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Comment on Christopher Ives

Stephen T. Davis

My one comment is less about Christopher Ives's excellent exposition than about the doctrine he expounds. He tells us that the Mahayana doctrine of emptiness signifies two things:

(1) Nothing in the world has any self-existence;
and

(2) No concept or theory, nor the cognitive process that creates and uses it, can grasp the nature of reality.

Now if (2) is true, we naturally wonder how (1) can be known or even rationally believed. Doesn't (1) help us grasp the nature of reality – something (2) says we cannot do? Unless I have missed something, the two statements are simply inconsistent.