutical conundrum situation fact. Can I be honest and be aware of it? And what is the implication there?

Usually what happens, historically, and it still goes on, actually, is that we create, discover the Pali Canon, just as we do with anything else that's meaningful to us, anything else that's involved in our soul-making, to whatever extent. There is creativity going on. But if I cloak my creative discovery in the language of the tradition, in, let's say, Buddhist language, then it's almost like I smooth over. It's as if, oh yeah, sure, we're all talking about the same thing, there's no problem. We're not creating anything here, we're just discovering. Because we all use words like Four Noble Truths, and we all use words like suffering and awakening or enlightenment or whatever it is.

It might mean completely different things, utterly divergent things. There's a whole range of meanings of these Buddhist words, but because we're all using the words of the tradition it's okay somehow. It cloaks the fact that we're creating and not just discovering, and it also hides the fact that we may be talking about really radically different directions and ideas.

So when the Dharma comes to a new culture, a culture that's new for it historically, now it's happening in the West, the Dharma is coming here, it's just in its very early infancy, not even out of the birth canal really, or just as it went to China or Japan, what happens there? You know, really, if you take Japanese Zen, let's say Soto or Rinzai Zen, or Shingon, whatever, first of all, there's quite a variety there, but sometimes you'd be hard-pressed - I don't know, if the Buddha was alive, would he even recognize that it's the same thing that he talked about? Maybe some words are the same, but it's so vastly different. Or even what passes for Zen, or what has the label of Zen in Western cultures now.

I'm not saying that's a bad thing. I'm just trying to expose something here, and so let's be honest about something. There's historically a way of doing this that still goes on to do with cloaking the creation, the creativity, and using the traditional words to kind of cover something that's vastly divergent - a range of teachings and directions of vast divergence.

Or, you know, again, historically there is what happened with the Mahayana and the Vajrayana in India: you get the teaching that the Buddha said this, historically he said this, but he said it in secret to a small select band of disciples. And so, again, there's a kind of historical factual claim. And now they preserve this teaching in secret, and now we're revealing it, or now this is the tradition. It goes back to the historical, factual Buddha. Or the Buddha is revealing this on another plane of existence. And actually, strange as that may sound to some people, it actually makes more sense. It feels more viable to me if you open up the language of who the Buddha is and who my mind is, etc.

Or you get a terma was found, an actual teaching was found by this particular person, a tulku or whatever, found this old teaching, this ancient original teaching, a scroll or whatever it is. Or you get the sort of modern version of "what the Buddha meant was this. When he said this..." All of it is trying to claim authority and authenticity, and those words are related, via a fantasy of origins and via the particular fantasy and agenda that one brings to the Dharma, to the Pali Canon, to whatever it is, or the Mahayana texts, or whatever it is in front of one that one is invested in.

I don't think now that the Dharma can grow, and it needs to grow, if it's a baby coming out of the birth canal. It will grow. It will change. It has already changed. Western Dharma has already taken on, as I mentioned in one talk already on this retreat, has already integrated into it certain concepts that were absolutely not there in the Pali Canon or Zen Buddhism, like certain psychotherapeutic concepts and certain neuroscientific ideas we just take for granted. So it's already happening.

But nowadays, in our culture, the Dharma can't grow convincingly with this - to me, not convincingly at all - with this kind of appeal to the authenticity or authority of the actual reality of a tradition as if that's something real and we're not owning the fantasy, the fantasy of scholarship, the agenda, the assumptions, the concepts that one brings to it. All of that. For me, that's not convincing. The cat is out of the bag. The cat's out of the bag in regard to our hermeneutical relationship with text and tradition and all that, and historical figures. And if you know, I'm from modern philosophy, I'm very fond of Hans-Georg Gadamer, who talked a lot, wrote a lot about this, the hermeneutics and our situation in history.

Looking back at the text, it doesn't mean we shouldn't inquire and talk about the Pali Canon, but there is no pristine, unsoiled actuality that we're going to arrive at there. To think that we are is philosophically naive—philosophically and psychologically naive, I would say. The cat's out of the bag. We are too aware now of the cultural and historical context.

So if someone said the Buddha in secret taught neuroscience to a select band of disciples, or what's more common—that the Buddha actually did teach this in certain psychotherapeutic interpretations of what's happening—it doesn't really convince me. It's not very convincing.

What about being in dialogue with the Buddha, with the Buddha Dharma, with the tradition? Dialogue, dialogos—we're in a conversation, in a back and flow. That's part of loving a tradition and respecting a tradition: actually admitting that when we love, we're in dialogue with our lover. We're in dialogue with this. Dia logos—back and forth. Dia means through. Logos goes through one way and the other. It's like water through other water, flowing both ways, mixing and coming back.

To be in dialogue with the Buddha Dharma, with the tradition, with the Buddha, with the Sangha—to me, it's important to acknowledge that. And then creativity. Actually, we're acknowledging that we are creative. We are creating, discovering if you want, the Pali Canon or whatever text. We add things. All of that. So to me, it's disingenuous to try to convince others that we're discovering something authentic and independent, something independently existing. The fantasy of that, the fantasy of historical facticity.

Let me say a little bit more about this. I mentioned that word epistemicide—it's a great word. The killing, like homicide—epistemicide, the killing of ways of knowing, the erasure, the eradication, the starving and therefore killing of ways of knowing.

This is something that actually happened in Western society with the emergence of modernism, starting with the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution, but really with the Western Enlightenment. A

certain way of knowing modeled on the methodology of classical Cartesian and Newtonian and Baconian science was claimed to be superior and to reveal the one universal reality. The project was to reveal one universally valid way of knowing things. It's a mixture of empiricism and rationalism, basically the scientific method.

But again, if you know much about recent Western philosophy, this has been radically questioned. The whole project of modernism and the Western Enlightenment project in relation to ways of knowing, ways of looking, and what reality is supposed to be has been radically questioned by postmodern philosophy, philosophers of science, postcolonial theory, feminist studies, and even philosophers from the so-called analytical Anglo-American tradition. I think I mentioned this in that talk—even Wilfrid Sellars and W.V.O. Quine, rigorous analytical, logical philosophers, question that whole take on epistemology and the monotheistic approach to epistemology and ontology and so-called reality and ways of knowing.

In this situation we now have, the yogi saying that the trees were calling, the forest was calling her, as she said so beautifully, felt and experienced. Or when I can feel this tree, this particular tree that I visit, is happy at my return today, is happy at my approaching it again. Or when people say in this culture or in other cultures, "We are sensing, we're perceiving the spirits that are around now." Or my friend says, "I'm getting information. It's like my ovaries are receiving information. I'm knowing through my ovaries, through my tongue."

We've talked about a sense of divinity, a sensation of divinity, and many—actually infinitely many more possibilities. All these kinds of ways of knowing that are implicit or claimed or spoken to through this epistemicide of modernism and secular enlightenment are discounted, dismissed, and often actually ridiculed, sometimes openly and also in some Dharma centers. Either explicitly or implicitly discounted, dismissed—there's an explicit or implicit epistemicide happening.

So the whole project of "we're just teaching mindfulness without a cosmology"—really? Is there not a cosmology wrapped up in the whole presentation there? And what is that cosmology? What's the one-dimensional cosmology of classical science? Empiricism with a bit of rationalism thrown in.

If one of us was teaching that way, and let's say someone from an Amazonian tribe or a First Nation Native American person heard it and accused the teacher of colonialism—of this kind of foisting, peddling this kind of view and essentially attempting epistemicide, a very successful attempt, not completely successful but pretty successful so far—what would the teacher say?

Effectively, what you're saying is basically dismissing and discounting and ridiculing ways of knowing that I have grown up with, that are very meaningful to me. If I'm teaching a kind of secular dharma or secular mindfulness, am I, in fact, enforcing what is effectively a kind of white man's religion? A white man's religion. Even though religion seems like the last thing, the furthest thing away from what I'm doing. Am I effectively foisting that, enforcing that somehow?

Somehow. I've been wondering about this for a while now, and I think it's wonderful and really important—the diversity initiatives in terms of people of color, gender orientation and identities, sexual orientations and identities, and all that. This is starting to open in some Dharma centers and dialogues, and I think it's really, really important.

But within that, how many people have stopped to consider that actually a certain presentation of the Dharma—which is sometimes quite aggressive, again, explicitly or implicitly—that a certain kind of secularized Dharma may actually be a form of proselytizing, a kind of violence that's akin to the Christian missionaries of centuries past?

We consider language and inclusion and the environment that we're teaching in and the way we might be more inviting and more inclusive to different groups and identities, et cetera, and respectful of that. But how many people are actually considering the content? Is there a blindness here that actually there may be something that doesn't allow or invite or sit well with certain groups of people because of the content?

You know, in America, the slaves brought over from Africa and enslaved there, or in Africa—African Americans, whether via slavery or Africans in Africa—some of them took on, or you could say were forced to take up, Christianity. But they took it on and—not all, but look at how much they gave to it, the dimensions they gave and gave to it, the dimensions of soul, their soulfulness. It became soul-making for them in their ways. It had to include more body, more hips, more groove than what the white missionaries might have had in their presentation.

So it was taken on board, but something had to be added to it to make it real, fertile, beautiful soul-making. And if you prohibit that—whatever it is that needs to be added, which may need to be certain epistemologies, certain ways of knowing—you're actually no better than a white missionary who would actually even try to disallow that.

So maybe what we consider stripped-down secularist Dharma in the way we present it—maybe that's amputating something, neutering something, as I said someone told me a while ago. Maybe we're smothering something to death. What? Certain ways of being with the body, certain ways of knowing with the body, certain embodiment, the hips, certain ways of knowing.

Epistemicide, like I said—there's a killing of certain ways of knowing. Another phrase: epistemic cleansing. I said I didn't come up with these phrases. I've been thinking about this for a while, and then Catherine taught at IMS recently, and she had a conversation with one of the staff people there who's alive to this. There's a teacher apparently, Bonnie Duran, who's also really drawing attention to this colonialism, epistemicide, et cetera, within the Dharma.

So there's a kind of—I doubt it's with realizing, I don't think it's intentional—but there's an enforcing of a cosmology and a metaphysics and limited fantasies and images of awakening. All of that is kind of enforced. And it's like closing doors and creating a kind of prison rather than opening doors.

A person might say—very tempting to say—"No, no, no, we're not doing that. We're just teaching a certain mode of mind called mindfulness, which brings freedom." Well, I would actually say, not sure, because I don't think it's a very deep freedom that comes from just that, if the mindfulness doesn't go beyond that deep into deeper insights about reality. If it doesn't include this movement into the unfabricated, the understanding of dependent origination at that very deep level, and if it doesn't open ways of looking, the freedom of ways of looking. If it doesn't liberate ways of looking.

And so sometimes dogma and truth—both things that most people would run from and believe that we're a million miles away from or want to renounce, being dogmatic or drawing in that word "truth," which has become very unfashionable now—but yet it's there, underpinning things without admitting or realizing it. How much is that the case?

The last thing about this—I'll pick up later. But I heard a Dharma teacher say in a Q&A that one can't go in a Dharma center, in a meditation retreat—one can't go, he said, one can't go from meditation to epistemology. In other words, just because you have certain experiences in meditation, you can't take that as saying anything about reality. It's not a valid epistemology. It's not a valid source of knowledge.

Now, I could say, okay, fine, you can say that if you want. Absolutely. But where do you get your epistemology from? You must have some epistemology. Okay, so you're just saying that for you it's not coming from meditation. I don't think you can say that for everyone. In other words, what gives you the right to dismiss that as a source of epistemology, and where do you get yours from?

So nowadays in Western philosophy, some of it is quite fashionable—for example, Richard Rorty and other philosophers—quite fashionable to sort of recognize the hermeneutical conundrum with regard to epistemology, but also ontology and all of that, and also recognize the kind of collapse, if you like, of the whole project of modernity and kind of coming up with the one grand theory of everything that reveals the truth and the way of knowing to know that truth, et cetera.

So philosophers like Richard Rorty respond to all that, kind of reiterate it and respond: abandon epistemology, abandon ontology, abandon all that kind of attempt in philosophy. And what it amounts to is a kind of just shrugging, shrugging at the whole question of ways of knowing. And maybe one comes up with different ideas—and for him it's solidarity with your community, just all kind of believing in the same sort of epistemology, ways of knowing, but kind of letting other communities have theirs. And so that sounds quite nice.

But effectively what happens is there's a reverting to the default epistemology, the default ways of knowing. In other words, you can say that as a sort of intellectual position and declare, "Well, I don't have an epistemology or an ontology or a cosmology," but you actually live one. You live one. You live an epistemology. In other words, there are certain experiences that you trust as being valid sources of knowledge and intimations of what's real, and you make certain conclusions about what's real. You live your life based on that. You live your life with a certain sense of what the cosmos is.

So to say there's no epistemology, no ontology, no cosmology—that's not tenable, as we said before. But because there's not the flexibility of the ways of looking, because there's not the meditative training to actually adopt different conceptual frameworks and different ways of looking, to actually see the experience open up, to inhabit, if you like, different universes, you can say what you like philosophically and intellectually and write it very nicely, but there's just a reversion to the default.

And where did you get that default from? The default is probably mostly from the dominant modernist Western culture. It's just what you receive as much as you learned in high school and whatever most people around you are sort of believing.

So a question would be: why? Where do you get your epistemology from? Is it from what's just popular around you, what's dominant in the culture? Is it just a kind of laziness, where it just slinks to in the being without questioning it? Is it just your own personal inclination? Are you admitting that? Am I admitting that? Why do I choose this or that?

Whatever it is—if I get my epistemology from logic, I get my epistemology from a high school science book, or I get my epistemology from the dominant culture, I get my epistemology from my meditation experience, I get my epistemology from what it says in such scripture or what such and such a teacher says—why? And is it possible to justify any of those epistemologies? I don't think so. Ultimately justify it, I mean.

This is partly why I think epistemology is so interesting: always an epistemology, a decision, a lived decision about what's real and what isn't, will come to rest on some assumptions that are not actually provable, that are ultimately not provable. I end up just having some recourse to some basis that's not actually provable.

So can we be conscious of this? Where am I getting my epistemology, and what are my claims for it? If I realize this—that epistemology rests on some assumptions, which somewhere needs to rest on some assumptions that are not finally provable—then what are my options? Where does that leave me? Am I just going to smooth this over? Am I going to talk as if it's not true, but then revert to as if there's a certain truth? I avoid the word truth—it's a bad word because it's not very fashionable now, and philosophers have shown that it's not a good thing to go bandying around or assuming. But basically I'm reverting to something that assumes a truth.

What are my options if I really hold this in sight? So what's happening in the epistemology? Classical scientific method, as I pointed out, rests partly on rationalism and reductionism—reducing everything to units and atoms and how these work together in a coherent way, atoms and then subatomic particles or whatever it is, or neural processes or whatever. Partly it rests on rationalism and reductionism.

But as Jeffrey J. Kripal, a scholar, pointed out, and he's drawing on someone else's thought called Charles Tart, he said rationalism and reductionism, if you're choosing that as your epistemological

framework—that is the basis of it, which a lot of people do—rationalism and reductionism are also what he calls state-specific truths. This is the bit that he got from Charles Tart. That is, they are specific to highly trained egoic forms of awareness.

In other words, rationalism and reductionism pertain to, or are possible in, a certain state of mind that's actually highly trained. But these states of mind that allow rationalism and reductionism and epistemology and all that comes out of that—these states of mind are more easily reproduced and communicated, at least within our present Western culture. In other words, we are trained in that epistemology. We are trained in that way of looking. We are trained in those states of mind in which rationalism and reductionism sort of hold sway.

It's a training. Training of a state of mind, training of a way of looking. What does that sound like?

Oh, it sounds like a kind of how I would conceive of meditation. That we're training ways of looking. It's just that we're so used to certain ways of looking, certain epistemologies, certain states of mind in our culture, that these become much more easily reproduced and communicated, taught to others.

But if we think of meditation as the whole range of flexibility of learning and developing and moving between ways of looking, it starts to take a different kind of contextual place. Again, what are my options?

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