



# Ligmincha Europe Magazine

*# 5 – Summer 2012*



Meet the French speaking sangha

Who was Khyung Tul Rinpoche?

Buddhism & Science

Prayers supporting people



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## THE LIGMINCHA EUROPE MAGAZINE

is a joint venture of the community of European students of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Ideas and contributions are welcome at [magazine@ligmincha.eu](mailto:magazine@ligmincha.eu). You can find this and the previous issues at [www.ligmincha.eu](http://www.ligmincha.eu), and you can find us on the Facebook page of [Ligmincha Europe](https://www.facebook.com/LigminchaEurope).

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# GREETINGS AND NEWS FROM THE EDITORS

**Dear Readers, Dear Practitioners of Bon,**

We present to you our summer edition 2012, again with a variety of articles. You can read about internet research done by Jacek Trzebuniak on Khyung Tul Rinpoche, a great Bon master who lived from 1897 till 1955. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche has been recognized as a reincarnation of this famous master, who was a renowned meditation master, teacher, scholar and healer. Scott Clearwater explains how physical reality relates to the *Fivefold Teachings* of Dawa Gyaltsen. Geshe Gelek reports from his search for discovery of the spiritual culture of Zhang Zhung. John Jackson

presentations of their national organisations and had discussions with Rinpoche, Gabriel Rocco and other directors of Ligmincha Institute.

Regarding this magazine, we want to let you know that Jitka Polanská resigned from the position of editor, and we are happy that Jitka is willing to contribute in the future by writing articles. We want to thank Jitka for all the ideas, work, and enthusiasm she brought to the team. Without her contribution, the Magazine would not be what it is now. More than three thousand people have found this Magazine on the internet.



The Ligmincha Europe bookstore in Amsterdam, May 2012

shares with us a scientific report which proves that prayers support people in their recovery, and invites readers to sign up for the *Garuda mailing list*. Here, members request prayers for themselves or others. For readers who are not experienced surfers on the internet we gathered interesting sites where you can find Rinpoche's teachings. In addition to other interesting articles, you will find a review on the book *Heart Essence of the Khandro* with teachings from the ancient female lineage holders of the Bonpo.

In our next issue, you can read more about a vivid and interesting meeting that took place in June at Serenity Ridge. Representatives of many countries celebrated the twentieth anniversary of Ligmincha Institute. They gave

When we started publishing this Magazine in 2011, we wanted to make a contribution so that sangha members could get to know more about, as well as to learn from each other in Europe. Personally, I also learned a lot. At that time, I had never interviewed anyone, I didn't use Skype or Facebook, and I didn't know about the Dropbox, or the program Issue.com which we use to present this Magazine on the internet. Through my work on the magazine, I've also gotten to know some of the many warm-hearted sangha members. So, if you want to grab that opportunity too, you are welcome to join our team. Just send an e-mail to [magazine@ligmincha.eu](mailto:magazine@ligmincha.eu).

**Ton Bisscheroux**  
chief editor





# KHYUNG TUL RINPOCHE: A GREAT MASTER OF IMPARTIALITY

A renowned Bonpo meditation master, scholar and healer Khyung Tul Rinpoche (1897-1955) was a contemporary of Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen Rinpoche (1859-1935). In terms of the development and promotion of the Bon religion in the first half of the twentieth century, these were the two most prominent Bon lamas. The great legacy of their achievements is still strongly felt in the Bonpo community. Jacek Trzebuniak researched available internet resources on Khyung Tul Rinpoche and summarized findings in the following article.

Born into a family of Amdo Gargya aristocratic lineage, in the nomadic Bonpo kingdom of Hor,

he had no objections in joining the Buddhist community of Dzogchen practitioners established in Namkha Khyung dzong under the guidance of Dechen Gyalpo in the Ngari region in West Tibet.

Khyung Tul Rinpoche spent a large part of his time as a Buddhist pilgrim visiting most of the sacred sites of northern India, Bhutan and Nepal. Journeys to India combined extensive pilgrimages to Buddhist sites with visits to Delhi in order to publish ancient Bon and Buddhist texts and also the complete works of Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen Rinpoche. Khyung Tul Rinpoche was not as prolific a writer as Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen Rinpoche, but his literary output was still substantial. He wrote on astrology, Tibetan grammar, and Tibetan medicine. He was also a skillful painter and poet, and wrote ten volumes of religious songs.



Khyung Tul Rinpoche Jigme Namkha Dorje in a photo taken around 1935.



Tulku Geshe Tenzin Wangyal – here in a photo taken around 1977 in Dolanji – was recognized as his incarnation.

Khyung Tul Rinpoche showed a great will to devote his entire life to religious activities from a very early age. The whole of his spiritual life was inspired by the Rime movement, making no distinction between Bon and Buddhism, as he constantly asserted in his poems. Thus, he received his full *drang srong* vows in the Bonpo scholastic tradition of Menri Monastery, but later

At the same time Khyung Tul Rinpoche was the instigator of the return of Bonpo traditions to the ancient land of Zhang Zhung in Ngari. Very significantly, he showed a particular interest for the remote Kinnaur valley, where he was to spend long periods of his life undertaking the difficult task of eliminating the deeply rooted, ancient traditions of offering blood sacrifices to the local





Khyung Tul Rinpoche in a photo taken by Giuseppe Tucci in 1935.

deities (*yul lha*). According to Bonpo historical accounts, this region was the centre of the ancient kingdom of Zhang Zhung from where the Bon religion originated. In an attempt to reestablish Bon in the area, Khyung Tul Rinpoche founded the Bon monastery of Gur Gyam, close to what he believed to be the location of Khyunglung Ngulkar ('the silver Garuda fortress'), the capital of Zhang Zhung. The monastery is situated next to a cave associated with the eighth century Bon master Drenpa Namkha. Khyung Tul Rinpoche and his principal medical student Tenzin Wangdrag meditated and consulted with patients in this cave.

It seems that most of his time at Gur Gyam was spent on construction work, and on preparing books for publication. The monastery took thirteen years to build and was finally completed in 1948. However Khyung Tul Rinpoche did find time to write his own works, as well as to practice and teach medicine. His knowledge of medicine was famous and many patients came to consult with him. He also completed his large four-volume medical commentary, known as the *Khyungtul Menpe*, in 1949.

Khyung Tul Rinpoche also had a considerable impact on a number of Westerners that he met during his life. This was the case of Giuseppe Tucci who had several occasions to meet the pilgrim in Tibet. Thanks to these meetings we have interesting descriptions of him (together with a few pictures) that help us understand his rich

### On the Khyung Tul Rinpoche hagiography

In accordance with his last wishes, after his death two close disciples, Palden Tsultrim and Khachog Dorje were entrusted with composing his *namtar* (hagiography). It was published in 1957 in Delhi. Fifteen years later, Menri Monastery in Dolanji (India) published another copy. This is the edition that has served as the basis for studies about the life and works of Khyung Tul Rinpoche published in the West. However, in the twenty-first century a new manuscript of the biography surfaced in Khyunglung (Ngari). The text had managed to survive the Cultural Revolution and was published in 2004 in Lhasa.

Khyung Tul Rinpoche's biography provides a very rich account of the first half of the twentieth century in Tibet and in its neighboring countries and it offers a portrait of the cultural history of these Himalayan regions. The Bonpo lama met some of the most powerful men of religion (both Bon and Buddhism) and politics of his time. The list is long and includes the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, the Twenty-eighth and the Thirtieth Menri Trizin, the Ninth Panchen Lama, the Sixteenth Karmapa, the First Dechen Gyalpo, the first Bhutanese king, the last king of the Princely State of Bushahr and several provincial governors of Ngari, among many others. At the same time, his biography also provides a unique source of information regarding the traditional toponymy and onomastics of remote and isolated regions including Hor, Kinnaur and Ngari.







Gur Gyam caves at upper Khyunglung Ngulkar. Established as retreat place with monastery below by Khyung Tul Rinpoche in 1936.

biography from a variety of different angles and viewpoints.

Khyung Tul Rinpoche died in 1955 in Drenpa Namkha cave, and with his death, a chapter in the history of Tibet was closed.

#### **From the Khyung Tul Rinpoche hagiography**

Before Khyung Tul Rinpoche was born, his parents had many dreams. Once, his mother had a dream in which she found a few flowers and jewels with which she made an ornament for her head; then a ray of light, brighter than the rising sun and moon, suddenly shone. On one particular night, a ray of light emanated from a small golden statue of a lama, the size of a thumb, lighting up the crown on her head.

While still a child, he saw on more than one occasion bright religious images similar to those found in thangkas and when shrouded in darkness he could point out rainbows to his mother. She could neither see nor hear anything but believed

them to be bad omens. She visited the lama, Gyalwa Tsultrim, who told her that in his past life her son might have been a lama or an excellent being devoted to the cultivation of virtue and so she had no cause for worry.

Because his family was rich and religious they invited many lamas to their house. From early childhood Khyung Tul Rinpoche was receiving many teachings and initiations. For example when he was three or four years old (1899-1901), Paton Nyima Bumsal, a sublime lama of Yetha Sog in Lower Hor, visited Upper Hor and was invited to Khyung Tul's home, where he gave all kind of initiations to the boy.

From early childhood Khyung Tul Rinpoche wanted to become a monk, but he was the eldest son (he had six brothers and one sister) and for few years his parents would not agree. In the end his parents conceded to their son's wishes, but they asked him that if he should decide to take on the monk's habit that he should never abandon them.







Monastery Donag Drag Gye Ling situated below Gur Gyam caves at upper Khyunglung Ngulkar, a place associated with Drenpa Namkha.

After study for few years with different Bonpo teachers in this region he decided to start a long pilgrimage in Tibet. His lama advised him to go to the West; spend some time in Menri Monastery, visit Mount Kailash, Lake Manasarovar, Khyunglung Ngulmkha and support Bonpo practitioners in Ngari. When he was leaving his homeland he had a dream in which Dorje Gradul appeared on horseback wearing his ornaments and weapons, followed by a multitudinous entourage. He bade farewell to all those deities who told him that they would accompany him on his journey to Namtso Lake. Nevertheless, Khyung Tul Rinpoche begged them to stay and protect the local people and their religion. The deities replied claiming that they would always be ready to help him if he was in need.

#### Resources:

[www.facebook.com/pages Naldjor](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Naldjor)  
[www.himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk](http://www.himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk)  
[www.bodyhealthreligion.org.uk](http://www.bodyhealthreligion.org.uk)

**Text by Jacek Trzebuniak**

Photos: from the websites

#### Jacek Trzebuniak

"I work on my Ph.D. at Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland, focused on Tibetan death rituals. I have been practicing Bon since 2007. I met Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche first time in summer 2008 and I immediately felt that this is my teacher. When I met him I only heard that he is the reincarnation of a famous Bonpo master. At the end of 2008 I was with Rinpoche and his students at First Lishu Trip in India, where the Abbot of the Nunnery in Dolanji told some stories about Khyung Tul Rinpoche. In 2011 Geshe Thupten Negi visited Poland and he spoke about this master because his grandfather knew Khyung Tul Rinpoche. In 2012 I found on Facebook a short film where Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche speaks about Zhang Zhung and Khyung Tul Rinpoche. This time I felt that I wanted to find more about him. Now I am working on a longer article about Khyung Tul Rinpoche and I plan to translate his biography into Polish. I am working on this because of two reasons. Firstly I have this scientific mind, I want to know: Who? Why? When? Secondly when I read these texts I feel more connection and devotion to Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and the Bon tradition."



# BUDDHISM & SCIENCE CONFERENCE AT SERENITY RIDGE

**Can the results of meditation be measured by scientists? An interesting question which cannot be easily answered. In the *New Dialogues Between Buddhism and Science Conference* scholars explored this field of research. One of the participants gives us an impression of those two days at Serenity Ridge Retreat Center.**

On February 18-19, 2012, Ligmincha Institute and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche hosted the *New Dialogues Between Buddhism and Science Conference* at Ligmincha's Serenity Ridge Retreat Center in Virginia, bringing together scholars whose work includes areas of common interest with Buddhist practices. The goal was continued engagement with researchers who value the insights that contemplative practices have brought to studies of human consciousness, behavior, and health. More than sixty members of the community attended, many participating in the lively discussion sessions which followed presentations.

The attendees were welcomed by Alejandro Chaoul-Reich, known for his work in documenting and teaching practices of *Tsa Lung Trul Khor* within the Bon tradition. Further welcoming introduction was made by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche himself, who expressed his supportive interest of the importance of this dialogue in the

modern age of information and the value wisdom traditions offer to modern humanity's state of disconnection and distress. He then led everyone in a brief meditation.

In two sessions nine scholars held presentations concerning their field of expertise. Amongst them Scott Clearwater, Ph.D., physicist and head of The Three Doors Research Committee, who examined the models of interaction between mind and reality in modern physics research and thought experiments, and the goals for collaborative research within the Three Doors Program. The first day concluded with a moving group meditation led by Rinpoche.

The following morning, everyone gathered for extended discussion of the exciting potential for new understandings that the synergy of Buddhist practice and cognitive frameworks might bring to fruition. While many challenges and hurdles were identified, and an acknowledged consensus that as Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche so concisely put, there would never be a quantifiable measure of the degree or benefits of 'open-heartedness,' that nonetheless the potential positives of future collaboration and future research offer much promise. All participants agreed that the dialogue is a rich one, and likely to bring benefit to beings for many years to come.

**Text by Rob Dorsey**

Photo by Polly Turner





# REALITY IS A CREATION OF THE MIND

In the *New Dialogues Between Buddhism and Science Conference* one of the presenters was Scott Clearwater. He talked about physical reality and how it relates to the *Fivefold Teachings* of Dawa Gyaltsen, and explains to us how modern science and ancient knowledge meet.

## How did you experience the conference?

Most of the talks were about physiological changes resulting from Dharma practices. Zoran Josipovic from New York University showed fMRI images of people before and after different kind of meditations. For me it was interesting to see that people who claim to be in *Rigpa* could actually be detected in different brain states.

I think the reason we have these Buddhist and Science conferences is because in the West our kind of religion is science. Many people look to science for what is real and what is believable. And because of that people look for scientific validation of everything, whether it is a new kind of medicine, a new physical law or a new particle. In this case we are trying to validate some very ancient traditions. We saw that Dharma practices can lead to scientifically measurable results, and I think that is very beneficial for the Western world.

## What subject did you present?

I talked about physical reality and how it relates to the *Fivefold Teachings* of Dawa Gyaltsen. Its first line *Vision is Mind* means for me that that reality is a creation of your mind. It is not out there independently from you, but it is you creating that reality. In a psychological sense you can understand that. For example when there is a personal relationship you can say something good or bad about that person, and everybody may have a different opinion. That is one kind of reality.

## Vision is Mind

- 'Vision' or appearances or experiences arise from the mind. Mind in the broader Buddhist sense, not as a brain state.
- We know experiences are subjective from a psychological viewpoint.
- Historical quantum physics experiments point to reality itself as being subjective.



**How do you explain *Vision is Mind*? For me it is quite difficult to understand that line. I know that that my mind creates my own reality, but I don't know what non-dual reality is.**

It is easy to say this line, but to really realize the essence at a deep level we have to do the practice. I claim that by doing these very subtle physics experiments we can touch that reality and the practices internalize what is shown in the laboratory. The hard part for us it is to be really in that state.

**When Rinpoche explained the lines of Dawa Gyaltsen I started to think about it instead of experiencing it.**

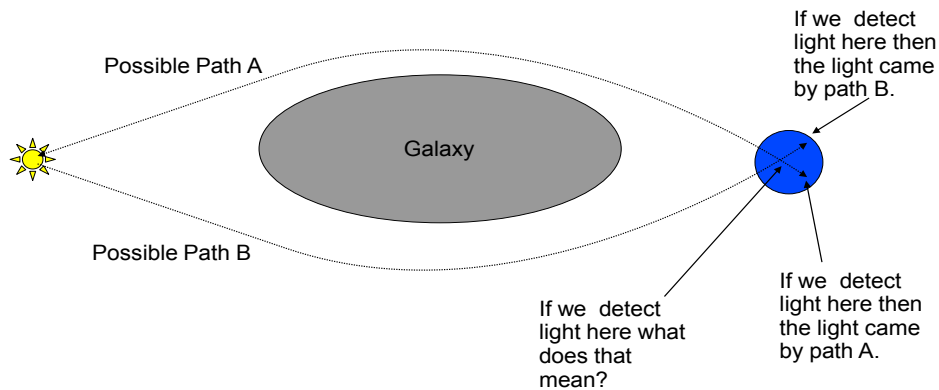
That is a problem most people have. The beautiful thing about the meditation we do is for me, coming from a science side, it is like a physics experiment, wherein I am the scientist, the phenomena and the apparatus, all in one. I'm sitting in a meditation, as an experimenter and allowing the phenomena – the experiences – to come out, and the Nature of Mind comes up and undergoes the experiences. Setting up the conditions for where the phenomena or experiences occur, that is what a scientist does. Then afterwards analyzing and understanding and moving forward. Hopefully there is a realization in that meditation or experiment, because then you can integrate that in everyday life and make progress.



## Which Choice?

To reach us light must go around the galaxy, either 'above' or 'below' it.

We don't know which path the light took until we measure it.



When you do a Dzogchen meditation you are working on a level that is prior to making any assumptions. When you let go of your assumptions, that is when you can discover new things. It is also with quantum mechanics that we discover things people in the nineteenth century didn't know about, and in the twentieth century started to appear. And for ourselves, having progressed more deeply in the practice, we also discover new things. They were always there, but we didn't know about them till we did the proper experiment or practice, just as with physics.

### **Can you tell something about the Mind in Dzogchen terms?**

It is open awareness and it has certain qualities like being non-conceptual. It doesn't have a literally physical location, but in terms of practice the physical heart is the place where we focus on the mind. It would also be an interesting area of research: what would the physical beating of the heart do, or other changes when you are in a *Rigpa* state or in anxiety? That would help to establish that there is a sense of mind in the area of the physical heart.

### **At the conference you stated that on the physics side the support of a lot of Buddhist and Bon views of reality are already established by experiment. Can you tell more about that?**

Yes, that's what I claimed. What's missing is the interpretation of those results, in the context of something like Dawa Gyaltsen. I talked about

actual physical reality that you touch. I gave an example of a physics experiment that showed how the choice of a conscious being determines the history of an event in the present time that should have happened in the past. For example, consider light traveling from a distant star to the earth. The experiment is set up in a way that there are two choices. There are two paths that the light can take. And depending on the location of the measurement the scientist chooses, that determines what path the light takes even though the light has presumably already gone in one direction by the time it gets to the scientist who measures it. The path of the particle is not defined until you measure it. The experiments have touched on the fact that there is a created reality; it is created by the experimenter, which is a mind.

That is my interpretation of the line *Vision is Mind*. I used physical reality rather than a psychological or neurological kind of measurement. The experiment I described has been replicated in the laboratory in a tabletop experiment where all the conditions are very precisely controlled. The concept has been tested in the laboratory, and the concept with the stars is a way of explaining it.

### **You say the observer determines the outcome of the experiment. Do I understand that correct?**

Let's use the starlight example. A star is one thousand light years away and there is a galaxy in between the star and us. The light could go around the left or the right before it reaches us. This light has been travelling for a thousand years





before it reaches us. And five hundred years ago it reached that galaxy that it had to go around. In our conventional way of thinking it had to go around in one of the two ways, and when it reaches us we can tell which way it goes. But when you look at the physics of it, depending on the way you measure it, you determine which direction it came from, after it supposedly had already gone there. A thousand years ago the light was emitted. Five hundred years after it passed the galaxy, and now you decide about that past history in the present. That's a mind boggling thing. It does not agree with our normal view, but it does agree with the Dawa Gyaltsen view, that *Vision is Mind*. The entire math works out, and experiments have been done, and it agrees with the theory. The after the fact measurement itself determines the historical path. There is no pre-defined path. It is another way of thinking. We think: it must have gone this way or that way, but in the quantum physics world that is not the case. My interpretation of the theory is that this is a support of *Vision is Mind*, because the mind is creating the history for something after it has supposedly already happened. So the whole notion of history and time is subjective and not objective. That is what I think Dawa Gyaltsen is saying.

#### **Could the light have gone both ways?**

Yes, if you measure it in a certain way you get a measurement that says "yes, it went both ways." That is another kind of strange contradiction of our normal way of thinking. How could one particle go on two paths? In reality it does, and that is I claim another support of Dawa Gyaltsen's *Vision is Mind*. So in essence, both quantum theory and Dawa Gyaltsen's *Fivefold Teaching*, the theories and the experiments, or meditations, say the same thing.

#### **Did people understand what you said?**

It provoked a lot of questions. I wanted to bring in the perspective that physical reality is also mind created, not only a psychological thing. Not everybody got it, but it was meant to be thought provoking, and make people think about it. For example, there was one person who had a poor relationship with another person for a long time. And after using the Dharma practice they were able to heal their relationship. The person said that was like changing the past because the bad part of the relationship no longer existed for them. I didn't agree, because that past relation-

#### **Scott Clearwater**

is a consultant in Silicon Valley, where he does scientific and technological problem solving, and uses his analytical skills to do market trading. He is head of *The Three Doors Research Committee*. Scott co-authored the first two books on quantum computing. He thinks there is a relationship between computation and the Dzogchen view of reality: "Sometimes very strange things happen when you do quantum computation, a kind of machine where they use quantum physics as a basis for its computation. When you do that you have some kind of *Vision is mind* behavior coming out of computation." He is currently writing a book explaining the similarities between quantum physics and Dawa Gyaltsen's *Fivefold Teaching*.

All his Ph.D. work he was involved in particle physics and used his quantum physics understanding to help him understand the Dharma. He says: "Each meditation is for me a science experiment, a possibility to discover the greater Self. When you wait for something to happen, then you are not going to get it. There must be patience in your waiting. Allow it to happen."

ship really did happen and was recorded in their memories. You can change your view of it, but you cannot change how it happened after the fact. In the experiment with the light, the path was never recorded until the measurement by the scientist. These are two different phenomena.

#### **In the Dzogchen practice you have the advantage that you can discuss your experiences with a Dzogchen master, and he can tell you if you are on the right track. Is it easier than science?**

Yes, there are teachers who have experienced it and know it. It's a huge advantage to be able to validate your experience. In science somebody gets a result and someone else has to go out and measure it again to verify it. They need a replication of what was found. As practitioners we are fortunate that all the masters have done all that work for us. They give us instructions and we have to follow it. That's easier than science where you don't know where you are going.

#### **Interview by Ton Bisscheroux**

Photo by Polly Turner



# TRACKING THE ORIGINS OF MY SPIRITUAL TRADITION

You may know Geshe Gelek Jinpa from the documentary *In the search of Zhang Zhung* as an insightful pilgrim travelling together with an American photographer and a group of Nepali shamans to witness what remains of the ancient civilization of Zhang Zhung — and realizing finally that what is alive of it is already in his possession as the wisdom of the Bon teachings. Geshe Gelek's passion for the discovery of the spiritual culture of Zhang Zhung continues. Recently, he spent six months in Tibet.

**Geshe Gelek la, what did you do during your last journey to Tibet?**

I went mainly for research. This is my big and continuous interest, searching for origins of Tibetan culture which are rooted in Zhang Zhung. I really want to do that more and more. It was my fourth journey to Tibet after I left it. For any research, you need to spend time at the place. During a five day trip you can't do much. So, longer stays are needed. How I do: I go to a place and try to find somebody who is considered knowledgeable, usually an old man or a lady, no difference if Bonpo or not Bonpo. And I ask them questions. Any research requires being at the place I think. Reading books and thinking about something is totally different from being really at the place where the culture originates.

Nowadays, I can see that Tibet more than ever has been discovering its ancient history and culture. You know, in the past, research was very much influenced by the view that the very cultural and spiritual development of Tibet started only with Buddhism coming from India and that before the 7th century there was nothing much valuable there. Lately, this approach had been replaced with recognition of the value and richness of the original ancient culture of Tibet and its source Zhang Zhung. This time, I met many young Tibetan scholars in Tibet deeply focused on Zhang Zhung, learning the ancient language and appreciating what they were discovering so much. It is really amazing.



**Geshe Gelek Jinpa**

was born in 1967 into a family living from farming and keeping yaks in the Khyungpo area of Kham, Tibet. Already as a child and as a teenager he was instructed in Bon by Lama Bon Nying Rang Drol (a disciple of a disciple of Shardza Rinpoche).

After a visit of His Eminence Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche to his village in 1986, Geshe Gelek at the age of nineteen became a monk and entered Thongdrol Ritrod Monastery. After a second meeting with H.E. Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, who visited Tibet again in 1992, Geshe Gelek decided to study for Geshe degree. For this purpose he had to leave Tibet.

In exile, he studied under H.E. Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche in Triten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu, where he obtained a Geshe degree in 2001.

Since obtaining his Geshe degree, Geshe Gelek has been teaching in Triten Norbutse and, increasingly, in Europe. He has taught in Italy, Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania and the United Kingdom, and regularly teaches courses in Shenten Dargye Ling in France.







The place where Rase Dawa Tapa took the rainbow body

**You were born in and grew up in Kham in Eastern Tibet, while Zhang Zhung was located in Western Tibet. During your research trips, do you have the possibility to visit your family?**

I always try to visit my mum, otherwise she becomes sad. When I went to shoot the documentary *In Search of Zhang Zhung* in 2003, I could not leave the crew and go to my village. But what happened? By coincidence I met some monks and nuns from my native place in pilgrimage to Mount Kailas where I was at the moment. When they came back to my village they told my mum that they saw me in Tibet. She was so sad about it: I was in Tibet and I didn't come to visit her! So, when I could I took a one month visa and went to see her. This time I went to my village but during the stay there, I got really sick. It is situated in high mountains and my body is not used to it anymore. I got terrible headaches. So, I thought that I had to go somewhere and I took the opportunity and went to visit Shardza Rinpoche's place and also the place where his close disciple Rasi Dawa Tapa took the rainbow body — even before Shardza Rinpoche himself. I also went to the birth place of Nyammé Sherab Gyaltsen and to his original monastery Yungdrung Lhateng.

I saw many memorable places in Eastern Tibet in this time.

**I read in internet that you were one of the monks examined by a team of scientist while practicing *Tummo*. How was it?**

Yes, it was right after my Geshe graduation. We received that request from Western researches and Yongdzin Rinpoche and Khenpo Rinpoche told me, Lama Sangye Monlam and another monk to undergo that experiment. And so we went to France, for the first time. It was in 2001. We did *Tummo* practices and the doctors were



Monastery of Yungdrung Lhateng





Shardza Rinpoche's Ritrö

trying to detect changes in our blood pressure, body temperature and other physiological processes. They found something, but of course, the real meaning and purpose of the practice they could not find. They had no tools for that. In Tibet, traditionally, there is also an examination after (during) the *Tummo* retreat which is usually held for one hundred days. You have to dry wet sheets put on your naked body, by the power of the practice. It is done outside, in the early morning, in freezing temperature. But it was easy compared to the scientific test. You know, the researchers put all the kind of things on you and you had to do the practice while they were watching you. At moments, a thought came: oh, they are watching me, and that was distracting. The practice needs really good concentration and focus.

**Western practitioners sometimes find it difficult to develop the concentration of mind that Eastern meditators have. Is the Western mind handicapped due to the Western life style?**

I think that Western people often don't put all of themselves in meditation. They just prefer thinking and analyzing things. Always searching

for information, they don't find what they look for. Because they are too intelligent, things become more complicated for them. But if you put 100 % of yourself into practicing, the result will come surprisingly easy. People try this and that but don't dedicate themselves fully. They believe that meditation is something to be found, but meditation is right here, everything is meditation. So, it is simply a matter of approach, nothing else. If somebody meditates, the results will come. The teaching is for everybody. The important thing is take everything from the easy side. If you take it from the heavy side, even moving this book from one place to another can be very difficult. I like the English expression 'take it easy'.

#### **Will you keep on teaching in Europe?**

I teach mainly in Italy or in Shenten, in France, and I like teaching here very much. But I also want to dedicate more time to research, as I said though. I want to go back to Tibet already this year. You know, being there is very inspiring to me. Even just listening to stories of great meditators gives you so much inspiration. I saw many, many Bonpos in regions where I went during my last trip. They paid so much respect







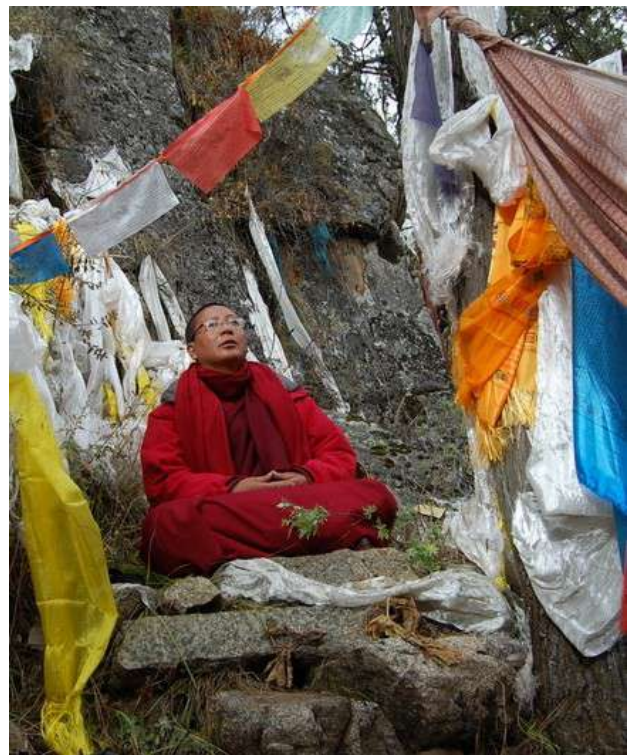
Monastery of Khyungpo Tsedruk

to us. They know that we received teachings and transmissions directly from H.E. Yongdzin Rinpoche and His Holiness who are recognized everywhere in Tibet as the leaders of Bon school.

Now, there are quite a lot of Dzogchen practitioners in Tibet: monks and lay people as well. My eldest brother is a monk and he also wants to dedicate his life to meditation. Now he wants to join a monastery in Eastern Tibet, called Khyungpo Tsedrug where many good meditators gather.

**How do lay practitioners in Tibet organize their lives so that they can dedicate themselves properly to their practice?**

Of course, they have to care about their families and households but they support each other. Once the father of the family goes to retreat, the mother takes care of the household and brings food to him. Then they change places and the mother goes and the father supports her. And then, when they are at home, they practice every day. So, they integrate their practice into their lives. This is what Western practitioners also try to do. It is perfectly possible.



Geshe Gelek practising *Thögal*

**Interview by Jitka Polanská**

Photos: courtesy of Geshe Gelek Jinpa



# DEVOTION IS OUR DRIVE

We wanted to introduce the French sangha. But, when Ton Bisscheroux interviewed Nathalie Duchanois, he discovered that Ligmincha France & Suisse romande is a collaboration of two close sanghas: one is in France and the other is in the French speaking part of Switzerland.

## Can you explain the name *Ligmincha France & Suisse romande*?

We work in two border countries: France and Switzerland. That are two different sanghas but we have many links as the fact we are French speaking brings us together. I live in 'Suisse romande', the French speaking part of Switzerland, but I often practice in dharma centers in France. In the beginning I was working on my own to organize Rinpoche's teachings, and the past three years Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche brought people spread all over France and Switzerland together. So now we are a team and have a Facebook page [Ligmincha France & Suisse romande](#).

## When did you meet Rinpoche the first time?

I met Rinpoche in a very informal way in Nepal a couple of days before New Year 2000. I was studying Dharma and Tibetan in Boudhanath, Kathmandu. I was then with an Italian friend in a tiny typical Tibetan restaurant; when Rinpoche heard her talk Italian he started a conversation with us. First I didn't know he was a Rinpoche as he was dressed as a Tibetan in a casual way, not as a monk. At that time he was there to write a book and to study with his master. During several weeks, I regularly met Rinpoche at the *kora* around the Boudhanath stupa and we had friendly and humorous conversations. You can imagine how surprised I was when I discovered he was a Rinpoche and such an extraordinary master! Then I started following his teachings and discovered the Bon tradition, even though I had been a student of Bokar Rinpoche (Karma Kagyu lineage) for several years. I've always found both the Bon and Kagyu traditions complement and enhance each other beautifully.

## How long has Rinpoche been coming to Switzerland?

In Switzerland there have been teachings for



about twelve years in Zurich, organized by Ann-Marie Jakob. Because the teachings are translated into German, I asked Rinpoche many times to teach in the French speaking part of Switzerland. Two years ago Rinpoche agreed to come and asked me to organize the seminar together with Guy Desbiolles. Both in May 2011 and 2012 about ninety persons came to the teachings of Rinpoche in a cultural center located in the little city of Bulle, near Fribourg.

## How about the teachings in France?

Rinpoche always wanted to teach in France, but he didn't want to interfere with his teacher, His Eminence Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, who teaches regularly in Shenten Dargyé Ling in France. There are many students of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche in France, most of them know Rinpoche through his books.

Three years ago Rinpoche was invited by the Institute Karma Ling, a wonderful Kagyu center founded in the eighties by Kalou Rinpoche, in the mountains near Grenoble. The Institute is very open to other traditions and invites regularly another Bon master, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. The 2009 seminar welcomed about two hundred and fifty students who had the great opportunity to practice the *Five Elements* in a gorgeous natural site, outside around the Institute.

Many years ago Rinpoche did teach in Paris. Since then, people kept asking if Rinpoche would come back, and finally Rinpoche agreed to come this spring to Paris for a seminar about *Tibetan Sound Healing*. We were amazed that about one hundred and eighty people came to the teachings and the place was too small...






>CONTACT:  
Lama Lhundrup  
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# invitations

## Tenzin wangyal Rinpoché



université rimay

**Les 4, 5 et 6 septembre**  
**LE POUVOIR THÉRAPEUTIQUE DES CINQ ÉLÉMENTS DANS LA TRADITION DU DHARMA DZOGCHEN BÖN**

Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoché, l'un des rares maîtres de la tradition Dzogchen Bön à vivre en Occident, nous ouvre les portes d'un monde tout à fait extraordinaire, celui des cinq éléments : dans un premier temps dans la vision chamanique Bön, où ils sont appréhendés par le biais des pouvoirs bruts de la nature et des êtres immatériels qui l'habitent, puis dans le cadre du Tantra, qui les considère comme cinq types d'énergie corporelle qu'équilibrent exercices de yoga et visualisations ; enfin dans la perspective Dzogchen, qui regarde les éléments comme le rayonnement de l'Être.

Cet enseignement de Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoché, en lien avec son ouvrage « Guérir par les formes, l'énergie et la lumière », offre au pratiquant, dans une optique thérapeutique, des méditations et des pratiques yogiques correspondant à chacun de ces niveaux. Il propose de remplacer une identité anxieuse, étroite et mal à l'aise par une autre plus vaste, paisible et compétente. Le monde aussi se transforme, passant de la matière inanimée et de processus aveugles à un paysage sacré, rempli d'une variété infinie de forces et d'êtres vivants.

Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoché est l'un des principaux héritiers de la tradition du Dzogchen Bon ayant pratiqué avec d'éminents maîtres Bon et bouddhistes.



Announcement in *Garuda*, the newsletter of the sangha Rimay, May 2009

Thanks to the French students enthusiasm, Rinpoche has decided to come back to Paris in September 2012 for an evening talk on *Awakening the Luminous Mind* and in March 2013 for a seminar on the *Dream yoga*.

At Easter Rinpoche was also invited by the Center of Buddhist studies in Grenoble, another historic Kagyu center founded by Kalou Rinpoche and 16<sup>th</sup> Karmapa. The director of this centre is Lama Tcheuky Senghe, an eminent translator who founded the famous *Claire Lumière Editions* where many of Rinpoche's books are published in French. The Grenoble sangha enjoyed Rinpoche's powerful teachings with his modern direct style.

### Can you tell something about the structure?

In both countries the organization is informal, because Rinpoche said we should wait before creating an association. We are beginners, working with devotion as our drive, and we are happy that it works. Last year Rinpoche told me to contact Jean Ory, Dominique Mongardé and Martine Allier. Together, we formed the *essence team*. We also got precious help from Guy Desbiolles, Claude Bonjour, Gilles and Phap. Their common point is that their dedication is wonderful! As we live far away from each other, we started to work over telephone, e-mail, Skype and we tried to organize things the best we could. Every three months we send a newsletter to our French speaking sangha, and also through e-mail and Facebook, we inform the students what's going on.

We are organizing groups in Paris and in Grenoble to practice *Tsa Lung*. In Paris we will start in

September for a full day, and if people are interested we will also organize full weekend retreats. Nicolas Gouranopoulos from Belgium will lead the group with my assistance. In Grenoble, I've been invited by the Center of Buddhist studies to lead a *Tsa Lung* practice group about three times a year on a week end. Grenoble is a convenient location as many people from the south and north of France and from Switzerland come.

**You are a young, but also very active group with good ideas. On the monthly European Skype-meeting I heard about the translations of Rinpoche's teachings and videos on the internet.**

Jean Ory started to translate Rinpoche's teachings on Facebook, and Rinpoche noticed how he was involved and contacted him. He's now very active translating the Rinpoche's written teachings, videos and even organized online teachings translations, together with Dominique Mongardé. There are other people helping with the translations, who I never met before! I translate Rinpoche's seminars into French and I work on translations of Rinpoche's books for the *Claire Lumière Editions*.

By the way, Jean never met Rinpoche in person, and the first time will hopefully be in Barcelona this autumn. I consider all these different people's dedication and links are a wonderful expression of the lama's grace, aren't they?

### Interview by Ton Bisscheroux

Photos: courtesy of Nathalie Duchanois



# PRAYERS SUPPORTING PEOPLE

Sangha members pray for people in need on request of sangha members. When Ton Bisscheroux heard this he wanted to know more, and interviewed John Jackson, who is administrator of the *Garuda mailing list*.

## What is the *Garuda mailing list*?

The *Garuda mailing list* was originally for discussion of meditation practices in the Tibetan Bon tradition, but now it is mostly used for prayer requests. About 90%, or perhaps even more, of the messages that go to the list now are related to prayer requests. Three or four years ago there was a very vigorous discussion whether the list should be split in a two parts. A clear majority decided to keep it all combined together. The discussion ended with an agreement that there is no significant difference between talking about practice experiences and doing the request for prayer for someone who died, for healing, or whatever.

## When did this initiative start?

It started in 1995 after a retreat where His Eminence Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche gave a teaching on *Dream Yoga*. It was Mark Dhalby, the editor of the Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's *Dream Yoga* book, who suggested to give rise to the *Garuda mailing list*. We created a list for people who participated in that retreat to share their dreaming experiences and ask questions about the practice. It turned out that most people would rather read about other people's experiences than share their own. We never publicized anything about this mailing list. But when people attended retreats, mainly in Virginia, we talked about it, and anybody in the international sangha can participate. The group gradually grew over time, and now there are three hundred and fourteen members.

## How does it work?

People on the list have the option to receive the

messages in two different ways. One is what's called a 'daily digest list'. That means if ten messages are written to the list in one day they get one message including all ten messages within it. But if people prefer individualized message format, every time someone writes to the list, they immediately get that message.

Beside the messages, Dean Grantham keeps track of all the prayer requests and once every month he sends a summary of every prayer requests in one email. They just have their name, one line summary the reason why that person has requested the prayer. In this list there are also the date when the forty nine days will be completed for the Bardo prayers when someone died.

When you are a member of the list, and you want to write something – e.g. a request for a prayer – you send it to a specific e-mail address and it will be forwarded automatically to everybody on the list.

## What do you do when you get an e-mail request?

The initiative is meant to be entirely open. So it depends on what the request is, and it also depends on what your practice is. Usually people do not request a specific prayer or a specific practice. They just ask: "This person is having this difficulty, please keep them in your prayers." Most of the requests are for someone who died, as well as for physical healing or emotional healing. And

then it is up to anyone's own interpretation what to do.

## Do people also send a picture of the person they ask the prayer for?

People can do that, and a lot of people who do the practice feel that it helps them to hold somebody in their own mind, but it is not required. Often people don't have a picture, because it is somebody they know, like their neighbour. Only about 5% send a picture.



### Are there many requests?

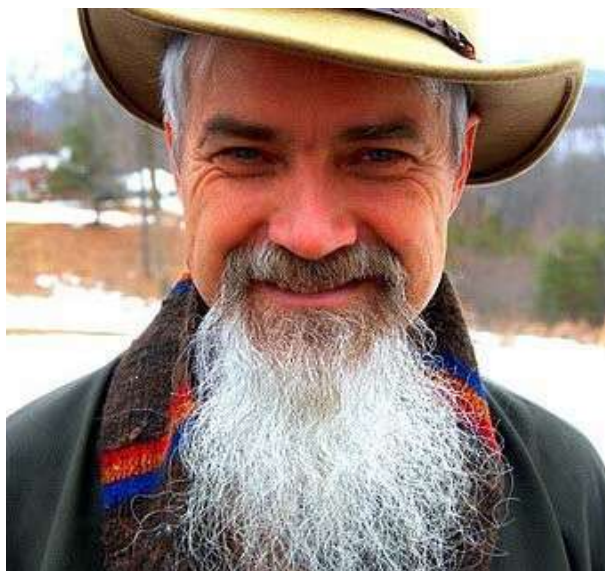
It varies from one per day to as many as sometimes ten or twelve per day, and the daily average is four or five messages. It seems to be really meeting peoples need. Otherwise it would not continue as long as seventeen years now. The nice thing about it is that it really builds a community across borders, because it is a very diverse international group.

### Can you tell something about the effects of the prayers?

Many times the people who have requested the prayers wrote back after some time and thanked the group. They told how much they appreciated it and how they could feel the very positive energy falling in their life from the rest of the group.

Several years ago there was an interesting research article published in a medical journal, *The Archives of Internal Medicine*. The researchers had nine hundred people with serious heart problems in a cardiology hospital. None of the patients were aware that they were being part of a study. The researchers divided half of these people into a group that received anonymous prayers from a group who had agreed to pray for the healing of these people. And the people who volunteered for this study came from all kind of different traditions. They were not given any instructions what to do, other than pray. And if they agreed they would do that every day for each person they were focusing on. And they tracked these nine hundred people over quite a long period of time. The patients involved had no idea that this was taking place. The researchers found that the people who received the prayers had improved more quickly, and had better outcomes than those who had not. The result was statistically significant. It was a rigorous study, because they knew there would be a lot of very close examinations of the results, and there would be a lot of criticism because it is not 'true medicine'. The authors of that paper said that they had no idea what the mechanism was. "All we're doing is reporting the effects, and we're not saying anything beyond that." This work has been published about six or seven years ago and a lot of people looked at it very closely and nobody found any faults with the method or the data.

The conclusion of this research — *A Randomized,*



### John Jackson

is a long-time student of the Bon tradition. He is the director of the Chamma Ling solitary retreat center in the mountains of Colorado. He is also one of the teachers of the Three Doors training program in Europe.

*Controlled Trial of the Effects of Remote, Intercessory Prayer on Outcomes in Patients Admitted to the Coronary Care Unit* — was: "...we found that supplementary, remote, blinded, intercessory prayer [praying for others, ed.] produced a measurable improvement in the medical outcomes of critically ill patients." This article is available at [archinte.jamanetwork.com](http://archinte.jamanetwork.com).

**I once experienced it, when a Buddhist monk prayed for me. From that time on I didn't experience any longer a daily slump, caused by a disease. I don't know how it works, and I can't rationalize it, but I experienced it.**

It is certainly a mystery, but learning to accept mystery is part of life.



**If our readers want to participate in the *Garuda* mailing list, can they contact you?**

If people want to become member of the list, they just sent an email to [red.garuda@gmail.com](mailto:red.garuda@gmail.com), and I'll put them on the list.

**Interview by Ton Bisscheroux**

Photos: courtesy of John Jackson and Oliver Wirtz





# THE FLOWER OF LISHU WILL BLOSSOM AND FLOURISH

Lishu Institute in Northern India is a retreat center for Western students to experience long-term, in-depth studies in the Bon tradition. There is also the opportunity to study or practice for shorter periods of time. We talked to Bob Anger, the Executive Director of Lishu Institute.

**Is the site now completely ready or is it still under construction?**

The long-term plans for Lishu Institute call for several more buildings so the site will see more construction in the years to come. One new three-story building on the Lishu campus is finished and it provides meditation practice space, classrooms as well as lodging for teachers and students. Lishu Institute will open in October 2013.

**Can you tell us something about the people who have already visited Lishu Institute?**

There have been several international students who have done an individual retreat at Lishu Institute. The feedback from those students has all been very positive, and especially appreciative for Geshe Thupten's support and guidance.

Geshe Thupten continues to be the cornerstone and lifeblood of Lishu Institute. He is a dear trusted friend, and colleague of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. He was the first Tibetan-Indian to become a Bon Geshe. He coordinated and supervised the construction of the new building and he is also a gracious and nurturing host for his guests.

**What are the costs for a student to do an individual retreat at Lishu Institute?**

The cost for an individual retreat at Lishu Institute is US \$15 per day, or US \$ 450 a month. Those who would like to attend Lishu Institute should contact me ([robert.anger@fox.com](mailto:robert.anger@fox.com)) and Geshe Thupten.

**The third international Lishu retreat, scheduled from October 13 through November 9, 2012 was cancelled because not enough people registered. Do you have an idea why?**

This is a difficult question to answer. The cancellation was a disappointment and surprise for us. It seems likely that the current global economic con-



ditions limit the financial resources available to students for travel and retreat. Another factor may be that other programs and teachings competed with this retreat.

**What are the plans for the near future?**

At this time the plans are to proceed with opening Lishu Institute to students beginning in October 2013. Students can study and practice there and get an intensive education in the Bon teachings. Rather than a three year or five year program the schedule of study will be in nine month segments with three month breaks between. When students have completed four of the nine month practice and study sessions they will receive a three year certificate of completion. Kurt Keutzer, a professor at the University of California at Berkeley is currently developing the Lishu Institute curriculum.

Rinpoche's vision is clear, open and flexible. He will celebrate the blossoming of the flower of Lishu Institute in which ever form it takes.

Students who are interested can find the latest information at: [www.lishu.org](http://www.lishu.org).

**Interview by Ton Bisscheroux**

Photo by Rob Wilson-Anger



# MONDAY

On Sunday I missed that secret door;  
that precious feeling wasn't there.  
A grey blank instead. Disconnected.  
On Monday it came back though.  
I woke up with it.  
I can't say what it is exactly.



It's like treasuring words of love  
someone told you, in your heart,  
but actually nobody did.  
It tastes like a promise, but of what?  
It counts only now, but you are  
not interested in the future anyway.  
Lightness of being, given for granted.  
You look around and you can't get upset.  
You just can't.

*Jitka Polanská*



# A BUSY BEE

Busy as a bee  
Happy and unfree  
No attention for poor me  
Only the branches of a tree  
Flying fled and flee  
Yes, my very busy bee  
The queen is controlling me  
Quickly, hurry up you little bee  
Bring every lovely honey to me  
Even your idea and everything you see  
Will be gathered for me



Busy as a bee  
Happy and unfree  
No attention for poor me  
Swinging, singing, thinking as a bee  
No matter how hard it can be  
Hurrying, hurrying no time to be free  
The queen will be dying at me  
Don't go with strangers little bee  
Dying, dying you will see  
Desperate in the jungle I guarantee  
Just fly, fly for me

This little bee  
a lost minute on a tree  
heard the sun on her flee  
sorrows fell into the sea  
rest came into this little bee  
left to be a VIP  
a deep sight made her see  
oh my little bee  
there is no have to flee  
can offer from your honey tree  
feeling inside this sunny-me



***Tonny Maas***

Photos by Hania Berdys  
[www.gardensafari.net](http://www.gardensafari.net)



## TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE'S CLOUD

Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche always looks for modern ways to reach people, and so he uses the internet Cloud. Detailed information on his teachings and insights on Bon Buddhism is easily available through the internet. Access to some of this information does not even require user registration or user fees. A summary of some useful internet resources to Rinpoche's teachings is provided here.

### Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's cyber-home

The main website to access Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's teachings is the Ligmincha Institute's homepage [www.ligmincha.org](http://www.ligmincha.org). Rinpoche's upcoming teaching schedule is available through this site, including details about his live webcasts. The site is frequently updated, for example with a new video series from the twentieth annual Ligmincha retreat on integrating practice into everyday life. For Europe we have [www.ligmincha.eu](http://www.ligmincha.eu). From that website you can link to all the European national websites. In the near future one website for the worldwide sangha will come.

### Live webcasts with Q&A sessions and recordings

Information about how and when to access the live teachings and meditations is provided on [www.ligmincha.org/retreats/live-webcast.html](http://www.ligmincha.org/retreats/live-webcast.html). Some webcasts are of public talks, while others are broadcast from retreats. During some webcasts, participants are invited to submit questions — an incredible opportunity for practitioners from throughout the world to interact with Rinpoche. From this page, visitors can also find links to previously recorded webcasts on a range of topics, including *Inner Creativity* and *Transcending Fear*.

### Register for online classes with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

In addition to offering many seminars and classes throughout the world, Rinpoche also makes his teachings available through online classes. For example, a four week online *Dream Yoga* class is scheduled for September 15 — October 14 2012. Information about this and other upcoming online classes can be found at [www.glidewing.com/twr/soundhealing\\_rinpoche.html](http://www.glidewing.com/twr/soundhealing_rinpoche.html).

New classes are being developed and these include: *Foundations of the Path*, *The Causal Vehicle*, *Sutra: Path of Virtue*, *Tantra: Path of Transformation*, and *Dzogchen: Path of Clear*

The screenshot shows the Ligmincha Institute website. At the top left is a portrait of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. To his right is a quote: "The heart of the spiritual path is the longing to know and to be your true and authentic self." followed by his name, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Below this are four red buttons: "GlideWing Home", "Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche", "Online Workshops", and "Workshop Registration". Underneath these buttons is the heading "About Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche". On the left side, there is a vertical menu with blue buttons for: "About Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche", "Awakening the Sacred Body", "Tibetan Sound Healing", "Tibetan Dream Yoga", "Tibetan Meditation", "Finding Refuge Within", and "Ligmincha Institute". On the right side, there is a video player showing Rinpoche in a yoga pose, with the title "The Tibetan Yogas of Breath and Movement" below it.







*Light.* The internet is a convenient way to stay updated and to receive information about registering for these classes as they become available.

### More teachings on video

The Ligmincha Institute maintains a channel on YouTube, which is regularly updated with new videos, primarily from Rinpoche's teachings: [www.youtube.com/user/ligmincha](http://www.youtube.com/user/ligmincha). For example, a seventy-five minute video on the *Five Element Practice* was added in May. Currently, eighty videos are available for public viewing. A number of themes are presented, including an eight part series with Rinpoche's explanation of the Dzogchen *Heart Teachings* by Dawa Gyaltzen, to help guide practitioners to the True Nature of the Mind.

Other individuals and groups, including sanghas, have also uploaded videos of Rinpoche's teachings on YouTube. Viewers have the option of subscribing to favourite channels, to receive email updates when new videos are added.

### e-Newsletters and e-Magazines

*The Voice of Clear Light*, a bimonthly and free e-publication from the Ligmincha Institute is a primary source for information and updates of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's teachings and schedule. It also includes interviews with other Bon masters and news from the worldwide sangha. Subscriptions can be easily made at the [www.ligmincha.org](http://www.ligmincha.org) website.

Other e-newsletters and e-zines are available online or through subscription from the different institutes, centers and sanghas founded by or associated with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. For example, the Chamma Ling newsletter, [www.chammaling.org](http://www.chammaling.org), is available online or through subscription.

### Avatars in the social network

Although Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche does not have a public personal website, he does maintain a personal Facebook page. His avatar or online representation shows a photo of Rinpoche with

his young son, and both are smiling and beaming. You can find this page, with his personal posts, comments, and photos as well as official updates from a senior student, at [www.facebook.com/tenzinwangyalrinpoche](https://www.facebook.com/tenzinwangyalrinpoche). During his July internet teaching, Rinpoche invited everyone to become his friend on Facebook.



The Ligmincha Institute as well as related groups (e.g. Ligmincha Texas, Chamma Ling Colorado, Ligmincha Europe, to name a few of the pages) also share updates through Facebook.

### The Three Doors

The Three Doors is an educational organization developed in response to the desire of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche to open up the gift of Bon Buddhist practices to the secular world. In Europe the first group started in 2011. If you want to learn more about it visit [www.the3doors.org](http://www.the3doors.org).

### Lishu Institute

If you want to go for a longer retreat and you want to study Bon intensively, Lishu Institute in India is a place where you can go: [www.lishu.org](http://www.lishu.org).

### Do you have suggestions?

Web resources can be useful for Bon practitioners of all levels. And, if you know of or find other good sources for information on Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's teachings, consider tweeting, digging, or posting — maybe even on the Ligmincha Europe Facebook page — to spread word about these valuable online resources.

**Text by Patricia Char**



# HEART ESSENCE OF THE KHANDRO

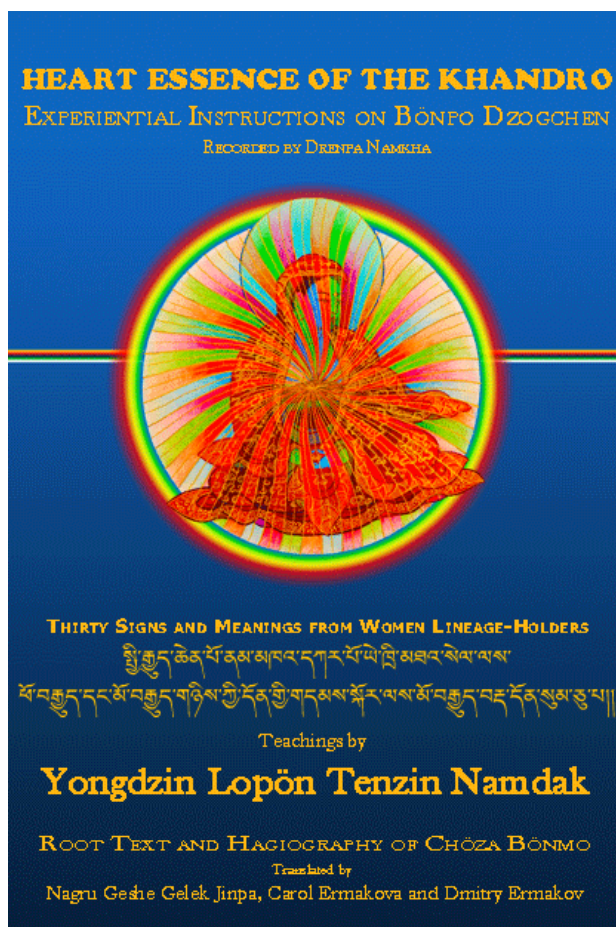
Invitations to strengthen one's personal practice come in many forms. The recently published book *Heart Essence of the Khandro: Experiential Instructions on Bonpo Dzogchen* is one such invitation — elucidating wisdom commentary by H.E. Yongdzin Lopon Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche on the teachings, but also teachings from the ancient female lineage holders of Bonpo Dzogchen, the Yetri Thasel Mogyud.

This is a lineage of strong women, each with a practice pure enough to achieve Buddhahood in a single lifetime. Each woman shared the essence of her experience with a single female disciple, continuing the lineage. Thirty of their stories, as well as their particular lessons and signs on their journeys to the rainbow body, are shared in this book.

That these teachings are now available is invaluable. This information is in an English publication for the first time. It is also a tribute to the effort by Bon practitioners over so many generations to save these teachings from being burned, tossed into rivers, or simply lost and forgotten. The section on Chöza Bönmo's life, a Tibetan Mogyud lineage holder in the eighth century, compiled by Nagru Geshe Gelek Jinpa, describes some of the hardships faced by those carrying on the Bon traditions.

Such cultural oppression has contributed to the dearth of existing information about the Mogyud Khandro. Few texts have survived and thangkas of these Khandro are rare. To remedy this, a new thangka was specially commissioned and, after much research, created – based on descriptions of the Khandro from various texts. The thangka is 'unveiled' in this book and its compelling images help modern day practitioners further their connections to the heart teachings from the Mogyud lineage.

The book includes a summary of the Dzogchen teachings from the male and female lineages of the Yetri Thasel, with commentary by Yongdzin Lopon Tenzin Namdak. The Tibetan text and translation from some of the root teachings and



prayers are also presented.

Regardless of level or gender, any practitioner open to the heart teachings of the Khandro can benefit from this experiential and beautiful book.

Here we share the teachings of Namkha Nyima Wödenma, on page 90, in the book:

*“Namkha Nyima Wödenma transmitted the teachings to Nyima Tongkhyabma.*

*The symbol is the three miraculous mirrors one after the other.*

*The meaning is as follows:*

*When you look back towards a thought, nothing remains – no trace, nothing. Leave it as it is. Don't think anything about what happens after thoughts disappear. Remaining in this way is called 'keeping the Presence of Emptiness.' But if you are thinking that this Nature is empty, that means you are kept in the prison of emptiness.*







Namkha Nyima Wödenma

*If, instead of liberating your thought completely and allowing it to disappear, you are still thinking something; however subtle, such as: 'Nature is like this' or 'Nature is like that'; then this is like being unable to purify some sickness which you have inside your heart or some other inner organ. That is the example. You can discover this through the Shining Sun of Wisdom. No thoughts can disturb Wisdom, so no matter what kind of thoughts arise, just leave them. Don't follow them, don't try to stop them. If you don't do this, they will disturb your wisdom.*

*Don't think that followers of Dzogchen count the Ten Bhumis and the Five Paths, trying to climb up to Buddhahood using this system. If you do this, your Awareness Wisdom will set like the setting sun.*

*All kinds of emotions and defilements come, stay a while and disappear, and so they are something like a helper for recognizing the Nature. If you think that they are disturbances and judge them as something not good, then that means you have to follow evil again, that you have fallen down from the very narrow path.*

*In other words, you shouldn't try to recognize any kind of emotions or thoughts which arise. Just let them come. Don't follow them, don't try to stop them, nothing. You yourself try to remain as stably as possible in the Nature."*

#### **Text by Patricia Char**

Photos are from the book, reprinted with the kind permission of the editors



# DISCOVERING THE TRUE NATURE OF MIND

In July 2012 during the European summer retreat in Buchenau Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche teaches from the Pith Realizations of the Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyud Masters. Rinpoche talked about one of these Masters, Dawa Gyaltsen, in *Shambhala Sun* in May 2004. Here we reprint the article, which is published at the website: [shambhalasun.com](http://shambhalasun.com)

“Geshe Tenzin Wangyal teaches us a five-stage Dzogchen meditation that begins with contemplating our worst enemy and culminates in the discovery that mind is empty, clear and blissful.

*Vision is mind.  
Mind is empty.  
Emptiness is clear light.  
Clear light is union.  
Union is great bliss.*

This is the heart instruction of Dawa Gyaltsen, a Bon meditation master who lived in the eighth century. Bon is the native, pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet, which has incorporated many Buddhist elements. This teaching is a direct introduction to the nature of mind and is not elaborate with ritual. The pith instructions of these masters – their heart advice to their students – are often only a few lines, but these few lines can guide the fortunate practitioner to recognizing his or her own true nature as Buddha.

## Vision is mind

How do we work with Dawa Gyaltsen's instruction, which begins, “Vision is mind”? Vision includes everything we perceive, but I suggest that you use what bothers you as an entrance to this practice. Do you have a famous person in your life? The famous person is the one who seems to be born to create a problem for you, as if that were his or her number-one mission in life.

Sometimes we feel there are people like that. Such people can make trouble for you not only with their presence, but with one single postcard sent to you. When you see the postcard with their handwriting on it, you are immediately disturbed.

So we begin our meditation practice with this famous person as our starting point. Create a protected environment and sit in a comfortable upright position. Now invite the image of your famous person to come into your awareness. They always come anyway, but this time you are inviting them so that you can look more deeply into this experience. What exactly is this famous person composed of? See the image of the person, the character of this person who bothers you so much. Sense the energetic or emotional presence of this person. When your famous person was born, he or she did not show any physical signs or marks of what you now see. And not all people share your view of this person. What you perceive is your mind, your karmic vision, which is more karma than vision.

So in this moment, instead of looking out and focusing on that person, look inward. Step back and let the experience come in. Do not step forward but step backwards. Don't go to your office and make phone calls and send emails. Just sit and close your eyes and reflect on this person, and experience what you're experiencing at this very moment. This is your vision. It is very much in you, in your mind. That famous person is now an image or a felt

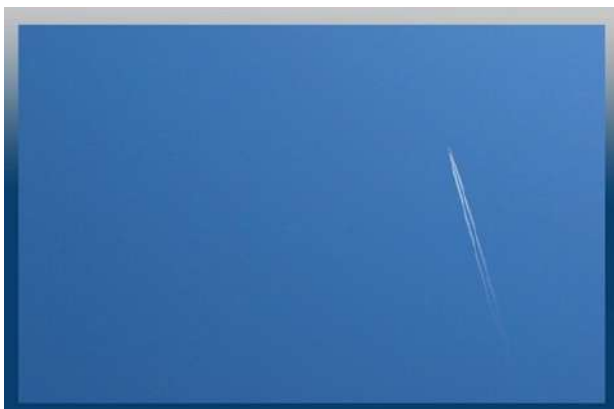
sense. Perhaps you have a sense of being contracted, closed or agitated in the presence of this person; feel this fully, not simply with your intellect. Sit with the image of your famous person, and with the resulting feelings and sensations, until you recognize that this experience is in you, and you conclude, “Vision is mind.”





## Mind is empty

The next question is, “What is this mind?” Look for your mind. Look from the top of your head to the soles of your feet. Can you find anything solid? Can you find any permanent color, shape or form that you can call your mind? If you look directly, you come to the conclusion that your mind is empty. Some people come to this conclusion very quickly; for others it requires an exhausting search to discover this clear awareness. But this is what mind is. You can obviously pollute that clarity in any given moment, but by continuing to look directly, you can discover that mind itself is just clear. Clear means empty. ‘Empty’ is a philosophical term, but as experience it is clear and open.



So what began as the famous person is now clear and open. If this is not your experience, you are grasping the image and holding on to the experience in some way. Just be. Relax into the experience. Simply be. Mind is empty. When we arrive at the experience of emptiness and vastness through the doorway of the famous person, it is possible to have quite a strong experience of emptiness.

## Emptiness is clear light

Our next question is, “What is this emptiness?” Sometimes emptiness is scary to the point where someone may prefer even their famous person to this nothing where one experiences the absence of self. But this experience of open space is essential. It clears the identity that creates the famous person. In order to clear the obstacle of the famous person, you have to clear the identity that creates that famous person. There is an expression, “The sword of wisdom cuts both ways.” Don't be scared by this. Remember:

“Emptiness is clear light.” It has light. It is possible to feel the light in the absence of the stuff.

Usually we accumulate a lot of stuff in life. Then we have a big yard sale in order to get rid of that stuff. For a moment we might feel “Ahhh . . .” – a sense of relief at getting rid of our old stuff – but soon we are excited again about all the new stuff we can accumulate to decorate and fill the open space. In your meditation, when things clear, just be with this. Don't focus on the absence of the stuff, but discover the presence of the light in that space. It's there. I'm not saying it's easy to recognize and connect with the light – clearly it will depend on how much you are caught up with appearances and with the famous person. I'm not talking about the clear appearance of the famous



person; I'm speaking of the clear appearance of the space.

So when you look at appearance and discover it is mind, and then discover that mind is empty, clear light emerges. When you look for the mind, you don't find the mind. When you don't find anything, the Dzogchen instruction is to “abide without distraction in that which has not been elaborated.” What has not been elaborated is that space, that openness. So you look for mind; you don't find anything. What you don't find is pure space which is not elaborated. So don't do anything. Don't change anything. Just allow. When you abide in that space without changing anything, what is clear light. The experience or knowledge of emptiness is clear light. It is awareness.

Clear light is the experience of vast emptiness. The reason you have a famous person in the first place is that you experience yourself as separated from the experience of the vast, open space. Not recognizing the vast space, not being familiar with



it, you experience visions. Not recognizing the visions as mind, you see them as solid and separate and out there – and not only out there, but disturbing you and creating all kinds of hassles for you that you have to deal with.

Perhaps you say, “Well, I am very clear about the direction in my life.” Here, you are clear about something. The clarity Dawa Gyaltsen points to is not clear *about* something; it is clear in the sense of being. You experience your essence, your existence, your being as clear. That clarity is the best. Through experiencing that clarity, you overcome self-doubt.

open *is* that clarity. The two are inseparable. Recognizing this is called union.

This means that our experiences do not affect our relation to openness. It is usually the case that experiences affect our connection to openness because immediately we get excited and attached. Then we grasp, or we become agitated, conflicted and disturbed. When that doesn't happen, when our experience spontaneously arises and does not obscure us, that is union: the inseparable quality of clear and light. You are free; you are connected. You are connected; you are free.



### Clear light is union

From this experience of vast emptiness we say, “Clear light is union.” The space and the light cannot be separated. *Clear* refers to space, and *light* refers to awareness; awareness and space are inseparable. There is no separation between clear presence and space, between awareness and emptiness.

We have a lot of notions of union: yin and yang, male and female, wisdom and compassion. When you pay close attention to the experience of emptiness, you experience clarity. If you try to look for clarity, you cannot find it – it becomes emptiness. If you don't find it, and you abide there, it becomes clear. The experiences of clarity and emptiness are union in the sense that they are not separate. Clarity is the experience of openness. If you don't have the experience of openness, you cannot be clear. What is clear *is* that openness, the emptiness. What is empty and

This combination experience, whether in deep meditation or in life, is rare. Often, if you are ‘free,’ that means you are disconnected. So this sense of union is important. Having the ability to do something and the ability to feel free, having the ability to be with somebody and still feel a sense of freedom, is so important. That is what is meant by “clear light is union.”

### Union is great bliss

If you recognize and experience this inseparable quality, then you can experience bliss. Why is bliss experienced? Because that solid obstacle to being deeply connected with yourself has disappeared. You can have a strong experience of bliss because you have released something. Bliss spontaneously comes because there's nothing that obscures you or separates you from your essence. You have a feeling that everything is complete just as it is. So you begin with the famous person, and you end up with bliss. What more could you ask for?





This is the basis of the whole Dzogchen philosophy in a few lines. The famous person you project is great bliss, but you must understand this as your mind, and that very mind as empty. From there, emptiness is clear light, clear light is union, union is great bliss. You can experience this in an instant. The moment you see the famous person, you can instantly see light. But sometimes we have to go through a longer process to see this. It is a question of ability. So this progression, this process, is our practice. It takes time. But there is a clear map.

guides you directly into the essence, to the root of yourself. It always amazes me when people fight with one another and say, “Oh, that terrible person. We have been good friends for a long time and I always thought that person was so honest. It took me a long time to discover that that person is really terrible.” So your conclusion is that that person is terrible. Have you heard people say things like that? This is not really a healthy solution. It's like going to therapy and realizing, “My dad was really a bad guy. Now I feel much better.” Of course, you might realize some



These five principles can be applied in daily practice. You can do this practice anyplace, in any given moment, and especially when the famous person is bothering you. When a difficult circumstance arises, of course you could just live with it, or you could try to find one of many solutions. But as a Dzogchen practitioner, this practice of the Fivefold Teachings is what you do. Perhaps you lost a business deal and you feel bad. What does ‘lost’ really mean? You look at that; that is vision. Whether fear-based vision or greed vision, you look directly at that experience. Be with that experience. Then you realize it is mind, and you look at your mind and discover that mind is clear – just clear. Even when we have a lot of problems, the essence of mind is always clear. It is always clear. There is always the possibility to connect with the essence of mind rather than the confusion aspect of it.

### How we conclude

I love this practice very much. On the one hand, it is so practical. It gives you a tool to deal with a very specific situation. On the other hand, it

difficult aspect of your situation, but realizing that is not the conclusion. You need to conclude into the essence, conclude into the root, to come to the place in yourself where you realize your mind is clear and blissful and the image that was bothering you has finally dissolved through your meditation.

What is the conclusion here? The conclusion is bliss. “Union is great bliss.” What better conclusion would you want than that? And it will be like that if you open your mind to learn, trust with your heart, and pray. It's really important to pray, and to pray for a deep experience. Because if what you think is not that deep, the result won't be that deep either. Through prayer, you open your heart and receive the blessings of effortlessness. The quality of effortlessness is a quality of heart, and devotion and prayer open the heart. So praying is wonderful. It sets up the intention and puts you in the right direction, so when you do the practice of meditation – of directly looking and being with your experience – it will work.



I encourage you to practice this heart advice of Dawa Gyaltsen, to look directly into what is disturbing you and discover the nature of your mind. Through the profound simplicity of these five lines, not only can you heal your day-to-day life and make it lighter and more pleasant, but you can recognize and connect with your innermost essence, the nature of your mind as Buddha.

### Questions and Answers

**Question:** In terms of the experience of “vision is mind,” it seems that our grasping mind, our small mind, is different from the natural state of mind which is clear light. I don't know how to bridge the gap between the grasping mind and emptiness, because the grasping mind doesn't seem empty.

**Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche:** It doesn't seem empty, but it is. If you look at the ocean you might find it calm and peaceful, or with small ripples, or bigger ripples, or small waves, or bigger waves. All these appearances – from calm to ripples to waves – have the quality of wetness. All are water in every appearance. The appearance of the ocean can never be anything other than water, no matter how terrible or peaceful the ocean appears. In the same way, no matter what vision appears, it is always empty. The essence is always there. The only question is, “Am I able to see it or not?”

**Question:** It is wonderful when the famous person dissolves, but I still have an obligation to him or her, a responsibility. He or she is my child. So the ‘famous person’ situation may keep recurring. Do I keep dissolving in the same way?

**Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche:** Sure. The famous person can still be famous without disturbing you as much. The reason we call him or her ‘famous’ is that they really bother you. Do they really need to bother you? No. He or she can be as they are or they can be different, but they don't have to bother you. We have expectations that things need to be a certain way. Do they really have to be a certain way? No.

Let's take a situation in which I'm trying to help my child. How am I trying to help? I want him to go to school and study well. So what's the

problem? Well, the child has some difficulty learning. O.K. So I'm trying to do the best I can under the circumstances. If I'm doing that, then what am I worrying about? Some people learn faster, some learn slower. Right?

But the problem is not about the child learning too slowly; it's that I can't accept the situation. It's not about the child; it's about me. I have some fixed idea about what would be good for my child. This is usually the case. I think, “What I want is good for you.” The child probably doesn't agree. He might be interested in a completely different thing than I am. But I feel like I'm the boss, and of course I am: I have a moral responsibility and so on. But there is someplace where it is just fine. I need to realize that.

**Question:** Is it just the lack of practice of recognizing that “vision is mind” that makes me feel there is a hook that draws me back to, “Yeah, but that famous person really is mean”?

**Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche:** I am not suggesting that this is the only way to deal with life. This is one of the Dzogchen ways. It is not a samsaric way, and sometimes we have to deal in a samsaric way. If somebody is trying to cheat me, of course I don't like that. If somebody asks me for something, I don't mind giving. But if somebody is taking something from me, then I don't want to give. If that aspect of me seems to be who I really am in this moment, then I will fight or do whatever needs to be done. It's not a question of one approach being more valid than another. Who I am and what realization I have determines how skillfully I am able to work. In the end, the real sense of victory is the practice. But in the conventional sense, we do whatever we have to do. We naturally defend and we fight. Sometimes, you defend, you fight, and you still lose. Then maybe you don't have any other choice but to see it as emptiness! That is a forceful way of discovering emptiness.”

**Text by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche**  
Photos by Sarah Edgehill





# TENZIN WANGYAL RINPOCHE'S 2012 EUROPEAN SEMINARS AND ON-LINE TEACHINGS

## August

31 - 2 September	Russia	Moscow	The Chöd Practice
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## September

6	France	Paris	Evening talk: Awakening the Sacred Body
7 - 9	Finland	Helsinki	Tibetan Sound Healing
12	Germany	Saarbrücken	Awakening the Sacred Body
14 - 16	Germany	Frankfurt	Awakening the Sacred Body

## October

16 - 21	Austria	Maria Alm	The Experiential Transmission, Part 3
26 - 28	Spain	Barcelona	Awakening the Luminous Mind

## LIVE INTERNET TEACHINGS

### October

10	01.00 – 02.30 CET (CET = Central European Time)	To be announced
13	21.00 – 22.30 CET	Awakening the Luminous Mind

### December

30	21.00 – 22.30 CET	The Chöd Practice
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## ONLINE WORKSHOPS

07/08 till 21/08	3-Lesson Series on Tuesdays	Awakening the Luminous Mind
15/09 till 14/10	Four-week interactive online course	Dream Yoga
10/11 till 02/12	Interactive online course	Tibetan Sound Healing

You can find more information about the teachings and workshops on the websites: [www.ligmincha.org](http://www.ligmincha.org), [www.ligmincha.eu](http://www.ligmincha.eu), [www.glidewing.com](http://www.glidewing.com) and [www.hayhouse.com](http://www.hayhouse.com).

