



The Voice of Clear Light

Volume I, No. 3

THE LIGMINCHA INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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Graphic # 1.

Photo of HH the Dalai Lama &
Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche goes here

*His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche
in Dharamsala, India (Fall of 1992)*

Letter From His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Department of Religion and Culture

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AND
CULTURE
Central Tibetan Administration
of H.H. Dalai Lama

October 7,

1992

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

We are very delighted to know that a new institute of Tibetan religion and culture 'Ligmincha Institute' has been established in Virginia, U.S.A. through dedicated efforts of Lama Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche with spiritual guidance from Kyabje Menri Trizin Lungtob

Tenpai Nyima and the Most Venerable Lupon Tenzin Namdak of Menri Monastery, Dolanji, India. We recognize the establishment of this institute as an important step towards the preservation and promotion of Tibetan religion and culture in general and the ancient Tibetan tradition of Bön in particular.

The Bön tradition is an undisputed and important known source of the Tibetan cultural heritage, and has always remained an integral part of Tibetan life for over two millennia. Today it is one of the five major religious traditions of Tibet striving for survival after the unprecedented

national tragedy of Tibet in 1959. Like four other traditions, the Bön tradition has been able to re-establish its main seat, Menri Monastery, and continue its traditional study program in exile.

Nevertheless, ever since it became a less known tradition and its followers became a minority group within Tibetan society, the Bön tradition has virtually been surviving as the most endangered religious tradition of Tibet. We are therefore greatly indebted to all those who contributed to the survival of the Bön tradition. Today when there is growing worldwide interest in the spiritual traditions of Tibet, the Bön tradition is being rediscovered, not only as a profound indigenous tradition of Tibet, but also as an authentic source of many traditional sciences and histories of Tibet.

In view of the above facts, the establishment of the Ligmincha Institute is a timely need for Bön and Tibetan culture at large under the current circumstances. We therefore recommend by this letter to all who are concerned to kindly provide all assistance and cooperation that may be necessary in the fulfilment of the aims and objectives of the Ligmincha Institute.

Lama Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, the President and Director of the Institute, who graduated as Geshe in 1986 from the Bönpo Monastic Centre, Dolanji, India, is a highly qualified master in the Bön tradition and in general Tibetan studies. Due recognition given to Lama Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche as a ~~qualified master of Bön and Tibetan~~ studies will also be highly appreciated.

Letter From His Holiness Lungtog Tenpai Nyima

H.H. Lungtog Tenpai Nyima
Head of Bön School
Menri Monastery
Solan, India

September 23,
1992

The establishment of the Ligmincha Institute is an important step for the Bön tradition. As the head of this tradition I am delighted that Lama Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche is devoting his energies to the establishment of the Institute.

Bön teachings have been an integral part of Tibetan life for centuries. Now is the time for these teachings to be understood in the West. The challenge is to maintain the pure form and essence of the teachings while making them comprehensible to the Western mind.

At the Bön Institute in Dolanji, India we have a traditional teaching program of nine to thirteen years. After much study and thought Tenzin Rinpoche has

condensed these teachings into a seven year program of Sutra, Tantra, and Dzog Chen, which takes into consideration the needs of the Western student—all the while maintaining the purity of these teachings.

In Bön—Sutra, Tantra, and Dzog

*His Holiness Lungtog Tenpai Nyima
Spiritual Leader of the Bön Tradition*

Chen are widely practiced. Also of importance though, are the healing arts and ceremonial practices for both

the dead and the living. Therefore the Institute will teach the ‘Southern Treasure of the Nine Ways of Bön’ which includes the indigenous teachings.

These traditional native teachings are in danger of becoming extinct if not cultivated. The Bön teachings have remained more isolated than the philosophical teachings of Buddhism. Therefore their careful preservation is something on which I place the highest value.

Tenzin Rinpoche is from the first group of Geshe graduated from the Bön Dialectic School. There he had a number of years of experience teaching and in administrative work. During that time he was president of the school for a number of years, instituting programs still in effect today. Since his childhood he has shown a special ability in Dzog Chen meditative practice, as well as a keen understanding of Western ways. Therefore I confidently support the Ligmincha Institute and look forward to all forms of collaboration. □

Yoga, Art, and Joy of Collaboration

This past September a Yantra Yoga retreat and a celebration of the performing arts in Richmond brought together members of Ligmincha Institute and the Dzogchen Community of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche for a weekend of practice and collaborative art. Ligmincha Institute invited Michael Katz to come down from New York City to teach a weekend of Norbu Rinpoche’s Yantra Yoga. At the same time, Cheryl Pallant had organized what she called “To Take Place: A Sunset Celebration” at the fountain lake in Byrd park. She invited dancers, musician, poets, painters, and all

manner of performing artists. As luck would have it, she had invited our dear vajra brother, Chuck Stein, from Barrytown New York, as well as Anthony Curtis and a band of drummers from Ligmincha. Ligmincha Institute hosted our vajra brothers from the North for a weekend.

Michael Katz, instructed a small but dedicated group at Ligmincha on Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday. Although some of us had been lucky enough to be instructed earlier by Fabio Andrico at Tsegylgar and by Tom Garnett in Washington, as a group we were not very accomplished at this vigorous moving yoga. Yantra

Yoga is based on the instructions Vairocana wrote in the eighth century and transmitted in an unbroken lineage to Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and his students in our time. The goal of Yantra is to find oneself in the natural state by doing movements that harmonize one’s breath, body, and mind. Michael instructed us in Tsigjong, which helps to activate the joints, in Lung Sang, which purifies the prana, in Tsadul, which activates the channels and chakras, and in the basic asanas. It was a strenuous weekend. We moved and stretched our stiff muscles; we breathed according to the sequences of movements;

we shouted “HA” and kicked or threw our fists. Sometimes we fell over, and sometimes we laughed when we should have been holding our breaths. We sweated and laughed quite a lot as we attempted the difficult moves and sequences. In regulating our energies, we found that we entered a state of great bliss and clarity that made us value these great teachings and our chance to collaborate with our friends from the Dzogchen Community.

The Sunset Celebration drew several hundred spectators (and a handful of Dzogchen practitioners) to the lake at Byrd park. It seemed a wonderful choice to hold the event at the lake, because the spectators

strolled around the lake in kind of natural circumnambulation, some going clockwise, some counterclockwise. There were many dancers, some doing contact improvisation in groups of two to five. There were puppeteers playing guitar in dog suits for children. There were many musical groups. Chuck Stein and Anthony Curtis performed together, Chuck doing spontaneous sound poetry as Anthony improvised electric guitar counterpoint. Anthony’s guitar styles ranged from Bach to Buck to Beethoven and even Jimmy Hendrix. Chuck spoke unknown languages, sometimes screaming and exhorting, sometimes cajoling and charming his

listeners—to do what, they had no idea. A group including Michael Katz and Victor Torrico that varied from three or four to nearly twenty accompanied them with tabla, drums, gongs, and other percussion instruments in true tribal fashion. Many onlookers joined in. I wish you all could have been there. At the end of the event, as it got dark and all the other performers left the area, this group continued to play and dance, unwilling to let the group collaboration end too soon.

All of us who spent the weekend together found ourselves learning again how important—how inspiring collaboration among individuals can be. We especially look forward to working with our vajra brothers and sisters in the Dzogchen community whenever the opportunity presents itself. A la la ho.

—Joan Kalyan-Curtis



Tibetan Studies Conference Held in Fagernes, Norway

The sixth conference of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS) was convened at the scenic resort of Fagernes, Norway on August 21st through 28th, 1992. The conference was organized by Professor Per Kvaerne, a leading European scholar of Bönpo studies, on behalf of the Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, Oslo, Norway, and the Norwegian Committee for Tibet. Scholars of Tibetan Studies came from many countries of Europe, from the United States, as well as from several countries of Asia: India, Japan, China, and even Tibet itself. Many interesting papers were presented by about 180 scholars attending the conference and their papers covered many different areas relating to Tibet, including philosophy, religion, literature, ancient and modern history, anthropology, social studies, art, linguistics, geography, and ecology. Plenary sessions were held in the mornings and parallel sessions for more specialized fields in the afternoons. Members of the Tibet Committee opened the conference

with native Tibetan folk songs and dances.

Through the efforts of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in collaboration with Dr. Samten Karmay, a meeting of all scholars interested in Bön studies was held in a separate session during the conference. This meeting was chaired by Professor A-M. Blondeau of Paris. Tibetologists in attendance reported on their current and future researches into the traditions and history of Bön. In this way, it became possible for the various scholars working in the field of Bön studies to be aware of each other’s current projects and research. More-over, the prospect of future collaboration among scholars in this field was established. In the order of their reports, the scholars attending this meeting were: Dr. Samten Karmay (France), Prof. Per Kvaerne (Norway), Prof. Michael Aris (England), Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche (USA), Geshe Namgyal Nyima (India), Inger Olsson (Sweden), Dr. Krystyna Cech (England), Prof. Tadasu Mitsushima (Japan), Dr. Michael Walter (USA), Dr. Mireille

Helffer (France), Prof. Tsering Thar (Italy), Dr. Alice Egyed (Hungary), Dr. Andrea Loseries (Austria), Dr. Daniel Martin (Israel), Dr. Charles Ramble (France), Mr. Robert Mayer (England), Dr. Roger Greatrex (Sweden), Dr. Hildegard Diemberger (Austria), Dr. Géza Bethlenfalvy (Hungary), Prof. John M. Reynolds (USA), Dr. Giacomella Orofino (Italy), Dr. Rohit Vohra (Luxemburg), Prof. Katsumi Mimaki (Japan), Prof. Janet Gyatso (USA), Dr. Donatella Rossi (Italy), Dr. Ayako Sadakane (Japan), and Prof. Anne-Marie Blondeau (France).

It is evident that the interest in Bön studies is growing. At the fourth conference of IATS held at Munich, Germany there were less than fifteen persons attending the special Bön studies meeting and very few papers were given on topics relating to Bön. At the fifth conference held at Narita, Japan there was no session at all for Bön studies, and again, very few papers. However, more than thirty scholars attended the special session at Fagernes. The Religion Session on Thursday afternoon was devoted

entirely to papers on topics relating to Bön. In total, during the conference, some thirteen papers dealing with Bön were presented. In order of chronology, these papers were as follows:

1. Dr. Andrea Loseries (Austria), “The Symbolism of Certain Initiatory Items in the Bönpo Mother Tantras.”

2. Dr. Mireille Helffer (France), “Traditions *rnying-ma et bon-po* Relatives au Tambour rnga.”

3. Prof. John M. Reynolds (USA), “Space, Awareness, and Energy in the *Zhang-zhung snyan-rgyud*: the Oral Tradition of Bönpo Dzogchen.”

4. Dr. Samten Karmay (France), “A New Interpretation of *bsGnags-pa bon lugs and gSang-ba chos lugs*.”

5. Prof. Janet Gyatso (USA), “Guru chos dbang’s (1212-1273) Strategies in an Account of Bönpo gTer-ma.”

6. Rinzin Thargyal (Norway), “A Process of De-marginalization: the Bönpos and the Recognition of Their Historical Importance.”

7. Prof. Katsumi Mimaki (Japan), “A Fourteenth Century Bönpo Doxography: the *Bon sgo dkar chag* of Treston rGyal mtshan dpal.”

8. Dr. Donatella Rossi (Italy), “The Nine Vehicles of the Bönpo Tradition: An Oral Description by a Contemporary Bönpo Lama.”

9. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche (USA), “gTer-ma Tradition in Bön.”

10. Geshe Namgyal Nyima (India), “The Education System in Bönpo Monasteries from the Tenth Century Onwards.”

11. Dr. Michael Walter (USA), “A Bönpo *mdo* and its Buddhist Equivalent.”

12. Prof. Tsering Thar (Italy) “The Historical Stages of the Bön Religion.”

13. Prof. Tadasu Mitsushima (Japan), “Bönist Traditions in the Lho District of Tibet during the Twelfth and Thirteenth

Centuries.”

At various times during the conference, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Prof. John Reynolds discussed the future work of the Ligmincha Institute with such leading scholars of Tibetan and Bön Studies as Prof. Per Kvarne, Dr. Samten Karmay, and Prof. A-M Blondeau, as well as with many other Tibetologists. All of them showed great interest in developing Bön Studies and Bön-related research. They were happy to collaborate with the Institute and its projects, and with its projected scholarly journal. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche extended invitations to a number of these scholars to become advisors to the Center for Translations and Research. The names of the members of this new Advisory Board of the Center for Translations and Research are as follows: Dr. Harvey Aronson, Prof. Anne-Marie Blondeau, Dr. Georges Dreyfus, Prof. Steven Goodman, Prof. Janet Gyatso, Dr. Samten G. Karmay, Prof. Anne C. Klein, Prof. Per Kvarne, Dr. Andrea Loseries, Dr. Daniel Martin, Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, Prof. John M. Reynolds (Director), Prof. Tsering Thar, and Dr. Michael Walter.

The Staff of the Ligmincha Institute in general and that of the Center for Translations and Research in particular look forward to collaborating with these scholars, as well as with other interested scholars and translators, in the fields of Bön Studies and Tibetan Studies.

—John M. Reynolds

Dzogchen Teachings at the Allenwood Correctional Center in Pennsylvania

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On the 10th and 11th of June I had the good fortune of accompanying Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche to the Federal Prison Camp (FPC) at Allenwood, Pennsylvania where he presented two days of Dzogchen teachings and practices to a unique group of practitioners.

Upon our arrival at the Allenwood FPC we were warmly greeted by Ms. Elizabeth Thurman, a young Afro-American woman, who is currently one of the chaplains at this institution. She leads religious services, acts as a spiritual counsellor and serves as a religious coordinator for the ten or more different denomina-

tions that are active in Allenwood. We were told that from the total inmate population of about nine hundred at this institution, different spiritual faiths conducted organized teachings and practices that varied in size from several hundred Protestant Christians, to eight or ten Buddhists and native Americans. Ms. Thurman was extremely helpful in arranging these teachings and showed a genuine warmth and interest in both the teachings and in being of help to the inmates. This was demonstrated not only by words but by the fact that the teachings were given in an old church on the grounds normally off-limits to

the inmates. Thus in order for the teachings to be given she was required to be present with the group and away from her normal working office. In very many ways, without her warm support, these teachings would not have been possible.

The physical setting of the Allenwood FPC appeared much as any typical two-year college campus. There were numerous low brick dormitories, a gymnasium, playing fields, other larger study and work buildings, and vast lawns, all set in the beautiful rolling hills of western Pennsylvania. Because Allenwood is at the lowest level of security within the

Federal prison system, the Allenwood camp has no walls or fences. All the constraints for the inmates exist therefore only at the mental level. One's behavior is conditioned by the knowledge that other prisons allow less freedom and that any attempted escape will result in an automatic three months to one year extension in sentence time. It is interesting that at this camp inmates had been convicted primarily of non-violent mental crimes. We were told that over sixty percent of the inmates were doing time for drug related crimes with sentences of five years or less.

Although the first impression of the Allenwood FPC is one of openness and freedom, as we remained there, it became more apparent how regulated and controlled the conditions were. Everywhere aspects of regulation and limitation differed from what one experiences in ordinary daily life. Ranging from the principal limitation that no one could leave the grounds to smaller details regarding getting up, eating, working, and places of walking, all aspects of life were very tightly regulated. This loss of freedom seemed to generate frustration and internal anger. There were few acceptable outlets other than sports and negative talk. In this unique setting, how much one's "outlook" is determined and influenced by one's "state of mind" was very clearly presented.

In this situation it was striking to hear Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche present the Dzogchen teaching of self-liberation to the eight inmates who had made the necessary arrangements

to attend this two-day retreat. Immediately upon meeting the individuals I was struck by just how "normal" everyone was in their external appearance. Somehow, in my mind, I must have been expecting some kind of slow, dumb, thick human who would exhibit obvious signs of hostile behavior. This was not the situation at all. Everyone appeared just the same as anyone else who would come to a retreat of this nature. They all had a high degree of intelligence and social

Practitioners with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche at Allenwood

understanding and seemed just like very normal people who had somehow been caught up in some behavior unacceptable to the society in which they lived. In this prison setting the group have begun to follow the Buddhist teachings, principally those of the Dzogchen master Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, under the guidance of one of his long-time students who had found himself caught up in this particular situation. They were particularly honored to have a master such as Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

come to teach them directly.

As most of the group were new or recent to the Dzogchen teachings, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche emphasized the foundational preliminary practices used to create a solid base upon which to work with the Dzogchen perspective. During the teaching sessions on the first day a detailed presentation on the basic practice of the "Short Meditation Session in Six Parts" was given to provide the group with a firm group practice. In between the teachings Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche had a private conference with each participant providing them with the time for more personal instruction.

In the evening after the teachings one of the group who works in the woodshop, where furniture is built to sell to government offices, was able to construct the sticks and mount the white , symbols that Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche had brought for them. Thus the second morning's teaching was devoted to the concentration practice of fixation upon the white , symbol. After the practice was explained it was then applied in several sessions. We then were able to lunch with the group in the facility dining hall where the food was quite good, including a fresh salad bar as well as a hot food service.

After completing the remaining private interviews Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche used the teaching session to eloquently present an overview of the Dzogchen teachings as the path to self liberation and how this "liberation" could be applied even in situations

such as this prison camp with all its oppressive confinement. He pointed out that our condition and circumstances are always limited whether we choose to recognize this or not; despite the fact that we normally feel that our self-chosen limitations are better than those society or life imposes upon us.

One of the most interesting aspects of this teaching was Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's comparison of his life and living situation at the monastery where he was trained with that of the inmates' life and living situation at this prison. He told them how his life in the monastery had also been very regulated and constrained and filled from morning to night rules and procedures. In comparison, he pointed out, the actual physical environment at the camp was superior to the food and housing conditions of the monastery. While acknowledging that the very important aspect of freedom of choice was lacking, still working with the realities of the situation, one could

choose to either be resentful and resist the situation (the seemingly dominant mode of expression at the prison), or one could try to find some ways to use the situation advantageously. If a shift in mental outlook could be generated, then it could be possible to see the positive part of this outer-imposed "retreat" from the ordinary pressures of life and to turn it into an opportunity to practice these teachings upon the spiritual path of self-liberation.

In fact it seems that many of this group of inmate practitioners are doing just that. Currently they meet for group practice five nights a week for an hour, and many are doing other basic practices in their free time in the evenings. It seemed that for several of them that these teachings were almost some sort of "life line" that would help to prevent them from drowning in the sea of prison life.

This attitude contrasts with that of many Dzogchen practitioners I know who, distracted and pressed by time, find it hard to practice even once a

week. In many ways it was inspiring to see how inmates were applying the teachings under less than ideal conditions. Many inmates were ripe for the teachings, insofar as they could realize that they are now paying a high price for what might be described as particular self-generated circular behavior patterns. They demonstrated a genuine openness and receptivity for the teachings. Insights now have the opportunity to generate positive changes in their lives.

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's visit to the Allenwood FPC seemed like a breath of fresh air to the inmates and an inspiration in reaffirming that someone "out there" cared. It also seemed beneficial to their status as a seriously practicing religious group, that might have been misunderstood and undervalued in comparison with the more mainstream denominations. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche made an excellent impression upon the religious coordinator of the prison and established a base for further Dzogchen teachings there. He was also able to establish channel for providing Dzogchen teaching materials (books, tapes, videos, etc.) to be sent to this group of practitioners. These teachings, we may hope, will benefit the retreatants and those undergoing similar "forced" retreats from "normal" living.

OM • AH • HUM
—Purusha Ananda

1993 Summer Retreat—First Year of the Seven Year Program

- A. Introduction to the First Year Program
- B. Teaching and Practice Schedule
- C. Teacher
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- E. Tibetan Language Class
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- H. Attendance at the Summer Program
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A. Introduction to the First Year Program

The Ligmincha Institute and its staff is pleased to announce the first summer retreat. Attendance in this program is open to all interested individuals at two levels of participa-

tion: (a) A certificate training program for which regular attendance is expected and also the completion of written examinations, and (b) A non-certificate program where attendance may be more intermittent and for which no written examination is required.

Although the principal focus and emphasis of the seven year program is the study of the theory and practice of Dzogchen, the preliminary study of the Sutra system in Bön and Buddhism provides a necessary foundation for the higher teachings of Tantra and Dzogchen. However, out of the vast body of Sutra teachings only that material which is useful and applicable to the conditions of western life will be emphasized. This includes the psychology of the states of consciousness and the philosophical critique of our distorted and erroneous views of reality. This material

provides us with a basic vocabulary to discuss the mind and its operations at various levels, and also a critical method for eliminating our wrong ideas concerning the nature of reality. Although the primordial natural state of Dzogchen has been present at the core of our being since the very beginning, it has been overshadowed and obscured by certain adventitious obscurations. These obscurations are both emotional and intellectual, and because of the obscurations we do not recognize our inherent enlightened nature. The study and practice of the Sutra system provides the methodology for removing these layers of obscurations. Once these clouds are dissolved and removed, we can dwell in the presence of the sunlight of the natural state of Dzogchen.

This retreat will provide an opportunity for serious students to complete their Ngondro practice. The Ngondro

or preliminaries is optional but it provides a firm foundation for more advanced meditation practices and for our spiritual practice in general.

B. Teaching and Practice Schedule

The teachings presented in the first summer program all belong to the Sutra system of Bön and Buddhism and they provide the foundation for the higher teachings and practices of Tantra and Dzogchen. Although one does not have to be first a Sutra practitioner when practicing Dzogchen, the Sutra teachings provide us with a basic vocabulary to talk about the mind and how it works.

From June 11 to June 29 the philosophical concepts (*eCfpz-Grub-mtha'*), regarding the ultimate nature of reality according to the Vaibhashika and Sautrantika schools are examined. These philosophies provide a radical critique of our distorted common view of the world and help to purify our minds at the conceptual level, eliminating our wrong views regarding the substantial nature of reality. The evening meditation practice will focus on applying the insights of Vaibhashika and Sautrantika in our meditation.

From July 2 to July 23 the teaching will focus on the basic psychology, (*DcC# blo-rig*), of Bön and Buddhism which represents a phenomenology of consciousness, a precise description of states of consciousness and how they dynamically interrelate. Again the evening meditation sessions will reflect the meditation practices of the Sutra system, including shamatha or zhine or calm abiding, and vipashyana or higher insight. Certificate students will be given written tests midterm and at the conclusion of the (*eCfpz-Grub-mtha'*) and (*DcC# blo-rig*) courses of studies.

From July 25 to August 10 the teachings will deal with the first two causal ways among the Nine Ways of

Bön according to the Southern Treasures system. The practices considered here include divination, astrological calculation, soul retrieval, healing rituals, and the various ways of relating to nature spirits. These causal ways represent the shamanic side of Bön which pertains to working with energies at the worldly level. This is the first time these shamanic methods have been taught in the West. It is planned to invite some shamanic native American Indian practitioners to perform their ceremonies at this time because of the close relationship of Bön with Native American traditions.

C. Teachers

The resident Lama Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, his teacher Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, and Khenpo Nyima Wangyal Rinpoche will be the instructors during the first year of the seven year program at the 1993 retreat. Also, we plan to invite different teachers from India and Nepal to teach during subsequent years of the seven year program.

Within a few years time, we hope that some of the Sutra material will be taught by the senior students who have been previously trained.

D. Retreat Dates and Daily Schedule

—Retreat Dates

June 10—Final registration and fee payment (9:00 am- 4:30 pm) and settling in during the day with the inaugural address at 5:00 pm

June 11-29—(*eCfpz-Grub-mtha'*, philosophy teachings) A systematic analysis of our conventional and erroneous ideas concerning reality

June 30-July 1—Break

July 2-23—(*DcC# blo-rig*, psychology teachings) Examination of various states of consciousness and their contents

July 24—Break

July 25-August 10—(*sXb†-Phywa-gshen*) and (*Nr-eb†-sNang-gshen*) Teachings on the first two causal ways of Bön, the indigenous and shamanic teachings of Tibet concerning nature spirits and healing

August 11—Ganapuja and conclusion

—Daily Schedule

6:30-7:30 am—Early morning practice: *zhine* meditation, space meditation, and contemplation (*rigpa*)

7:30-8:00 am—Breakfast

8:00-9:30 am—Morning teaching

9:30-10:00 am—Tea break

10:00-11:30 am—Mid-morning practice: Ngondro or preliminary practices, and other forms of individual meditation practices

12:00-1:00 pm—Lunch

1:00-3:00 pm—Free time: Rest, individual study

3:00-4:30 pm—Afternoon teaching

4:30-5:00 pm—Tea break

5:00-6:30 pm—Tibetan language, or discussion period, or independent study, or a time when people can meet and share experiences

7:00-8:00 pm—Dinner

8:00-9:00 pm—Evening Practice: Meditation related to the teachings where the emphasis is on meditations related to the Vaibhashika and Sautrantika teachings, and the practices will vary from day to day.

E. Tibetan Language Class

There will be the opportunity to attend a class in the Tibetan language and its literature during the summer retreat. Such classes, which are optional, would be both for the beginner and the advanced student. If you would be interested in attending such a class please let the staff of the Institute know in advance. For those interested in how to pronounce practices in Tibetan, the opportunity will be provided at the retreat.

F. Reading List

Although study materials translated from the Tibetan texts of the Bönpo tradition will be made available for students of the summer retreats, the following books may be purchased and studied in advance of the retreat. This preparation is highly recommended and will make your studies more meaningful and less hectic at the retreat.

(1) For the (eGfpz-Grub-mtha) or philosophy systems course please read the following books:

(a) Cutting Through Appearances; Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism, by Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins, Snow Lion; especially pp. 171-247. Also see the introduction pp. 11-137, and prologue of the translation pp. 145-170,

(b) Knowledge and Liberation, by Anne C. Klein, Snow Lion; pp. 13-67. On direct perception see especially pp. 89-114,

(2) For the (Dk#blo-rig) or psychology of the states of consciousness,

please read:

(c) Mind in Tibetan Buddhism by Lati Rinbochay and Elizabeth Napper, Snow Lion; pp. 11-74 and pp. 75-146,

(3) For the shamanic teachings of Bön found among the Nine Ways of Bön, please read:

(d) *The Nine Ways of Bön*, by David Snellgrove, Shambhala; the first two chapters on (SAb*pe-a-Phywa-gshen Theg-pa) and (Nr#pe-a-sNang-gshen Theg-pa).

G. Fees, Pre-Registration, and Final Registration

A two-tiered fee schedule follows:

(a) For the entire two-month stay the fee is one thousand, eight hundred U.S. dollars (\$1,800) per person. (b) For a stay of less than two months the fee is forty U.S. dollars (\$40) per day per person.

The fee includes the teachings, lodging, three meals per day, handouts, additional speakers, plus coffee, tea and snacks during the breaks.

One third of the total fee is payable upon pre-registration which closes sixty days prior to the retreat on April 10, 1993. This one-third fee of six hundred dollars (\$600), along with a completed pre-registration form, should arrive at the Institute by April 10, 1993. Pre-registration forms are available by calling, faxing, or writing the Institute. Refunds, if necessary, will be given up to June 6, 1993. No refunds will be given after June 6, 1993.

Final registration and final payment of fees will be conducted between 9:00 am and 4:30 pm on June 10, 1993 at the retreat site. Please call the Institute if you have any questions concerning fees, registration, or about the retreat in general.

H. Attendance at the

Summer Program

Those who are enrolled in the certificate training program should try to attend as much of the summer retreat program as possible. A determination of eligibility for a certificate will depend upon successful completion of the course. Those who are non-certificate students may attend as much of the retreat as they find of interest to them. However, casual visits of only one day are to be discouraged. One should plan to stay at the retreat for at least a full weekend or otherwise at least three days or longer. Tapes and transcripts will be available of material that the student has missed. Everyone is encouraged to call the Institute from time to time to discover what programs and activities are available.

There is no provision to offer the seven year program only by correspondence, because transmission can only take place in the context of face to face encounter between teacher and student. But once personal contact has been made with the teacher, then arrangements can be made for independent study. In such a case, the student's program will be worked out on an individual basis in consultation with the teacher.

No one should feel that she or he is too old or ill-prepared educationally for this seven year program. In actual fact, the program is only fourteen months extending over a seven year period: four months of Sutra studies, four months of Tantra studies, and six months of Dzogchen studies. Every effort has been made by the Institute and its staff to condense the retreat teachings to the essence of Sutra, Tantra, and Dzogchen, eliminating what is marginal and extraneous, and also eliminating whatever has no application in the context of our lives in the West. Seven years is not such a long time and, in any event, seven years would pass by in our lives even if we do not avail ourselves of the

the intent to bring relief.

The Vehicle of Wealth presents four kinds of practices: Divination, Astrology, Ritual, and Medical Diagnosis. Our sessions dealt primarily with Divination and Ritual.

There are numerous systems of divination in Bön. Some of these involve highly complex procedures, are connected to the Higher Bön traditions, and require erudition and study as well as expertise in visualization and ritual. In the Zhang-Zhung Ju Thig, for instance, practitioners manipulate 360 knotted threads, each knot corresponding with one of the 360 retinues of Meri. Besides these complex systems, however, there are more humble methods that are used by uneducated persons.

Divination in all cases involves contact with a deity who rules the divinatory practice. The personal connection between the practitioner and the deity is the source of success of the divination. The individual's clarity in connection with the deity grows with familiarity over the course of a life time. There are thus many persons who, though having no sophisticated training, nonetheless have established powerful contact with divinatory spirits and are thus very expert in their use.

Besides forms of divination involving external manipulation of such objects as knots and threads, there are practices that involve the direct use of the senses, comparable to the practice of "skrying" in the west—the practitioner sees images relevant to the problem situation in a mirror or in a black substance applied to the finger nail. There is a method used by Bön medical practitioners that involves fashioning a statuette of a little man and investing it ceremonially. The practitioner carries this little man about with him and the little man talks to the practitioner, providing him with information he needs.

In general, divination is applied to situations where more ordinary ways of understanding and dealing with our problems are inapplicable. In our own society, for instance, we consult medical doctors for ailments that have physical

causes and psychotherapists where our mental anguish derives from ordinary confusions. But Bön holds that there are disturbances to our life-forces that these ordinary methods of treatment are powerless to address. There is, for instance, a class of "spiritual" entities called Dön (gdon) who create disharmony in our beings when they are provoked. They are provoked when, for example, we disturb the earth with construction projects, industrial pollution, or inattention to the qualities of nature where we dwell. Divination can be used to discern whether our particular problem is in fact caused by such provocations and, if it is, precisely what sort of action must be taken to propitiate the disturbed spirits. Usually this action will be a prescribed ritual involving the familiar elements of Tibetan Ceremony: Sadhana texts, mantras, offerings, tormas, mudras, mandalas and so forth.

Divination may also reveal a condition of "loss of soul" caused by shocks of various kinds, contact with negative circumstances, or physical weakness from disease. When we experience a sudden shock, for instance, our "soul" entity may be frightened out of our body, or our soul-energy may be seized by various demonic entities who have need of that energy.

Practices are prescribed for "retrieving" the absent soul and its energy, or for making offerings to "buy back" the absent soul from the entities that have absconded with it. There are also Sadhanas for compelling the return of the soul through the use of wrathful transformation practices and magical threats.

When we can see in a person's pallor the signs of approaching death, sometimes the soul has left the body, though the person's life force (Tse-yinus-pa) has not yet completely drained away. It may still be possible to summon the soul's return by ritual means and thus prolong the person's life.

Tibetans are fond of keeping a turquoise stone on a cord around their neck as a personal amulet. These stones are supports for a person's life-force and are considered auspicious objects that

serve as an abiding place for the soul entity. When soul-loss is suffered, the use of these stones becomes an important element in the ritual practices undertaken to bring the soul back.

The second two days of the retreat were spent in conversation between Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, guest practitioners of contemporary Shamanism, and members of the community involved with healing and therapy.

On day three, the guests were Sandra Ingerman, the author of "Soul Retrieval," now practicing counseling in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Christina Stack, a practitioner of soul retrieval, artist, and spiritual counselor living in the Hudson Valley of New York. The soul retrieval process as practiced by Sandra and Christina originates with Sandra. Through techniques learned from Michael Harner, she made contact with her personal guardian spirits and was taught soul retrieval by them. Soul retrieval involves the practitioner's undertaking of shamanic journeys on the behalf of clients with various presenting symptoms or problems. On these journeys the practitioner locates the soul of the client in "non-ordinary reality" and helps the soul return to the client's body. The discussions involved comparison between this process and the similar aspects of Bön Shamanism and Bön and Buddhist Long-Life practices. In Long-Life practices especially, aspects of the individual's vital energy, having left the person's body, can be summoned back from the four directions with the help of ritual and visualization.

There was also much discussion about the different conceptions of "soul", "spirit", and "mind" in Bön and Buddhist thought and in the working concepts that these practitioners of modern shamanic journeying employ. Sandra Ingerman expressed her thoughts that the "soul" is that aspect of a being which undergoes experiences, learns and grows during the course of life. The soul passes to "the other side" at death or when it is a victim of various traumatic experiences during life. The "spirit" in contrast, is the "god-essence," the aspect of one's being that is already perfect,

already in possession of ultimate wisdom, and is finally the source of the wisdom that is acquired by the soul during its sojourn in the body. It was observed that this conception of the spirit as contrasted with soul is similar to the Dzogchen view of the nature of mind as contrasted with moving mind.

There was also a discussion between Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, Sandra, Christina, and the psychotherapists about the need in our society for rescuing persons suffering from various sorts of spiritual crises from conventional psychiatric, psychotherapeutic, and medical interpretations and treatments of their condition. Sandra maintained that much mental as well as physical disease throughout the modern world is symptomatic of "soul loss" and can be treated by the Soul Retrieval and related processes. It was also clear that where an individual is suffering from explicitly spiritual confusions and problems, treatment by persons who have neither familiarity with, nor sympathy for, the experiences the troubled person is undergoing, can be very harmful.

On the final day of the workshop Michael Harner stopped by for a brief session with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and the other participants. He was on his way to Bearsville, New York where he conducts his training seminars in Shamanic practices. Michael Harner is a leading exponent of what I have been calling the "neo-shamanic" movement. He talked about the nature of the process of learning shamanic skills and emphasized that the source of this learning is the guardian spirits themselves, usually in the form of power

August 1992 Retreat with the Dzogchen Community near Frankfurt, Germany

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We cannot afford to send out free issues of the 'Voice of Clear Light'. Please subscribe now if you have not subscribed so you don't miss any issues of the newsletter.

Help Needed by Ligmincha

Some of the ongoing projects here at Ligmincha are: **(a)** Looking for land and facilities, **(b)** Recording, transcribing, typing, editing, Desk Top Publishing, and printing of Rinpoche's teachings, **(c)** Administrative typing, filing, and secretarial work, **(d)** Maintaining a library of Buddhist & Bön texts both in Tibetan & English, **(e)** Fund Raising, **(f)** Generation and maintenance of computer graphics libraries, mailing lists and general databases (We use both the Apple Macintosh and IBM computer systems) **(g)** Writing articles for the newsletter, **(h)** Typing, editing, layout of, Desk Top Publishing, and printing of the 'Voice of Clear Light' newsletter, **(i)** General housekeeping & cleaning tasks.

Any help you can provide in any of the above areas is needed and is sincerely appreciated. Help can be days, weekends, evenings at your home or at Ligmincha. Please call the Institute if you will help.

Schedule of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

In addition to his duties as resident teacher of 'The Ligmincha Institute' Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche teaches and gives lectures concerning shamanism and philosophy at Rice University, Houston, Texas. There he also collaborates with Prof. Anne C. Klein in the translation of certain very precious Bön sacred texts. Additionally, he works closely with Prof. Anne C. Klein and Dr. Harvey B. Aronson in giving continuing education classes. Rinpoche, Prof. Klein, and Dr. Aronson will present a series of continuing education classes sometime in January 1993. Information concerning these classes can be obtained from the the Department of Religious Studies at Rice University. These classes are:

(I) 'Tibetan Culture and the West: A Personal Account' Prof. Klein,

(II) 'Autobiography of a Lama' Rinpoche,
 (III-IV) 'Background and Symbolism of Shamanic Traditions' Rinpoche,
 (V) 'Visions of Monastic Life' Rinpoche,
 (VI-VII) 'Meditative and Artistic Traditions' Rinpoche,
 (VIII) 'Cultural Context, Psychology, and Spirituality' Dr. Aronson.

Rinpoche's 1993 Schedule

Jan 29-31: C.G. Jung Center, Houston, Texas-Tel: (713) 524-8253

Feb 13-14: Open Center, NYC, NY-Tel: (212) 219-2527

Feb 27-28: Albuquerque, NM: Dzogchen teachings-Call Lar and Paige Short-Tel: (505) 898-0363
 Mar 6-7: Six-Loka's Practice-Richmond, VA-Call Ligmincha

Mar 19-21: Intro to Dzogchen-Charlottesville, VA-Call Ligmincha

Apr 3-4: Dzogchen Teachings-Richmond, VA-Call Ligmincha

Apr 23-25: Bön Shamanism Workshop -Washington, DC- Call Kiva-Tel: (703) 582-3574

May 8-9: Boston, MA-Call Martin Leventhal-Tel: (617) 332-4967

May 29-30: Dzogchen Teachings-Richmond, VA-Call Ligmincha

Jun 10-Aug 11: 1993 Summer Retreat-near Woodstock, NY-Call Ligmincha



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