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4-21-1982

## Arts and Humanities: Correspondence (1982): Memorandum 02

Peter Galbraith

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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

EDWARD G. SANDERS, STAFF DIRECTOR  
GERYLD B. CHRISTIANSON, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

April 21, 1982

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Pell ✓

THROUGH: Jerry Christianson ✓

FROM: Peter Galbraith *PG 617 1MM*  
*WYV*

SUBJECT: Request for a Letter of Support of Nalanda Foundation Grant Proposal to Make a Film on The Life of Gyalwa Karmapa

The Nalanda Foundation is submitting a proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities to make a film on the life and cremation of Gyalwa Karmapa of the Kagyu Order and would like a letter of support from you. The amount of the proposal is \$102,195.

I attach the material submitted to me by the Nalanda Foundation including the proposal and a letter of welcome from you at the time of the Karmapa's visit to the U.S. (You also hosted a luncheon for him.)

Do you wish to send a letter?

Attachments:  
As stated.

*Peter Galbraith*  
*4-7523*

*to*  
*✓ Aug '82 Council*

*yes*  
*pg ask*  
*AC to draft*  
*(AC is Sonny Craig*  
*on my fd Gyalwa-matter*  
*staff)*

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

July 1, 1980

His Holiness  
The Gyalwa Karmapa

Your Holiness:

I would like to welcome you to the United States and extend my personal best wishes for a successful visit to my country.

The return of Your Holiness to the United States is an act of affirmation of the growing development of the Buddhist tradition in America. Your name and being are embodiments of the qualities of eternal truth, justice and humility which are revered by all people who cherish spiritual values.

With real regard and respect.

Ever sincerely,



Claiborne Pell

THE LION'S ROAR

## THE KARMAPA

Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, the sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa, died on November 5th, 1981. As head of the Kagyu Order of Tibetan Buddhism, the Karmapa was the living embodiment of the accumulated spiritual energy of the Karmapa tulkus, a line of incarnate lamas which started in the twelfth century.

The Tibetan Buddhist teaching regarding tulkus states that, although the moment of enlightenment brings release from the forces that lead to rebirth, an enlightened intelligence which transcends ego may decide to continue to work on earth, for the benefit of all sentient beings. This enlightened intelligence may take birth over a long period of time through a succession of human individuals. The Gyalwa Karmapa was such a manifestation.

The Nalanda Foundation, in association with Centre Productions, intends to produce a 55 minute, 16mm, film documentary on the life of Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, the line of Karmapas, and the tulku tradition. Much of the filming will take place at Rumtek monastery in Sikkim, where for the next two months there will be a large gathering of the lamas of the Kagyu lineage and a series of ritual ceremonies held in anticipation of and in supplication for the Karmapa's immediate rebirth.

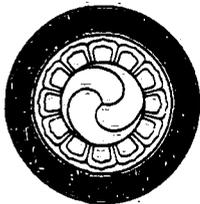
Other incarnate lamas present at Rumtek at this time will include the Sharmapa, whose lineage has historically assumed the responsibility of regent after a Karmapa's death, Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche, Situ Rinpoche and Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche. These and other important lamas will be featured in the film along with the rituals that they will be performing at this unique gathering.

The sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa was born in 1924 and discovered through a letter of prediction that was left by his predecessor. The film will explore the stories of his childhood, the experiences of his youth and training and the task that he undertook in sustaining the meditative legacy of the Kagyu Order after the dissolution of the society that had supported it for centuries. In particular the film will look at the initiative taken by Rangjung Rigpe Dorje in bringing the wisdom of his lineage to the West on his three visits to Europe and the United States, all of which have been filmed by the Nalanda Foundation and Centre Productions.

Through research into all available film footage and through intensive filming in Sikkim, the makers of this film will portray the rich legacy of the Kagyu Order and the manifestations of this legacy in its lines of tulkus and the ritual and everyday life of its teachers and students. The film will be a valuable exploration of cultural anthropology and a fitting portrait of a man of supreme wisdom and compassion, Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, who touched deeply the lives of those who encountered him.

THE LION'S ROAR  
A Proposal Summary

©1982, Centre Productions, Inc.



# NALANDA FOUNDATION

A Non-Profit Educational Corporation

Dear Friends,

Please find enclosed a brief proposal for our film on His Holiness the XVth Gyalwa Karmapa and on the legacy of the Kagyu Order of Tibetan Buddhism. We are very excited about the project, and in particular about the filming that we did in Sikkim in December. The lamas at Rumtek Monastery were completely generous in extending their cooperation for the film and we feel that our footage is absolutely unique.

To date the funds for the filming have been provided by the Nalanda Foundation, Centre Productions and a number of interested individuals who have made us loans and donations. At this point our immediate need is to raise the money to print and process almost ten hours of film footage that was shot in Sikkim. The cost of this will be \$10,000. In the event that this funding has been obtained before receipt of your gift, we need to raise a similar amount to have much of the footage transferred to video-tape before we begin editing the film. The reason for this is that we feel the footage, which includes interviews with eleven high lamas and the ceremonies surrounding His Holiness' Cremation, is of great archival and educational importance in themselves and we would like to preserve them and make them available intact.

Once funding for the printing and processing of the film footage is secured, Centre Productions will be editing the 55-minute film at its own facility here in Boulder. We will be looking for further funding for acquisition and duplication of further footage of His Holiness, animation of still photographs of artwork that we shot at Rumtek, and for final post-production.

The film itself is scheduled for completion in October of 1982.

I would like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to present our proposal. Please contact me if you are prepared to make a donation to this effort or have any further questions.

Yours sincerely,

Kenneth H. Green  
Vice President  
Executive Producer, Centre Productions

## CENTRE PRODUCTIONS INC.

1327 Spruce, Suite #3  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

303/444-1166

### THE LION'S ROAR

#### A Proposal Summary

Today's technological society threatens to significantly change or even destroy certain ancient religions and cultural traditions. Important aspects of these traditions could easily be lost unless preserved for future generations through documentation--especially on film.

Each of the four orders of Tibetan Buddhism (Kagyu, Gelug, Sakya and Nyingma) has a spiritual leader. In Tibetan society the Karmapa, head of the Kagyu Order, and the Dalai Lama, head of the Gelug Order, are held in the highest esteem. Both represent the embodiment of compassion.

Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, the Sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa, died on November 5, 1981. His death has become the occasion for the documentation of a religious tradition that started in the twelfth century. The Sixteenth Karmapa was the living embodiment of an unbroken line of incarnate lamas, or tulkus. He was born in 1924 and, like previous Karmapas, was discovered through a letter of prediction left by his predecessor that described the section of Tibet, the date and even the house in which he could be found.

The Nalanda Foundation and Centre Productions, Inc., both located in Boulder, Colorado, are co-sponsoring a 55-minute, 16mm, color film documentary on the life, death and cremation of the Sixteenth Karmapa. This will be the first film documentary of the ceremonies surrounding the death of a Karmapa. Due to the uncertain political climate of Sikkim, the home of the Sixteenth Karmapa, this may be the last time these ceremonies are performed in the complete cultural and religious context of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.

Through research into all available film footage and through intensive filming in Sikkim at Rumtek Monastery, the makers of the film will portray the rich legacy of the Kagyu Order of Tibetan Buddhism. In addition the film will convey an understanding of the cultural milieu of Tibetan Buddhism, past and present.

The film will explore how the Sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa, Rigpe Dorje, sustained the contemplative tradition of the Kagyu Order after he left Tibet in 1959. It will examine Rigpe Dorje's childhood and youth and the rigorous training

of the Karmapas. The film will also show how Rigpe Dorje brought this tradition to the West during his three visits to Europe and the United States, all of which were filmed by the Nalanda Foundation and Centre Productions.

A film crew from Centre Productions and Nalanda Foundation spent three weeks filming intensively at Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim in December 1981. The filming took place at the invitation of the high lamas of the monastery who extended their full cooperation and placed few restrictions on what could be covered in the film.

Sequences that were filmed include scenes of the cultural setting in Sikkim and of the Tibetan people resident in Rumtek village, scenes of monastery life, including the training of young monks and, in particular, of the ceremonies that were held prior to the cremation of the Karmapa. Many interviews with high lamas on the subject of Buddhism, the tulku tradition, the question of death and rebirth and the place of religion in the world were also filmed.

Lamas that were interviewed include Shamar Rinpoche, T'ai Situ, Rinpoche, Jamgön Kongtrul, Rinpoche, and Gyalsab Rinpoche, all of whom were students of the Karmapa and will act as Regents of the Kagyu Lineage until the Seventeenth Gyalwa Karmapa is recognized, enthroned and has reached his maturity. Other tulkus interviewed include Kalu Rinpoche and Dingo Khyentse, Rinpoche, elders of the tradition, Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche, and young tulkus still in their teens such as Punlap Rinpoche and Sangye Nyenpa, Rinpoche, the latter being of Western birth.

The filming culminated in the extraordinary ceremony of the cremation of the body of His Holiness, the Sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa. Witnessed by a crowd of over ten thousand people who had come from all over the world, the cremation epitomised the Buddhist belief in impermanence--that even the greatest treasures are subject to inevitable decay. At the same time it demonstrated the power of the Karmapa tradition which is one of absolute continuity. As a great lama dies, he has already passed on his teaching to his students who will in turn recognize and train him in his next incarnation. Thus the tradition of the Kagyu Order has remained alive.

The film promises to be a bold and naked presentation of the Tibetan Buddhist view of death as a natural continuation of life. James Coburn, noted American actor, will narrate the film and negotiations are now in progress with several television networks for its broadcast. The documentary will be made available internationally to interested organizations, libraries, museums and educational institutions.

## PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

Kenneth Green is the executive producer of the film. Mr. Green is the President of Centre Productions and a Director of the Nalanda Foundation, the film's sponsor.

Mark Elliott will direct and edit the film. A professional filmmaker for eleven years, Mr. Elliott's credits include directing and editing the award-winning films Tantra of Gyuto and Crow Dog's Paradise. He has produced, directed, or edited more than thirty films, and is currently staff director and editor for Centre Productions.

Baird Bryant will be the cinematographer. A professional since 1956, Mr. Bryant has shot numerous documentary and feature films including the Academy Award nominee The Divided Trail. He directed and shot the National Geographic television special Wild River, and received the Golden Lion award at the Cannes Film Festival.

Paul Joe Vest will be producer and scriptwriter for the film. Mr. Vest joined Centre Productions in 1978 and is responsible for scriptwriting and organizing the company's film distribution. Previously, he was Vice-President for Curriculum Development at Clearvue, Inc., in Chicago, Illinois.

James Hoagland will be the second cameraman for the film. Mr. Hoagland studied film at Columbia College and is staff cinematographer for Centre Productions. His credits include cinematographer for Crow Dog's Paradise and second camera on Discovering Elegance as well as numerous television commercials and industrial films.

Marv Ross will be the soundman for the film. Mr. Ross has been responsible for the sound on all Centre Productions films and filmstrips.

## CENTRE PRODUCTIONS, INC.

Centre Productions was incorporated in the fall of 1976 by a group of independent filmmakers dedicated to exploring social and cultural issues through media. Founding members Kenneth Green, Mark Elliott, Victress Hitchcock, James Hoagland, and Marv Ross made a commitment to develop a style of filmmaking that would treat subjects, largely ignored by the mass media, with humor, gentleness, and dignity. This approach does not force a judgment or conclusion. It evokes a response that allows the world of the films to come alive to their viewers, creating a greater awareness of important, though sometimes neglected, issues.

In addition to producing its own films and filmstrips, Centre also has acted as a service facility, making documentaries, television commercials, and industrial films for a variety of producers. More recently, the company has begun to distribute its own films directly, as well as those of other filmmakers who complement Centre's overall philosophy.

Centre now has a catalogue of eight films and seven filmstrips which is mass mailed throughout the United States to high schools, colleges, public libraries, hospitals, and special interest groups. In addition, the company's film productions have been shown on television in the United States and abroad, and are subdistributed in Canada, Europe, Japan, and Australia.

Awards won by Centre's productions include Silver and Bronze Medals at the International Film and Television Festival in New York, a Red Ribbon at the American Film Festival, and a Gold CINDY.

PRELIMINARY POST-PRODUCTION BUDGET

1. EDITING COSTS

Print and process 16,000' negative @ .29	\$4640
Sound transfer 25,000' @ .06	1500
Edgenumbering 18,000 @ .0175	315
Print and process still film	1250
Animation of stills	3000
8 months editing room rental @ \$800	6400
Producer's salary	5000
Director's salary @ \$1600 per mo.	12800
Editor's salary @ \$1600 per mo.	12800
Ass't editor's salary @ \$1000 per mo.	8000
Narration writer salary	5000
Music recording and rights	2500
Editing supplies	600
Acquire and duplicate HHK footage	8000
Narration recording	350
	<hr/>
	\$72155

2. FINAL POST-PRODUCTION COSTS

Sound Mix 8hrs @ \$160	\$1280
Titles	1100
Opticals, effects and subtitles	1850
Conforming	1300
Answer print	1400
Optical track	800
Internegative	1800
4 release prints	1040
	<hr/>
	\$10370

3. TRAVEL AND MISCELLANEOUS

3 trips Denver-New York for animation, promotion and post-production	\$1750
2 trips Denver-Los Angeles for narration recording and promotion	1080
Travel expenses for promotion and research	1250
Telephone	1500
Secretarial and office	3500
Shipping	800
Negative insurance	500
	<hr/>
	\$10380

TOTAL	\$ 92,905
CONTINGENCY	<hr/> 9,290
GRAND TOTAL	\$ 102,195

## SEQUENCES FILMED AT RUMTEK MONASTERY AND IN SIKKIM

### Scenes of Gangtok

Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche in Gangtok  
Early morning market and Tibetans  
Archery and activities around temple  
Tashi viewpoint of Kangchenjunga  
Miscellaneous shots of town, valley, mountains and Rumtek  
from across valley

### Scenes of Rumtek Village

Carpet factory and tea with Shamar Rinpoche's mother  
Street scenes  
Tashi Namgyal's sister milking cows and talking about HHK  
Establishing shots of monastery and village  
HHK aviary  
Old Rumtek

### Rumtek Monastery

Vajrayogini Puja with westerners  
Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche Puja  
Kalachakra Puja in Shamar Rinpoche's room  
Chakrasamvara Puja in Upper Shrine Room  
Pujas in the Lower Shrine Room  
Shots of Tibetan people making devotions  
Establishing shots of monastery  
Dawn at monastery, conches blowing, monastery wakes up  
Miscellaneous monastery vignettes, courtyard, monks kitchen  
and eating  
Getting haircut, etc.  
Group shot of monks outside monastery

### Nalanda School

Trangu Rinpoche conducts class, prayers, gives teaching, examination,  
study session and debate.  
Shamar Rinpoche visits  
Footprint in rock

### Interviews

Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche  
Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche  
Situ Rinpoche  
Gyaelsab Rinpoche  
Dingo Khyentse Rinpoche  
Kalu Rinpoche  
Traleg Rinpoche  
Trangu Rinpoche (audio only)  
Sange Nyenpa Rinpoche  
Punlab Rinpoche

Interviews (continued)

Ösel Tenzin  
Judy Lief  
Hetty Maclise  
Tashi Namgyal

His Holiness Karmapa Cremation

Early morning gongs from His Holiness the Karmapa's balcony,  
overviews of courtyard  
Blessings and pujas around choten  
Dingo Khyentse Rinpoche - Vajrasattva Puja  
Royal family of Bhutan arrive  
Rainbow  
Military salutes  
Cremation and fire puja

Stills

Rupas of Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, Gampopa and all sixteen  
Karmapas as well as miscellaneous Buddhas  
Lineage thanka  
XVI Gyalwa Karmapa thanka  
Miscellaneous murals around monastery  
Tserphu mural at Gateway