Pema Pera: Stim just disappeared?

Gaya Ethaniel: Yes seems so Pema

Chimera Cosmos: Ola Pema!

Scathach Rhiadra: must have crashed

Pema Pera: Hi Chimera and everybody!

Storm Nordwind: Massive asset db problems it seems. Taking a long time to rez

Gaya Ethaniel: Thanks Fael

Gilles Kuhn: hello all

Pema Pera: Today, Stim will switch to voice only, he told me

Fefonz Quan: Hello everyone :)

Pema Pera: so that means that we can record the whole session

Fael Illyar: voice only?

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Gilles and Fefonz :)

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Gilles, Fefonz, Storm

Pema Pera: we will put the chat log up on our web site

Fefonz Quan: heya, gaya ;)

Storm Nordwind: text only you mean?

Pema Pera: so if you don't like to appear there, you should either leave or be very silent :-)

Pema Pera: yes

Pema Pera: text only

Pema Pera: and hopefully not us only, but also Stim :)

Pema Pera: while we are waiting for Stim to return, does anyone have any comments, questions, observations, about last week, or about this whole series of workshops?

Chimera Cosmos: Are there readings?

Chimera Cosmos: Sorry I missed last week.

Pema Pera: http://www.kira.org/index.php?option...109&Itemid=139

Chimera Cosmos: thanks :-)

Pema Pera: This is the second meeting, so we are still feeling our way around, to see what works well, and wat everybody is interested in

Allan Whiteberry: Perhaps you could briefly explain for a newcomer what this is all aboout

Gilles Kuhn: i missed the two first for pc problems alas so i will be very "observing now"

Pema Pera: the key ideas, as you can see on the page that I just quoted is:

Pema Pera: 1) science is empirical and rational

Pema Pera: 2) contemplative investigations are in their own way empirical and rational

Rene2008 Zanzibar: brb guys

Pema Pera: 3) it is a fascinating challenge and adventure for us to explore what this empirical and this rational ingredient really means, in practice, in both cases

Fefonz Quan: the link is not working for now...

Pema Pera: (this is just my summary)

Pema Pera: And as for a hint of how to conduct the exploration, there is also:

Chimera Cosmos: worked for me

Pema Pera: 0) what mind are we using

Pema Pera: That last question, really the first question as a base, is what is crucial for contemplation

Pema Pera: and should be crucial for any deep investigation of reality

Pema Pera: Anyway, that was a short intro/summary

Pema Pera: Any questions, comments?

Pema Pera: (I know that Stim was planning to start with a little talk by him, but we'll have to just improvise for now)

Gilles Kuhn: a lot but basically because i was not here the first two time ! so i prefer to look

Pema Pera: this is the second time, Gilles, you only missed one :)

Gilles Kuhn: but if nobody enter i willl ask you what you mean by "0) what mind are we using"

Gilles Kuhn: ?

Pema Pera: with any lab investigation, you choice of instrument is crucial

Pema Pera: also with observations in nature -- like using a telescope

Allan Whiteberry: Each person has more than one mind?

Pema Pera: we can use our mind in different ways

Pema Pera: is one way to say it

Pema Pera: or we can use different minds

Pema Pera: that's another one

Allan Whiteberry: different states of mind

Pema Pera: in the first way you presume that you know who you are

Pema Pera: that there is one "core self"

Pema Pera: "core you"

Pema Pera: "core mind"

Pema Pera: but that is a BIG assumption

Storm Nordwind can observe more than one mind at a time simultaneously

Pema Pera: it may be more empirical NOT to make that assumption, to leave it open

Pema Pera: does that make sense?

Storm Nordwind agrees

Pema Pera: you see, we always start with SO MANY pre-assumptions

Gilles Kuhn: yes it make sense but it is a lot of assumption pema but it can be taken as work hypothesis indeed

Pema Pera: like there is a material world that I more or less know and that more or less defines me, there is one me, there is one mind, we just have to figure out how those work . . . .

Pema Pera: so as much as possible I'd like to try to leave out any and all assumptions

Allan Whiteberry: Except for those extremely rare cases of multiple personality disorder, I believe there is only one "self"

Pema Pera: yes, you do, Allan, that is how you were brought up

Pema Pera: but why do you do that?

Pema Pera: because we all talk that way?

Allan Whiteberry: It is self-evident

Pema Pera: or is there a good reason?

Pema Pera: self-evident is what people say before the next breakthrough

Pema Pera: it is self-evident that the Sun moves around the Earth

Gilles Kuhn: yes but its relatively easy with a little pratice to put you in a different mind set and to think "as another"....

Storm Nordwind notes it is common in some forms of Buddhism to accept the coexistance of several types of mind simultanenously

Pema Pera: note that I am perfectly willing to entertain the possibility that that would indeed be just one mind

Pema Pera: I just don't want to start there

Pema Pera: I want to start with what appears, what kind of minds present themselves

Gilles Kuhn: thats what we do in ethoric or in play or in debate when you change defence and thats the live of a lawyer....;-)

Storm Nordwind nods at Pema

Gilles Kuhn: rethoric*

Pema Pera: whether they later turn out to be usefully describe as coming from one mind or not is a later question

Allan Whiteberry: ok

Fefonz Quan: if my mind can do things in parallel, is it one?

Pema Pera: so I would be willing to compromise as follows :

Pema Pera: instead of "what mind are you using?"

Fael Illyar: is it even meaningful to count?

Pema Pera: "in what way are you using your mind?"

Pema Pera: BUT THAT WOULD BE a rather bad compromise

Allan Whiteberry: yes, that makes sense to me

Pema Pera: it would assume a YOU and a MIND

Pema Pera: and both may not be there

Pema Pera: it would be like Newton positing an absolute space and time

Pema Pera: pragmatic compromise

Pema Pera: but it held up things like the appearance of relativity theory for quite a while

Pema Pera: though it was certainly useful

Pema Pera: so we could go either way, as long as we wear our assumptions lightly

Pema Pera: and are willing to drop them

Storm Nordwind: "Quite a while" is only relative. We need not be impatient! :)

Pema Pera: I'm an astronomer, I'm used to thinking in billions of years . . . .

Pema Pera: well, Stim has disappeared, it seems -- not only different mind but differen tworld perhaps? :-)

Pema Pera: so we may as well freely flow with questions and comments -- but let us try to stay focused on this question: HOW can we figure out what unspoken assumptions limit us?

Pema Pera: anyone?

Chimera Cosmos: unspoken? or unexamined? is that different?

Fefonz Quan: we can start dropping them and see whats left

Allan Whiteberry: Can you be more specific, give an example?

Pema Pera: unexamined

Gilles Kuhn: well pea i will beprovokative s not the fact to assume we have assumption an assumption or to assume we need epoche another one (assumption).....?

Pema Pera: If we say "I don't understand" we then rush foreward to get more understanding -> Allan

Pema Pera: but we can instead stop right there and see whether the "I" is perhaps the problem

Pema Pera: the belief in a particular "I"

Chimera Cosmos: for one, we assume it is possible to be empirical and unbiased--to be provocative as well :-)

Pema Pera: To TRY to be empirical is different from assuming that it can be done

Pema Pera: we don't have to assume it, we try

Chimera Cosmos: granted

Allan Whiteberry: If I don't understand what someone says, it is either my lack of background information, or the other person's imprecise statement

Chimera Cosmos: but I think many scientists Assume

Pema Pera: but IF we assume there is only one mind, a thing called mind, and only one I, a thing called I, those are much more dangerous assumptions when not investigated

Pema Pera: to Allan: or the whole setup can be wrong

Pema Pera: Note, Allan, that you assumed that the background setup was okay

Pema Pera: doesn't have to be

Storm Nordwind: We can find out what limits us by seeing what things look like without limitation. But how will we be able to recognise when we've been successful?

Pema Pera: that's the crux, Storm . . . .

Pema Pera: . . . I would say: seeing directly, like in mathematics

Allan Whiteberry: A good example of "i don't understand what you mean"

Wester Kiranov: doesn't that bring the danger that we only think we have done away with limitations?

Pema Pera: anything can be dangerous, Wester

Wester Kiranov: just because we do not see them

Pema Pera: we do the best we can

Pema Pera: and both in science and contemplation, peer comparison helps

Pema Pera: but is not necessarily full-proof of course

Gilles Kuhn: but pema is that not panpsychismagainonly one mind ? only one thought only one sense is that brahmanism ?

Pema Pera: even mathematicians can make mistakes

Pema Pera: no isms here, Gilles :-)

Pema Pera: just trying to get back to basics

Pema Pera: very simple

Gilles Kuhn: yes pema but your basics are too full of assumption (mine too i dont disput that)

Pema Pera: we can look at any and all isms, but we don't start from there

Pema Pera: what is an assumption of mine, Gilles, can you name a few?

Fael Illyar: it's difficult to speak without sounding like there are assumptions.

Wester Kiranov: So, one of the ways to find out HOW can we figure out what unspoken assumptions limit us is to compare notes, see what other people have found, and get a tase from that

Pema Pera: yes, Fael

Gilles Kuhn: oh yes you assume we have to quit assumption and that it is possible for a start

Pema Pera: yes indeed, Wester!

Pema Pera: not quite assumptions, Gilles, but wear them lightly, become aware of them

Fefonz Quan: yes, wester, we are much better at finding other's limitations :)

Wester Kiranov: :)

Allan Whiteberry: Are not assumptions usefull?

Pema Pera: science is far more intelligent than even the best scientist :-)

Pema Pera: sure, Allan, of course, but don't buy into them wholesale

Storm Nordwind is not so sure Wester. We might find a common delusion instead

Pema Pera: use them, but remain aware that they could be traded in at some point

Allan Whiteberry: possibly

Gilles Kuhn: yes thats the core of western philosophy : reflection bt too reflection start with assumed assumption and then evolve thanks to methods like dialectics or criticism

Gaya Ethaniel: Those limitations we find in others are often related to our own in my experience

Pema Pera: yes, Storm, and that happens in science too, for a while, but then sooner or later that is noticed

Fefonz Quan: storm got a point there

Wester Kiranov: it's just meant to be a start

Wester Kiranov: and you can compare not just what you found but also how you found it

Pema Pera: yes

Allan Whiteberry: I think what you are talking about is finding out which of your assumptions may be wrong

Pema Pera: before that, Allan, just which ones you use

Pema Pera: once you see that, it can become clear which once are wrong

Wester Kiranov: and some assumptioms you don't know about at all

Pema Pera: or better, under which circumstances they can be rightfully used

Pema Pera: yes, Wester, and those are the problem!

Pema Pera: Before relativity, almost no physicists wondered about the drawback of using absolute space and time

Pema Pera: you didn't start a physics course saying: we start with the dangerous assumption of absolute space adn time

Pema Pera: rather, it was considered "self evident" . . . .

Pema Pera: not even mentioned typically

Gilles Kuhn: pema technicaity but i was thinking that absolute space time was only an instrumentality since laplace ? (i can be very wrong long time...)

Allan Whiteberry: Because early physicists lacked the equipment to make precise measurements

Pema Pera: Newton introduced it, as far as I know, and Leibniz certainly didn't like it :)

Pema Pera: yes, Allan?

Allan Whiteberry: are you asking me something?

Gilles Kuhn: (well leibnitz and newton were like cat and dog ;-))

Pema Pera: yes, Allan, you wrote "[14:38] Allan Whiteberry: Because early physicists lacked the equipment to make precise measurements"

Pema Pera: and I was wondering in what context

Allan Whiteberry: yes, I did. In the context of the relativity theory of Einstein

Pema Pera: ah, yes, verification needed a lot of precision

Pema Pera: but the basic ideas could have been formulated earlier

Pema Pera: according to David Finkelstein, Galileo could have done it :-)

Pema Pera: by symmetrizing the so-called Galileo transformations

Pema Pera: that may be a bit of a stretch

Pema Pera: but not altogether unreasonable

Pema Pera: (David is the first person who realized the physical meaning of a black hole, in the early sixties)

Gilles Kuhn: gosh pema thats is most stretched inded and i think not reasonable

Fefonz Quan: some knowledge of light and waves would have helped him though :)

Pema Pera: yes, would have helped, for sure

Pema Pera: let's see whether I can find a reference, just a sec

Gilles Kuhn: look before michelson morley experiment einstein and lorentz poiincarre work were not even necessary

Wester Kiranov: from the maxwell equations to the relativity theory did not take that long

Fefonz Quan: took a few decades, which is not a little

Pema Pera: sorry, can't find it on the web; if you go to my publication list http://www.ids.ias.edu/~piet/publ/ to number [165] there is the info about a book in which both he and I wrote a chapter -- his chapter talks about what I mentioned, but it may not be online . . . .

Pema Pera:

Pema Pera: sorry, I had a local reference :)

Edwound Wisent: just afking here so I can read notes later

Pema Pera: yes, maxwell equations were the trigger

Pema Pera: but not necessarily the only possible trigger

Pema Pera: David Finkelstein's reading of the whole history of physics is that it has been one continuing move to symmetrization

Gilles Kuhn: maxwell? not michelson morley on light speed ?

Pema Pera: first you posit that something influences something else

Pema Pera: but then you turn the tables, and look at influence in the other direction

Pema Pera: so space and time influence objects

Pema Pera: well, why not having objects influence space and time?

Pema Pera: THAT is something you can ask yourself well before Maxwell

Pema Pera: let time slow down when objects move fast, for example

Pema Pera: to Gilles: Maxwell's equations were the starting point

Pema Pera: Michaelson/Morley were a check, really

Gilles Kuhn: ah ok

Storm Nordwind silently salutes the Scot

Gilles Kuhn: but the light speed = in all ref are that a consequence of maxwell equation i was thinking it was saw for michelson morley exp . ?

Pema Pera: The experiment confirmed that the speed of light was independent of frames of reference

Gaya Ethaniel: How can I apply these point to 'contemplative' exploration?

Pema Pera: that there was no need to posit an ether as a kind of medium that would prefer a particular frame of reference

Gilles Kuhn: confirmed i was tinking that it was a pure surprise ! can you elaborate i'm very interested !

Pema Pera: The connection, Gaya, is the way to keep an eye out for unstated assumptions

Pema Pera: we can use science and see how assumptions for implicitly used for centuries

Pema Pera: and contemplatives do something quite similar

Pema Pera: looking for unnoticed assumptions

Pema Pera: I'd love to elaborate, Gilles, but that would become rather technical

Gilles Kuhn: true another time indeed

Pema Pera: and we only have five minutes left

Gaya Ethaniel: I see Pema

Pema Pera: after which I'll have to go to another meeting

Fefonz Quan: yet, one more thing science teach us, is not to trust our senses

Wester Kiranov: not to trust only our senses

Pema Pera: yes, Fefonz, and at the same time not to trust our reasoning either

Pema Pera: since that can go wrong too:

Pema Pera: senses + reasoning + a large groups of peers

Pema Pera: three ingredients at least

Fael Illyar: trust here in the sense of absolute trust I guess?

Fefonz Quan: "science - don't trust no one!" :)

Pema Pera: yes, nothing is absolutely sure in science, indeed

Pema Pera: evidence builts, and useful applications can be tested, but that's it

Wester Kiranov: i wish more scientists knew that

Pema Pera: :)

Pema Pera: any last minute remarks, comments, questions?

Storm Nordwind: Do we have a homework, like last week?

Pema Pera: well, that's up to Stim, really, it is his workshop

Storm Nordwind nods

Pema Pera: I presume he will post something

Pema Pera: if you are a member of the Kira Cafe group in SL

Pema Pera: or the google group for Kira Cafe (IM me to become a member)

Pema Pera: you will get the announcements

Pema Pera: well, shall we stop here then?

Pema Pera: Thank you all for joining us !

Pema Pera: sorry we missed Stim . . . .

Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you :)

Allan Whiteberry: Thanks

Scathach Rhiadra: thank you :)

Fefonz Quan: thanks pema

Storm Nordwind: Thank you for stepping in Pema

Wester Kiranov: thank you, and bye

Pema Pera: sure, my pleasure

Chimera Cosmos: thanks much

Pema Pera: I'll get the chat log for today put up soon(ish) on the Kira web site

Pema Pera: see you all next time!

Fael Illyar: Thank you Pema, see you later :)