

SHUGDEN PROTESTERS LIE



THE TRUTH ABOUT THE FOREIGN
FUNDED SMEAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST
HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA BY AN
EXTREMIST BUDDHIST GROUP

Who are the Shugden protesters?

Former members call NKT a “cult” due to its undemocratic, nontransparent and authoritarian operations.

Only a very small minority of Tibetans propitiates Shugden, or Dolgyal, followers. The majority of the protesters belong to the International Shugden Community, a front organization of the UK-based Buddhist fringe group "New Kadampa Tradition (NKT), whose members are all westerners, apart from their spiritual director, Kelsang Gyatso, who is a Tibetan Buddhist monk.

The NKT has no association with the mainstream Tibetan Buddhist organizations around the globe. In their administrative direction issued to their centers, the NKT leadership discouraged their members from having any contact with other Buddhist organizations. The administrative direction issued on August 5, 2010 reads, "We advise and request that NKT Centres, teachers, managers and residents do not get involved with the activities of any Tibetan Buddhist groups, teachers or their students."

This sectarian and splinter Buddhist group with chapters in Europe and North America feel threatened by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his

promotion of non-sectarianism and have been orchestrating a smear campaign wherever His Holiness visits in the West by personally attacking His Holiness with false allegations and distortions of the truth.

The former members of the NKT, whose numbers exceed 1200 individuals, call the NKT a "cult" due to its undemocratic, nontransparent, and authoritarian operations. Self-titled "NKT Survivors" strongly condemn the NKT protests against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Their statement reads, "We are appalled and saddened that those who were once our NKT sangha demonstrate against and defame His Holiness the Dalai Lama." The statement continues, "Inaccuracies and distortions of what we know to be the truth have been published as fact" and "many allegations and insults are made against His Holiness which are completely unwarranted."



What is the Shugden cult?

The Shugden issue has nothing to do with the practice of Buddhism or the Buddha's noble teachings. Dorje Shugden, also known as Dolgyal, is a controversial, divisive, and wrathful spirit, whose propitiation is adopted by a fringe section of the Tibetan Buddhist community. The practice emerged in Tibet during the Fifth Dalai Lama in the 17th Century. Masquerading as the incarnation of a monk named Tulku Dakpa Gyaltsen, the spirit arose in conflict with the Dalai Lama. After the Fifth Dalai Lama's death in 1682, followers of the cult sought to portray Shugden as protector of the Gelugpa School of Tibetan Buddhism.

Following deep investigation, the Fifth to the Thirteenth Dalai Lamas as well as several spiritual heads of the Gelugpa tradition have discouraged the propitiation of Dolgyal. Not a single Sakya monastery or centre follows Dolgyal practice. For the Kagyud and Nyingma schools, Dolgyal is an anathema. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's action is supported by all the senior Tibetan Buddhist leaders. On June 20th 2015, at the conclusion of the 12th Religious Conference of the Four Schools of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon Tradition held at Dharamsala, India, they said, "We are deeply grateful and appreciate His Holiness the Dalai Lama's concern for the Tibetan people and Buddhists worldwide, and for truthfully explaining the harmful effects of propitiating Dolgyal (Shugden)." They have further said that the Shugden group is making "false allegations" and continuing "a hate campaign against the Dalai Lama." Their statement can be read here:

<http://www.tibetanreview.net/tibets-top-religious-leaders-condemn-shugden-worshippers-anti-dalai-lama-tirade/>

Shugden followers make false allegations against His Holiness the Dalai Lama through a misleading hate campaign.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has never imposed a 'ban' on the propitiation of Dolgyal. The structure of Tibetan Buddhism is such that such a ban can never be imposed.

What is His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advice concerning Shugden?

In the light of his personal and long investigation, the present Dalai Lama strongly discourages Tibetan Buddhists from propitiating the spirit known as Dolgyal.

His Holiness had, at one time, also participated in the propitiation of Dolgyal and he has said this was due to ignorance. But, His Holiness renounced the practice in 1975 after discovering the profound historical, social and religious problems associated with it. His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a Buddhist leader with special concern for the Tibetan people has the responsibility to speak out against the damaging consequences of this kind of spirit worship. His Holiness has discouraged Tibetan Buddhists from propitiating Dolgyal for two main reasons:

1. *Danger of Tibetan Buddhism degenerating into a form of spirit worship:* Tibetan Buddhism traces its source to the authentic and ancient tradition upheld at the great Indian monastic university of Nalanda, a tradition that His Holiness often describes as a complete form of Buddhism. It embodies the original teaching of the Buddha as developed through the rich philosophical, psychological and spiritual insights of many ancient Indian Buddhist masters. Since the great Indian philosopher and logician Shantarakshita was instrumental in establishing Buddhism in Tibet in its earliest stage in the 8th century, philosophical enquiry and critical analysis have always been important hallmarks of the Tibetan Buddhism. The worshippers of Dolgyal tend to promote the divisive spirit as more important than the Buddha himself or his actual teachings. His Holiness the

Dalai Lama says that there is imminent danger that the rich tradition of Tibetan Buddhism may degenerate into the mere propitiation of spirits.

2. *Obstacle to the emergence of genuine non-sectarianism:* His Holiness the Dalai Lama has often stated that one of his most important commitments is the promotion of inter-religious understanding and harmony. As a part of this endeavor, His Holiness is committed to encouraging the study of all denominations of Tibetan Buddhism, and promoting a spirit of non-sectarianism. On the other hand, propitiators of this divisive Shugden spirit openly involve in sectarianism and threaten any one from its group who desire to study any other tradition. H.H. the Dalai Lama, thus, feels that this has damaging consequences for the Tibetan tradition as a whole.

The goal of the protest campaign is to defame His Holiness, create discord within the Tibetan community, and accumulate power and financial gain for some of the Shugden group leaders.

Has His Holiness the Dalai Lama or the Tibetan leadership imposed a 'ban' on the Shugden practice?

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has never imposed a 'ban' on the propitiation of Dolgyal. The structure of Tibetan Buddhism is such that such a ban can never be imposed. While as the universally accepted leader of Tibetan Buddhism, His Holiness has rightly advised against it, he has made it abundantly clear that it is up to the individual whether or not to heed his advice. Understanding the strong negative aspect of the Shugden cult, he has asked those who continue to propitiate Dolgyal not to attend his religious teachings, which traditionally require the establishment of a teacher-disciple relationship.

Is there an issue of religious freedom?

In order to generate public sympathy, the Dolgyal extremists have tried to project their issue as being one of a fight for their religious freedom. But they know for certain that there is no violation of freedom of religion involved because the individual is free to make his or her own decision. His Holiness is in fact a staunch defender of religious freedom, but he also retains a right and duty to advise his followers. Even after His Holiness' advice they continue their divisive practice in their

respective monasteries whether in India or rest of the world, including here in the United States. This shows that there is no issue of religious freedom involved in this controversy.

Does the Tibetan leadership discriminate against Shugden followers?

The Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala, India, has consistently reiterated that there is no institutional discrimination against any Tibetan refugee on the basis of their personal faith or prayers. In terms of admission to schools, access to scholarships for higher education, obtaining Tibetan travel documents, or access to retirement homes, no discrimination is exercised on the basis of whether an applicant worships Dolgyal or not. In fact, organizations like Amnesty International (report June 1998) and the Indian National Human Rights Commission (report December 19, 2007) investigated such allegations by Dolgyal worshippers and did not find any basis for intervention. Similarly, in 2010, a verdict issued by the Delhi High Court, dismissed a case filed by the "Dorjee Shugden Devotees' Charitable and Religious Society" against the Central Tibetan Administration and His Holiness

The Tibetan exile leadership does not discriminate Dolgyal

practitioners. There are over 600 civil servants serving in the Central Tibetan Administration and none have been harassed or denied opportunity. Any eligible Tibetan can serve in the administration. Children of families practicing Dolgyal have the same rights as any Tibetans to attend schools and other monastic institutions run by the Tibetan administration in India. Shugden monks who do not wish to abide by the monasteries' internal regulations have established their own large monasteries that operate freely next to other mainstream monasteries in South India. The Shugden community have their own organizations and they enjoy full freedom to carry out their activities. Furthermore, prominent Tibetan members of the Shugden community have been able to freely leave India based on travel and legal documents issued by the government of India with the endorsement of the Central Tibetan Administration.

Although His Holiness has rightly advised against Shugden practice, he has made it abundantly clear that it is up to the individual whether or not to heed his advice.

Does the Shugden community have a history of violence?

An atmosphere of fear, intimidation and retribution combined with ingrained sectarianism characterizes those who worship Dolgyal. This has spilled over into actual violence in cases such as the brutal murder of a learned Tibetan Buddhist master and two students in Dharamsala, India, on February 4, 1997. The Indian police have charged Dolgyal worshippers with perpetrating the crime and Interpol has a standing Red Notice for the arrest of two members of the Shugden group who are wanted for “murder” and “criminal conspiracy”, but are being protected by China. You can find the details on Interpol’s website <http://interpol.it/> and search for persons wanted by India in China.

Is there Collusion between the worshippers of Shugden and external forces?

There are credible reports that the members of the so-called International Shugden Community are provided financial and other incentives by outside forces. Their intent is to destabilize the Tibetan community and undermine the efforts of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to promote human values and inter-religious harmony in the world. Discerning people may conclude that these demonstrations lack credibility.

A former head of the Shugden group has now come out with his statement saying the Chinese Government have provided monetary incentives to their members to launch the smear campaign against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He has come out with details of who the Chinese officials are and who among the Shugden group received Chinese money. His statement can be watched here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3zosv39mDM>

The Chinese connection is also evident from the fact that despite all its slogans about religious freedom and human rights, neither the NKT nor the Shugden group have said anything against Chinese denial of rights to the Tibetans in Tibet. In fact, when a BBC reporter asked a Shugden

representative "if she is troubled by Chinese policies toward Tibetans, she says she doesn't want to talk about politics." Her response can be heard here at 4:53:

<http://www.pri.org/stories/2014-10-31/breakaway-buddhists-take-aim-dalai-lama>

What is the true agenda of the Shugden smear campaign?

The Shugden issue and the allegations of the individuals and organizations behind the protest campaign has nothing to do with religious freedom and denial of rights. The goal of the protest campaign is to defame His Holiness, create discord within the Tibetan community, and accumulate power and financial gain for some of the Shugden group leaders.

For more information please visit:

<http://shugdeninfo.com/>

http://info-buddhismus.de/new_kadampa_tradition.html

http://info-buddhism.com/new_kadampa_tradition.html

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