

Ri-Mé Approach, Ringu Tulku Brussels June 2006

What is "Rimé"? Ris or Phyog-ris in Tibetan means "one-sided", "partisan" or "sectarian". Med means "No". Ris-med (Wylie), or Rimé, therefore means "no sides", "non-partisan" or "non-sectarian".

It does not mean "non-conformist" or "non-committal"; nor does it mean forming a new School or system that is different from the existing ones.

A person who believes the Rimé way almost certainly follows one lineage as his or her main practice. He or she would not dissociate from the School in which he or she was raised.

Kongtrul was raised in the Nyingma and Kagyu traditions; Khyentse was reared in a strong Sakyapa tradition.

They never failed to acknowledge their affiliation to their own Schools.

In the 1970's I was doing research work on the Rimé (Wylie, Ris-Med) Movement.

This gave me the opportunity to meet and interview a number of prominent Tibetan Lamas, including His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, and the heads of the Four Main Schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

I prepared a questionnaire. One of the questions I asked was whether they believed that other Schools of Buddhism showed the way to attain Buddhahood. I have never been so rebuked in my life as when I asked that question! All of them, without exception, were shocked and felt insulted, deeply saddened that I, a monk, could ever have such doubts. They would not speak with me until I persuaded them to believe that this was one of those unimportant, procedural questions that are part of the modern University system.

"How can you say such a thing?" they rebuked me.

"All Schools of Buddhism practise the Teachings of the Lord Buddha. Moreover, the Schools of Buddhism in Tibet have even more common ground.

They all base their main practice on Anuttara Tantra of Vajrayana. Madhyamika is their philosophy; they all base their monastic rules on the Sarvastivadin School of Vinaya.

One of the unique features of Buddhism has always been the acceptance that different paths are necessary for different types of people. Just as one medicine cannot cure all diseases, so one set of teachings cannot help all beings - this is the basic principle of Buddhism.

His Holiness, XIV Dalai Lama, has been strongly influenced by some great Rimé teachers such as Khunu Lama Tenzin Gyatso, Dilgo Khentse Rinpoche and the 3rd Dodrupchen Tenpe Nyima.

Due to their efforts in recent years, there has been more interchange of teachings amongst different Schools of Tibetan Buddhism than ever before.

Following the Traditions of Rimé, the Dalai Lama has been receiving and giving Teachings of all Schools in their respective traditions and lineages.

The Ri-Me Philosophy of Jamgon Kongtrul the Great: A Study of the Buddhist Lineages of Tibet by Ringu Tulku, ISBN 1-59030-286-9, Shambhala Publications

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kxd_VOH1aI