

Spiritual Teacher and Sexual Abuse / Sexual Exploitation

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About Sectarianism

Here is an abstract from Ven Ringu Tulku's book about the **Rime Philosophy**:

Jamgon Kongtrul on Sectarianism

Jamgon Kongtrul disagreed so thoroughly with a partisan approach that he asserted that those with sectarian views cannot uphold even their own tradition. Kongtrul says:

*»Just as a king overpowered by self-interest
Is not worthy of being the protector of the kingdom,
A sectarian person is not worthy of being a holder of the dharma.
Not only that, he is unworthy of upholding even his own tradition.«*

And again:

*»The noble ones share a single ultimate view,
But arrogant ones bend that to their own interests.
Those who show all the teachings of the Buddha as without
contradiction can be considered learned people. But who would be
foolish enough to think that those who cause
discord are holders of the dharma?«*

Ri-me is not a way of uniting different schools and lineages by emphasizing their similarities. It is basically an appreciation of their differences and an

acknowledgment of the importance of variety to benefit practitioners with different needs. Therefore, the Ri-me teachers always take great care that the teachings and practices of the different schools and lineages, and their unique styles, do not become confused with one another. Retaining the original style and methods of each teaching lineage preserves the power of that lineage experience. Kongtrul and Khyentse made great efforts to retain the original flavor of each teaching, while making them available to many. Kongtrul writes about Khyentse in his biography of the latter:

»Some people are very fussy about the refutations and affirmations of the various tenets, becoming particularly attached to their own versions, such as Rangtong or Shentong Madhyamaka. There are many who try to pull others over to their own side, to the point of practically breaking their necks. When Jamyang Khyentse teaches the different tenet systems, he does not mix up their terminology or ideas, yet he makes them easy to understand and suitable for the students. In general, the main point to be established by all the tenets is the ultimate nature of phenomena. As the Prajnaparamita Sutra states:

'The dharmata is not an object of knowledge; It cannot be understood by the conceptual mind.'

In addition, Ngok Lotsawa, who is considered the crown jewel of Tibetan intellectuals, agrees with this understanding when he says:

'The ultimate truth is not only beyond the dimension of language and expression, it is beyond intellectual understanding.'

So, the ultimate nature cannot be established by the samsaric mind, no matter how deep that mind may be.

The scholars and siddhas of the various schools make their own individual presentations of the dharma. Each one is full of strong points and supported by valid reasoning. If you are well grounded in the presentations of your own tradition, then it is unnecessary to be sectarian. But if you get mixed up about the various tenets and the terminology, then you lack even a foothold in your own tradition. You try to use someone else's system to support your understanding, and then get all tangled up, like a bad weaver, concerning the view, meditation, conduct, and result. Unless you have certainty in your own system, you cannot use reasoning to support your scriptures, and you cannot challenge the assertions of others. You become a laughing stock in the eyes of the learned ones. It would be much better to possess a clear understanding of your own tradition.

In summary, one must see all the teachings as without contradiction, and consider all the scriptures as instructions. This will cause the root of sectarianism and prejudice to dry up, and give you a firm foundation in the Buddhas teachings. At that point, hundreds of doors to the eighty-four thousand teachings of the dharma will simultaneously be open to you.«

The Ri-me concept was not original to Kongtrul and Khyentse, nor was it new to Buddhism. Shakyamuni Buddha forbade his students to criticize others, even the teachings and teachers of other religions and Cultures. This directive was so strong and unambiguous that in the *Introduction to the Middle Way*, Chandrakirti felt compelled to defend Nagarjuna's *Madhyamaka* treatises by saying:

»If, in trying to understand the truth, one dispels misunderstandings, and therefore some philosophies cannot remain intact, that should not be considered as criticizing others' views.«

More about Sectarianism

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