

DHARMA -- THE VIEW OF THE PARTS

[One blizzard is barely shoveled when another comes in. This must be winter.]

The sum of the parts make a whole, but any one of the parts is not the whole. In fact a popular phrase is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This “whole” conundrum is not solvable other than by unification.

This is what in dharma is called “relative truth,” the story of duality, of subject and object. And relative truth is by definition divisive. It is divided. Remove all the division and you have the whole, but there is nothing we can say about the whole without dividing it, because that is what a whole is: indivisible. And all of these words are just conceptual, relative. Even by saying that the whole is whole, we are already divisive because we are contrasting it with what is not-whole.

I don't think these words are difficult to understand, but when applied to dharma they are the difference between samsara and nirvana; and that's a difference that is not easy to unite and realize as a whole. Samsara and Nirvana are said to be connate (co-emergent), yet it seems that most everyone I know only knows one side of that equation: samsara. Realizing that whole is difficult to close-to-impossible or so it seems.

In the advanced dharma practices, what has been called the “realization” practices, virtually nothing can be stated. For example: we can't say that we exist in any permanent way or that we don't exist. We can't say we both exist and don't exist or that we don't exist

and don't not-exist. Why? Because these are all relative (dualistic) statements.

So, you won't find Mahamudra practitioners saying any of the above for that same reason, that they are neither totally true nor untrue. Again, all relative statements are divisive, ways of dividing the whole. There is nothing wrong with dividing the whole except that it is not the same as the whole, about which nothing can be said without being divisive. It's kind of a case of "put up or shut up."

And so, if we are talking about the realization dharma practices, it is case of going single-file, not hand-in-hand or two-by-two as in dualistic. Like birth or death, we are alone, unitary. As the great German philosopher Gerog Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel put it:

"We go behind the curtain of the Self to see what is there, but mainly for there to be something to be seen."

"As Bodhicitta is so precious,
May those without it now create it,
May those who have it not destroy it,
And may it ever grow and flourish"

For those of you who would like to have access to other free books, articles, and videos on these topics, here are my links:

http://traffic.libsyn.com/spiritgrooves/Links_to_Michael_Erlewine-V2.pdf

