

Dissemination History of the Eight Instructions of Lam-Rim in Mandarin China

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Abstract

Tibetan Buddhism became broadly spread in China towards the early 20th CE, and continued right up until the present day. That Ven. Fazun translated and introduced *Great Lam-Rim* (by Tsong Khapa Lobsang Drakpa, founder of the *Gelupa* tradition) into China, has played a significant part in this phenomenon. This essay is going to introduce the eight Instructions of *Lam-Rim* headed by *Great Lam-Rim*. There will be a brief on the translation, dissemination & teaching history, as well as analysis on some issue.

Keywords: Lam-Rim, the Eight Instructions, translation & dissemination, teaching

1. The Eight Instructions of Lam-Rim

Tibetan Buddhism became popular among the elites and the masses in Republican period. Though suspended during Cultural Revolution, it is still seen with strong influence remained in China nowadays. Actually now there is a growing amount of *Gelupa* tradition practitioners, monarchical and lay. This trend is credited with the Eight Instructions of *Lam-Rim*, that has been translated and introduced into China since the Republican period, headed by *Great Lam-Rim*¹ and *A Summary of the Stages of Enlightenment*², both written by Tsong Khapa Lobsang Drakpa (also called Je Rinpoche), founder of the *Gelupa* tradition.

Great Lam-Rim was written in AD 1402. According to *Venerable Master Tsong-kha-pa*³, the most credible biography of *JeyTsong-kha-pa*, the master initially received recommendation from *skyabsmchogdpalbzang* (a translator), *zulphudkonmchogbzangpo* and *dkonmchogtshulkhriims*.

¹ byang chub lam rim cheba./byang chub lam gyi rim pa chen mo. The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to enlightenment.

² rgyalba'igsungrabthams cad kyisnyingpo'ignadbsdustegtan la phab pa byang chub lam gyi rim pa./ lam rim chungngu / The Brief Treatise on the Stages of the Path to enlightenment

³ Page186, *Venerable Master Tsong-kha-pa*, written by *blobzang 'phrinlasnamrgyal.*, Translated by GuoHetsing, Qinghai People's Publishing House, 2004.

They repeatedly prayed and asked him to write a book. Je Rinpoche accomplished this book after meeting *Manjushree* himself and got his instruction. The book was based on *Lamp For The Path To Enlightenment*⁴ by *Atisha*⁵, and then got explanatorily noted by *sharaba*, the third disciple of *Atisha*, Je Rinpoche also read and disseminated *Teaching Process*, by *gro lung pa*, etc. Therefore, the book is more of an elaboration of earlier studies, instead of a creation. *Lam-Rim* means the path to enlightenment. Enlightenment, means pure understanding, i.e. the result of understanding complete truth, in case of Hearer, Solitary Realizer and Buddha it also means completed enlightenment; 'the path', is the process to reach completed enlightenment, whose main part is wisdom; the method of how to arrange the progress of various Buddhism approaches demonstrated by Shakyamuni, is called the stages; 'great' (*Chen Mo*) differentiates this book from other books on *Lam-Rim* of Je Rinpoche. This book particularly instructs ordinary people how to practice to become Buddha. The practice process, the order of how to generate renunciation, motive of enlightenment, and the right view of emptiness in proper order, makes up majority of the book. The process following, however, did not get elaborated in this book. Another book *Great Vajrayana*⁶ was written for it. The two books are strongly connected in theory. But the latter one requires motive of enlightenment as entry level for practitioner, which is extremely strict and therefore screens out most people. That explains why the latter book has not been disseminated in public in China yet, though got translated by Ven. Fazun.

According to *Great Lam-Rim*, a practitioner heading to becoming Buddha should start from generating renunciation against *Samsara*, which is the core of *Shared Intermediate Scope*. Different from Hearer and Solitary Realizer who aim immediate nirvana, *Shared Intermediate Scope* is a preparation for Mahayana stage. Mahayana practice is a very long and challenging path, which does not guarantee immediate renunciation. Once a lower rebirth (hell, hungry ghost and animal), it will take extremely long time before the next opportunity of Dharma practice comes. Hence there is the *Shared Initial Scope*, an ethical practice for human life rebirth with *ten endowments*, which is capable for Mahayana practice. The *Shared Initial Scope* is not just a mere purpose for upper rebirth. It is a back-up preparation in case one does not become

⁴ byang chub lam gyisgron ma.

⁵ atisadīpamkāraśrījñāna.

⁶ sngags rim chen mo. The great treatise on the stages of the path to Vajrayana

Buddha in this life, at least he/she does not fall lower rebirth, and is capable of continuing the practice in next life. Both *shared Intermediate Scope* and *shared Initial Scope* are of the same purpose: to head to the *Final Scope of Bodhisattva Development*, practicing the compassion of “I want to become Buddha for the benefit of all”, then enlightenment, and finally Buddhahood. The *shared Intermediate Scope* in this book is also different from normal stated ‘Bodhisattvapath’. Followed by Vajrayanapath, it does not elaborate very much in the 10th stage Bodhisattva or the Six Perfections the Four Qualities Making for Amicable Association. The instructions of how to become Buddha in this very short life, is to be found in the Vajrayana path.⁷

Great Lam-Rim is a guidance book that completely covers Tripitaka of Mahayana & Hinayana. It is clearly stated in the book, “This contains essence of all Buddha speeches, and covers the vehicles of Nagarjuna and Asanga. This is a complete process for all approaches for all people to practicing into enlightenment of Buddha.”

After that, Je Rinpoche wrote another text, *A Summary of Stages of Enlightenment, shorted as Middling Lam-Rim*. According to *Venerable Master Tsong-kha-pa*, it is written under the encouragement of Manjursee, for those people of lower wisdom who find *Great Lam-Rim* too difficult to understand. The text was written in 1415.⁸

Je Rinpoche is also the author of *Purification of Forgetfulness: A summarization of the arrangement of practicing the stages of the path to enlightenment*, shortened as *Short Lam-Rim*. In *A briefing explanation on Short Lam-Rim*, given by *ho thogthublobzangstan ‘dzin ‘jigs med dbangphyug*, conveyed by Ven. Guankong and recorded by Zhou Shujia, there is a statement as below. “This is written by *Tsong-Kha-pab Lobzanggragspa* in his mid-age. Je Rinpoche was Qinghai resident, moved to Tibet at 12/13-year-old. Missing the son, his mother sent him a letter with a piece of her hair, and said, ‘My hair was yet black when you left me. Now it has turned blank white. I long for our reunion so much.’ However the master could not quit from his Dharma teaching career in Tibet. So he wrote back to his mother and said, ‘Despite how I miss you and remember your

⁷ Page 2, *Lam-Rim Chenmo*, by JeyTsong-kha-pa, Translated by Ven. Fazun, Book One, Supplement of Tripitaka (Gangyur and Tengyur), the 1st edition, 1935

⁸ Page 99, *Venerable Master Tsong-kha-pa*, written by *blobzang ‘phrinlasrnamrgyal*. Translated by GuoHetsing, Qinghai People’s Publishing House, 2004

kindness, I'm afraid it's impossible for me to leave this place. If I ever came back home, it would be for your refuge to Buddha and Dharma. Now I'm writing this Gatha for you, which can tell you everything I practice. And I hope you can also practice them. I wish you reach Buddhahood.' The letter, the Gatha, is this text."⁹

A reference from *Venerable Master Tsong-kha-pa*, "Here is a story not often seen in texts, but echo down from masters in history. *Jey Tsong-kha-pa*'s mother asked him many times to go back home in Ando. The last time, his mother sent him a piece of hair, white as conch, and said, 'Please think about my age, please come back'. *Je Rinpoche* sent back a letter to state why he could not make it, together with a picture of his own portrait. When his mother opened the picture, the portrait uttered like 'mom'. At the moment, the mother had a strong feeling of belief and happiness, as if she saw her son in person. This story is considered as a quite reasonable and believable one."¹⁰ This is the most detailed and complete one of all biographies of *Je Rinpoche*'s. However in this biography, there is no mention of sending *Short Lam-Rim* to mother or any likely, even in oral tradition. In Tibetan version of *Short Lam-Rim*, there is a postscript written by the author himself, "By *bLobzanggrag-spa*, the Bhikshu, in *dgeldanrnam par rgyalba 'igling*(Gaden Monastery) of 'brog Mountain." Referring above, we can speculate that it was written after Gaden Monastery establishment (AD.1409). No further finding on accurate year or writing background.

Later masters wrote many guidance texts for Lam-Rim. Five of most representatives, together with three works of *JeyTsong-kha-pa*'s, are collectively called *the Eight Instructions*, as most well-known texts within the tradition. Ven. Phabonkhasaid in his *Liberation in Our Hands*¹¹, "Je Rinpoche realized that one day people will not be able to understand how to turn the general instructions into practice. He indicated, 'Only a few can understand, that all the various Buddhism teachings can be taken as practice instructions. It would be better to briefly note the instructions first, and then write a book to elaborate them.' So there comes *Lam-Rim Essence of Superfine Gold* by Third Dalai Lama¹²; *Lam-Rim Majushree*'s

⁹ Page 50-51, book 1, *A brief explanation on the short Lam-Rim*, given by *ho thogthublobzangstan 'dzin 'jigs med dbangphyug*, recorded by Zhou Shujia, collected in *Instruction to Tibetan Vajrayana Practice*, copy of Bodhi Society 1939. Huaxia publishing house published in 1995.

¹⁰ *Venerable Master Tsong-kha-pa*, written by *blobzang 'phrinlasrnamrgyal*, Translated by GuoHetsing, Qinghai People's Publishing House, 2004

¹¹ *byang chub lam rim gyizinbrismnamgrol lag bcangs*.

¹² *byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i 'khriddseryi yang zhun./ lam rim 'khriddseryi yang zhun*.

oral instruction by Fifth Dalai Lama¹³; *Bliss Path* by Fourth Panchen Lama¹⁴; and *Quick Path* by Fifth Panchen Lama¹⁵. ” These four and the three instruction work on *Lam-Rim* by *JeyTsong-kha-pa*, plus *Fine Teaching* by *dwagsposgomchenngagdbanggragspa*¹⁶, combines to the *Eight Instruction*.¹⁷

In chronological order, *Instructional manual to the Great Lam-Rim* (shortened as *Fine Teaching*) by Dakpo Awang Tsbak [active in 15th CE, studied under *Jeychoskyongrgyamtsho* (the *dga' ldankhripa*, 1534-1539) in Gandan Monastery] firstly came out. Followed by *Essence of Superfine Gold*: *instruction manual to the Lam-Rim* (shortened as *Superfine Gold*) by *bsodnamsrgyamtsho*, the Third Dalai Lama (1543-1588). Then, the *Instructional manual to the Great Lam-Rim*, shortened as *Bliss Path* by *blobzangchoskyirgyalmtshan*, the Fourth Panchen Lama (1567-1662). After that is the *Manjushree's Words: instruction manual to the Lam-Rim* shortened as *Manjushree's Words* (written in 1658) by Fifth Dalai Lama *ngagdbangblobzangrgyamtsho* (1617-1682). And finally the Quick path : *Instructional manual to the Lam-Rim Chenmo*, shortened as *Quick path* by Fifth Panchen Lamablobzang ye shes (1663-1737).

The author postscript of *Manjushree's Oral Instruction* said, “In our tradition lineage, besides the two texts of Lam-Rim and teaching from my Guru teacher, there used to be no such instruction before *bsodnamsrgyamtsho* (Third Dalai Lama). Before *sbyansngarinpoche* (*gzhon nu chosdbalbzangpo*), we used to take *Nectar Pure Gold* as root, and teach with the two texts of Lam-Rim. We had not put it down in written in a brief way... Hence, otherwise, this might benefit Dharma. I'm writing this *Manjushree's Words* in this mood.”¹⁸ So we can tell that *Manjushree's Words* is an explanation and collaboration based on *Superfine Gold*.

The author postscript of *Quick Path* said, “...Hence I made additional notes to the *Bliss Path*, put on oral teaching to make it clearer

¹³ byang chub lam gyi rim pa 'ikhridyig 'jam pa 'idbyangskyizhal lung ./ lam rim 'jam zhal.

¹⁴ byang chub lam gyi rim pa 'idmarkhridthams cad mkhyen par bgrodpa 'ibde lam./lam rim dmarkhriddde lam.

¹⁵ byang chub lam gyi rim pa 'idmarkhridthams cad mkhyen par bgrodpa 'imyr lam./ lam rim dmarkhridmyur lam.

¹⁶ byang chub lam gyi rim pa nas 'byungba'inyamslengyisonasrnam par nges pa legs gsung kun gyinying-khu./ lam rim legs gsung.

¹⁷ Page 34, *Liberation in Our Hands*, given by First Pakbongka Rinpoche, recorded by Third khrigyang Rinpoche. white Conch Foundation.Inc Taiwan published in 2000.

¹⁸ Chinese version: Page 217-218, *Manjushri's Words* by ngagdbangblobzangrgyamtsho, translated by Ven. Miaofang (Yuanzong), BeitaHuguo Falun Monastery published in 2008. Tibetan version: Line 2 of P220 – Line3 of P221, *Manjushri's Words – LamRim Instruction*, TBRC copied from Sngon Po Thang Monastery woodblock (W1KG12205).

and easier to understand. These made up this text *Quick Path*.”¹⁹ So *Quick Path* is an explanation and collaboration to *Bliss Path*.

Superfine Gold, Manjushree's Words, Bliss Path and *Quick Path*, these four all fall into the category of ‘clear instruction’. *Liberation in Our Hands* explains the word ‘instruction’ in this way: “In Shakyamuni time, there was no ‘instruction lineage’, but only ‘transcript/teaching lineage’. Later on, people became to find mere transcript and teaching hard to understand, so the ‘instruction lineage’ appeared. Here are the categories of instructions. ‘Interpret instruction’ provides detailed explanation to the transcript. ‘Clear Instruction’ directly instructs mindful practice without much explanation on words. It is more like a professional doctor opening a fresh body, showing vivid body structure to disciples. ‘Experience instruction’ indicates particular object for disciples to observe at one time, and send them to somewhere nearby to practice. The instruction does not move on to next object, until disciple generates mindful experience to the anterior one.”²⁰ So the four texts are direct instructions of Lam-Rim practice, more than explanation to it. *Superfine Gold* and *Manjushree's Words* are about Sutrayana only, while *Bliss Path* and *Quick Path* contain Vajrayana approaches as well.

The fundamental root of *Great Lam-Rim*, is the *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment* written by Atisha: “This teaching is based on *Abhisamayaalamkaraby* Manjushree, and *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment* by a great teacher *dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna* Venerable Atisha.” The *Great Lam-Rim* quoted broadly from traditional texts such as *Avatamsaka Sutra*, *Discourse on Ten Dharmas*, *Ornament of Mahayana Sutralamkara*, *Yogaczra-bhumi-a stra* and other Kadampa masters’ teachings, to instruct approaches of *Lam-Rim*. It can be categorized into ‘interpret instruction’. Though not as broad as it, *Middling Lam-Rim*, *Short Lam-Rim* and *Fine Teaching* also belong to this category.

2. Translation & Dissemination, Teaching & Practice of the Eight Instructions of Lam-Rim in China

1) *Middling Lam-Rim* Among the Eight Instructions,

¹⁹ Chinese version: Page 229, *Quick path* : Instructional manual to the LamrimChenmo, SanmenDuobao Monastery published in 2006. Tibetan version: Line 3-4, page 287, book 3, the Collection of Panchen Lopsang Yeshe, TBRC copied bkrashishlunpo monastery woodblock (W1174-1793).

²⁰ Page 34, *Liberation in Our Hands*, given by First Pakbongka Rinpoche, recorded by Third khrigyang Rinpoche. white Conch Foundation.Inc Taiwan published in 2000.

Middling Lam-Rim was firstly introduced to Mandarin China. As Ven. Fazun claimed in his essay *Lam-Rim Texts of JeyTsong-kha-pa*: “In 1926, (I) went to lhamortse Mountain of darrtsemdo with a Dharma disciple team. We studied with *dgebshesbyams pa smon lam*. In 1927, Ven. Dayong gave teaching of *Middling Lam-Rim* in dkarmdzes. The teaching was recorded by Hu Zhizhan in Chinese, and later named *The Brief Treatise on Lam-Rim (Middling Lam-Rim)*. However the teaching did not include the *Serenity and Insight* section. I added translation of this section later.”²¹ An earlier version translated by Ven. Dayong (excluded the Serenity and Insight section) got published ahead in Chengdu and was very much in demand. In 1942, Ven. Fazun added the missed section into the book²². During 1939-1945, Buddhism followers in Chengdu invited *mkhanpongagdbangnamrgyal* to give teaching of *Middling Lam-Rim* based on the *Ven. Dayong* translation. Later in 1941, they invited *Ven. Fazun* to translate the missed section. Based on Tibetan version, *Ven. Fazun* finally accomplished three volumes which can be found in page 48-107 of volume 2, book 3 in *Selection of Chinese Buddhism Studies*²³. However comparing to the Tibetan one, contents following “... now we talk about the summary of complete path briefly”, cannot be found anywhere but in the 1942 translation work *the Serenity and Insight Section*. “Which of the two translation works of Ven. Fazun is the completed and reliable version” has troubled readers for decades. In fact, the two version complement each other. A later version translated by Xing Suzhi got published in Hong Kong in 1959. A recent version translated by Ven. Ruxing was published by Taiwan Voice Friend Publishing House in 2012, after an editing on initial work. The only version in contemporary Chinese language was published by the *Nada Series Translation Team* in 2014. Translation quality wise, Ven. Fazun’s version is mostly recommended.

The first complete teaching of *Middling Lam-Rim* in Mainland China was during 1939-1945 by *mkhanpongagdbangnamrgyal*, as above. This teaching was later recorded by GuoHetsing, and the transcript got published as *Explanation on the Middling Lam-Rim*²⁴, which became very popular among Chinese practitioners and was republished several times.

²¹ Page 279, *Lam-Rim Texts of JeyTsong-kha-pa*, Collection of Ven. Fazun’s works, by Ven. Fazun. Published by China Buddhism Research Institute in 1990.

²² Page 14, chronology of Ven. Fazun’s Translation Work, by LvTiegang, published in the December issue of *The voice of Dharma* in 1990.

²³ According to the copy of the printing department of WenlongGe, Chendu.

²⁴ Page 1-2, *Explanation on the Middling Lam-Rim*, teaching by *mkhanpongagdbangnamrgyal*, printed by the Correspondence Department of Sichuan Buddhist Academy.

The Serenity and Insight Section collected in this version, is an integration of the two Ven.Fazun's versions. This indicates that this version is quite close to the initial teaching. In 2004, Ven.Jiqun, who is quite influential in Chinese Buddhism tradition, started teaching *Middling Lam-Rim* in Jiechuang Buddhist Research Institute. The transcript is collected and circulated as *The Path of Lam-Rim*. The 102nd GandanKhripa also gave a complete teaching of *Middling Lam-Rim* in Taiwan, and the transcript got collected. In 2011, Ven.Xuecheng of Longquan Monastery Beijing gave his teaching of *Middling Lam-Rim*.

2) Short Lam-Rim - Song of the Stages on the Spiritual Path

In 1934, Ven.Fazun's translation work on Short Lam-Rim got published by Beijing Tianhua-Kang. The same year, ho thogthublobzangstan 'dzin 'jigs med dbangphyug gave a teaching (interpreted by Ven.Guankong, recorded by Zhou Shujia), and the transcript was published by Bodhi Society in 1939. Ever since then, almost every master of Geluk, Chinese or Tibetan, has given teaching on the Short Lam-Rim. As a short text, it also sees various translation versions such as Ven.Fayin's, Houzhensheng's, BzhagpaRimpoche's, etc.

3) **Great Lam-Rim** This is the most influential text among the eight. According to Ven.Fazun, the first 6 volumes were translated during his study period in Tibet. Following Ven.Dayong's last will, Ven. Fazun started to study *Great Lam-Rim withamdodgebshes*('jam dpalrol bi blogros) since 1931. The first 6 volumes translation work was along with the study²⁵. He then translated the next 5 volumes during his tour in Rangoon. Final 13 volumes were accomplished in the Chinese-Tibetan Buddhist College of the World Buddhist Institute, Jinyun Mountain, Chongqing in 1934. In 1935, the work got published after first edition. According to *Translation Tradition*, Ven.Taixu edited 4 volumes of the book. However it was the original version that applied to publishing, due to timing limitation. In 2009, Taiwan Oak Tree Publishing Company published *Vernacular Great Lam-Rim*, which was translated from Ven. Fazun's work into vernacular Chinese language by Liu Xiaonong. The Serenity and Insight Section in this book is not complete. Same year, *dandrimdrelephrin* from *Nada Series Translation Team* accomplished the Modern Chinese language version. Translation accuracy wise, there is not yet a version that surpasses beyond Ven.Fazun's work.

²⁵ Page 264, the Production, Translation, Content & Exercise of the Great Lam-Rim, Collection of Ven.Fazun's works, by Ven.Fazun, published by China Buddhism Research Institute in 1990.

Ven.Fazun gave teaching of *Great Lam-Rim* to disciples during his translation work period in Chongqing, which is an opening of *Great Lam-Rim* teaching in Mandarin China. The later broadest spread of *Great Lam-Rim* was initiated by Ven.Richang. The master gave two complete teachings. The first teaching was during 1989-1990. The 160 tapes record of this teaching released. In mainland China, the teaching received favorable responses. Numbers of ‘*Great Lam-Rim*class’ established in both China and Taiwan, some of the classes still remain active nowadays. In early 2000’s, Ven.Richang gave the second complete teaching of *Great Lam-Rim*. All these contribute hugely to the unparalleled and continuous popularity of *Great Lam-Rim* in Mainland China.

Moreover, there are other influential masters who disseminated *Great Lam-Rim* in China, such as Ven.Zhimin (from Duobao Monastery in Sanmen, Zhejiang), Ven.Xuecheng, Ven.Jiqun, etc. Ven. Zhimin is the author of *Variorum of Great Lam-Rim*²⁶, which does not contain the Serenity and Insight section. A well known Tibetan annotation text for *Great Lam-Rim*, the *Four Commentaries Collection*, has been co-translated by Ven.Miaofang (Yuanzong) and Ven.Zongfeng in 2011, about to launch publishing. An earlier version of *Great Lam-Rim* translated by Huarui Lobsang Gyatsog, is actually an integration work of the *Four Commentaries Collection* and translator’s comments. Unfortunately, this work did not differentiate *Four Commentaries Collection* from *Great Lam-Rim* accurately.

4) Quick Path Chinese translation work of *Quick Path* was initiated by Ven.Yuanzong in 2001. Before an edition in 2007, the Duobao Monastery launched printing and circulation firstly in 2006. *zilkar Rinpoche (thuptenlegsha)* gave teaching upon this version repeatedly in Chinese language, which is broadly received in both Taiwan and mainland China.

5) Bliss Path There are various translation works for *Bliss Path*, including Jiang Bo’s work (printed by Duobao Monastery in 2006), Ven. Fayin’s work (printed by Duobao Monastery in 2006), Lobsang Gyatsog’s work. The two teachings given by *bzhagpa Rinpoche* in Chinese language, and the teaching by *zilkar Rinpoche* in Chinese language (in Taiwan), are quite influential among disciples.

²⁶ First published by Shanghai Ancient Books House in 2003.

6) *Superfine Gold* *Superfine Gold* was translated into Chinese by *bzhagpa* Rinpoche in 2007, printed and circulated by BeitaHuguo Falun Monastery Shenyang in 2008. The teaching given by *bzhagpa* Rinpoche was in Chinese.

7) *Manjushree's Words* *Manjushree's Words* was translated by Ven.Miaofang(Yuanzong) during 2007 to 2008, and printed/circulated by BeitaHuguo Falun Monastery in 2008. Complete teaching was given by *bzhagpa* Rinpoche in Chinese.

8) *Fine Teaching* *Fine Teaching* was translated by Jiang Bo in 2008, and got printed and circulated by BeitaHuguo Falun Monastery. So far there has not been any well-known complete teaching given in Chinese language.

Conclusion

Due to the limited reach of Buddhism document dissemination and unstable work of publishing and transmission (by various individuals and organizations) , the works of *The Eight Instructions* introduced above, are not yet to cover the whole of influential works (of *Lam-Rim*). Hence it is difficult to provide a statistic number of written works or oral teachings in China. Nevertheless, the works listed above still witness how broadly and deeply the Eight Instructions has influenced Buddhism study in mainland China. This influential power resulted *Great Lam-Rim* and/or *Middling Lam-Rim* into textbook and courses in many famous Chinese tradition Buddhism monasteries, such as the Buddhist Academy of China, Buddhist College of Minnan, Famen Monastery Buddhist College, Sichuan Bhiksuni Buddhist College, Jiechuang Buddhist Research Institute, etc. Furthermore, besides Geluk, there are other Tibetan Buddhism traditions giving *Lam-Rim* teachings to Chinese disciples.

Nowadays, you can hardly find a Chinese Geluk disciple who has not studied or heard of *Lam-Rim*. Those who major in Chinese Buddhism tradition, are also usually aware of *Lam-Rim*. *Lam-Rim* has turned to be the spontaneous top-of-mind answer from Mandarin scholars, when they are asked about Gelupa teaching. However the situation in Tibetan Gelupa monasteries is quite different. In major Gelupa temples, well organized monastery such as the big five - Gaden Monastery, Bras spungs Monastery, Sera Monastery, Bkrashislhunpo Monastery, and Blabrang Monastery, it

is *The Five Treatises* that disciple monks study on. The Five Treatises are Prajna, Madhyamaka, Moral Discipline, Abhidharma, and Pramana. These subjects include large amount of texts including *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, *Madhyamakāvātāra*, *Abhidharmakośa*, *Pramāṇavārttika*, *dam chos 'dulbamdortsa*, etc. In the Mahayana educational system of 20 years, *Lam-Rim* teaching such as *Great Lam-Rim* is not particularly set for Gelupa disciple monks' study. Comparing to the effort that Chinese scholar put on *Lam-Rim* study, the Gelupa monks spend majority of their time on The Five Treatises. One of the facts caused this difference, is that Chinese disciples are not capable of devoting into complete study on The Five Treatises as the Tibetan monks do. Hence, as a conclusive work of The Five Treatises, the Eight Instructions of *Lam-Rim* provides a more approachable way to study. However, the connotation of *Lam-Rim* instructions requires logical reasoning, which can be provided by The Five Treatises. Even the *Great Lam-Rim* of great-length, is also based on hypothesis that scholar/practitioner has accomplished understanding on The Five Treatises. That is why *Great Lam-Rim* does not provide many logical reasoning processes. Due to the lack of knowledge to The Five Treatises, Chinese scholars and practitioner could misunderstand these *Lam-Rim* instructions, since there are so many difficult-to-understand contents. One of the worst misunderstandings, is to mistaken these 'instructions' for practice, as textbooks for theory study. In fact, *Lam-Rim* instructs the process of practice, not the process of study. It is for the purpose of those who already studied and well know about theories, who has come up to a practice stage. Some Chinese disciples have been troubled from this misunderstanding, suffering invalid practice after years of study on *Lam-Rim*. It has been over 80 years since *Great Lam-Rim* was introduced to China, and the Eight Instructions got circulated. However the tragedy of misunderstanding has limited their real effectiveness on practitioners. Of course this is a particular topic that we can discuss elsewhere.

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