

The Dilemma of Western Minds Approaching Eastern Philosophies

by sadh Saturday, Mar 23 2013, 10:21am

international / prose / post

I recently read a short article by Western Buddhist, 'llar' titled, '*Suffering and Design.*' The piece began in typical western fashion with concepts, i.e. created cultural thought habits so often repeated they are accepted as given 'realities' when in fact they are fabrications or arbitrary social fictions/conventions designed to enable social management by crafty ruling elites or anyone willing to exploit the feeble minded. The concepts referred to are 'dukha' and 'sin,' which roughly render as 'suffering' and out of 'step/synch/alignment,' respectively.

Notwithstanding the catchy title, almost guaranteed to attract the usual masochistic types that dwell on the negative or subscribe to esoteric and/or new age philosophies, the article is typical/characteristic of the meaningless semantic abundance that new age 'sages,' like Deepak Chopra and others (Tolle) specialise in.

The article dwells on the notion of separateness or dislocation, as somehow natural, we are all able to relate to that condition as we live in perverse societies/cultures engaged in tearing themselves apart with inherent cultural contradictions; for instance, we note the first premise of Buddhism, the existence of suffering or sorrow, when in fact Buddhist philosophy rejects all binary notions of joy or sorrow -- the Buddhist void or nirvana simply does not admit such illusory concepts, yet the Buddha himself stated that sorrow is real when in fact it is un-real -- simple logic says you can't have it both ways Gautama, either the void is the ultimate infinite (all-pervasive) reality or sorrow/misery is the condition of humankind. [Please note, that the Chinese Tao rejects all notions of separateness or binary oppositions, but I do not wish to digress.]

I am not able to include the text to which I refer due to copyright restrictions but am able to cite it as an example of a certain syndrome that plagues new age writers and so-called authorities in the field.

You will note the reference to 'dislocation' and sin (out of step) but not the qualifier, dislocated from what or out of step with what? What is implied of course is some greater harmony or perfection; by not aligning oneself to it, misery and/or suffering is experienced, which is the penalty clause in the contract of subscribing to that 'reality' or fiction -- I need not refer to the hell-fires of the Abrahamic religions, which are obsessed with the concept of sin.

The text implies we are disconnected, but reality dictates otherwise, we all are aware of the plane of existence in which we live -- the notion of separateness is a greater folly/delusion than the existence of misery; however, cultures thrive on myths, fictions and delusions/illusions.

Double binds and contradictions are symptomatic of faulty paradigms as we know, so if we surrender our discriminatory faculty to the (any) author/culture we deserve the inversions, convolutions and contradictions that must follow.

In Christian cultures the worship of money is evident yet the beginning of the narrative known as the Gospel of Luke clearly depicts the protagonist, during the temptation, rejecting all temporal power

and monetary wealth. Just another cultural contradiction to contend with if you subscribe to that world view.

In my experience, folklore is the best repository of practical knowledge in existence, need I refer to a sow's ear and silk purse, or attempting to discover perfection via imperfect means.

The simple reality is, 'there are no secrets,' as existence or continuous perfection is in your face, however, I do not expect the truth to appeal more than mental self-pity, negativity or to displace the cultural ideologies that promote mutual flagellation and mental masturbation.

Beware of what or who you believe. Remember the Zen adage, "*those who speak do not know and those who know do not speak;*" for the simple reason that finite language is utterly incapable of communicating infinite reality/truth!

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