



Treasuring the Feminine in Vajrayana Buddhism Symposium 2021 Participants

Participants giving a keynote address

Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche



Her Eminence Mindrolling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche was born as the eldest daughter of Kyabje Mindrolling Trichen Gyurme Künzang Wangyal, the 11th throne holder of the renowned Mindrolling lineage, one of the six main Nyingma lineages of Tibetan Buddhism. Mindrolling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche was recognized by His Holiness the 16th Gyalwang Karmapa as the reincarnation of the great Dakini of Tshurphu, Khandro Orgyen Tsomo, the consort of the 15th Karmapa, and a respected and revered female master who spent most of

her life in retreat. Thus, Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche, as a Jetsünma within the Mindrolling lineage and a tulku within the Kagyu lineage holds both the Nyingma and Kagyu lineages. For the past two decades, Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche has been teaching in Europe, North America, and Asia. Rinpoche is actively involved with the Mindrolling Monastery in India

and in 1993, Rinpoche established the Samten Tse Retreat Centre in Mussoorie, India, as a branch of Mindrolling Monastery, a place of study and retreat for both nuns and Western lay practitioners. The North American Seat of Mindrolling International, Mindrolling Lotus Garden Retreat Centre was established by Rinpoche in 2003 in Stanley, VA, USA, and Rinpoche's land centre, Rigdzin Gatsal, located in Greece is currently under construction. In 2014, Rinpoche established the Mindrolling Ösel Ling centre in Chicago, Illinois, USA. In addition, Rinpoche leads numerous city centres and associations in many countries including Samten Tse Association in France, Samten Tse Germany, Samten Tse Greece, Samten Tse Denmark, Samten Tse Czech Republic, Samten Tse Poland and Samten Tse Spain.

Chagdud Khadro



Chagdud Khadro met His Eminence Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche in March 1978, married him in November 1979, and remained his devoted student for twenty-three years. At the time of her ordination as a lama in 1996, Rinpoche invested her as the future Spiritual Director of Chagdud Gonpa Brasil. During her time with Rinpoche, Khadro received constant training from him both in organizing dharma activities and in the teachings and practice of Vajrayana. She was among the collaborators for his autobiography *Lord of the Dance* and with his guidance, she compiled commentaries of his

teachings on the Dudjom Tersar Ngondro, the Longsal Nyingpo Phowa, and the concise version of Apong Tertson's Red Tara. Formerly the managing editor of Padma Publishing in the United States, Khadro has edited many translations of Tibetan works.

Chagdud Khadro has constantly aspired to uphold Rinpoche's legacy. She has guided the construction of a Zangdog Palri (Guru Rinpoche Pureland), works with translation and publishing of texts in Portuguese and Spanish, helped establish Sítio Esperança, a school and educational project in the state of Minas Gerais, and continued to support spiritual care for the dying and their caregivers. Khadro supervises the activities and teaches in all the Chagdud Gonpa Brasil centers and Chagdud Gonpa Hispanoamérica. She also teaches in Europe, the United States and Australia.

Elizabeth Mattis-Namgyel



Elizabeth Mattis Namgyel has studied and practiced the Buddhadharma for 35 years under the guidance of her teacher and husband Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche. She is the retreat master of Samten Ling in Crestone, Colorado and has spent over six years in retreat. She holds a degree in anthropology and an M.A. in Buddhist Studies. She teaches throughout the U.S., Australia, and Europe. She is the author of *The Power of an Open Question: The Buddha's Path to Freedom* and *The Logic of Faith: the Buddhist Path to Finding*

Certainty Beyond Belief and Doubt.

Elizabeth is known for her use of inquiry as a means to reach a place of genuine practice and awakening. She asks audiences to engage in the practice of open questioning with her while she takes a fresh look at all the assumptions and beliefs we have about spirituality. In particular, Elizabeth is fascinated with the Buddha's essential teachings on the natural principle of pratyasamutpada, dependent arising. Audiences repeatedly comment on how her approach has reinvigorated their meditation practice and the way they relate to their lives as a whole. She teaches extensively in Latin America with students in Brazil and Colombia.

Marcia Schmidt



Marcia Dechen Wangmo, aka Marcia Binder Schmidt, is a renowned Buddhist translator, editor, and writer who - with Erik Pema Kunsang - created Rangjung Yeshe Publications (www.rangjung.com). They have translated and produced over sixty-two titles that have been translated into fifteen different languages. Marcia now teaches around the world sharing her humor, practice advice, and human approach to traditional Tibetan Buddhist practice.

"Marcia lived at the feet of one of the greatest Tibetan Masters of meditation for 17 years at the epicenter of unfolding events of Dharma that crossed many oceans." Tulku Thondup Rinpoche

"Marcia [Dechen Wangmo] has followed many great lamas, some of the best of this century. Her experience as an American amidst this older generation of lamas is quite important for Dharma students from the West." Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche

Sangye Khandro



Sangye Khandro has been a Buddhist since 1971 and a translator of the Dharma since 1976. She has helped to establish numerous centers in the USA and has served as translator for many prominent masters in all four lineages. Sangye has been the spiritual companion of the Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche for nearly thirty years and has continued to help serve the centers established by her root teacher, Kyabje Dudjom Rinpoche, with whom she studied and practiced for many years. Sangye Khandro is one of the founders of the Light of Berotsana Translation Group.

Symposium Participants

Venerable Anila Drolma Choedron



Anila Drolma Choedron began her studies of the Dharma in 1990 in France under the guidance of Ven. Khenpo Thupten, with whom she also studied Tibetan and started translating Dharma teachings. From 1992 Drolma Choedron has studied with Minling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche and in 2006 she took ordination in Mindrolling in India. Since then, she has been receiving intensive training at the Samten Tse Nunnery in India and at Mindrolling Lotus Garden in the

USA under the guidance of Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche.

Anila Drolma today teaches extensively within the Mindrolling International Sangha, and in particular, is one of the main Dharma Instructors for French students studying in the Mindrolling tradition.

Venerable Ani Jinba



Early 1969 I took refuge with Kalu Rinpoche and later that year met my first main teacher, the 8th Khamtrul Rinpoche, with whom I studied until his paranirvana early 1980. In December 1969 I received nun's ordination from the 16th Karmapa and from 1971 onwards studied with my second teacher Apho Rinpoche, grandson of Drubwang Shakya Shri, until his paranirvana in 1974. In 1973 I met my third main teacher, HH Dilgo Khyentse, and during the seventies and eighties received from him the Treasury of Precious Instructions, the Treasury of Precious Termas, the Nyingtik

Yabzhi, the Nyingtik Tsapo, the Mipham Kahbum and many other transmissions. Between 1982-85 I did a 3-year retreat under HH Dilgo Khyentse's guidance in Dordogne, and since 1986 I used to spend winters in Asia and summers in Holland or traveling in Europe/US as an oral interpreter. I started translating in 1975 and from 1982 onwards worked on texts, of which my main publications are Pure Appearance and Primordial Purity, 2 books of oral teachings by HH Dilgo Khyentse; the Great Image, Life of Vairotsana the Translator; Brilliant Moon, autobiography of HH Dilgo Khyentse; and Ocean of Blessings, oral teachings by HH Penor Rinpoche; all published by Shambhala Publications. Besides these 5 books I worked on Notes to the Words of my Perfect Teacher, the Yeshe Lama, the Nyingtik Mabu, some Drukpa Kagyu commentaries and sadhanas and many texts related to termas of Trulshik Rinpoche, whom I served as interpreter from 1994 till 2006. My present projects are the biography of Gotsangpa, a 12th century Drukpa Kagyu mahasiddha and an 84.000 sutra, and due to the pandemic I've now been in Holland for the last 14 months.

Venerable Choenyid Choedron



Choenyid Choedron, originally from Bhutan, received her education and Buddhist training at the Mindrolling Samten Tse Nunnery in India under the guidance of Minling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche. Choenyid Choedron had the great fortune to serve and receive many teachings and transmissions from Kyabje Mindrolling Trichen, Kyabje Trulshik Rinpoche, Kyabje Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche and other

masters. Choenyid Choedron has been with Jetsun Khandro Rinpoche for over 20 years, serving as her main assistant and overseeing the running of the Samten Tse Nunnery and facilitating Rinpoche's activities within Mindrolling International.

Anila Choenyid is also an instrumental member of the administration team of the Mindrolling Monastery.

Choenyid Choedron is deeply respected by the entire community of nuns, monks and lay practitioners from both the East and the West, as an example of a true practitioner, whose conduct is always infused with devotion, kindness and humility.

Venerable Karma Lekshe Tsomo



Karma Lekshe Tsomo is a professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of San Diego, where she teaches Buddhist Thought and Culture; Dying, Death, and Social Justice, and Women in Buddhism. She studied Buddhism in India for 15 years and holds a doctorate in Comparative Philosophy from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She is a founder and past president of Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women and the founder and director of Jamyang Foundation, a project to support education for

Buddhist women in developing countries. She is the author of *Women in Buddhist Traditions*; *Into the Jaws of Yama: Buddhism, Bioethics, and Death*; and *Sisters in Solitude: Two Traditions of Monastic Ethics for Women*, and has edited numerous books on women in Buddhism. Currently, she's communing with birds and butterflies at La'i Peace Center on the North Shore of Oahu, a project of Sakyadhita Hawai'i.

Venerable Tenzin Tsapel



When Lama Thubten Yeshe and Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche toured the Australian FPMT centres in 1979, I attended my first Buddhist course and took Refuge and Bodhicitta vows with them. I spent a year in India in 1982 to study and do retreat. I returned to India in early 1985 to take ordination with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. After ordination I lived and worked at a few FPMT centres and as Regional co-ordinator for Australia and New Zealand. I then joined the Chenrezig Nuns Community in Queensland where I managed three building projects for the nuns and helped establish Chenrezig Institute's Buddhist Studies Programme. I studied for fifteen years there with Geshe Tashi Tsering and was Chenrezig Institute's resident non-Tibetan teacher, and later tutor for two modules of the Lamrim Chen-mo Basic Study Programme. In 2007 I became the resident teacher at Chandrakirti Centre, Nelson, New Zealand and, after a break for two year solitary retreat, became the resident teacher at The Golden Light Sutra Centre, Darkhan, Mongolia. A few years ago I moved to The Great Stupa of Compassion in Bendigo to help establish Atisha Centre's Machig Labdron nunnery. We have four nuns here and we plan to build accomodation and facilities for nuns.

Venerable Thubten Chodron



Venerable Thubten Chodron is an author, teacher, and the founder and abbess of Sravasti Abbey, one of the first Tibetan Buddhist training monasteries for Western nuns and monks in the US. She graduated from UCLA and did graduate work in education at USC. Ordained as a Tibetan Buddhist nun in 1977, she has studied extensively with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tsenzhap Serkong Rinpoche, and Kyabje Zopa Rinpoche. She received full ordination as a bhikshuni in 1986.

Ven. Chodron teaches worldwide and is known for her warm, practical, and humorous explanations of how to apply Buddhist teachings in daily life. She is also involved in prison outreach and interfaith dialogue. She has published many books on Buddhist philosophy and meditation, and is currently assisting His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the writing and publication of The Library of Wisdom and Compassion, a multi-volume series of teachings on the Buddhist path. The sixth volume, *Courageous*

Compassion, was published in May 2021. Visit thubtenchodron.org for a media library of her teachings, and sravasti.org to learn more about Sravasti Abbey.

Agness Au



In 1975, Agness Au became a student of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, the renowned and brilliant meditation master and Tibetan Buddhist teacher. As an artist and designer, she was initially moved by his interest in the arts and the Buddhist science of perception, but gradually began to see how perceiving and the artistic journey were deeply intertwined with meditation and post meditation practices. In 1985, Rinpoche bestowed upon her, the title of Sangyum, empowering her as a holder of the feminine lineage. A senior Shambhala Buddhist teacher and retreat leader, Agness

teaches internationally on “The Inseparable Union of the Feminine and Masculine Principles”. In the late 2000’s, Agness served as the chair person for the Shambhala Commission on the Status of Women and the Feminine Principle. She is a long-time teacher in the Sogetsu School of Ikebana and a devoted student of improvisational movement, voice and performance. In New York City, Agness had a 30-year career as a fashion director and business owner, and for the past 10 years, has served as the creative director for The Synergy Company, in Boulder, CO. She is happily married and the loving mother of two young men. Agness is deeply committed to the vision and possibility of a wakeful, sane and kind society, a regenerative earth and the vital importance of community building and ‘play’.

Anne C. Klein/Lama Rigzin Drolma



Anne C.Klein/ Rigzin Drolma is Professor and former Chair of the Department of Religion at Rice University. She is also a Lama in the Nyingma tradition, and in 1996 co-founder of Dawn Mountain, a center for Tibetan Buddhism (www.dawnmountain.org). In addition to graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin (MA) and University of Virginia, (PhD) her training includes close study of texts and practices with leading Geluk, Nyingma and Bon masters. Her academic work and teaching-retreats draw from all of these, with special

emphasis on Nyingma and Heart Essence traditions. Her Dzogchen teachers include the late

Khetsun Sangpo Rinpoche of Nepal, who gave her rein to teach in 1994. Since 1999 she has been supported in her dharma teaching and personal retreats by A.Pay Rinpoche of Tibet, who named her Dorje Lopen in 2009. Her seven books include Heart Essence of the Vast Expanse: A Story of Transmission, Meeting the Great Bliss Queen: Buddhists, Feminists, and the Art of the Self, and a translation of Khetsun Sangpo Rinpoche's only work on Dzogchen, Strand of Jewels. Her next book Being Human and a Buddha Too, is an extended reflection on Longchenpa's seven trainings and dzogchen, coming out from Wisdom mid-2022.

Catherine Paul



Catherine Paul began studying Buddhism in 1984 under the guidance of S.N. Goenka and his assistant teachers. She first encountered Tibetan Buddhism during a trek to Tibet in 2003 and shortly thereafter met her root teacher, Sogyal Rinpoche, in Australia. She moved to Rigpa's main retreat centre in France to participate in the three year retreat from 2006 - 2009. Afterwards she continued to live at Lerab Ling as a member of the spiritual community holding the practices and activity of Rigpa. She worked as a mother

and a lawyer prior to committing herself full-time to Dharma study, practice and activity. She grew up in a strict patriarchal family where she frequently witnessed her mother being physically, verbally and emotionally assaulted by her father. This inspired an interest in feminism from an early age. At university she studied and championed feminist jurisprudence which examines the relationship between women and law and questions the history of legal and social biases against women. The topic of her Masters of International Law thesis was sexual violence against women as a war crime and as evidence of genocide.

Christina Monson



A Tibetan language translator and interpreter, Christina Monson has over thirty years of study, translation, and practice experience in Buddhism. Her interest in Asian philosophy led her to immersion in the study of eastern religions as a student at Brown University where she earned an undergraduate degree in Religious Studies. Later, she focused on Tibetan Buddhism while completing a Master's degree at the University of

Wisconsin-Madison. On her first trip to Nepal in 1989, she met her root guru, Chatral Sangye Dorje, under whose guidance she studied and practiced for the next three decades. A direct disciple of Sera Khandro, Chatral Rinpoche introduced Christina to the lineage of this great dakini, whose writings and revelations have been the focus of her practice and study ever since. In 2020, Christina published Sera Khandro's collected works and continues to translate selections of them into English language as a Tsadra Foundation translator and scholar. Her upcoming publication is a book of Sera Khandro's advice entitled *A Dakini's Counsel, Sera Khandro's Spiritual Instructions and Advice*. Christina studied at the Master's degree level at the Rangjung Yeshe Institute in Kathmandu for three years and has interpreted for the Rigpa Shedra for the past eight years.

Dominique Side



Dominique Side has been a student and practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism since 1975. She completed a Diploma in Religious Studies (Cambridge University, UK), an M.A. in Indian Religions (SOAS) and a Ph.D. in Madhyamaka philosophy (Bristol University, UK) and taught Buddhism in secondary schools in London for nine years. She edited *The Four Noble Truths* and *Transforming the Mind* by H.H. the Dalai Lama and is author of a textbook on Buddhism. She is a senior teacher in Rigpa and, under the guidance of

Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, helped to establish the Milinda Programme, a cross-sangha project for training Western Dharma teachers. She also served as vice-president of the European Buddhist Union (2013-2018).

Elaine Jackson



Elaine Jackson is a founding member of [Vajrapani Institute](#) for Wisdom Culture located in Boulder Creek, California. She has been a student of Tibetan Buddhism since 1977 and has studied with many of the greatest teachers of our time, primarily in the Gelug Tibetan Buddhist tradition of the FPMT. Elaine served as Executive Director of [Vajrapani Institute](#) for over five years where she now serves as the Resident Teacher. Elaine has completed a three-year meditation retreat. She lives a contemplative life off-the-grid in the Santa Cruz mountains while offering Dharma teachings and meditation support.

Eva Natanya



Eva Natanya, PhD, University of Virginia
Executive Director and Resident Teacher, Center for Contemplative Research—North America (Miyo Samten Ling). A scholar of Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, Christian theology, and comparative religion, Dr. Natanya has served in many capacities as a spiritual teacher, academic lecturer, translator and editor of Tibetan texts, writer, and retreat leader. Following a nine-year career as a professional ballet dancer with both the New York City Ballet and the Royal Ballet of

England, she earned an MA in Christian Systematic Theology at the Graduate Theological Union, and a PhD in Religious Studies from the University of Virginia. Her dissertation examined the complex interactions of Madhyamaka, Yogācāra, and Abhidharma teachings as they underlie the Vajrayāna philosophy of Je Tsongkhapa. She has worked closely with Dr. B. Alan Wallace on his translations for several books, including *Open Mind* and *Fathoming the Mind*, and has co-taught meditation retreats with Dr. Wallace around the world. In a Christian context, she co-authored *Living Resurrected Lives: What It Means and Why It Matters* with Veronica Mary Rolf. She has spent more than three years in solitary meditation retreat, and remains in residence at Miyo Samten Ling in Crestone, Colorado.

Gabriele Mass



Gabriele Maass was born in 1968 in Hamburg, Germany, and first met her teacher, Sogyal Rinpoche, in 1995. She has been an ardent student of Tibetan Buddhism ever since. After graduating from the University of Lüneburg with an MA in Applied Cultural Sciences, Gabriele worked as a senior market researcher until she decided to enter retreat from 2003-2005. Since that time, she has devoted herself to serving the Dharma, beginning with her support of the many activities of Rigpa's international retreat centre, Lerab Ling, in the

south of France. Following the conclusion of Rigpa's three-year retreat in 2009, Gabriele was requested to take up the position of National Director of Rigpa Germany. Her responsibilities grew as Rigpa Germany founded a major new Dharma centre in the heart of Berlin, Dharma Mati, that was inaugurated by Sogyal Rinpoche in 2007. This centre has been blessed by the visits of many leading Buddhist teachers and provides a vibrant, open space for Dharma study and practice – for the resident community, the larger Buddhist Sangha, and people of all walks of life.

Heidi Nevin



Heidi lives in Corvallis, Oregon with her husband and two kids (ages 14 and 11). She studied Tibetan language at Manjushree Center for Tibetan Culture in Darjeeling, India (1996-8). She completed the Dudjom Tersar and Longchen Nyingtik preliminaries under the guidance of her root guru, Kyabje Chatral Sangye Dorje (1998-2003). She has worked as a Dharma translator since 2003, translating works such as the autobiography of Khenpo Ngakchung, Dudjom Rinpoche's Khandro

Tuktik and long Tegal commentary, Dungse Thinley Norbu's Ruby Rosary, and the Dzogchen volumes of the Dogyud Dzod. She has studied with Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche since 2015.

Holly Gayley



Holly Gayley, Associate Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder, is a scholar and translator of contemporary Buddhist literature in Tibet. Her research areas include gender and sexuality in Buddhist tantra, ethical reform in contemporary Tibet, and theorizing translation, both literary and cultural, in the transmission of Buddhist teachings to North America. Holly became interested in the study of Buddhism through her travels among Tibetan communities in India, Nepal, and China. She completed an M.A. in Buddhist

Studies at Naropa University in 2000 and Ph.D. at Harvard University in Tibetan and Himalayan Studies in 2009.

Judith Brown Meyers



Judith has been a student of Sogyal Rinpoche, Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche, Elizabeth Mattis Namgyel and Mingyur Rinpoche over the past 25 years. She served as Executive Director of the Tenzin Gyatso Institute for Wisdom and Compassion, a Rigpa retreat center, and as founding Treasurer of the Board of The Middle Way Initiative. Professionally, she founded and managed several companies based in San Francisco that provided public policy and environmental consulting and conducted public opinion research. Judith has lived and worked

periodically in India, Nepal, and Bhutan for more than 30 years, providing organizational development and strategic planning assistance to indigenous environmental and conservation organizations. She has also studied and photographed the interdependence of people and their natural environments throughout the Himalayas from Ladakh, Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan. Judith earned a Ph.D. in South Asian Studies from Columbia University. She has served on the Boards of more than 20 non-profits ranging in purpose from Jazz to improving health and education for nomads of the Tibetan plateau.

Judith Lief



Judy Lief is a Buddhist teacher who trained under the Tibetan meditation master, Ven. Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche. She has been a teacher and practitioner for over 35 years, and she continues to teach throughout the world. Judy is known for offering insights and practices stemming from the Buddhist tradition as a support for ordinary people facing the difficulties and challenges of modern life. Judy leads retreats and workshops as well as presenting online teachings.

Acharya Judith Simmer Brown



Acharya Judith Simmer-Brown, Ph.D., is Distinguished Professor of Contemplative and Religious Studies Emerita at Naropa University and Acharya in the Shambhala lineage of Chogyam Trungpa. She has been active in interreligious dialogue internationally since the 1980's, and co-chairs the American Academy of Religion's Contemplative Studies Unit. Since retiring in 2020, she continues at Naropa with the Compassion Initiative and Masters of Divinity courses. A student of Chogyam Trungpa since 1974, she was empowered as an acharya by his

dharma heir, Sakyong Mipham, in 2000. She focuses on teaching Shambhala beginning and advanced programs and retreats. Her books are *Dakini's Warm Breath: The Feminine Principle in Tibetan Buddhism* (Shambhala) and *Meditation and the Classroom: Contemplative Pedagogy for Religious Studies* (SUNY).

Julia Stenzel



My interest in Buddhism was ignited more than thirty years ago by the late Lama Gendun Rinpoche, a Mahāmudrā master from Eastern Tibet, who had been sent by the sixteenth Karmapa to establish monasteries and retreat centers in France. In my twenties, I spent a decade in three consecutive three year retreats receiving many teachings of the Karma Kagyü Tradition. This was followed by years of study and teaching at various centers belonging to Dhagpo Kagyu Ling and the Bodhi Path in the US. I also studied

Buddhism academically for some years (M.A. from the University of the West, PhD from McGill University) and am regularly translating with the Sakya Chödung Karmo translation group. Since 2018, I am part of Rangjung Yeshe Institute’s faculty in Kathmandu. My areas of interest are contemplative traditions, ethics and contemporary applications of Buddhist compassion cultivation. I spend my time between Nepal, Germany and North America.

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Marina Baer



Baptized into the Russian Orthodox Church and raised by a mother with an abiding interest in Christian Science, I have always valued inner life. In 1964 I met Willem Nyand, a student of the Georgian mystic George Gurdjieff, and spent nearly 30 years following that path, deeply involved in the group at many levels, until it became time to change direction. In 1992 I became a student of Sogyal Rinpoche, and spent over 25 invaluable years in the Rigpa sangha, benefitting from the many masters he

invited to teach us. In 2017, having attended numerous teachings and retreats with Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche over the years, I became his student. My academic training was in Western philosophy. My PhD thesis was a philosophical examination of the concept of maturity and I taught ethics, bioethics, and world religions for 15 years before retiring to study and practice.

Padma 'tsho



Padma 'tsho (Baimacuo) is a Professor in the Philosophy Studies Department of Southwest Minzu University in Chengdu, China. She holds a Ph.D. from Sichuan University in Chengdu and has an M.A. from Central Nationalities University in Beijing. Her areas of research and teaching include Tibetan Buddhism, ritual studies, gender issues- individually and in Tibetan monasteries, and the education and elevation of Buddhist nuns in Tibetan monastic areas. She is the author of, *A Study on the*

Devotional Practice of Padmasambhava in Tibetan Culture (Tibetan Publishing House: Beijing, 2007). She has been working on the higher education and publications of Tibetan nuns from Larung Gar. She has published several articles about Tibetan nuns and how they are becoming Khenmos.

In the last decade, Professor Padma 'tsho has spent time as a Visiting Research Scholar at several North American universities, including Harvard, Columbia, University of Virginia, and CU Boulder. She has been researching Tibetan Buddhism in the West and has published two articles about this.

Pia Artigas



Pia Artigas was born in Chile in 1955. Part of her youth she lived in USA and the last 20 years in Madrid, Spain. She is a lawyer specialized in criminology and worked many years defending human rights and political oppression during Pinochet dictatorship. Also, she worked in woman's prison where she got to know the vulnerability of woman and children as subject of physical and sexual abuse, and creating a national program in Chile to give them guidance and protection. In 2003 she found the Tibetan book of Living and Dying that transformed

completely her life. She recognizes Sogyal Rinpoche as her teacher and the dharma as the truth and the path to really alleviate the suffering in the world. Since then, she has dedicated all her time to serve the dharma and Rigpa. Co-founder of Rigpa in Spain and founder of the Center of Rigpa in Madrid has been dedicated these last 18 years to study, practice, and teach dharma. Also organizing national retreats, and giving instructor formation in Spain.

Sara Lindbloom-Namgyel



Sara Namgyel is a student of Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche and the wife of Rinpoche's son and Dharma Heir, Dungse Jampal Norbu. As a firm believer in the scholar-practitioner model of Buddhist practice, she has studied at Naropa University, Rangjung Yeshe Institute, and completed her master's degree at the University of Colorado in addition to retreat. While rooted in traditional methods of study

and practice, she is interested in bringing the Dharma forward with the next generation of students in the west through her work as a budding translator and writer. As a young(ish) woman in the Dharma, she is primarily concerned with *how* to "bring along" women of her generation while maintaining the integrity of the Buddhist teachings.

Sarah Jacoby



Sarah H. Jacoby is an associate professor in the Religious Studies Department at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. She studies Tibetan Buddhism, especially Treasure revelation (gter ma), religious auto/biography, Tibetan literature, gender and sexuality, and the history of eastern Tibet. She is the author of *Love and Liberation: Autobiographical Writings of the Tibetan Buddhist Visionary Sera Khandro* (Columbia University Press,

2014), co-author of *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience* (Oxford University Press, 2014), and co-editor of *Buddhism Beyond the Monastery: Tantric Practices and their Performers in Tibet and the Himalayas* (Brill, 2009). Currently she is working on a full Tibetan-English translation of Sera Khandro's autobiography, as well as a project centered on the 53-volume Tibetan anthology of writings by and about Buddhist women compiled by Tibetan nuns from Larung Gar called *Khandro Chödzo Chenmo* (Dakinis' Great Dharma Treasury). Sarah Jacoby is both a practitioner and a scholar of Tibetan Buddhism. She is grateful to have had the precious opportunity to receive teachings from Chatral Sangyé Dorjé Rinpoché as well as other Nyingma lineage masters, which inform not only her practice but also her scholarship and university teaching.

Lama Tsering Everest



Born in the US, Lama Tsering served H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche as his translator for more than 11 years. After completing a traditional three year retreat in 1995, she was ordained as a lama and recognized by Rinpoche as a holder of the Red Tara lineage, authorized to give teachings and empowerments. In the same year she was invited to teach in Brazil where she moved shortly after. Her warm and humorous style reflects Rinpoche's own humor and

empathy, with focus on cultivating compassion, training the mind, and applying the dharma in daily life. She teaches and conducts retreats in many cities across Brazil, Chile, New Zealand and Australia as well as returning whenever she can to fulfill the

requests of her students in North America. Lama Tsering has founded and been the resident lama at Odsal Ling Temple in São Paulo, Brazil for 26 years.

Lama Tsultrim Allione



Lama Tsultrim Allione is the bestselling author of *Women of Wisdom* (1984), *Feeding Your Demons* (2008), and *Wisdom Rising Journey into the Mandala of the Empowered Feminine* (2018). Lama Tsultrim is the founder of Tara Mandala, a 700-acre retreat center with the three-story temple and library dedicated to the divine feminine in the Buddhist tradition near Pagosa Springs, in southwest Colorado. She leads a vibrant international community with over forty groups around the world. Born in New England, she traveled to Asia in her late teens and in 1970 at the age of 22 in

Bodhgaya, India she became the first American to be ordained as a Tibetan Buddhist nun. She later disrobed, married and became the mother of three and now is grandmother of six. In 2007 she was recognized in Tibet and Nepal as the reincarnation of a renowned 11th-century Tibetan yogini, Machig Labdrön, and she is one of the few women Lamas in the world today. In 2012 she received the Machig Labdron Empowerment from His Holiness the 17th Karmapa. She was awarded international recognition as an “Outstanding Woman in Buddhism” in 2009 by a panel of distinguished scholars and practitioners in Bangkok, Thailand.

Verena Pfeiffer



Verena Pfeiffer has completed eight years of shedra education at the Rigpa College of Buddhist Studies in Nepal under the direction of Khenpo Namdrol. She is currently studying at Milinda, a project established by Dzongsar Khyentse to train Buddhist teachers for the West.

Vivian Kurz



Vivian Kurz is the director of Dilgo Khyentse Fellowship, an organization dedicated to the preservation and spread of the Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's lineage and teachings. Until 2018, she was the executive director of Karuna-Shechen USA, a humanitarian organization working in the Himalayas. Vivian's first teacher was Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche and, in 1974, she went to India to meet Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche who became her root guru. She was a co-founder of Dudjom Rinpoche's centers, Yeshe Nyingpo and Urgyen

Chodzung. A graduate of Brandeis University in 1966, Vivian spent many years in Europe. She completed the first Nyingma Three-Year Retreat in Dordogne, France under the guidance of Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche. Over the years she has collaborated with Matthieu Ricard on numerous projects including films on the life of their teacher and book tours and events. She has worked on the publication of all of the English translations of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's writings. Vivian continues to work for and visit the Shechen monasteries and nunneries in Asia.

She is very active in the development of the Shechen School in Nepal and in furthering education for nuns in Bhutan. She is based in New York City.

Zuzana Dankova



Buddhist practitioner since 1999, Zuzana Dankova had the good fortune to receive teachings from great masters such as Kyabje Trulshig Rinpoche, Kyabje Taklung Tsetrul Rinpoche, Kaybje Tenga Rinpoche and others. Zuzana has been receiving intensive training under the direct guidance of Minling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche for over 20 years, in India, Europe and the US.

Zuzana also serves as translator for His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his numerous visits to the Czech Republic. Zuzana Dankova is the main assistant to Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche and oversees all her activities within Mindrolling International, in particular within Europe, and she is one of the main Dharma Instructors for students in the Czech Republic studying in the Mindrolling tradition.

Coordinators & Facilitators:

Ruth Seehausen



Ruth Seehausen has been interested in Tibetan Buddhism since her teenage years, and became a student of Sogyal Rinpoche in 1986. She served as Rinpoche's personal assistant for twelve years, travelling all over the world with him, before becoming Rigpa Germany's National Director for seven years. She then moved to France to take part in a Three Year Retreat held in Lerab Ling.

She currently divides her time between Germany and France, devoting as much time as she can to intensive Dharma study, practice, and regular retreats. She also works as a course-designer for Rigpa, in particular for the Dzogchen study programme, alongside instructing on residential and online retreats.

Ruth holds an MA degree in psychology from the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich, and works professionally as a freelance trainer and coach, with special emphasis on meditation techniques. Her passion lies mostly in exploring how Buddhist study and practice can benefit a modern audience to cope with life's challenges, and find lasting freedom.

Vinciane Rycroft



Vinciane Rycroft met several great masters of Tibetan Buddhism in her early twenties and became a student of Sogyal Rinpoche in 1994. She has been studying and practicing Mahayana, Vajrayana and Dzogchen in Rigpa since, with many teachers, and is currently on Rigpa's Vision Board. Her passion is to bring the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha's teachings to a general public audience - individuals as well as whole communities to nourish personal and social change. Vinciane is also a director of the

Tenzin Gyatso Institute and a co-founder of outreach dharma projects such as the education charity Mind with Heart. Her professional background includes education, participation, sustainable development and charity governance.