



## ISBS Inaugural Conference Programme

8-10 January 2019, Magdalen College, University of Oxford

*All events take place in Magdalen College except 2.1B and the Sheldonian Lectures*

### DAY 1 – TUESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019

ITEM	TIME	ROOM
<i>Kind notice: all timings are prompt.</i>		
Registration	08:15 – 09:00	Grove Auditorium lobby
<p><b>SESSION 1: Opening Session:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Opening Prayer</b></li> <li>- <b>Welcome to ISBS Conference:</b> Sabina Alkire <u>BIOGRAPHY</u></li> <li>- <b>Welcome to Europe:</b> Ambassador Pema Choden, Bhutanese ambassador Belgium with concurrent accreditation to the European Union, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden <u>BIOGRAPHY</u></li> <li>- <b>Welcome to UK:</b> Michael Rutland OBE, Honorary Consul of UK to Bhutan <u>BIOGRAPHY</u></li> <li>- <b>Welcome from SCS:</b> Kim Samuel, Founder of The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness <u>BIOGRAPHY</u></li> <li>- <b>Welcome from The Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom:</b> Sir Simon Bowes Lyon KCVO, President of UK-Bhutan Society <u>BIOGRAPHY</u></li> <li>- <b>Welcome to Oxford:</b> Professor Ulrike Roesler, Chair of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford <u>BIOGRAPHY</u></li> <li>- <b>Welcome to Magdalen:</b> Sir David Clary, President of Magdalen College, Oxford <u>BIOGRAPHY</u></li> <li>- <b>Keynote to Open ISBS inaugural conference:</b></li> <li>- Dasho Tshering Tobgay, Honourable former Prime Minister of Bhutan <u>BIOGRAPHY</u></li> </ul>	09:00 – 10:30	Grove Auditorium
<b>Coffee Break</b>	10:30 – 11:00	Grove Auditorium lobby

<b>DAY 1.1 MORNING SESSION A – LINGUISTICS</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Sonam Pelden</b> , Editor of the <i>Kuensel</i> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Yoshiro Imaeda</b> : Bhutanicity in the Tibetan Cultural Context <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	11:00 – 12:30	Summer Common Room
<b>Gwendolyn Hyslop</b> : On the history and development of the East Bodish languages <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Fuminobu Nishida</b> : Sentence Type of Mangdebikha <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>DAY 1.1 MORNING SESSION B – 2.1 ECOLOGY</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Gelay Norbu</b> , Director of National Land Commission <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Frances Harris, Fergus Lyon, Kuenga Wangmo</b> : Decision Making under Uncertainty: The Case of Building Earthquake Resilience in Bhutan Fergus Lyon <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a> Kuenga Wangmo <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	11:00 – 12:30	Grove Auditorium
<b>Shad Ahmad Khan</b> : Vertical farming for Bhutan: through lens of ecology, policy and economy <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Ritu Verma</b> presented <i>in absentia</i> : Bhutan's Unique Engagement with Climate Change and Development Alternatives: Lived Experiences and Resilient Futures <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Lunch</b>	<b>12:30 – 14:00</b>	Hall
<b>DAY 1.2 AFTERNOON SESSION A – ANTHROPOLOGY</b>		
Session Chair: <b>David Gellner</b> , Professor of Social Anthropology, Director of ISCA, and Fellow of All Souls College, University of Oxford. <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Francoise Pommaret</b> : People on the Move: In-country Migrations in Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	14:00 – 15:30	Grove Auditorium
<b>Azade Toygar</b> : Funeral Rites and Post-Mortem Practices of the Lhokpu <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Johanna Prien-Kaplan</b> : Ritual chants of <i>neyjom</i> and <i>pao</i> in Wangdue Phodrang <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>DAY 1.2 AFTERNOON SESSION B – LAW &amp; INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>		

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Session Chair: <b>Susan Hitch</b> , former Fellow of Magdalen College, University of Oxford and Visiting Professor of Public Policy at King's College BIOGRAPHY		
<b>Richard Whitecross:</b> New Horizons?: The right to environmental protection and the Supreme Court of Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	14:00 – 15:30	Summer Common Room
<b>Nitasha Kaul:</b> Where is Bhutan? The historical production of an 'inbetween' Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Michaela Windischgrätz:</b> Dispute Settlement in a Changing Society <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Tea Break</b>	<b>15.30 – 16.00</b>	Grove Auditorium lobby
<b>PLENARY SESSION: Buddhism in Practice and in Transition</b>		
Session Chair and Discussant: Rev. Prof. Martin Laird, O.S.A., Villanova University (USA) BIOGRAPHY		
<b>Ven Lopen Gembo Dorji:</b> Garcham - the Masked Dances of Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a> <b>Ven Lam Lotay Singay:</b> Religious Music and Chants from Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a> <b>His Eminence Dralop Rinpoche Sangay Dorji:</b> Mandala and Arts ( <i>Thig</i> ) <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	16.00 – 17.30	Grove Auditorium
<b>Magdalen College Choir:</b> Evensong <i>This is a special evensong for ISBS guests to experience Magdalen's signature cultural tradition with the Clerks, Founder's Chaplain, and Dean of Divinity.</i>	18.00	Magdalen College Chapel
<b>Dinner:</b> Formal dinner	19.00- 21.00	Seated table service in The Hall

**DAY 2 – WEDNESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019**

ITEM	TIME	ROOM
Optional Morning Prayers (Bhutanese)	8:30	Magdalen College Chapel

<b>DAY 2.1 MORNING SESSION A – ANTHROPOLOGY</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Dorji Penjore</b> , Chief Researcher, Centre for Bhutan Studies, Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Sonam Nyenda</b> : Kangsol: A Vajrakila Performance Tradition of Sumthrang Monastery in Central Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	09.00-10.30	Oscar Wilde Room
<b>David Hecht</b> : Home-ranges for Birds, Home-ranges for Deities: Spatializing Ontologies of Conservation in Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>DAY 2.1 MORNING SESSION B – GNH &amp; DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Tashi Wangyal</b> , Eminent Member of Parliament and National Council Member <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Matthew Schuelka</b> : Education in Bhutan: Culture, Schooling, and Gross National Happiness <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	09.00 – 10.30	Exam Schools Room 6 (in Examination Schools, High St)
<b>Yoshiaki Takahashi</b> : Ideal happiness in Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Dorine Eva van Norren</b> : SDGs versus cosmovisions of the Global South: GNH, Ubuntu and <i>Buen Vivir</i> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Coffee Break</b>	10.30 – 11.00	Exam Schools Rm. 7
<b>DAY 2.1 MORNING SESSION C – WISDOM COMES YOUNG</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Kim Samuel</b> , Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Tashi Namgay</b> : The careful Science of Astrology <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>	09.00 – 10.30	Summer Common Room
<b>Deki Yangzom</b> : Food Culture of Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Discussion</b> : Supporting the Youth in ISBS		
<b>Coffee Break</b>	<b>10.30 – 11.00</b>	Old Kitchen Bar
<b>DAY 2.2 MORNING SESSION A – BUDDHISM</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Lopen Gembo Dorji</b> , Advisor to the Central Monk Body, Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Seiji Kumagai</b> : The Education of Tsangpa Gyare (1161-1211) as the Basis of Pedagogic System of the Drukpa Kagyu School <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	11:00 – 12:30	Summer Common Room

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<b>Karma Gyeltshen:</b> Sacred Geography - Footprints of Padmasambhava in Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Kinley Dem:</b> The contributions of Gelongma Palmo towards women's empowerment in Monastic Life <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>DAY 2.2 MORNING SESSION B – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND GOVERNANCE</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Nandini Gooptu</b> , Professor of South Asian Studies and former Head of Department of International Development, University of Oxford <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Romolo Gandolfo:</b> Politics and Elections in Bhutan: The Role of Social Media <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	11:00 – 12:30	Oscar Wilde Room
<b>Anden Drolet:</b> Good Governance, Gross National Happiness, and the Care of the Other <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Steven Newman:</b> Practical ideas for facilitating Bhutan to become a global exemplar of resilience in the face of the 'perfect storm' <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>Lunch</b>	12:30 – 14:00	Hall
<b>DAY 2.2 SHELDONIAN LECTURES</b>		
Chair: <b>Dr. Ralph Walker</b> , Former Chairman of the General Board, Oxford University & Emeritus Fellow, Magdalen <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Does Bhutan Matter? Stories from a Young Democracy</b> Keynote: <b>Hon Dasho Tshering Tobgay</b> , Former Prime Minister of Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>	15:00 – 16.30	Sheldonian Theatre
<b>Bhutanese songs and dances</b>	16:30 – 17:00	Sheldonian Theatre
Chair: <b>Prof. Louise Richardson</b> , Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Development with Integrity: Bhutan's development and its Gross National Happiness Index</b> Keynote: <b>Dasho Karma Ura</b> (PhD), President of the Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a> Discussants:	17.00 – 18.30	Sheldonian Theatre

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<p><b>Martine Durand</b>, Chief Statistician, OECD,  <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>  <b>James Foster</b>, Professor of Economics, Georgetown University  <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a></p>		
<b>Private Reception</b>	18.30- 19.30	Divinity School

**DAY 3 – THURSDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019**

ITEM	TIME	ROOM
Optional Morning Prayers (Bhutanese)	8:30	Magdalen College Chapel
<b>DAY 3.1 MORNING SESSION A – LINGUISTICS</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Tenzin Lamsang</b> , Editor of <i>The Bhutanese</i> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Selin Grollmann</b> : The internal diversity of the Tshangla languages: Insights from Bjokapakha <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	09.00 – 10.30	Summer Common Room
<b>Pascal Gerber</b> : Gongduk agreement morphology in functional and diachronic perspective <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>		
<b>DAY 3.1 MORNING SESSION B – GOVERNANCE AND SCHOLARSHIP</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Ulrike Roesler</b> , Professor of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies and Chair of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Michael Rutland</b> : The Search for Harmony in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a>	09.00 – 10.30	Grove Auditorium
<b>Dasho Sonam Kinga</b> : Modernity of Monarchy: The Case of Wangchuck Dynasty <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<b>Coffee Break</b>	10.30 – 11.00	Grove Auditorium lobby
<b>PLENARY: ISBS ~ Identity &amp; Purposes</b> In this interactive session <b>Roger Goodman</b> , Warden of St Anthony’s and former head of Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, and <b>David Gellner</b> , Fellow of All Souls and Chair of the Britain-Nepal Academic Council, as well as <b>Dasho Dr Karma Ura</b> ,	11.00 – 12.30	Grove Auditorium

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<p><b>Ven Lopen Gembo Dorji, Prof Seiji Kumagai, Prof Francoise Pommeret, Dr Kuenga Wangmo</b>, and perhaps a special guest, will consider the future of ISBS, moderated by <b>Sabina Alkire</b>.  <b>Prof. Roger Goodman</b> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>  <b>Prof. David Gellner</b> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>  <b>Dasho Dr Karma Ura</b> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>  <b>Ven Lopen Gembo Dorji</b> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>  <b>Prof Seiji Kumagai</b> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>  <b>Prof Francoise Pommeret</b> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>  <b>Dr Kuenga Wangmo</b> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>  <b>Prof. Sabina Alkire.</b> <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a></p>		
<b>Lunch</b>	12:30 – 14:00	Hall
<b>DAY 3.2 AFTERNOON SESSION A – GNH IN ACTION</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Jamie Coates</b> , President of sOPHIA, University of Oxford <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<p><b>Jigme Phuntsho</b>: GNH and Business: steps towards engagement and certification <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a></p>	14:00 – 15:30	Summer Common Room
<p><b>Michael Givel</b>: Gross National Happiness Policy Outputs in Bhutan from 1972 to 2014 <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a></p>		
<p><b>Rabsel Dorji and Fergus Lyon</b>: Alternative governance for alternative business- Social enterprise models of business inspired by GNH? Rabsel Dorji <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a> Fergus Lyon <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a></p>		
<b>DAY 3.2 AFTERNOON SESSION B – ANTHROPOLOGY</b>		
Session Chair: <b>Karma Jamtsho</b> , Gross National Happiness Commission of Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>		
<p><b>Dorji Penjore</b>: Chukor: Water sharing institution for sharecropping and subsistence in Samcholing, Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a></p>	14:00 – 15:30	Grove Auditorium
<p><b>Kuenga Wangmo</b>: Archaeology in Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a></p>		
<p><b>Chelsea Ferrell, Hemanta Kafley <i>et al</i></b>: Sacred Groves under a Shadow: Importance of Religious Forests for the Rural Himalayan Communities of Bhutan <a href="#">BIOGRAPHY</a>   <a href="#">ABSTRACT</a></p>		

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<b>Tea</b>	15.30 – 16.00	Grove Auditorium lobby
<b>Short Plenary (Sabina Alkire) and Closing Session</b>	16:00 – 17:30	Grove Auditorium

The 2019 Inaugural Conference of the International Society for Bhutan Studies (ISBS) is organised at Magdalen College by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) at the University of Oxford, in collaboration with the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness (SCSC). The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada offered support for Bhutanese student participants, and kind benefactors supported in so many ways. Gratitude abounds.





## **Biographies of Speakers at the Opening Session on Day 1**

### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Sabina Alkire  
**Organisation** : Director  
**Position** : Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), University of Oxford  
**Country** : United Kingdom



Sabina Alkire directs the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), a research centre within the Oxford Department of International Development, University of Oxford. Her research interests and publications include multidimensional poverty measurement and analysis, welfare economics, Amartya Sen's capability approach, Bhutan's Gross National Happiness index, and human development. She is also a Distinguished Research Affiliate of the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at the University of Notre Dame's Keough School of Global Affairs. She holds a DPhil in Economics from the University of Oxford. [Back](#)

### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : H.E. Pema Choden  
**Organisation** : Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan  
**Position** : Bhutanese Ambassador to Belgium with concurrent accreditation to the European Union, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden  
**Country** : Bhutan

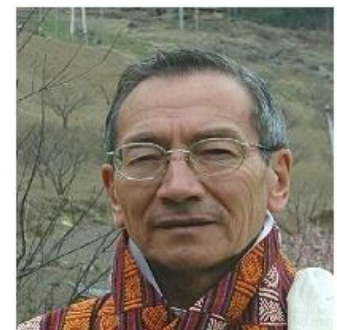


Her Excellency Pema Choden is Bhutan's Ambassador to Belgium with concurrent accreditation to the European Union, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden

She has served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1989. She has a Bachelor's degree and subsequently studied French and international relations, including at the ENA in France. In recent years she has held the following posts: 2014–2016 Ambassador to Bangladesh, concurrently accredited to Sri Lanka, Maldives, Pakistan and South Korea; 2011–2014 Chief of the Europe, Americas and Africa Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thimphu; 2007–2011 Managing Director, Bhutan Broadcasting Service, Thimphu; and 2005–2007 Head, Policy Planning Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thimphu. [Back](#)

### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Michael Rutland OBE  
**Organisation** : Bhutan Consulate United Kingdom  
**Position** : Honorary Consul of UK to Bhutan  
**Country** : United Kingdom



Michael Rutland first lived in Bhutan in 1971, when he assisted in setting up the Ugyen Wangchuck Academy in Paro and taught Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics there.

Subsequently he visited Bhutan regularly, and worked briefly for the UN (ILO) as a Consultant in the field of Technical and Vocational Education. Since 2000, Michael Rutland has lived in Thimphu. He was granted a citizenship of Bhutan by H.M. The Fourth King in 2006. He was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth II in 2005 for services to British-Bhutan relations and also holds the Bhutan Coronation Gold Medal. He is currently a member of Bhutan's Royal Education Council. He is a Founder and presently the Chairman of the Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom. He is also a member of the International Council of the English Speaking Union. For six years prior to becoming the United Kingdom's Honorary Consul in Bhutan, Michael Rutland held the appointment of Honorary Consul of Bhutan in the United Kingdom. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Kim Samuel**

**Organisation : Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness**

**Position : President and Chair**

**Country : USA**

A pioneer in the field of social isolation and connectedness, Kim Samuel, Founder of The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness, combines academic research, writing, and lecturing with direct programmatic and partnership building experience supporting communities across the globe facing diverse challenges. Her work focusing on social isolation as a critical experiential and measurable component of multi-dimensional poverty and other critical issues underscores the importance of social connectedness to human dignity and human rights struggles globally. Ms. Samuel is Professor of Practice at the Institute for the Study of International Development at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. In 2016, she designed and delivered the first academic course offering in the emerging field of social connectedness to graduating students in international studies and taught a new cohort in 2017. She also created the Social Connectedness Fellowship Program in 2017, which offers recent undergraduates the opportunity to pursue projects related to social isolation and connectedness in the context of community building and international development.

Ms. Samuel served as Visiting Scholar at the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, University of Oxford (2013-2014) where she continues to serve as Policy Advisor. She also served as Chair of the External Advisory Board (2007-2015) of the Yale University Center of Environmental Law and Policy (YCELP). Among other appointments and memberships, Ms. Samuel is a Director of the Synergos Institute, Founding Member of the Global Philanthropists Circle, and Member of the Disability Rights Advisory Committee of Human Rights Watch. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : Sir Simon Alexander Bowes-Lyon KCVO**

**Organisation : UK-Bhutan Society**

**Position : President**

**Country : United Kingdom**

Sir Simon Alexander Bowes-Lyon KCVO is a first cousin of Queen Elizabeth II and was Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire from 1986 to 2007. He was created a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order in The Queen's Birthday Honours List 2005. He is the current President of the United Kingdom - Bhutan Society.

He was educated at Eton College, Windsor, Berkshire, England.<sup>1</sup> He graduated from Magdalen College, Oxford University, Oxford, Oxfordshire, England, with a Master of Arts (M.A.). He held the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire in 1986. He was appointed Fellow, Institute of Chartered Accountants (F.C.A.) He was appointed Knight Commander, Royal Victorian Order (K.C.V.O.) in 2005. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Professor Ulrike Roesler

**Organisation** : Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford

**Position** : Chair

**Country** : United Kingdom

Professor Ulrike Roesler is a Professor of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies at the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the University of Oxford. Professor Roesler obtained a PhD in Indian Studies from the University of Münster, Germany, and her “Habilitation” in Tibetan Studies from the University of Munich, Germany. Prof. Roesler's research interests are in the early history of Buddhism in Tibet, interactions between India and Tibet, Tibetan biographical writing, narrative literature, and the notion of “sacred landscapes” in the Himalayas. Her most recent book publication is the volume *Lives Lived, Lives Imagined: Biography in the Buddhist Traditions* by L. Covill, U. Roesler and S. Shaw (Wisdom Publications 2010). [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Sir David Clary

**Organisation** : Magdalen College, University of Oxford

**Position** : President

**Country** : United Kingdom

Professor Sir David Clary FRS has been President of Magdalen College since 1 September 2005. He also runs a research group in the Chemistry Department at Oxford University. Before coming to Magdalen he was Head of the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences at Oxford University and a Professorial Fellow of St John's College. He has held faculty positions at Manchester, Cambridge and UCL. He was a Fellow and Senior Tutor at Magdalene College Cambridge where he is now an Honorary Fellow. His PhD was at Cambridge where he also holds the Sc.D. He was an undergraduate at the University of Sussex where he recently was awarded the Doctor of Science, honoris causa. He was the first Chief Scientific Adviser to the Foreign Office from 2009-13 and before that was President of the Faraday Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry. Sir David has been elected to several academies including the Royal Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the International Academy of Quantum Molecular Science, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was Knighted in the 2016 Queen's birthday honours for services to international science. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : H.E. Dasho Tshering Tobgay**  
**Organisation : Kingdom of Bhutan**  
**Position : Honourable Former Prime Minister**  
**Country : Bhutan**



Tshering Tobgay is a Bhutanese politician, environmentalist, and cultural advocate who was the Prime Minister of Bhutan from July 2013 to August 2018. He was a civil servant before he engaged in politics. He started his career in 1991 with the Technical and Vocational Education Section (TVES) of the Education Division in Bhutan. After his stint with the TVES from 1991 to 1999, Tobgay created and led the National Technical Training Authority (NTTA) from 1999 to 2003.

Tobgay also served from 2003 to 2007 in the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources as the director of the Human Resources department. Tobgay resigned from the Ministry of Labour in February 2007 and entered politics to serve his duties for the reigning king, who established democracy in 2008. After the election in 2013, Tobgay became the Prime Minister of Bhutan through a secret ballot. Dasho Tobgay was a co-founder member of the People's Democratic Party and was responsible for establishing the Party as Bhutan's first registered political party.

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## **Biographies and Abstracts of Presenters**

### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Sonam Pelden**  
**Organisation : Kuensel**  
**Position : Editor**  
**Country : Bhutan**



Sonam Pelden is the News Editor and Chief Reporter for Kuensel, the national newspaper of the Kingdom of Bhutan. She holds a Postgraduate qualification in Journalism from the Asian College of Journalism and she also graduated from Webster University-Leiden with an MA in International Relations and Affairs (2016 - 2017). Sonam also graduated for a MA in Journalism from the Ateneo de Manila University. [Back](#)

### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : YOSHIRO IMAEDA**  
**Organisation : Kyoto University**  
**Position : Visiting Professor**  
**Country : Japan**

Yoshiro Imaeda is a Japanese-born Tibetologist who has spent his career in France. He is director of research Emeritus at the National Center for Scientific Research in France. Born in Aichi Prefecture, Imaeda graduated from the Otani University Faculty of Letters, where he studied with Shoju Inaba, under whose advice he pursued graduate studies in France, where he earned his Ph.D. at Paris VII. Between 1981 and 1990, he worked as an adviser to the National Library of Bhutan Bhutan. In 1995, he was a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and has also held a visiting appointment at Columbia University. His research has focused on Dunhuang Tibetan documents, but he has also translated the poems of the VI Dalai lama, and produced a catalog of Kanjur texts. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Bhutaneity in the Tibetan cultural context**

#### **Yoshiro Imaeda**

Study Bhutan for herself and independently from Tibet is a recent phenomena. This is mainly due to the historical inaccessibility of Bhutan for foreign reserachers and it is only quite recently that Bhutanese studies *in situ* became possible in certain fields. Recent years witness an increasing number of studies on Bhutan and the creation of the International Society for Bhutan Studies (ISBS) thus is a natural outcome of this change and is in itself most welcome and justified.

It however is an undeniable fact that Bhutan has historically been an integral part of Tibetan cultural world especially in religious and linguistic areas. Nonetheless since the establishment of the 'Brug pa theocracy in the middle of the seventeenth century, and especially since that of the Wangchuck monarchy in 1907, Bhutan gradually developed and established her own identity distinct from other parts of Tibetan culture, including Tibet itself. It is particularly evident in the field of the spoken language. Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan, became as it is today a different language which can not be understood by the sole knowledge of Tibetan, although it derives from it.

However in certain fields of the written language (*chos skad*) which is common to both Tibetans and Bhutanese, a particular attention has to be paid. Here is an example. For Tibetans a calendar year starts from the first month (*zla ba dang po*) and ends with the twelveth month (*zla ba bcu gnyis pa*) while for Bhutanese, it starts with the eleventh month, followed by the twelveth month and then the first month. In other words, a Bhutanese year ends at the end of the tenth month of the calendar and a new year starts with the eleventh month. As a result when the eleventh and twelveth months are mentioned in *Chos skad*, one has to know either is is meant in the Tibetan way or in the Bhutanese way.

As an example of this, let us see the year of death of Mi pham tshe dbang bstan 'dzin (born in 1574), father of Bstan 'dzin rab rgyas (1638-1696). There are two biographies: one written by Gtsang mkhan chen 'jam dbyangs dpal ldan rgya mtsho (1610-1684), great Tibetan scholar fled to Bhutan following Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, and the other by Ngag dbang lhun grub (1673-1730), disciple of Bstan 'dzin rab rgyas, born and grown up in Bhutan.

According to the former: Mi pham tshe dbang bstan 'dzin passed away in the eleventh month of the water-sheep (*chu lug*) year which in the conventional conversion to the Gregorian calendar corresponds to 1643 AD. However according to the latter, the same subject passed away in the same eleventh month, but of the wood-monkey (*shing spre 'u*) year which follows the water-sheep (*chu lug*) year. At a first glance it appears that there is a gap of one year between the

two sources both written in *Chos skad*. However in reality the same date is meant by both sources and there is no discrepancy between them. The eleventh month in question is that of the water-sheep (*chu lug*) year according to the Tibetan way. However as the year ends with the tenth month according to the Bhutanese way, the same eleventh month is already that of the next year, the wood-monkey (*shing spre'u*) year which starts with the eleventh month, and not the first month.

This is a typical example of the Bhutanicity which is not yet well known and recognized. Future Bhutanese studies are expected to elucidate more cases of such peculiar features and characteristics of Bhutan in order to academically establish the Bhutanese identity. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : GWENDOLYN HYSLOP

**Organisation** : Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sydney

**Position** : Lecturer in Linguistics

**Country** : Australia

Dr. Gwendolyn Hyslop is a lecturer in Linguistics at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney in Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Science (Wisconsin), a Master of Arts and a PhD (Oregon). Dr Hyslop's research interests include documentation of endangered languages, with a focus on languages of the Himalayas, especially Bhutan and Northeast India. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

**On the history and development of the East Bodish languages**

**Gwendolyn Hyslop**

**The University of Sydney**

Of the approximately 20 languages spoken in Bhutan, seven belong to the East Bodish branch of Tibeto-Burman. These are Dakpa, Dzala, Kurtöp, Bumthap, Khengkha, Chali, and Upper Mangdep. While these languages are also spoken in neighbouring regions of Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh, the centre of gravity for these languages is eastern Bhutan; hence this group of languages is distinctly Bhutanese. The aim in this talk is to outline the languages and showcase the current understanding of their historical development.

The first proposal for an 'East Bodish' group can perhaps be attributed to Shafer (1954), who first noticed a language in the eastern Himalayas that was similar to Tibetan but obviously not a direct descendant from Classical Tibetan, in the way Tibetan or Dzongkha are. Hyslop (2013) continued this work to show how these seven languages are uniquely united in a family.

Historical Linguistics makes use of the 'comparative method' to reconstruct words to parent languages in the past. Speculatively, we can estimate that Proto East Bodish would have been spoken between 1500 and 2000 years ago, to the north of where the East Bodish languages currently are. Amongst the terms that reconstruct to Proto East Bodish are numerals, grains (barley and buckwheat only), and dairying terms. For example, some reconstructions are: *\*thek* 'one', *\*langa* 'five', and *\*gyu* 'milk'.

Since the breakup of the East Bodish family into Bhutan, the languages have continued to diverge, with Bumthap, Kurtöp, and Khengkha being especially close to each other. For example, these three languages all share the change *\*langa > yanga*. Dakpa and Dzala have been influenced by contact with Tibetan; for example, they have borrowed the Tibetan word for house: *khyim*. Upper Mangdep, the language spoken in the western-most East Bodish region, such as in Phobjikha, has received substantial influence from Dzongkha. We can see this, for example, in crop terms, such as *gäza* ‘maize’.

The East Bodish linguistic group appears to represent several modern groups of speakers united with a shared ethnic and linguistic history. In particular, East Bodish speakers have also been historically united by a shared religion, known as Sril-pa’I Lha Bon (Huber in press). Based on historical linguistic principles, we can also infer the ancestors of modern East Bodish languages had dairy technology and practiced buckwheat and barley agriculture. These technologies are still practiced in most modern East Bodish-speaking communities in Bhutan. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : FUMINOBU NISHIDA

**Organisation** : Tohoku University

**Position** : Associate professor

**Country** : Japan

Fuminobu Nishida studied Chinese at Keio University, Linguistics at the University of Hawai’i and the City University of Hong Kong. Mandarin, Cantonese and Nepali are amongst the languages which Nishida speaks. Fuminobu Nishida is currently completing studies of the Nàmùyì and Choyo languages in Sichuān and the Mangde language in Bhutan. Nishida is in charge of the Chinese language programme at Tohoku University, Sendai, Japan. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

**Sentence Types of Mangdebikha**

**Fuminobu Nishida**

**Tohoku University**

Mangde or, in Dzongkha, མང་ཐཱེ་བཞི་ཀླ། Mangdebi kha, is a language of the East Bodish group spoken in the Mangde river basin, on the eastern slopes of the Black Mountains of west central Bhutan and also in adjacent parts of the western Black Mountains. The language is also spoken in several villages to the east of the Mangdechu between Trongsa and Zh’äm gang. The language is also known by the names ’Nyenkha, Henkha and a slew of loconyms whereby the language is named after one of the villages where it is spoken. The Mangde speaking area is bounded to the west by Dzongkha, to the east by the Bumthang language, to the north by the Lakha speaking area, and to the south by the Kheng and Black Mountain Mönpa languages. The author has been working under the auspices of the Dzongkha Development Commission of the Royal Government of Bhutan toward the completion of a grammar of Mangde.

This paper deals with structural and functional aspects shown by sentences of Mangdebikha. Based on the first-hand data collect by the author, this paper focuses on the classification of verb sentences with respect to speech-act types, the possible types of non-verb sentence and the distribution of copula, as well as the concepts and factors crucial to the descriptions of

sentences of the language. Last but not least, relevant phenomena of other Tibeto-Burman languages will be discussed to enrich on understanding of sentences of TB languages. Initial results of ongoing fieldwork on the Mande variety spoken in Tshangkha, Tronsa will also be presented as well as sociolinguistic situation. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Geley Norbu**

**Organisation: Land Commission Secretariat**

**Position: Director**

**Country: Bhutan**

Mr. Norbu is the Director at National Land Commission Secretariat, Bhutan. He also served as the Chief Urban Planner at Thimphu Municipality. He holds a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning and a Bachelor's degree in Architecture. He also studied at MIT where he took the opportunity to enrich his understandings on urban planning and management systems, policy analysis, land, housing, poverty, and issues related to environment and climate change. He is also passionate about public service. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : FERGUS LYON**

**Organisation : Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research**

**Position : Acting Director of CEEDR**

**Country : United Kingdom**

Fergus Lyon is a Professor of Enterprise and Organisations in the Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research (CEEDR), Middlesex University in London and Deputy Director of the ESRC Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity. His research interests include social and sustainable enterprises, provision of public services by social enterprises, clustering and networks of enterprises, ethnic minority enterprise, and enterprise support policy. Recent funders include the Economic and Social Research Council, Cabinet Office, Dept of Business Innovation Skills, Innovate UK, International Labour Organisation, and a number of charities. In 2007 he was seconded to the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (Health team) in the Cabinet Office. He was the social enterprise lead on the £10m Third Sector Research Centre funded over five years by ESRC and Office for Civil Society. Previously he has carried out research in Ghana, Nigeria, India, Pakistan and Nepal. He is also a founder and director of a social enterprise preschool.



Fergus has over 130 publications including 40 substantial reports for policy makers funded by UK and international donors, 25 papers in established international journals, 23 book chapters, a number of shorter policy briefings and two books on social research methodologies. He holds a PhD on Trade systems, partnerships and rural development in Ghana from Department of Geography, University of Durham, UK. He also holds an MSc in Agriculture, Environment and Development (Distinction) from the School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia and a BA Hons in Geography, from the University of Newcastle. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : KUENGA WANGMO  
**Organisation** : The School of Field Studies  
**Position** : Resident Lecturer in Political and Socio-economic Dimensions of Environment  
**Country** : Australia

Kuenga Wangmo is Bhutan's first archaeologist. She has worked on archaeological sites in Bhutan, India, and the United States. She was a member of a Policy Think Tank under His Majesty's Secretariat and advises the Centre for Historical and Archaeological Studies at the Royal University of Bhutan. She was a post-doc research fellow at the Courtauld Institute of Art, UCL, in London and guest lectured at the Leon Levy Foundation Centre for Conservation, Royal Thimphu College, and Sherubtse College. Kuenga is a National Geographic Explorer. She has an undergraduate degree from Harvard University and post-graduate degrees from Cambridge University and The Courtauld Institute of Art. She was born in Bhutan and calls Thimphu, the capital of her country, home. She holds a PhD in Archeology and an MPhil in World Archeology both from the Cambridge University. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Social Anthropology and Archeology from Harvard University.

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Decision making under uncertainty: the case of building earthquake resilience in Bhutan**  
**Frances Harris (University of Hertfordshire, UK), Fergus Lyon (ESRC Centre For the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity, UK) and Kuenga Wangmo (Royal University of Bhutan).**

This paper seeks to investigate the how uncertainty about the risk of earthquakes affects decision making in Bhutan. Speculation concerning Bhutan's vulnerability to earthquakes has increased since the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, which had devastating consequences for lives and housing, and which was a clear wakeup call concerning the potential risk should an earthquake of similar magnitude occur in the country.

Bhutan has experienced serious earthquakes recently such as those in 2009 and 2011. However, there has not been a very severe earthquake in living memory or since records began. This has led some to claim that Bhutan is in a 'seismic gap', and may have a unique geology which means it is not prone to earthquakes in the same way as neighbouring Himalayan countries. However another theory is that there have been earthquakes but they have not been recorded. Recent evidence suggests a major earthquake in 1714 but this has not been remembered by those making decisions today.

In order to understand how people cope with such uncertainty regarding the science of earthquakes and a 'gap in seismic knowledge', we explore the following research questions:

How do different stakeholders perceive risk? What are the decision making strategies of stakeholders? How to policy makers respond to uncertainty?

This paper draws on theories about how different parts of society use scientific knowledge and also theories about how people cope with and understand uncertainty. This exploratory study uses qualitative interview data from a purposeful sample of 25 stakeholders from national government, local government (Dzongkhag and Gewog), businesses, farmers and civil society organisations. This is analyzed to draw out key themes and an understanding of responses to uncertainty of seismic activity.

Perceived risk is found to vary with different groups of stakeholders drawing on their experiences and different use of scientific knowledge. There is also a difference in the ability to access scientific information and the knowledge of scientific language. Interviews suggested that those policy makers and decision makers who were closer to central government had a better understanding of the scientific knowledge underpinning earthquake risk.

To some there is a lack of willingness to discuss earthquakes as this is seen as inauspicious. This demonstrates the importance of understanding the role of faith based approaches as a form of coping with such uncertainty.

Conclusions are drawn about how risk is perceived in the Bhutanese context and how preparation for a major earthquake (and associated communications) need to understand these different perceptions. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : SHAD AHMAD KHAN  
**Organisation** : Royal University of Bhutan  
**Position** : Senior lecturer  
**Country** : Bhutan

Shad Ahmad Khan is a Senior lecturer at the College of Business Studies at the Royal University of Bhutan. He holds a Master of Business Administration degree from the Aligarh Muslim University. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

### **Vertical farming for Bhutan: through lens of ecology, policy and economy**

**Shad Ahmad Khan (PhD)**

Vertical Farming is referred as a solution to the problem of rising population and shrinking of agricultural land to respond to the demand arising thereof. Vertical farming is the practice of producing food and medicine in vertically stacked layers, vertically inclined surfaces and/or integrated in other structures (such as in a skyscraper, used warehouse, or shipping container). The modern ideas of vertical farming use indoor farming techniques and controlled-environment agriculture (CEA) technology, where all environmental factors can be controlled. These facilities utilize artificial control of light, environmental control (humidity, temperature, gases, etc) and fertigation. There is a mixed opinion of researchers and practitioners with regards to its feasibility, advantages and disadvantages. Bhutan too in the quest of achieving self-reliance in food production has identified food production as a priority activity in the Schedule I of the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Rules and Regulations 2012 (amended 2014) which allows FDI up to 74% in Agro Based Production. The geographical issues the kingdom faces is a major hurdle in

achieving 100% food self-reliance for the country, to this a controlled environment agriculture through vertical farming can be a potential solution. The present paper analyses the feasibility of Vertical Farming in Bhutan in light of literatures, policy documents and texts. It's an attempt to answer the question that why Bhutan should think towards vertical farming and how it can be a sustainable solution both economically and ecologically.

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : RITU VERMA**

**Organisation : Tarayana Centre for Social Research and Development**

**Position : Senior Researcher and Strategic Leader**

**Country : Bhutan**

Ritu Verma is an international development scholar and researcher with 20+ years of trans-disciplinary experience in anthropology and international development/affairs in East and Southern Africa and the Buddhist Himalayas. She is fascinated by critical scholarship and out-of-the-box thinking and action. She has over a decade's experience in senior management and strategy, and in-depth expertise in programme coordination, action-oriented research, intellectual leadership and institutional innovation across the globe in different cultures and geographic contexts. Appreciation and high value placed on critical analysis, innovative thinking, honest communication, humour and happiness. She holds a P.Eng in Civil Engineering from the McGill University, a Master of Arts in International Development from Carleton University and a PhD in Anthropology from SOAS, University of London. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

**Bhutan's Unique Engagement with Climate Change and Development Alternatives: Lived Experiences and Resilient Futures**

**Dr. Ritu Verma**

Bhutan is an unparalleled carbon sink in the world, absorbing three times more carbon than it emits. Its high mountainous terrain means that it is particularly vulnerable to weather extremes and the effects of climate change. In the vast and variable region of Himalayas, Bhutan's policy engagement with climate change is both ambitious and unique, combining and prioritizing social and environmental goals for holistic, sustainable and transformative outcomes. Upheld as an "inspiration to the world" by UN Climate Chief Christiana Figueres, the Himalayan Kingdom encodes its commitment to environmental conservation in its constitution stipulating more than 60% forest cover in perpetuity. Recent pledges made at COP21 in Paris further commit the nation to remain carbon neutral and integrate climate adaptation and mitigation into far-reaching development policies. Bhutan's sensitive land-locked geopolitical position in relation to two carbon-emitting giants, demonstrates that discursive social uptake of climate change, institutional interventions and engagement with the Anthropocene are varied across the Himalayan region. The paper explores Bhutan's unique environmental policies, institutional practices, and socio-cultural and political-economic engagement with climate change. It situates them within its unique history, Buddhist and spiritual-ecological beliefs, and geopolitics, as well as GNH, a

holistic, integrated eco-social framework and living development alternative that guides the nation. In doing so, it investigates enabling conditions, conceptual underpinnings, everyday practices, dedicated institutions and development resources, as well as the challenges that the nation faces in a rapidly changing world where climate change impacts are observed across borders. The paper argues that discourses, policies and cultural norms interact with local material and interpretive contexts, shaping lived experiences in relation to climate change, and enabling varied outcomes for humans and sentient beings across diverse socio-cultural-ecological mountain landscapes.

**Key Words:** Bhutan, climate change, sustainability, anthropocene, development alternative, policy, GNH [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: DAVID GELLNER**

**Organisation : Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford (ISCA)**

**Position : Professor of Anthropology**

**Country : United Kingdom**

David Gellner is a Professor of Social Anthropology, Director of ISCA and a Fellow of All Souls College, University of Oxford. He studies the Anthropology of South Asia, East Asia, Buddhism, Hinduism, cities, ritual, politics, ethnicity, activism, borderlands, class formation and cultural change. He was Head of the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography from 2009-2012 and again from 2016-2018. His doctoral research (1982-4) was on the Vajrayana Buddhism of the Newars and on Newar social organization, in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. He has carried out fieldwork in Nepal on many subsequent occasions, broadening his interests to include politics and ethnicity, healers, mediums, and popular approaches to misfortune, religious change, activism of all sorts, democratization, elections, borderlands, Dalits, and class formation. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : FRANCOIS POMMERET**

**Organisation : Bhutan Foundation**

**Position : Director of Research**

**Country : France**

Dr. Françoise Pommaret, is Director of Research at the CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research, France) and Adjunct Professor at Institute of Language and Culture (ILCS), Royal University of Bhutan. She has been associated with Bhutan in different capacities since 1979 and has published numerous scholarly articles and books on different aspects of Bhutanese culture including the definitive guidebook Bhutan, a Cultural Guidebook. She is currently involved in the documentation of the Bhutan cultural atlas and is



working on the interface between deities, local powers and migrations in Bhutan. Dr. Pommaret has lectured intensively in numerous academic institutions around the world and has been guest-curator for several exhibitions. She has been advising the Bhutan Foundation on our cultural heritage projects including restoration of Wangduechoeling Palace. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **People on the move: In-country migrations in Bhutan**

**Françoise Pommaret, PhD**

This paper draws on a new understanding of the dynamic process of intra-country migration that has been, until now, slightly overlooked in the Bhutanese context. It sets out an overview of a range of different intra-migrations that reconfigured the human and linguistic landscape of Bhutan along her history.

When speaking of migrations into Bhutan, the term evokes either the ancient migrations of the early historical period (8th-9th century) from Tibet or the recent 20th century migration from Darjeeling and Sikkim by different peoples regrouped under the misnomer blanket term of "Nepali" and called in Bhutan Lhotshampas.

However, Bhutan has a rich linguistic mosaic that reflects a longer, more cultural complex of process of movement and settlement. In this paper, I turn to address the different intra-Bhutan migrations that have occurred since the 11th century until the present. These intra-migrations within Bhutan and from among the various linguistic groups were, and indeed are, of a different nature from either the early migrations from Tibet or the 20th century migrations from Darjeeling and Sikkim.

These intra-migrations reflect a range of reasons and complex histories: transhumance, taxes, search for new lands for cultivation, as well as, religious. Bhutan provides a unique framework for the study of migrations, with three major factors at play: the interdependence of the valleys combined with the socio-economic migrations and religious duties.

In my paper, I will provide a short overview of these migrations which have reconfigured the human and linguistic landscape of Bhutan across the centuries, and will emphasize on some regional case-studies.

This paper aims at providing a dynamic, and in my view more accurate, image of Bhutan that challenges the common impression of farmers ensconced in their valleys, as generally reported by casual observers. It might also help to refine our understanding of the meaning of community vitality in Bhutan by linking communities with a shared heritage. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : AZADE TOYGAR

**Organisation** : Humboldt University

**Position** : PhD Candidate

**Country** : Germany

Azade Yoyger is a Phd Candidate at Humboldt University in Germany. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : JOHANNA PRIEN-KAPLAN

**Organisation** : Humboldt University

**Position** :

**Country** :

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Dengju Rites of Neyjom and Pao in Wangdue Phodrang**

**Johanna Prien-Kaplan**

This paper investigates *neyjom* and *pao* spirit mediums found in rural western Bhutan. Although various studies of this type of ritual specialist have been made, most fail to account for the complex social worlds within which they are embedded and operate, while systematic analysis of local ritual language in chants at the heart of *neyjom* and *pao* practice is passed over briefly or simply avoided. Moreover, existing studies of spirit mediums have often been evaluative, and sometimes dismissive or critical, rather than neutral efforts to understand local meanings and the subject positions of all those involved.

The case study data used for this paper concerns a local network of *neyjom* and *pao* from the area of Gaselo (Wangdue Phodrang), gathered using long-term field research. After briefly introducing these ritual specialists as members of their village communities and families, I will focus upon the ritual chants belonging to the Dengju rite they perform. Dengju rites are organized for each household individually, and conducted on a triennial basis. They have not been described before. Many types of crops and food items are offered to a spirit called Dengju to ensure a good yield, a healthy family, and an everyday life free of obstacles. The preparations for a Dengju are quite complicated and extended, and the *neyjom* and *pao* chants in colloquial Dzongkha detail the collection of materials, goods, foodstuffs and actions required. In some cases, trade connections are mentioned (e.g. for the mandarins coming from India) and household activities are implied (e.g. different types of snacks and drinks that are prepared at home). These chants demonstrate not only the unique character of Bhutanese rural culture in contrast to other Tibeto-Burman speaking peoples in the region, but also the strong influence of conventional Buddhism upon the practices of *neyjom* and *pao*.

The talk will be supported with the use of audio and video material. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

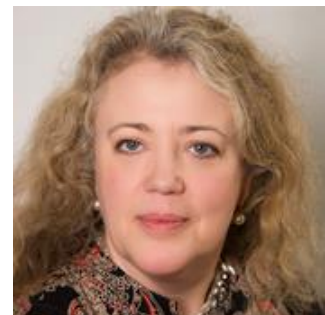
**Session Chair: Susan Hitch**

**Organisation** : Lord Sainsbury of Turville's pro bono programme

**Position** : Manager

**Country** : United Kingdom

Susan Hitch is the Manager of Lord Sainsbury of Turville's pro bono programme and a broadcaster on arts and culture on BBC radio and television. She is a board member of the Institute for Government, Progress, Centre for Cities, Policy Network, Network for Progress and the Centre for European Reform. Susan is a trustee of the Sigrid



Rausing Trust and a member of the advisory board of the Weidenfeld Scholarships and the Rand Europe Council of Advisors. She is also on the board of the Gate Theatre, a trustee of the Orlando Consort and one of the founders of the Gdansk Theatre Foundation. She was a Fellow of Magdalen College Oxford where she taught Medieval English Literature and the History of the English Language. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : RICHARD WHITECROSS  
**Organisation** : Edinburgh Napier University  
**Position** : Associate Professor in Dispute Resolution, Delict and Professional Practice  
**Country** : United Kingdom



Richard is lecturer in Delict, Dispute Resolution and Ethics in the Centre for Law. He is joint personal development tutor ('PDT') for students in Year 3 of the LLB Programme. He is a member of the University's Child and Family Law and Policy Team. Among other things, the Team research contemporary issues in Child and Family Law and comment on legal and social policy reform. Richard is Programme Leader for the Business School Doctorate in Business Administration.

Prior to joining the Law Team at Edinburgh Napier University, Richard was a Senior Analyst working in Justice Analytical Services, Scottish Government. Before joining the Scottish Government, Richard was held a number of research and teaching positions at the University of Edinburgh in the School of Social and Political Science. Whilst at the University of Edinburgh, he was a regular expert witness in Asylum cases across the UK. Law and in particular how law works has consistently informed his research interest. Richard carried out ethnographic fieldwork in Nepal, Bhutan and West Bengal between 1999 and 2001. He was awarded his PhD in December 2002. Richard worked as a lawyer at Burness. Richard taught on the Diploma at Edinburgh Law School between 1993 and 1998. He holds the following degrees: MA (Hons) History; LLB (Ord) ; LLM, MSc (Taught) Social Anthropology; MSc (Research) Social Anthropology (Distinction); and a PhD in Legal Anthropology all from University of Edinburgh. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

**New Horizons? : The right to environmental protection and the Supreme Court of Bhutan. Edinburgh Napier University, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK**  
**Richard Whitecross**

In August 2013 the Second South Asian Judicial Roundtable on Environmental Justice was held in Thimphu, Bhutan. The event was sponsored by the Asian Development Bank and under the auspices of the Judiciary of Bhutan. It drew together chief justices, judges, court officials and environmental experts from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The *Thimphu Declaration on Enhancing Environmental Justice in South Asia* issued at the conclusion of the Roundtable states that "chief justices and judges recognised their own important and unique role in ensuring environmental preservation, by upholding constitutional rights and providing fair and comprehensive adjudication of environmental cases" (Thimphu Declaration, 2013:1).

This presentation considers the right to environmental protection set out in Article 5 of the 2008 Constitution it focuses on the role of the Supreme Court of Bhutan as it begins to develop its own jurisprudence. The presentation is in four parts. Part 1 provides a brief overview of Bhutan and in particular the key potential environmental threats that it current faces and the increasing awareness of and concern about local level environmental issues. Part 2 briefly outlines the main environmental legislation and regulations developed in Bhutan since 2000.

Part 3 focuses on Article 5 of the 2008 Constitution of Bhutan. Article 5 places a duty on the Bhutanese citizen, as well as the government and Parliament, to protect the environment and to balance conservation with sustainable development. Article 5 is considered with reference to other Articles of the 2008 Constitution in relation to the current provisions for the enforcement of the right to environmental protection. challenge of decisions? These two basic considerations raise the central concern of the paper, whether the Supreme Court of Bhutan will recognise the *locus standi* of a party seeking judicial intervention in the enforcement of the right to environmental protection. Part 4 considers possible barriers and lessons from judicial activism in neighbouring countries, notably the Indian Supreme Court. It argues that the 2008 Constitution and the NEP Act 2007 provide the Supreme Court with the basis to support the viability of such claims. Finally, it is argued that by taking a proactive approach to the right to environmental protection and extending standing that the Supreme Court will enable the emergence of a strong civil society. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : NITASHA KAUL  
**Organisation** : University of Westminster  
**Position** : Associate Professor  
**Country** : United Kingdom



Nitasha Kaul is a Kashmiri novelist, academic, poet, economist, artist who lives in London. She often finds herself speaking to, engaged with, writing and addressing, and part of, specific audiences who do not speak much to each other: economists, novelists, poets, feminists, economic social and political justice activists, politics and international relations theorists, musicians and filmmakers, Bhutan scholars, Kashmiris, street-artists, academic philosophers (to name a few). Her first book was a scholarly monograph on economics and philosophy titled 'Imagining Economics Otherwise: encounters with identity/difference' (Routledge, 2007). She continues to write and speak on issues of political economy, neoliberalism, economic justice and economic violence. Her recent work has been on the contemporary global rise of right wing politics, Kashmir, Bhutan, gender/border violence and nation-statism.

She has a BA Honours in Economics from SRCC, Delhi University, a Masters in Economics with a specialisation in Public Policy, and a Joint PhD in Economics and Philosophy from the University of Hull, UK (2003). She was earlier a tenured Assistant Professor of Economics at the Bristol Business School (2002-2007), an Associate Professor in Creative Writing at the Royal Thimphu College in Bhutan (2010), and a Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Democracy in London (2007-2015). At present, she is an Associate Professor in Politics and International Relations at the University of Westminster in London where she has been teaching postgraduates courses in Politics and IR since 2012. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

### **Where is Bhutan? The historical production of an ‘inbetween’ Bhutan**

**Dr Nitasha Kaul**

Bhutan is often defined by outsiders in terms of an exhaustive *inbetween-ness* ascribing it to the geographical and strategic location as a small country in-between two of the largest countries in the world - India and China. In this paper, by adopting a lens that I term “subaltern geopolitics”, I identify and analyse the economic, security, inequality, and prestige imperatives in the region in 18th-20th centuries that led to this state of contemporary in-betweenness. In addition to the role of the dominant outsiders, including the British empire and post-colonial India, the paper will also engage with the contributions of Bhutanese elite in resisting, accommodating, transforming, and successfully creating the contemporary modern state. While for the outsiders, it is the “in-betweenness” and its strategic significance that matter most, for the Bhutanese people, it is the “smallness” that has become a structuring factor in psychogeography finding a powerful expression in their everyday identity. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : MICHAELA WINDISCHGRÄTZ**

**Organisation : Dept of Employment Law and Social Security Law, University of Vienna**

**Position : Professor of Law and Deputy Head of the Department**

**Country : Vienna**

Michaela Windischgrätz is Professor of Law and Deputy Head of the Department of Employment Law and Social Security Law at the Faculty of Law, University of Vienna. She studied law at Vienna University and at the Université Panthéon-Assas Paris II (LL.B., LL.M.). Additionally, Michaela completed a second diploma in Social Anthropology and Tibetan and Buddhist studies at the University of Vienna (B.A.,M.A.). She wrote her master's thesis on “biopiracy” and the intellectual property rights of indigenous communities. Her subsequent Doctorate, which she earned from the University of Vienna, focused on medical law. She earned her professor title in 2002 for her book on the coordination of social security systems in Europe.

Since 2016, Michaela has served as the Coordinator of the faculty mobility partnership between the University of Vienna and the Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law (JSW Law) in Bhutan. She is currently working on an oral legal history research project exploring customary legal traditions in Bhutan. Prof. Windischgrätz teaches Buddhist Legal History at JSW Law.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Dispute Settlement in a Changing Society**

**Michaela Windischgrätz**

Research on mediation practices throughout the world has shown a great variety of practices that are called “mediation” in various professional and cultural contexts. Scholars attempted to systematize these processes of dispute settlement in order to understand the underlying dynamics and implications.

In my presentation I am going to analyse some of the interviews given by village elders and officials who mediated cases during the time of the 3rd King (for further information on the Oral History Project see my CV). From the perspective of a legal historian it is important to take into consideration the legal changes that were caused by the enactment of the Thrimzhung Chenmo in 1957 by the 3rd King. This legal code already introduced some legal transplants from Indian Law and thus shapes the legal situation of the time the interviews are reporting on.

In modern Bhutan, mediation of disputes – contrary to litigation in courts – is still needed as an appropriate means to settle conflicts. So called Nangkha Nangdrik is seen as the most effective and efficient way of resolving disputes, creating win-win situation and not compromising relationships in the communities. The dynamics of Mediation – as one way to support GNH-pillar „community vitality“ - might have changed though. Further research, partly started, will have to put the focus on the various actors shaping the mediation process – parties as well as mediators and the wider field of involved persons. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Plenary Session Chair and Discussant: Rev. Professor Martin Laird**

**Organisation : Villanova University**

**Position : Professor of Early Christian Studies**

**Country : USA**



Martin Laird, O.S.A. is a member of the Order of St Augustine and Professor of Early Christian Studies at Villanova University, USA. He has extensive training in Contemplative Disciplines and gives retreats and lectures throughout the United States, Great Britain and Ireland. Among his books are *Into the Silent Land* and *A Sunlit Absence*, compelling works for those interested in contemplative prayer. He draws on the ancient wisdom of both the Christian East and West as well as on contemporary literature. His most recent book, *An Ocean of Light*, is forthcoming from Oxford University Press. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : VEN LOPEN GEMBO DORJI**

**Organisation : Zhung Dratshang**

**Position : Secretary General**

**Country : Bhutan**

Ven Lopen Gembo Dorji is the Advisor to the Central Monk Body, the Sangha of Bhutan. He served as the representative of the Central Monk Body in the Nation Assembly and the Royal Advisory Council of Bhutan. He was also the Secretary General of the Central Monk Body. Apart from completion of two terms Three Years Retreat, he studied at Kanglung Sherubtse College,



Tango Buddhist College, Reitaku University, Tokyo University and East West Center (Hawaii, USA). [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### ***Garcham – The Masked Dances of Bhutan***

**Ven Lopen Gembo Dorji**

This talk addresses the first aspect of the Buchos comprising “Gar-thig-yang Sum”, the art of dances, creations and chants which stand out typical unique to this country. Gar referred to various ritual and cultural dances.

The headquarter of the Central Monk Body of Bhutan performs numerous religious chants and masked dances for the benefit of the entire country. These chants and dances are the highlights of Vajrayana Buddhist traditions that have been in practice for many centuries. Since Buddhism is a religion that deals with human nature, it is indeed a philosophy of mind and therefore of creations. The tradition deals with various means and methods directed towards realizing the nature of our ordinary consciousness. Thus, initiating and listening to ritual chants, music and watching the Mandalas and dances can ward off illness, misfortunes and various strong and settled negative energies ensuring development of peace, tranquillity and happiness in the country.

The Gar-cham, which include the masked dances, are the highlights of our Vajrayana Buddhist traditions that have been in practice for centuries. The name derives from Gar (emanation display) or Cham (religious dance) and therefore Garcham.

A key factor of all Buchos that I will observe is the mental state that underlies them. Since the dances are performed as part of the ritual performance following the process of Daked (visualization of oneself as the deity) and Dunked (visualization and invocation of the Mandala of the deity), and the sequenced process of Toedlay-jangchub-drupa (process of liberation or practice course to achieve enlightenment) and Medlay-dragi-drelwa (process of subjugation or beholding the promises to protect and liberate sentient beings) activities. In the process, the most dreadful enemy and greatest barrier to enlightenment or realization - our outer bondage of ego clinging, Zung-zin (duality of subject-object) is sacrificially subjugated and the inner consciousness is liberated and realization achieved. In simple, the process of Cham clears all negative forces and transforms them into positive energies. So while one may think of dances as external physical acts, they arise from a meditative state. And because of the mind state that underlies each of these, the leaders of the Masked Dance – or the Chant Masters – or the Mandala writers – must complete three years meditation in order to be able to take up a leadership responsibility.

The paper will present how the interior state and training in meditation combine with exterior action, in ways that are unique in Bhutan. It observes how training in meditation and the generation of awareness and genuine thoughtfulness of others, undergirds the actions, and also how the visualizations are required in order for the exterior actions to be effective.

Masked dance and ritual ceremonies are the development stage of the Vajrayana deity practice. Dancers and performers transform their body, speech and mind into the state of the deity through visualization, contemplation, specialized movements and recitation of the mantra and ritual text of the deity. Once the foundation of contemplative visualization completed, the wisdom aspect of the deity is invited from the Buddha field and merged together creating a live image of the assembly of refuge deities able to bestow powerful blessing and grant wishes. The

paper explains how masked dance is a vital aspect of the spiritual culture of Bhutan that needs to be propagated and preserved for future generations. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : VEN LAM LOTAY SINGAY**

**Position : Lam**

**Organization : Central Monastic Body**

**Country : Bhutan**

Lam Lotay Singye is a highly accomplished meditation master having completed three years retreat at Cheri Meditation Centre followed by four years intensive meditation at Mountain Retreat of Lingzhi Tangdro. Subsequently he taught at various Buddhist schools including Tango Buddhist College in Thimphu. Besides, he was the meditation instructor of Langpoizer Meditation Center. In addition, he was the Abbot of Gaylegphug District Monk Body. Currently he is the Lam (Resident Spiritual Master) of Nyizergang Minastery, the seat of His Holiness Je Nyizer Truilku Rinpoche in Wangduephodrang District. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

### **Religious Music and Chants from Bhutan**

#### **Lam Lotay Singay**

In the *Sutra*, Shakyamuni Buddha summed his forty-five years of 84,000 different teachings into the following lines –

Do not commit even a single unwholesome thought and action

Engage in virtuous and merit generating thought and action

Conquer and refine your own mind completely

This is the teaching of the Buddha

Why we need to do virtuous deeds and avoid committing unwholesome actions is simply because we don't want suffering of any type. Neither do other sentient beings. We want peace and happiness. In the same way all others want too. The cause of suffering is the accumulation of bad Karma (negative thought and action). Similarly, the cause of peace and happiness is the accumulation of good Karma (positive thought and action). Therefore, if we want happiness and to avoid suffering, we must accumulate good merit and discard any kind of unwholesome thought and action.

In order to control our mind, we have to free our mind from all kinds of thoughts. Just be aware of what we are doing from moment to moment. We could concentrate on our breathing or gaze at an object taught from *Zhiney* (shamatha) meditation. Then gradually lead oneself to practice *Lha-thong* (vipassana) and achieve realization. But in this degeneration period, how many can afford to take this path? I guess only very few will have the luxury and be fortunate to have the opportunity. Therefore, the best way to achieve realization for all without much effort incidentally is the Vajrayana method of ritual dance and performances. Who will not wish to achieve enlightenment as you watch, play, dance and listen to beautiful chants and music.

The profound principle is to clear or free our mind from thoughts and emotions, and develop alertness or simply be conscious from moment to moment. Attending a ritual performance can do wonders in controlling our mind and generating wisdom, which is the key to free oneself from the cycle of suffering and achieve enlightenment. This is because Vajrayana is a result oriented approach and therefore right from the beginning, we are initiated with realization. Therefore, anything can trigger the mind to achieve realization which otherwise is confirmed to take eons. For example, in my monastery, some of the lay performers from the village are better practitioner and initiated into the Dharma and more refined than the monks.

In Buddhism, we talk of and also indulge in simple practices such as making aspiration prayers, dedicating the merit, and rejoicing in virtue. Though simple, these practices are very powerful skilful means for bringing positive change. It leads us beyond our limited notion of self and other, and therefore, awaken our wisdom and compassion. Throughout the ceremony, the union of compassion and wisdom are never lost. Therefore, realization and perpetual contentment or happiness is assured.

Thus, in my following presentation, I will highlight on various sections observed within a ritual service such as the refuge and tribute to the lineage masters, generation of Bodhi-chitta, *Dhaked* (self transformation into the deity), *Dhunked* (creation of the refuge Mandala), *Choedpa* (offerings), *Toedpa* (praises), *Kangso* (sate fully), *Ngyersol* (assignment) and finally dedication. It is my hope that the participants will have some idea why the Monk Body of Bhutan is conducting over six hundred days of ritual services in a year. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : His Eminence DRALOP RINPOCHE SANGAY DORJI  
**Organisation** : Central Monastic Body  
**Position** : Drabi Lopen  
**Country** : Bhutan

His Eminence Dralop Rinpoche Sangay Dorji pursued his master degree in Buddhist philosophy from Tango Shedra in Thimphu. His Eminence is one of the greatest Buddhist Masters of Bhutan. He is well versed in Buddhist philosophy and an accomplished practitioner. Dralop Rinpoche is also the reservoir of empowerment, authorizations and oral instructions for both Kargyud and Nyingma traditions. Rinpoche has served the Monk Body in various capacities as Senior instructor at Phajodhing Shedra, Vice Principal of Tango Buddhist College, Principal of Cheri Meditation Center, Chief Abbot of Trongsa District Monk Body, Chief Spiritual Advisor to the Nunneries and the Drabi Lopen (Minister Rank) of the Monk Body of Bhutan. Rinpoche had completed three terms of Three Years Retreat. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

### **Mandala and Arts (*Thig*)**

#### **His Eminence Dralop Rinpoche Sangay Dorji**

For the monastic order, Zhabdrung Rinpoche propagated the three teachings of *phachoe* and introduced the three traditions of the *bhuchoe* popularly known as the *Yang-Thig-Gar Sum* which are too precious to be forgotten. He made it compulsory for all members of

the Sangha to learn and practice these teachings that he had specifically highlighted in the first legal code of conduct and the first act of Bhutan, the *Chayig Chhenmo*. As a result, we the members of the Bhutanese Sangha followed strictly and continued learning and practicing to this day. Out of these *yang-thig-gar sum*, I will deliberate on the *Thig*, underlying Bhutanese architecture and designs.

The *Thig* is developed with a consciousness of the revolutions and paths of the sun, moon, planets and stars known as *lung golai thig*. This enables one to know the exact location of the sun, moon, stars and planets; in which space they are dwelling and in which part they move. This particular *Thig* (calculation study) is used mostly by the astrologers to make calculations for building new houses, Dzongs, temples, Mandalas, and to predict good and bad periods.

The *Thig* also involves the calculation of the “Sadag Tochey”, calculation and measurement of the Big-bellied Earth-owning Spirits. It is using very precise geometrical relationships, related to these Spirits, that all Bhutanese Dzongs and houses are built. This prevents all kinds of revulsions and harm from the Earth-owning Spirits (rightful owners of the land).

The *Thig* is used in a third way: to draw the Mandalas for temples and residence of Gods. The paper conveys how these mandalas are drawn – the geometric relationships and underlying structure, the colours and their significance, where the symbols are placed, the size of the structure and relationships between height and width.

The fourth use is to govern the size and measurement of the representations of Body, Speech and Mind of the enlightened state). All *Kutens* (body representations) or symbolic representation of both peaceful and wrathful deities or gods in a painting, statue or printed must apply and follow the measurement rules and structure. Similarly, for *Sungtens* (speech representations) the Bhutanese calligraphy must observe the measurement requirements. For Thugtens (mind representations) the eight different kinds of stupas must comply to the size and measurement rules and accordingly constructed.

In brief, all *Zorig* (Arts & Crafts), must be made in accordance with their size, proportion and culture. Therefore, Zhabdrung Rinpoche saw that the *Thig* was very important for our Bhutanese culture and tradition.

Finally, all Mandalas, monuments and houses built in accordance with our unique Bhutanese traditions need proper consecration at completion. This wards-off all adverse conditions; creates auspiciousness; brings in prosperity; generates immense blessings and create positive inter-dependent connections. That is why in Bhutan so much importance is given to the consecration and is refreshed as often as possible. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Dorji Penjore**

**Organisation : Centre for Bhutan Studies & Gross National Happiness.**

**Position : Head of the Research Division**

**Country : Bhutan**

Anthropologist by training (PhD, 2016, Australian National University), researcher by profession, bureaucrat by function, and poet at heart, Dorji Penjore currently heads of the Research Division



of the Centre for Bhutan Studies & Gross National Happiness. Dorji Penjore's research specialty is in the areas of Bhutan (economic) anthropology, Bhutan oral literature (folklore), oral interviews, village ethnography, and social surveys. He has an experience in long-term anthropological fieldwork, home ethnography, Bhutanese decentralization, project development and management, and Gross National Happiness. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : SONAM NYENDA

**Organisation** : College of Language and Culture Studies, Bhutan

**Position** : Associate Lecturer

**Country** : Bhutan

Sonam Nyenda is an Associate Lecturer at the College of Language and Culture Studies. He has a Masters Degree in Religious Studies from the University of Colorado Boulder, USA. Currently he teaches Religion and Bhutanese Cultural Heritage to the undergraduates in CLCS. Besides teaching, he is also the Coordinator of the Bhutan and Himalayan Research

Centre (BHRC) at the college. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

**Sonam Nyenda**

**Kangsöl:**

A Vajrakīla Performance Tradition of Sumthrang Monastery in Central Bhutan  
Kangsöl (bskang gsol) literally means "fulfillment and offering, usually to a Dharma protector" and refers to appeasing local deities, including protective deities (srung ma) as well as the tutelary deity. Kangsöl is mainly a performative tradition of appeasing its tutelary deity (yi dam) Vajrakīla (rdo rje phur pa). Vajrakīla embodies the enlightened activities of all the Buddhas, whose practice is famous for being the most powerful deity for removing obstacles, destroying the negative forces with his wrathful compassion and purifying the spiritual contamination.

This form of deity practice is undertaken both for soteriological as well as apotropaic purposes. Although, while there are some studies on the soteriological aspect of the practice, there are few studies focusing on its apotropaic aspects of the practice, a lacuna to which my presentation seeks to contribute. Scholars were intrigued by the study yet cautious about the apotropaic aspects of the practice, especially the violence inherent in rites of subjugation. At times it is claimed by academics that such practices involve a live victim. This project attempts to explore Kangsöl as practiced at Sumthrang Monastery in central Bhutan, wherein an annual Vajrakīla performance is enacted to affect this-worldly issues, particularly by appeasing deities and bringing malevolent spirits under control by securing them in a hierarchical order. This hierarchical order is concurrently reflected among community

members. Therefore, I examine the intersections of lineage, ritual, and visual art of Sumthrang in order to understand how its Vajrakāla tradition and the Kangsöl festival in particular function to restore the cosmic balance between physical and non physical realms of the community around the monastery on an annual basis. The efficacy of this performative tradition to restore the balance between physical and non physical realm is understood through Sumthrang's blessed lineage and transmission, distinct ritual enactment, and textually followed images that support the living presence of Vajrakāla deities, which is performed through redundancy of ritual enactment and multimedia performance. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : DAVID HECHT  
**Organisation** : University of Georgia  
**Position** : PhD Candidate  
**Country** : USA

David Hecht is a PhD candidate in the Center for Integrative Conservation (ICON) at the University of Georgia. He is also a Research Partner at the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN), Thimphu, Bhutan. His research interests are: Community-based conservation, anthropology of landscapes, ethno-ornithology and Bhutan studies.



In his research he draws on the anthropology of place and landscape to explore the spatial dimensions of community-based Black-necked crane and White-bellied heron conservation in Bhutan. He focuses on the entanglements between lived religion, place-based local deities, species of conservation concern, and adaptive beliefs/traditions embedded in landscapes and along trans-national flyways, in the context of NGO conservation practice and protected area management. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

**Home-Ranges for Birds, Home-Ranges for Deities: Spatial Ontologies & Sacred Landscapes in Community-based Black-necked crane Conservation in Bhutan**  
**David M. Hecht (PI), and Jigme Tshering, RSPN (Co-PI)**  
**Integrative Conservation (ICON) and Anthropology Ph.D. Program at University of Georgia**

Bhutan is frequently referred to as the last remaining Himalayan Buddhist kingdom, a nation where the fabric of social life is interwoven on a landscape inscribed by the pantheon of Vajrayana Buddhism, Nepalese Hinduism, and Indigenous bon. The omnipresence of religious fortresses, sacred sites, and belief in place-based local deities (neydah zhida) translates to regionally distinct land management practices rooted in local spatial ontologies. This has led researchers to describe avenues for aligning regional cosmologies with broader institutional goals of environmental conservation and protected area management (Allison, 2015; Pommarett, 1998). Notably, governmental and institutional discourse recognizes and reiterates the importance of the nation's sacred cosmology in protecting the kingdom's cultural and ecological heritage (Allison, 2017). And yet, community-based conservation initiatives inextricably linked to local land-use



practices infrequently integrate local ontologies, let alone spatial ontologies, in project design and decision-making.

While attempts to align conservation priorities with sacred cosmologies are common in the E. Himalayas, there has been remarkably little research investigating how different types of protected areas, those established following institutional conservation objectives and those effectively protected in accordance with local belief systems, are produced and differentially managed in relation to species-specific ecological research. Prominent protected area projects in Bhutan include avian conservation priorities, particularly with high profile avian species like the Black-necked crane, at a time when institutional interest in spatial mapping tools for monitoring critical habitats and estimating wildlife home ranges are rapidly growing in the country. While the Bhutanese landscape is co-produced by human agents, wildlife habitats, and the unseen realm of the sacred (beyul) and place-based local deities (neydah zhida), the spatial and ontological relationships between religiously-inscribed landscapes and conservation-inscribed landscapes has not been comprehensively explored.

In my research, I will examine how conservation protected areas for Black-necked cranes are entangled with areas protected in accordance with local ontologies, notably beyul and neydah zhida; spatially and empirically modeling the home-ranges of BNCs with the variable range and extent of sacred sites and neydah zhida. In doing so, I aim to demonstrate the value in broadening the theoretical underpinnings and conservation utility of home-range modeling for species of conservation concern, while supporting community conservation with ethnographically informed spatialities and socio-cultural realities. I draw from scholarship in the anthropology of landscapes, as well as foundational aspects of the public participation geographic information systems (PPGIS) approach to inform my methodologies. In addition to community ethnography, I engage in collaborative mapping sessions with community partners to foreground local spatial ontologies of cultural landscapes and protected areas in order to highlight under-represented knowledge systems in avian conservation decision-making and project design. I will discuss my 5-year collaborative partnership with the Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) and local conservation support groups involved in community-based black-necked crane conservation. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Hon. (Dasho) Tashi Wangyal**

**Organisation : National Council of Bhutan**

**Position : Eminent Member**

**Country : Bhutan**

Hon. (Dasho) Tashi Wangyal is an Eminent Member of the National Council of Bhutan as appointed by His Majesty, the King. He holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Development Economics from Institute of Developing Economies Advanced School (IDEAS) in Japan, (2003 - 2004).

In addition, he also holds an MPhil in International Relations from University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom (1999). He also holds a BA (Hons) in Economics and Political Studies from Trent University, Ontario in Canada, (1998). Lastly, he also holds an International Baccalaureate Diploma from Pearson United World College in Victoria, Canada (1993-1995). Hon. (Dasho) Tashi Wangyal is currently part of the Economic Affairs Committee and the Foreign Relations Committee within the National Council in the Parliament of Bhutan. He was the founding member of the Royal Education Council in Thimphu, Bhutan (2007-2009) and was an



Independent Researcher and Consultant specializing in macro-economic and trade policy issues from 2005 to 2007. He was also a Research Analyst for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bhutan (2004-2005) and was Economist in the Ministry of Finance (2000-2004), among other positions. Hon. (Dasho) Tashi has authored several publications for the Royal Government of Bhutan and major international agencies on topics ranging from development economics to trade policy issues and contributes to academic journals. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : MATTHEW SCHUELKA

**Organisation** : University of Birmingham

**Position** : Lecturer

**Country** : United Kingdom

Dr Matthew Schuelka is Lecturer in Inclusive Education and also serves as the Programme Director for the Inclusion and Special Educational Needs (ISEN) programme at the University of Birmingham – both in the UK and in Dubai. He comes from a diverse background of study, research, and teaching experience in the United States, Bhutan, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom. Past school teaching experience includes general education, music education, language arts, and special/inclusive education. Dr Schuelka is very active in inclusive education development, policy, and understanding around the world. He has been involved in educational research and development projects in places such as the United States, Serbia, Zambia, India, Japan, Malaysia, and especially Bhutan. He is a consulting advisor for the Global Resource Center on Inclusive Education, based at the University of Minnesota, and has undertaken research and consultation for UNICEF, USAID, JICA, the British Academy, and the Toyota Foundation.



He holds a Ph.D in Educational Policy and Administration with emphasis in Comparative and International Education from the University of Minnesota; an M.A. in International Education Administration and Policy Analysis from Stanford University; a M.Ed. in Special Education from the University of Vermont; and a B.A. in Music Education with minor in English Literature from the University of Minnesota. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Education in Bhutan: Culture, Schooling, and Gross National Happiness**

#### **Dr Matthew Schuelka**

In the past 60 years, the phenomenon of schooling in Bhutan has risen precipitously as a socio-cultural institution and become the norm for nearly all children in the Kingdom. This is a rapid and massive shift in Bhutanese society within the span of two generations. With the increase and norming of schooling, many challenges and opportunities have arisen. Curricular and pedagogical practices have struggled to keep up with a more heterogeneous student population and include these students effectively, as well as a fundamental shift in knowledge production and how knowledge is accessed and understood. The geography and topography of Bhutan means additional challenges in terms of school structures, accessibility, teacher distribution, and availability of high-quality resources. However, Bhutan also has opportunities to promote a different kind of educational experience based around the Gross National Happiness (GNH) philosophy. The relative newness of the Bhutanese secular education system presents challenges in

growth, but also that newness means that Bhutan can learn more effectively from the mistakes and missteps of its neighbours. This paper, proposed for the International Society for Bhutanese Studies Conference, will explore these challenges and opportunities. Much of the paper is a summary of the recent work of many Bhutanese scholars that culminated in the edited volume *Education in Bhutan: Culture, Schooling and Gross National Happiness* (Schuelka & Maxwell, Eds., 2016). The particular case of the challenges for more inclusive education in Bhutan is based on Schuelka's on-going ethnographic work on Bhutanese education. This paper will trace the historical origins of education in Bhutan from both secular and monastic educational sources, its growth and development during its modernization phase, its more recent 'Bhutanization' period, and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the *Educational Blueprint*. The shifts in the 'place' of school in Bhutanese society during these developments will also be discussed. Besides presenting this narrative, the overall argument is that Bhutan is well-positioned to embrace GNH as a guiding educational philosophy as well as a development philosophy. However, the challenge to overcome is the current culture of education in Bhutan which presents significant dissonance with the Education for GNH initiative. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : YOSHIAKI TAKAHASHI  
**Organisation** : Nakasone Peace Institute  
**Position** : Senior Research Fellow  
**Country** : Japan



Yoshiaki Takahashi joined Nakasone Peace Institute as a Senior Research Fellow in April 2016. He was Associate Professor at the University of Tsukuba. His main research topics are cultural differences and measurement issues of happiness as well as consumer behavioral bias related to public policy. He introduced happiness studies into government work in Japan. He wrote the White Paper on the National Lifestyle in 2008 when he was the Director of Research, Department of Quality of Life, Cabinet Office. From 2009 to 2011, he was the Head of Happiness Studies Unit in the Cabinet Office and contributed to development of Japan's National Well-being Indicators. To date, his research team has conducted qualitative and quantitative surveys in Bhutan, India, Philippines, Thailand, Costa Rica, the Netherlands and Japan. He was also an advisory member when the OECD developed the guidelines for measuring subjective well-being (2011-13) and the head of Japanese advisory team for the GNH2015 survey conducted by the Centre for Bhutan Studies & GNH Research (2014-17). He is currently the head of advisory board for opinion surveys for suicide prevention in Nippon Foundation (2016-date) and Principle Investigator for JSPS Bilateral Open Partnership Research Project with EHERO, the Netherlands (2017-date). He holds MSc. degrees from University of London and University of Southampton in the UK and PhD. in International Relations from Waseda University. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

**Yoshiaki Takahashi:** Ideal happiness in Bhutan

**Aims:** When we compared with the means of subjective well-being (SWB) and income by country, Asian countries tends to have lower SWB than European and Latin American countries. OECD (2013) pointed out that a new evidence of cultural bias is one of priorities for future work.

We started an international comparative research project to examine if “ideal happiness” could measure such a difference since 2012.

Data: Under our project, we conducted an area-sampling qualitative survey in 26 Gewogs among Bhutan. Sample size was 101 (male 58 and female 43, means of age: 41.5 years old).

Results: The means of happiness, life satisfaction, Cantril’s ladder and ideal happiness are very similar each other. The correlation between happiness and life satisfaction and ones between happiness and Cantril’s ladder are not high (0.371 and 0.330 respectively). On the other hand, ones between happiness and ideal happiness is relatively high (0.477). When we looked at reasons why a Bhutanese person chose a specific level of ideal happiness, persons who choose mid-point tends to say close family relationship.

Conclusion: The distribution of the gaps between happiness and ideal happiness is very similar to the ones in Europe and Latin America. We could conclude that ideal happiness is also useful in Bhutan. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : DORINE EVA VAN NORREN  
**Organisation** : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
**Position** : Coordinator  
**Country** : Netherlands



Dr. Dorine van Norren has a master in international and Dutch law (1995) and a PhD in law and development studies (2017). She studied law in Amsterdam and Cape Town, South Africa, and French for a year in Lyon, France. She worked as a Dutch diplomat in Sri Lanka (Colombo) and Turkey (Ankara) and held several positions at the ministry of foreign affairs (Southern Africa, North America and European Integration desks). She was attached to the Advisory Council of International Affairs (AIV), as an executive secretary for the Commission on Development. She did field research for her PhD in Ecuador, Bhutan, South Africa, and at the UN in New York and Paris. She is currently seconded to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, as a coordinator for UNESCO. She regularly gives guest lectures on her PhD in the Netherlands and abroad (i.e in Tanzania, South Korea, Malaysia, France, Costa Rica, the USA and the UK). [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **SDGs versus cosmovisions of the Global South: GNH, Ubuntu and *Buen Vivir*** **Dorine Eva van Norren**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) claim to be universal as they were multilaterally negotiated within the UN, but is offering the Global South a seat at the table truly inclusive development? Other cosmovisions have an inherent biocentric value orientation that is often ignored in academic and diplomatic circles. These claim to be more promising than continuing green development approaches, based in modernism. This article looks at a cross cultural comparison of the African philosophy of Ubuntu, the Bhutanese Gross National Happiness and the native American idea of Buen Vivir (BV) in relation to the SDGs, their general attitude towards the SDGs, how they view ‘development’, goals and indicators, leadership and the implicit value

underpinnings of the SDGs; prioritization of goals by their adherents and missing links (in ca.120 interviews and literature). Happiness adherents are upbeat, ubuntu pragmatic, BV polemic towards the SDGs. Positive: The SDGs contain language of all three worldviews. Negative: The SDGs are not biocentric aiming to respect nature for nature's sake, enabling reciprocity with nature. The SDGs embody linear growth/results thinking which requires unlimited resource exploitation, and not cyclical thinking replacing growth with well-being (of all beings). The SDGs represent individualism and exclude private sector responsibility, and not collective agency and sharing, implying that there is a need for 'development as service' to one another and to the Earth. Ultimately this may lead to abolishing the word 'development' replacing it by inter-relationship. The glass can be viewed as half full or half empty, but Western 'modernism' is still a strong underpinning of the SDGs. Bridges can be built between Happiness, Ubuntu and Buen Vivir in re-interpreting the globalization process. If necessary to focus only on Bhutan this is also possible. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

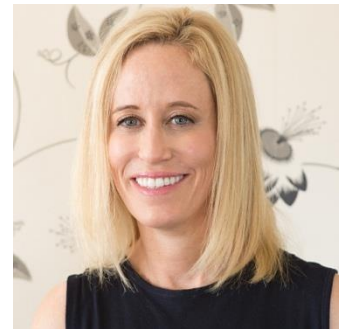
**Session Chair: Kim Samuel**

**Organisation : Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness**

**Position : President and Chair**

**Country : USA**

A pioneer in the field of social isolation and connectedness, Kim Samuel, Founder of The Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness, combines academic research, writing, and lecturing with direct programmatic and partnership building experience supporting communities across the globe facing diverse challenges. Her work focusing on social isolation as a critical experiential and measurable component of multi-dimensional poverty and other critical issues underscores the importance of social connectedness to human dignity and human rights struggles globally. Ms. Samuel is Professor of Practice at the Institute for the Study of International Development at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. In 2016, she designed and delivered the first academic course offering in the emerging field of social connectedness to graduating students in international studies and taught a new cohort in 2017. She also created the Social Connectedness Fellowship Program in 2017, which offers recent undergraduates the opportunity to pursue projects related to social isolation and connectedness in the context of community building and international development.



Ms. Samuel served as Visiting Scholar at the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, University of Oxford (2013-2014) where she continues to serve as Policy Advisor. She also served as Chair of the External Advisory Board (2007-2015) of the Yale University Center of Environmental Law and Policy (YCELP). Among other appointments and memberships, Ms. Samuel is a Director of the Synergos Institute, Founding Member of the Global Philanthropists Circle, and Member of the Disability Rights Advisory Committee of Human Rights Watch. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : TASHI NAMGAY

**Organisation** : College of Astrology

**Position** : Student

**Country** : Bhutan

Tashi Namgay is a student at College of Astrology in Bhutan under Central Monastic Body. He is currently studying astrology. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

**The careful Science of Astrology**

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : DEKI YANGZOM

**Organisation** : Royal Thimphu College

**Position** : Student

**Country** : Bhutan

Deki Yangzom is a student at the Royal Thimphu College in Bhutan. She is currently studying towards a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

**Food and Culture: Changes, Continuities and Changing Continuities in Bhutan**

**Deki Yangzom**

In this presentation, I discuss how Bhutanese food cultures and traditions are changing over time and illustrate this transition with a number of auto-ethnographic examples. Bhutanese food culture possesses significant meanings and symbols, both social and spiritual. However, with the touch of modernity, traditional Bhutanese food culture has come under increasing strain.

Food, from a Bhutanese perspective, is closely associated with the realm of religion. It was long considered proper etiquette to offer “Tomchoe” before meals, which is an offering to the Three Jewels- the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. I will discuss how and why this practice is currently declining. Next, I will discuss changes in the motif of seating positions during meals. Earlier, people were expected to sit together in a circle with crossed legs. The “Nang gi Aum”, the woman of the household, would serve the family members, and serve the head of the family first. This was indicative of hierarchies in terms of gender and generation, but is currently witnessing change.

Another thread of my paper is a discussion of the social and religious connotation of the consumption of ‘Ara.’ I will discuss how it was offered as “Serkem” libation or liquid offering to the gods, but argue that the social perception and meaning of alcohol is changing in

contemporary Bhutanese society. More broadly, this paper argues that changes taking place in relation to Bhutanese food culture are reflective of wider societal transformations.

By experiencing the alteration and foreseeing the inevitable loss of aspects of Bhutanese food culture at the level of individual families, if we do not try to revive the losing food custom at the initial stage, will food culture remain as the identity of Bhutan or will it be just a history is my concern. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Ven Lopen Gembo Dorji**

**Organisation : Zhung Dratshang**

**Position : Advisor to and Former Secretary General**

**Country : Bhutan**

Ven Lopen Gembo Dorji is the Advisor to, and former Secretary General of the Zhung Dratshang, the Monk Body of Bhutan. He has a Master's Degree in Buddhist Studies from Tango Buddhist College and a Post Graduate Diploma in Leadership from East West Center, Hawaii. He also did research on Comparative Studies on Buddhist Traditions from Tokyo University. Since 1988, he worked for the Monk Body in various positions as lecturer, planner and administrator. He served as a member of the National Assembly and represented the Monk Body in the Royal Advisory Council. He also served as the Council Member of the Royal University of Bhutan and Board Director of several organizations including the Gross National Happiness Youth (GNHY). He completed his 1st Three Years Retreat from Cheri Meditation Center and the 2nd Three Years Retreat from Tokchong Mountain Retreat. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : SEIJI KUMAGAI**

**Organisation : Kokoro Research Centre, Kyoto University**

**Position : Associate Professor**

**Country : Japan**

Seiji Kumagai is an Associate Professor at the Kokoro Research Centre at the Kyoto University, Japan. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Buddhist Studies, a Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies, and a Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies, all from Kyoto University. He was a CDFJ Scholarship Student at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (EPHE) in France from 2007-2008. He was also JSPS Research Fellow (PD) at the Institute for Research in Humanities in Kyoto University from 2009-2011. He has served as Assistant Professor at the Hakubi Center for Advanced Research at Kyoto University from 2011-2012 and as a Senior Lecturer at the Kyoto Women's University from 2012-2013. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

**The Education of Tsangpa Gyare (1161-1211) as the Basis of Pedagogy System of the Drukpa Kagyu School**

## **Seiji KUMAGAI**

Bhutan is called “Druk-yul” (*‘Brug yul*), that is “the Country of the Drukpa Kagyu school” in Dzongkha and Tibetan. The name is explained by the fact that the chief abbot of the Drukpa Kagyu school Shabdrung Ngawang Namgyel (*Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal*, 1594-1651) is deemed to have founded the country in the first half of the 17th century. There are many Buddhist schools such as Ningma (*rNing ma*), Sakya (*Sa skya*) and Geluk (*dGe lugs*) in Bhutan, thus Bhutan is a non-sectarian and religiously tolerant country with a rich diversity. At the same time, we need to note that we cannot accurately understand the nation of Bhutan without understanding the Drukpa Kagyu school which has been dominant as a state religion in the country.

A thorough research on the founder of Drugpa Kagyu, Tsangpa Gyare Yeshe Dorje (*gTsang pa rgya ras Ye shes rdo rje*, 1161-1211) is crucial in order to fully comprehend this particular school. It is necessary to directly read his collected works to systematically understand his thoughts. The difficult access to primary sources experienced until very recently means that only presently we are starting to understand his thought. In this regard, my research group has assumed the task of analyzing the content of all his collected works.

Tsangpa Gyare’s disciples are not systematically clarified yet. Traditionally, the Drukpa Kagyu school is said to have split into three sub-schools: “Upper Drukpa” (*sTod ‘brug*), “Lower Drukpa” (*sMad ‘brug*) and “Middle Drukpa” (*Bar ‘brug*). The “Middle Drukpa” is traditionally said to have become the main stream while the others gradually declined. Western historians also follow this idea. However, is this classification historically attested?

The classification of three sub-schools of Drukpa Kagyu is mentioned in the chronicle *lHo ‘brug chos ‘byung* composed by the 69th Je Khenpo dGe ‘dun rin chen (1926-1997), and also mentioned in the more ancient doxography *Thu’u bkwan grub mtha’* composed by Thu’u bkwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737-1802). Thus, the classification already existed in the 18th century. The terms “Upper Drukpa” and “Lower Drukpa” are also attested in older chronicles such as *Deb ther sngon po* composed by ‘Gos lo twa wa gzhon nu dpal (1392-1481) between 1476-1478 and in *Lho rong chos ‘byung* compiled by rTa tshag Tshe dbang rgyal (birth 15<sup>th</sup> cen.) in 1446. However, we need to note that the term “Middle Drukpa” is not referred to in these sources. That is to say, there is a possibility that term “Middle Drukpa” did not exist in the 15th century.

This paper aims to briefly introduce the founder of Drukpa Kagyu school Tsangpa Gyare and his disciples, and to outline how the sub-schools of Drukpa Kagyu were classified by Tibetan and Bhutanese historians. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name:** KARMA GYELTSHEN

**Country:** Bhutan

Karma Gyeltshen holds an M.A. in Applied Buddhist Studies and M.A. in Health & Social Wellbeing from Nan Tien Institute of Higher Education based in Wollongong, Australia. Before pursuing his higher studies he worked in both the government, nonprofit organisations and private sector in Bhutan at different capacities and at different times. Most notably he worked as the Assistant Engineer, Offtg. Chief Program Officer and as Administrative Officer in the Department of Youth & Sports (DYS), Ministry of Education. He served as the Project Manager for the Simply Bhutan Project (SBP) under Bhutan Youth





Development Fund. He also served as the elected Commissioner for the Community Based Scouting (CBS) under the aegis of Bhutan Scout Association (BSA) which is a vibrant Scouting program in partnership with the Danish Guide and Scout Association (DDS). Above all he has been one of the leading volunteers working at community and grassroots level as youth leader and/or youth worker, youth media trainer, life skills and value education trainer, and has collaborated with youth organizations/groups, community centres and religious entities in Bhutan. As such he was nominated for the volunteer of the year award by the United Nation Volunteers (UNV), UNDP in 2015 on the International Youth Day. In the private sector, he pioneered as one of the animators and ventured into documentary and short film making, which won him the Golden Khadar (Beskop Tshechu) and the Best Short Documentary Film (Bhutan Film Association) of the year 2013. Currently, he is exploring opportunities to pursue PhD in Buddhist studies with added research interest in Guru Padmasambha's visit to Bhutan and the psychosocial effect of Buddhist practices related to the Guru including the dynamics of the rainbow body. I also intend to trace Guru's geographical footprints physically, document and archive it in all possible formats before it becomes touristy, commercialised, and loses its meaning or form totally. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Sacred Geography - Footprints of Padmasambhava in Bhutan Karma Gyeltshen**

This work seeks to examine two things: firstly, it evaluates the role of Padmasambhava in the history of Bhutan while highlighting the cultic practices surrounding Padmasambhava within the historical and geographical context of Bhutan; secondly, it evaluates the available written sources that are related to Padmasambhava and his legendary activities in proto-Bhutan.

The study is carried out using the available written sources mostly in English, and a few in Dzongkha. These sources are reviewed following a broad overview or 'umbrella review' approach and the findings are thematically presented in a chronological order of visiting Buddhist masters from Tibet to Bhutan down the historical timeline, focusing on the themes that are most vividly associated with Padmasambhava.

The results of the study shows that the Padmasambhava cult that had apparently developed in Tibet was transported into Bhutan by the Tibetan Buddhist masters including some of the pioneers of the cultic teachings, practices and texts. The exact date cannot be specified but the period roughly falls around the twelfth century. The prominence of the cult in Bhutan is not explicit in the early centuries of transmission but there are certain interceptive milestones in the historical timeline of Bhutan that suggests periods of possible rise and fall of the cult.

This work, besides evaluating Padmasambhava's cult and his role, attempts to assess and gauge the existing scholarship on Padamasambhava with special focus on Bhutan. It aims to contribute to the currently almost non-existent modern scholarship thereby providing some basic information and direction for future research concerning Padmasambhava in Bhutan. For a culture that is grounded in Padmasambhava's history-and-myth it is only apt to study more about him and his roles to understand the past better and to be better informed for the present and future, both historically and mythically. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : ANI KINLEY DEM  
**Organisation** : Losel Yangchenling Nunnery, Easter Bhutan  
**Position** : Student (Nun)  
**Country** : Bhutan

Kinley has a Bachelors Degree in Psychology with a minor in Social Work from the University of Nebraska, Kearney, USA. She also has a Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and counselling from Samtse College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan. She has been certified in Basic Pranic Healing and Human Values. She worked as a resident tutor/ counselor at Sherubtse College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan for 3 years. She joined as a nun in 2017. Currently she is studying Buddhist Philosophy in Losel Yangchenling Nunnery, Easter Bhutan. She just completed her second year of school. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **The contributions of Gelongma Palmo towards women's empowerment in Monastic Life**

A princess gives up the life of luxury to follow the path of Dharma. Despite facing many challenges such as incurable disease among others, Gelongma attains enlightenment with her devotion and determination. She then goes to teach and help many others attain Nirvana in a Lifetime. Even today, her fasting rituals are practiced all across the country. Gelongma stands as an inspiration for many especially nuns and even laywomen in Bhutan. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Nandini Gooptu**  
**Organisation** : Oxford Department of International Development  
**Position** : Associate Professor, former Head of Dept.  
**Country** : United Kingdom

Nandini Gooptu is Associate Professor of South Asian Studies at ODID and Fellow of St Antony's College. She was Head of Department between 2012 and 2016. Educated in Calcutta and at Cambridge, and trained as a social historian, she is the author of *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early-Twentieth Century India* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), editor of *Enterprise Culture in Neoliberal India* (Routledge, 2013), and joint-editor of *India and the British Empire* (Oxford University Press, Oxford History of the British Empire series, 2012). While her past research has been on colonial India, her current research is concerned with social and political transformation and cultural change in contemporary India in the wake of economic liberalisation and globalisation.

She has published articles on a variety of subjects, including caste, communal and religious politics, urban development, poverty and labour, work and employment, media and politics, and social movement of sex workers. She has taught at Cambridge and Oxford Universities.

She is a member of the South Asia Panel of the British Academy and of ESRC's Peer Review College. She is the editor of the South Asian Diversity and Plurality book series of Anthem Press and a member of the editorial board of the South Asian History Series. She is one of the associate editors of Oxford Development Studies. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : ROMOLO GANDOLFO**

**Organisation : College Year in Athens - International Centre for Hellenic and Mediterranean Studies**

**Position : Lecturer**

**Country : Greece**

Romolo Gandolfo was born and raised in Italy and has studied Political Science (BA, University of Milan), International Relations (MA, Yale University), and History (M Phil, Yale University).



His main research interests lie in the field of migration history and ethnic studies, about which he has written extensively and also taught undergraduate and graduate courses, both in Italy and in Argentina.

Shortly after settling in Athens in 1990, Mr. Gandolfo became the editor-in-chief of the English-language newspaper Athens News. For seven years, day after day, his challenge as a non-Greek was to explain Greek politics and society to a sophisticated, cosmopolitan readership. In this task he was greatly helped by several good journalists, and by the fact that he could meet and share thoughts with local politicians, diplomats, businessmen, trade unionists, religious leaders, intellectuals and artists, as well as with countless Greeks from all walks of life.

Currently, he is editor-in-chief of [www.migrantsingreece.org](http://www.migrantsingreece.org), an online observatory on migration and refugee issues in Greece; the site was launched in 2002 with funds from the European Union and is carried out by the Lambrakis Research Foundation. He is also Director for International Affairs at Lambrakis Press, Greece's largest news publishing group. Professor Gandolfo is an avid trekker (both in Greece and in the Himalayas) and has had a longstanding academic and personal interest in the Kingdom of Bhutan. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Politics and Elections in Bhutan: The Role of Social Media**

#### **Romolo Gandolfo:**

The proposed paper deals with the impressive growth of social media in Bhutan over the last ten years and explores in particular the impact it has had on the kingdom's democratic politics and elections.

What is the relationship between Bhutan's "traditional" media (print, radio and TV) and the new internet-based social media? What explains the extraordinary popularity of smartphone applications such as Facebook and WeChat in the specific Bhutanese context? How have political parties and candidates used these new channels of communication with the electorate? What is the role of independent bloggers in this changing media scene? To what extent is social media being used to spread 'fake news' or to anonymously undermine political opponents? If indeed social media represents a major threat to the consolidation of a healthy democracy—as contended by most observers—to what degree, by which means, and by whom should it be regulated? On the other hand, if excesses and abuses were to be effectively curbed, or at least limited,

couldn't social media afford new opportunities for open debates on a variety of issues, thus leading to the formation of a more robust, democratic public opinion? Can we detect anything 'uniquely Bhutanese' in the sudden popularity of social media—something revealing about Bhutan's 'political culture'? Or is Bhutan's experience with social media simply part and parcel of larger (regional or global) trends which are redefining and challenging both the meaning and the future of democracy?

The proposed paper will address these broad questions in three parts. First, I review the small but growing scholarly literature on Bhutan's media, highlighting common concerns and emerging points of consensus. Second, I analyze the ongoing public debate across Bhutan about the role of social media. This will be done by examining both the traditional news outlets as well as the most popular online discussion groups, blogs, and anonymous websites. Finally, I plan to interview this October a number of individuals (politicians, journalists, bloggers, and officials in charge of media and elections) so as to gain a better sense of the different voices contributing to this debate. In the end, the proposed paper aims to provide a fresh perspective on contemporary Bhutanese politics and society. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : ANDEN DROLET  
**Organisation** : University of Colorado  
**Position** : Master's Candidate  
**Country** : USA

Anden Drolet, a PhD student in cultural anthropology from University of Colorado Boulder, studies in Central Bhutan. His research interests include Gross National Happiness, development, and local frameworks of well-being. Looking to human interaction with symbols of well-being, his work bridges discussion of policy with affect theory and symbolic anthropology. In addition to his dissertation research in Bhutan, Drolet is also a part of CU Boulder's Tibet Himalaya Initiative to bring scholars of the Himalayas into productive academic collaboration. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Good Governance, Gross National Happiness, and the Care of the Other Anden Drolet**

Gross National Happiness is one of the hallmarks of governance in Bhutan and continues to be a topic of study and consideration. In the focus on the idea of happiness, there has been a lack of consideration for the concept of care. While western theories of governance took the concept of care from Enlightenment era scholars, I argue that the history of GNH draw upon a different consideration of the care of the other: one that is rooted in the practice of Mahayana Buddhism and the social organization of the family. By comparing translations of early Bhutanese legal codes with speeches from the monarchs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the informing principles of contemporary GNH, I suggest that there is an underlying theme of care that has been adapted as the systems of governance in Bhutan have adapted. Just as the creation of GNH in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was designed to emphasize a different, more holistic happiness than that of Western individual happiness, so too do we need to recognize that practices of care are different. Rather than an individualized relationship of care between citizen and the State, Bhutan's care of the other draws upon both religious and familial notions of care. In this paper, I outline how the creation

of GNH in the 20<sup>th</sup> century worked to bring an early language of care, informed upon by Mahayana Buddhist belief, into a system of state governance and democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Steven Newman  
**Organisation** : BioDiversity International Ltd  
**Position** : Managing Director  
**Country** : United Kingdom

**Professor Steven Newman is a leading expert in climate smart and nutrition sensitive rural development**

He has a first degree in Environmental Biology from Oxford Brookes University and a PhD in Agroforestry.

In the UK he established and managed the largest network of farmer managed agroforestry research sites and was the first to characterise yield advantage in temperate agroforestry as compared to monocultures under the same level of management.

He has written over 80 papers on agroforestry and biodiversity and is a co-editor of the leading text book on temperate agroforestry.

He has worked in consultancy projects in over 90 countries as team leader/consultant/MD of BioDiversity International Ltd. The work has involved developing and managing many multi-million pound investments in agroforestry worldwide leading to the planting of over 8 million trees.

He is currently Visiting Professor in the School of Biology at Leeds University where he is facilitating research and consultancy ventures linked to agroforestry, biodiversity, forestry, climate change and low carbon futures. He is an associate member of the UK Centre for Climate Change Policy and Economics under Lord Stern.

He has recently established Grow a Better Future CIC in order to develop agroforestry linked “countryside community restoration villages” in the UK and Bhutan based on experience of forest villages worldwide.

The work of his team in Bhutan in 2009 contributed to the EU moving from a relationship with Bhutan linked to “project support” to one of “sector policy support” in the area of Renewable Natural Resources (RNR). This approach involves a relationship where macroeconomy, public financial management, performance monitoring (GNH) and governance reform issues are tackled as part of a joint approach. The funding envelope linked to this work from 2009 until Bhutan becomes a middle-income country is likely to exceed €100m. He continues to assist with this relationship and is now working with Bhutan on an evaluation of the EU Himalica project which aims to facilitate climate smart development across the Himalayan region. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

**Practical ideas for facilitating Bhutan to become a global exemplar of resilience in the face of the “perfect storm” based on 35-years experience with renewable natural resource management in the Himalayan region**

**Steven M Newman, BioDiversity International Ltd Faversham Kent UK**

The UK and Bhutan face what could be called a “perfect storm” linked to global effects of population growth, dietary change (more meat eating eg in China and India), and unpredictable climate change. The effects of all these are likely to contribute to massive price increase in agricultural inputs, migration, conflict over water (flood and scarcity) and burdens on the state in terms of health, coping with and preventing disasters and providing food security.

On the positive side climate change could lead to new opportunities for agriculture, tourism and new investment.

The paper seeks to highlight practical solutions on how the quality of climate change resilience can be improved. In other words, how can policy be improved, lessons be learned, and citizens contribute in a way that leads to greater peace, harmony and belonging. Key ideas include (1) participatory scorecard approaches, (2) monitor farms, (3) countryside and community restoration villages and (4) sentinel landscapes. [Back](#)

**SHELDONIAN THEATRE**

**BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Ralph Walker  
**Organisation** : Magdalen College, University of Oxford  
**Position** : Emeritus Fellow and Former chairman of the General Board  
**Country** : United Kingdom



Dr. Ralph Walker completed his Bachelor of Arts at McGill University in 1964, and came to Oxford in that year as a Rhodes Scholar. At Balliol College, he studied for the B.Phil. and the D.Phil. in Philosophy, and was a Junior Research Fellow at Merton from 1968 to 1972, and then he came to Magdalen as a Fellow and Tutor. He held that post until he retired in 2011. During that time he also taught for short periods in other countries, including Uganda, Brazil, Poland and (particularly) Czechoslovakia: He was on the Management Committee of the Jan Hus Educational Foundation, concerned with higher education in Czechoslovakia, from 1982. Despite his retirement, he currently teaches undergraduates (primarily at Magdalen) for History of Philosophy, Kant, Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Plato’s Republic and Aristotle’s Ethics. He also takes part in teaching the first-year introductions to philosophy, and also some graduate teaching on Kant. He has held a number of University offices, including: Junior Proctor, 1984-5; Chairman of the General Board 1999-2000; Head of the Humanities Division, 2000-2006; Delegate of Oxford University Press 1993-2003 and he was Vice-President of Magdalen in 2008 and 2009. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : H.E. Dasho Tshering Tobgay  
**Organisation** : Kingdom of Bhutan  
**Position** : Honourable Former Prime Minister  
**Country** : Bhutan



Tshering Tobgay is a Bhutanese politician, environmentalist, and cultural advocate who was the Prime Minister of Bhutan from July 2013 to August 2018. He was a civil servant before he engaged in politics. He started his career in 1991 with the Technical and Vocational Education Section (TVES) of the Education Division in Bhutan. After his stint with the TVES from 1991 to 1999, Tobgay created and led the National Technical Training Authority (NTTA) from 1999 to 2003.

Tobgay also served from 2003 to 2007 in the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources as the director of the Human Resources department. Tobgay resigned from the Ministry of Labour in February 2007 and entered politics to serve his duties for the reigning king, who established democracy in 2008. After the election in 2013, Tobgay became the Prime Minister of Bhutan through a secret ballot. Dasho Tobgay was a co-founder member of the People's Democratic Party and was responsible for establishing the Party as Bhutan's first registered political party.

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair:** Louise Richardson AAAS AcSS FRSE  
**RIIA**  
**Organisation** : University of Oxford  
**Position** : Vice Chancellor  
**Country** : United Kingdom



Professor Louise Richardson became Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford on 1 January 2016, having previously served as Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of St Andrews, Scotland, for seven years. A political scientist by training, Professor Richardson received a BA in History from Trinity College Dublin in her native Ireland. She then studied in the USA, graduating with an MA in Political Science from UCLA, and subsequently an MA and PhD in Government from Harvard University.

Professor Richardson's research specialises in international security with a particular emphasis on terrorist movements. She has written widely on international terrorism, British foreign and defence policy, security institutions, and international relations. Her publications include *Democracy and Counterterrorism: Lessons from the Past* (2007), *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy*, *Containing the Threat* (2006), *The Roots of Terrorism* (2006), and *When Allies Differ* (1996).

Professor Richardson's commitment to teaching won her both the Levenson Prize and the Abramson Prize during her time at Harvard University where she was Assistant and Associate Professor in the Harvard Government Department from 1989 to 2001, serving as Head Tutor for several of those years. As Executive Dean of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at

Harvard 2001-8, she was instrumental in its transformation into an interdisciplinary centre promoting scholarship across academic fields and the creative arts.

The Vice-Chancellor currently serves as a trustee on a number of non-profit groups, including the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Booker Prize Foundation and the Scottish WWI Commemorations Panel. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, the Academy of Social Sciences in the United Kingdom, an Honorary Member of the Royal Irish Academy and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Dasho Karma Ura  
**Organisation** : Centre for Bhutan and GNH Studies  
**Position** : President  
**Country** : Bhutan



Dasho Karma Ura studied in St. Stephen's Delhi; Magdalen College, Oxford; and Edinburgh University. He worked for the Ministry of Planning of Bhutan for 12 years before becoming the Director of the Centre for Bhutan Studies (CBS) from its founding in 1999 until 2008 when he became its President. The CBS has been at the forefront of promoting His Majesty the fourth King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck's development philosophy of Gross National Happiness and conducting multidisciplinary research about Bhutan. He was a member of the Drafting Committee of Bhutan's first Constitution, enacted in July 2008. In December 2006, His Majesty the Fourth King bestowed on him the red scarf and the ancient title of distinction, Dasho for his dedicated service to the country.

In 2010, he was bestowed the honour of Druk Khorlo (Wheel of Dragon Kingdom) by His Majesty the King for his contributions to literature and fine arts. He is also a painter. He has written several books such as Faith and Festival of Nimalung; Deities and Archers; The Hero with a Thousand Eyes; Ballad of Pemi Tshewang Tashi; and Leadership of the Wise: Kings of Bhutan. He has contributed articles to numerous books. He has served in many boards. He has participated in many international conferences as keynote speakers. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Martine Durand  
**Organisation** : Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development  
**Position** : Chief Statistician  
**Country** : France



Martine Durand was appointed Director of Statistics and Chief Statistician of the OECD in 2010. She is responsible for providing strategic orientation for the Organisation's statistical policy and oversees all of OECD's statistical activities. She was formerly Deputy-Director of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs where she was responsible for OECD's work on employment and training policies, social policies, health policies and international migration published



in OECD flagship reports such as the *OECD International Migration Outlook*, the *OECD Employment Outlook*, *Pensions at a Glance* and *Health at a Glance*. Martine Durand joined the OECD in 1983 as an economist in the Economics Department where she worked on a number of policy issues related inter alia to international competitiveness, oil and commodity markets and labour markets in OECD countries. She later worked on the *OECD Economic Surveys* of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

During her career at the OECD, Martine Durand has co-authored numerous articles and publications in the area of international competitiveness, foreign trade and investment, public finances, labour markets and international migration. She is one of the principal authors of the *OECD Growth Study*. She was a member of the *Editorial Board of OECD Economic Studies*. Martine Durand graduated in mathematics, statistics and economics from the Paris VI University, the Ecole Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Administration Economique (ENSAE) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : James Foster  
**Organisation** : George Washington University  
**Position** : Oliver T. Carr Professor of International Affairs and Professor of Economics  
**Country** : United States of America



James E. Foster is the Oliver T. Carr Professor of International Affairs and Professor of Economics at the George Washington University. He received his Ph.D. in economics from Cornell University and holds a Doctorate Honoris Causa from Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo (Mexico).

Professor Foster's research focuses on welfare economics — using economic tools to evaluate and enhance the wellbeing of people. His joint 1984 *Econometrica* paper (with Joel Greer and Erik Thorbecke) is one of the most cited papers on [poverty](#). It introduced the FGT Index, which has been used in thousands of studies and was employed in targeting the Progresá CCT program in México. Other research includes work on economic [inequality](#) with Amartya Sen; on the distribution of human [development](#) with Luis Felipe Lopez-Calva and Miguel Szekely; on multidimensional [poverty](#) with Sabina Alkire; and on [literacy](#) with Kaushik Basu. Foster regularly teaches introductory and doctoral courses on international development and each spring joins with Professor Basu in presenting an undergraduate course on Game Theory and Strategic Thinking, to which staff and Board members of the World Bank are also invited.

Professor Foster is also Research Fellow at the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative ([OPHI](#)), Department of International Development, Oxford University, and a member of the Human Capital and Economic Opportunity ([HCEO](#)) Working Group, Becker Friedman Institute for Research in Economics, University of Chicago. This year he is serving on the World Bank's [Commission](#) on Global Poverty. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Tenzing Lamsang**

**Organisation : The Bhutanese**

**Position : Chief Editor**

**Country : Bhutan**

Tenzing Lamsang is the Editor of The Bhutanese, an Independent private newspaper in Bhutan. He has won the best investigative journalism award four years in a row in Bhutan's annual journalism awards. Tenzing completed his graduation from St Stephens College in Delhi University in 2006 in History (Hons) after which he worked as a reporter with the Indian Express Newspaper in Delhi from 2006–2008. He then worked with Bhutan's national newspaper Kuensel as a Chief Reporter from 2008–2010 after which he joined Bhutan's first and only business paper Business Bhutan from 2010 to 2012 as its News Editor.



He then launched The Bhutanese in 2012 as an Editor and co-owner. Tenzing has contributed papers written for international publications. He was selected as a Asia21 leader in 2017.

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : SELIN GROLLMANN**

**Organisation : University of Bern**

**Position : Lecturer/PhD Candidate**

**Country : Switzerland**

Selin Grollmann is a Ph.D. student and lecturer at the Department of Linguistics (ISW) at the University of Bern. As her Ph.D. project, she writes a grammar (including dictionary and texts) of Nachiring, an undocumented and highly endangered Kiranti language spoken in eastern Nepal. Nachiring is spoken by max. 100 people, the majority being above 60 years old. The degree of Nepalisation is extremely high and Nachiring children do not acquire the language anymore. Nachiring belongs to the Khambu group within Kiranti.



Selin Grollmann completed her M.A. in Historical Linguistics, General Linguistics and Sociolinguistics at the University of Bern in 2014. She wrote a sketch grammar of the Bjokapakha language (Tshangla branch, Trans-Himalayan) as her Master's Thesis. Other projects in which Selin Grollmann is involved are the first grammatical description of Gongduk, a Trans-Himalayan language isolate spoken in the Monggar district of central Bhutan (together with Pascal Gerber and George van Driem) and the documentation and description of Lhokpu spoken in southwestern Bhutan (together with with Pascal Gerber, Gwendolyn Hyslop, Karma Tshering and George van Driem). Selin Grollmann is a junior researcher of the Swiss team of PhoPhoNO ("Phonetics, Phonology and New Orthographies"), a collaborative project with ICU Tokyo funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. For PhoPhoNO, Selin Grollmann and her colleagues examine the phonology of Tamang (central Nepal) and works towards a new community-oriented orthography. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **The internal diversity of the Tshangla languages: Insights from Bjokapakha**

**Selin Grollmann**

Tshangla is a Trans-Himalayan (Tibeto-Burman) language spoken in Bhutan, northeastern India and Tibet. Tshangla has traditionally been represented as a homogeneous language, forming a dialect continuum which exhibits only minor dialectal differences. Standard Tshangla or the lingua franca variety, spoken in eastern Bhutan, has been described by Wangdi (2004), Andvik (2010) and Bodt (2012), whereas most minor varieties of Tshangla remain undescribed. Most of these varieties are in danger of extinction. Urban migration amongst the younger generation leads to a separation from the original home villages and to a gap in the intergenerational transmission of the language. Speakers of non-standard varieties tend to assimilate their language to the lingua franca variety of Tshangla and to hide their often rural origins. The pressure to assimilate to powerful supra-regional languages, such as English, Hindi or Nepali, additionally increases the degree of endangerment of the diverse linguistic landscape of Bhutan.

Recently, research has been conducted on the Bjokapakha variety which is located at the periphery of the Tshangla dialect continuum in the Bjoka geok in Zhemgang district. Bjokapakha is the only Tshangla language spoken in Zhemgang district and is surrounded by speakers of the East Bodish language Khengkha. To the northeast, Bjoka verges on the Gongduk speaking region. The Gongduk are one of the oldest ethnolinguistic groups in Bhutan, and their language is linguistically highly distinct from the other languages in Bhutan, e.g. exhibiting biactantial verb agreement. To the southeast, Bjokapakha is geographically adjacent to the Dungsam varieties with which it shares several linguistic features. Bjokapakha is spoken by roughly 1,500 speakers.

Based on my grammar of Bjokapakha (Grollmann, in press, Brill), I shall present Bjokapakha phonetic, phonological and grammatical features of Bjokapakha which diverge from the lingua franca variety, many of these traits representing conservative retentions. My account will enable a more comprehensive understanding of the Tshangla group as a whole, both in diachronic and comparative terms as well as from a typological and descriptive perspective. Both Dirang Tshangla and Bjokapakha, when contrasted with the lingua franca variety, vividly highlight the internal linguistic diversity of Tshangla as a Trans-Himalayan subgroup in its own right.

This newly more comprehensive understanding of the internal diversity of Tshangla (1) will help us to explain apparent irregularities, (2) provide a better insight into the diachronic history of Tshangla and the linguistic contact situations to which the Tshangla language communities have been historically exposed, and (3) yield new descriptive and areal-typological findings. The internal diversity of Tshangla has major ramifications for our understanding of Bhutan's linguistic landscape and compels us to revise our understanding of the role which languages of this Trans-Himalayan subgroup have played in the eastern Himalayan region. [\*Back\*](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : PASCAL GERBER  
**Organisation** : Linguistics Institute, Bern university  
**Position** : Lecturer/PhD Candidate  
**Country** : Switzerland



Pascal Gerber is Ph.D. candidate and lecturer at the linguistics institute (ISW) at Bern University. He is writing a comprehensive descriptive grammar of Mewahang, a Kiranti language spoken in the Arun valley in eastern Nepal, as his Ph.D. project. He graduated from Bern University in 2016 in linguistics and sociolinguistics. His research interests include historical-comparative linguistics, its methods, achievements, problems and limits, and Trans-Himalayan languages, especially of Bhutan and Nepal. He is currently also working on the first description of the Gongduk language of central Bhutan (with George van Driem and Selin Grollmann) and is involved in the documentation and description of the Lhokpu language of southwestern Bhutan (with Gwendolyn Hyslop, Karma Tshering, George van Driem and Selin Grollman. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Gongduk agreement morphology in functional and diachronic perspective**

**Pascal Gerber**

Gongduk is a Trans-Himalayan language spoken in Monggar district in central Bhutan. The language belongs to the oldest ethnolinguistic layer of Bhutan, together with the Mönpa language of the Black Mountains and Lhokpu. The position of Gongduk within the language family is not known and it is therefore treated as an isolate (cf. van Driem 2015). A grammar of the language is currently being prepared for publication (Gerber/Grollmann/van Driem *in preparation*) on the basis of field notes collected by George van Driem as well as Selin Grollman and Pascal Gerber.

Gongduk is, besides Black Mountain Mönpa, the only Bhutanese language to exhibit biactantial agreement morphology, marking both the subject and the object of a verbal action on the verb. This typologically noteworthy and functionally complex feature is a characteristic feature of several other branches of the Trans-Himalayan language family. Agreement morphology of this kind is reconstructed to the Trans-Himalayan proto-language (Bauman 1974, 1975, van Driem 1993, DeLancey 1989, 2010, 2011, Jacques 2012).

However, despite the description of the morphology by van Driem (2001, 2013), Camenisch et al. (2014) and Gerber (2015), Gongduk agreement morphology is completely disregarded in publications about agreement morphology in Trans-Himalayan, although the inclusion of Gongduk in the discussion would yield promising new insights into the reconstruction of agreement morphology and the phylogenetic position of Gongduk within Trans-Himalayan.

In this talk, Gongduk agreement morphology will be discussed from a synchronic-functional as well as a diachronic-comparative point of view. The morphology will be presented and illustrated with examples, and the sociopragmatic and syntactic factors determining the choice of the specific markers will be explained. The agreement morphemes of Gongduk will then be subjected to a comparative analysis and related to cognate morphology in other branches of Trans-Himalayan.

Finally, a phylogenetic assessment of Gongduk based on the comparison of the agreement morphology will be provided. Trans-Himalayan linguistics, both synchronic and diachronic, can benefit significantly from a proper, detailed consideration of the Gongduk language. This talk also aims to show the general significance of Bhutanese languages for the field of linguistics, both Trans-Himalayan and general linguistics, and the importance of comprehensive documentation and description of the significant, but endangered linguistic diversity of the Kingdom of Bhutan. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Professor Ulrike Roesler**

**Organisation : Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford**

**Position : Chair**

**Country : United Kingdom**

Professor Ulrike Roesler is a Professor of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies at the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the University of Oxford. Professor Roesler obtained a PhD in Indian Studies from the University of Münster, Germany, and her “Habilitation” in Tibetan Studies from the University of Munich, Germany. Prof. Roesler's research interests are in the early history of Buddhism in Tibet, interactions between India and Tibet, Tibetan biographical writing, narrative literature, and the notion of “sacred landscapes” in the Himalayas. Her most recent book publication is the volume *Lives Lived, Lives Imagined: Biography in the Buddhist Traditions* by L. Covill, U. Roesler and S. Shaw (Wisdom Publications 2010). [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : MICHAEL RUTLAND OBE**

**Organisation : Bhutan Consulate United Kingdom**

**Position : Honorary Consul of UK to Bhutan**

**Country : United Kingdom**

Michael Rutland first lived in Bhutan in 1971, when he assisted in setting up the Ugyen Wangchuck Academy in Paro and taught Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics there. Subsequently he visited Bhutan regularly, and worked briefly for the UN (ILO) as a Consultant in the field of Technical and Vocational Education. Since 2000, Michael Rutland has lived in Thimphu. He was granted a citizenship of Bhutan by H.M. The Fourth King in 2006. He was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth II in 2005 for services to British-Bhutan relations and also holds the Bhutan Coronation Gold Medal. He is currently a member of Bhutan's Royal Education Council. He is a Founder and presently the Chairman of the Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom. He is also a member of the International Council of the English Speaking Union. For six years prior to becoming the United Kingdom's Honorary Consul in Bhutan, Michael Rutland held the appointment of Honorary Consul of Bhutan in the United Kingdom. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

**Michael Rutland:** The Search for Harmony in the 21st Century

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : SONAM KINGA  
**Organisation** : National Council of Bhutan  
**Position** : Former Chairperson  
**Country** : Bhutan



*Dasho* Sonam Kinga is a Bhutanese actor and researcher at the Center for Bhutan Studies. He played the monk in the 2003 film *Travellers and Magicians*, for which he is also credited as a dialogue coach. Sonam Kinga obtained his Ph.D in Area Studies from Kyoto University, Japan, BA in English Honours from Sherubtse College, Bhutan and I.B (Diploma) from Lester B. Pearson College, Canada. He started his career as a Publication Officer at the Curriculum Division of Ministry of Education in 1998. Later, he worked as Research Officer with the Centre for Bhutan Studies, Senior Program Officer with Save the Children US, Thimphu and Executive Editor for *Bhutan Observer* (private newspaper).

After his election to the National Council during the historic parliamentary elections of 2008, he served as the Deputy Chairperson between 2008-2013. He also served as Chairperson of the Good Governance Committee and House Committee.

An academic, his research and publications have focused on Bhutanese history, society, politics and culture. He is primarily interested in state-society relations in Bhutan, state rituals and oral literature. He is a Faculty Member at the Royal Institute of Governance and Strategic Studies. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

**Sonam Kinga:** Modernity of Monarchy: The Case of Wangchuck Dynasty

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## **PLENARY SESSION**

### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : Roger Goodman  
**Organisation** : St. Antony's College, University of Oxford  
**Position** : Nissan Professor of Japanese Studies and Warden of St. Antony's College  
**Country** : United Kingdom



Professor Roger Goodman became the sixth Warden of St Antony's College in October 2017 in succession to Professor Margaret Macmillan. His relationship with the College began in 1982 when he arrived to start his doctoral work in social anthropology. Between 1985-88, he held a Junior Research Fellowship at the College in Japanese Studies. He taught for one year in Imperial College London's Humanities Department before taking up a Readership in the Department of Sociology at the University of Essex in 1989. In 1993, he returned to Oxford to become the

first Lecturer in the Social Anthropology of Japan with a Fellowship at St Antony's. He succeeded to the Nissan Professorship of Modern Japanese Studies in 2003, which has also always been attached to the College, a position which he will continue to hold while Warden. In 2004, he was appointed as the inaugural Head of the new School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies (SIAS). For the academic year 2006-7, he was Acting Warden at St Antony's following the retirement of Sir Marrack Goulding. In 2008, he was appointed Head of the Social Sciences Division within the University of Oxford, a position which he held until becoming Warden at St Antony's. He is a Fellow of the UK Academy of Social Sciences and has been the Chair of Academy's Council since 2015.

Professor Goodman's research is mainly on Japanese education and social policy. He has published two major monographs with Oxford University Press, *Japan's International Youth* (1990) and *Children of the Japanese State* (2000), and has been the editor or co-editor of a further ten volumes. Most of his work is also available in Japanese editions. He is currently writing a monograph on the changes which are taking place in Japanese higher education. He has supervised more than thirty doctoral theses on Japan over the past two decades on topics ranging from Shinto shrines to volleyball coaches, teacher unions to karaoke, *hikikomorito* firefighters. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : David Gellner**

**Organisation : Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford (ISCA)**

**Position : Professor of Anthropology**

**Country : United Kingdom**

David Gellner is a Professor of Social Anthropology, Director of ISCA and a Fellow of All Souls College, University of Oxford. He studies the Anthropology of South Asia, East Asia, Buddhism, Hinduism, cities, ritual, politics, ethnicity, activism, borderlands, class formation and cultural change. He was Head of the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography from 2009-2012 and again from 2016-2018. His doctoral research (1982-4) was on the Vajrayana Buddhism of the Newars and on Newar social organization, in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. He has carried out fieldwork in Nepal on many subsequent occasions, broadening his interests to include politics and ethnicity, healers, mediums, and popular approaches to misfortune, religious change, activism of all sorts, democratization, elections, borderlands, Dalits, and class formation. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : Dasho Karma Ura**

**Organisation : Centre for Bhutan and GNH Studies**

**Position : President**

**Country : Bhutan**

Dasho Karma Ura studied in St. Stephen's Delhi; Magdalen College, Oxford; and Edinburgh University. He worked for the Ministry of Planning of Bhutan for 12 years before becoming the Director of the Centre for Bhutan Studies (CBS) from its founding



in 1999 until 2008 when he became its President. The CBS has been at the forefront of promoting His Majesty the fourth King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck's development philosophy of Gross National Happiness and conducting multidisciplinary research about Bhutan. He was a member of the Drafting Committee of Bhutan's first Constitution, enacted in July 2008. In December 2006, His Majesty the Fourth King bestowed on him the red scarf and the ancient title of distinction, Dasha for his dedicated service to the country.

In 2010, he was bestowed the honour of Druk Khorlo (Wheel of Dragon Kingdom) by His Majesty the King for his contributions to literature and fine arts. He is also a painter. He has written several books such as Faith and Festival of Nimalung; Deities and Archers; The Hero with a Thousand Eyes; Ballad of Pemi Tshewang Tashi; and Leadership of the Wise: Kings of Bhutan. He has contributed articles to numerous books. He has served in many boards. He has participated in many international conferences as keynote speakers. [Back](#)

### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : VEN LOPEN GEMBO DORJI  
**Organisation** : Zhung Dratshang  
**Position** : Secretary General  
**Country** : Bhutan

Ven Lopen Gembo Dorji is the Advisor to the Central Monk Body, the Sangha of Bhutan. He served as the representative of the Central Monk Body in the Nation Assembly and the Royal Advisory Council of Bhutan. He was also the Secretary General of the Central Monk Body. Apart from completion of two terms Three Years Retreat, he studied at Kanglung Sherubtse College, Tango Buddhist College, Reitaku University, Tokyo University and East West Center (Hawaii, USA). [Back](#)



### **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : SEIJI KUMAGAI  
**Organisation** : Kokoro Research Centre, Kyoto University  
**Position** : Associate Professor  
**Country** : Japan

Seiji Kumagai is an Associate Professor at the Kokoro Research Centre at the Kyoto University, Japan. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Buddhist Studies, a Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies, and a Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies, all from Kyoto University. He was a CDFJ Scholarship Student at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (EPHE) in France from 2007-2008. He was also JSPS Research Fellow (PD) at the Institute for Research in Humanities in Kyoto University from 2009-2011. He has served as Assistant Professor at the Hakubi Center for Advanced Research at Kyoto University from 2011-2012 and as a Senior Lecturer at the Kyoto Women's University from 2012-2013. [Back](#)





## **BIOGRAPHY**

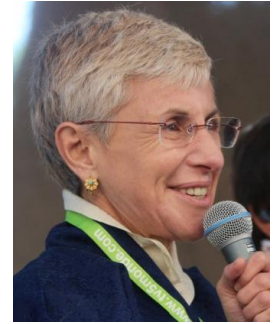
**Name : FRANCOIS POMMERET**

**Organisation : Bhutan Foundation**

**Position : Director of Research**

**Country : France**

Dr. Francoise Pommaret, is Director of Research at the CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research, France) and Adjunct Professor at Institute of Language and Culture (ILCS), Royal University of Bhutan. She has been associated with Bhutan in different capacities since 1979 and has published numerous scholarly articles and books on different aspects of Bhutanese culture including the definitive guidebook *Bhutan, a Cultural Guidebook*. She is currently involved in the documentation of the Bhutan cultural atlas and is working on the interface between deities, local powers and migrations in Bhutan. Dr. Pommaret has lectured intensively in numerous academic institutions around the world and has been guest-curator for several exhibitions. She has been advising the Bhutan Foundation on our cultural heritage projects including restoration of Wangduechhoeling Palace. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : KUENGA WANGMO**

**Organisation : The School of Field Studies**

**Position : Resident Lecturer in Political and Socioeconomic Dimensions of Environment**

**Country : Australia**

Kuenga Wangmo is Bhutan's first archaeologist. She has worked on archaeological sites in Bhutan, India, and the United States. She was a member of a Policy Think Tank under His Majesty's Secretariat and advises the Centre for Historical and Archaeological Studies at the Royal University of Bhutan. She was a post-doc research fellow at the Courtauld Institute of Art, UCL, in London and guest lectured at the Leon Levy Foundation Centre for Conservation, Royal Thimphu College, and Sherubtse College. Kuenga is a National Geographic Explorer. She has an undergraduate degree from Harvard University and post-graduate degrees from Cambridge University and The Courtauld Institute of Art. She was born in Bhutan and calls Thimphu, the capital of her country, home. She holds a PhD in Archeology and an MPhil in World Archeology both from the Cambridge University. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Social Anthropology and Archeology from Harvard University. [Back](#)



## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Jamie Coates**

**Organisation : sOPHIa**

**Position : President**

**Country : UK**

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : JIGME PUNTSO  
**Organisation** : Centre for Bhutan Studies and GNH  
**Position** : Research Officer  
**Country** : Bhutan

Jigme Phuntsho is a researcher at the Centre for Bhutan & GNH Studies. He studied business management from Gaeddu College of Business Studies, and was involved in analyzing and drafting of the 2015 GNH Survey report and the GNH Certification Tool. He has published a book “Fruits of Happiness: How Horticulture Impacts Happiness in Mongar, Bhutan” in 2016. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

**GNH and Business: steps towards engagement and certification.**

**Jigme Phuntsho**

GNH Certification is a tool to systematically assess a business establishment’s effort to integrate GNH values into its operations. The development of the tool was initiated by the former Prime Minister of Bhutan, Dasho Tshering Tobgay, and carried out by the Centre for Bhutan & GNH Studies. It is based on the nine-domain framework of GNH, and has a total of 56 indicators. This assessment tool was launched during the Seventh International Conference on GNH held in Thimphu in 2017. This presentation will provide a brief introduction of the tool, its indicators, assessment methodology and the certification process. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : MICHAEL GIVEL  
**Organisation** : University of Oklahoma  
**Position** : Professor  
**Country** : USA

Michael Givel is a Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Oklahoma, USA. He holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts from the University of Florida. He also holds another Master of Arts and a PhD both from the University of California-riverside. Professor Givel’s areas of research specialization include: public policy theory, complexity theory, and Himalayan area policy studies. His areas of teaching specialization include: Himalayan area studies, well being policy, U.S. urban politics, and social movements. Professor Givel, in recent years, has published a number of scholarly articles related to Bhutanese culture and policy. This includes articles illustrating the connection between Mahayana Buddhism and Gross National Happiness, the policy history of Gross National Happiness, and a survey and analysis of the unwritten constitution of early Bhutan.

Regarding U.S-oriented policy theory, in recent years, Professor Givel has published four ground-breaking. Professor Givel’s current research areas include: Policy theory, comparative public policy, Himalayan and Tibetan area studies, complexity and public policy, well being and public policy, corporate actions and policy, and public health policy. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

### **Gross National Happiness Policy Outputs in Bhutan from 1972 to 2014**

**Michael Givel**

In 1972, Bhutan's Fourth King declared Gross National Happiness (GNH) more important than Gross Domestic Product. But what has been the nature of GNH legislation policy outputs from 1972 to 2014? This study, examines Bhutanese legislation in this time period and concludes GNH policy has been in two stages related to Bhutan's four pillars that include sustainable and equitable economic development, good governance, cultural preservation, and environmental protection. In the first stage lasting to the 1990s, Bhutanese policy emphasized preserving traditional culture. In the second phase, Bhutanese policy outputs emphasized all four pillars address modern issues like health care and illiteracy. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : FERGUS LYON**

**Organisation : Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research**

**Position : Acting Director of CEEDR**

**Country : United Kingdom**

Fergus Lyon is a Professor of Enterprise and Organisations in the Centre for Enterprise and Economic Development Research (CEEDR), Middlesex University in London and Deputy Director of the ESRC Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity. His research interests include social and sustainable enterprises, provision of public services by social enterprises, clustering and networks of enterprises, ethnic minority enterprise, and enterprise support policy. Recent funders include the Economic and Social Research Council, Cabinet Office, Dept of Business Innovation Skills, Innovate UK, International Labour Organisation, and a number of charities. In 2007 he was seconded to the Prime Minister's' Strategy Unit (Health team) in the Cabinet Office. He was the social enterprise lead on the £10m Third Sector Research Centre funded over five years by ESRC and Office for Civil Society. Previously he has carried out research in Ghana, Nigeria, India, Pakistan and Nepal. He is also a founder and director of a social enterprise preschool. Fergus has over 130 publications including 40 substantial reports for policy makers funded by UK and international donors, 25 papers in established international journals, 23 book chapters, a number of shorter policy briefings and two books on social research methodologies. He holds a PhD on Trade systems, partnerships and rural development in Ghana from Department of Geography, University of Durham, UK. He also holds an MSc in Agriculture, Environment and Development (Distinction) from the School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia and a BA Hons in Geography, from the University of Newcastle. [Back](#)



## **ABSTRACT**

### **Alternative governance for alternative business- Social enterprise models of business inspired by GNH?**

**Rabsel Dorji and Fergus Lyon:**

Social enterprise aims to develop wellbeing of beneficiaries, staff and other stakeholders. The approaches vary between country, but in all cases, the social enterprises share a common focus on social aims and business model. In this way, social enterprises can provide a diverse range of examples of businesses that provide an alternative view of prosperity that focuses on wellbeing and flourishing. In this paper we examine how one country, Bhutan, with a national policy framework that is focused on broader conceptions of prosperity and happiness can shed light on how such enterprises are operating and can be supported.

In this paper, we explore the different social enterprise models in Bhutan and examine how these enterprises contribute to wellbeing and flourishing. We do this by showing how enterprises deliver benefits that fit in a specific framework developed to be culturally specific to Bhutan's context. Bhutan has been developing the Gross National Happiness framework as an alternative to cruder economic measures that relied solely on GDP. At a national level it has been measuring GNH as an interpretation of development that brings together, livelihoods, health, culture and the environment. While policies have been focussed on GNH, there is now a desire for social enterprises to show how they too can deliver on GNH in very practical ways.

This paper contributes to wider theories in business and management studies related to 'hybrid organisations' and how enterprises have to draw on different institutional logics (related to commercial, environmental, and social value). Institutional theory also allows us to explore how the Bhutanese cultural context shapes management. We draw on qualitative data collection with 12 social enterprises in Bhutan in order to draw out examples of social enterprise and also to explore how they have propose to have impacts on a range of social and environment criteria. We therefore ask the research questions: What are the different models of social enterprise in Bhutan? What are the types of social, environmental and cultural impact being pursued? How do these impacts relate to the Gross National Happiness framework developed in Bhutan?

The paper therefore contributes to the understanding of social enterprise in different contexts. It also shows social enterprise models can also contribute to alternative views of prosperity that challenge conventional economic models. The paper concludes by drawing out the implications for practice and policy and in particular the ways in which social enterprise can be a driver for practical changes. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Session Chair: Karma Jamtsho**

**Organization: Gross National Happiness Commission of Bhutan**

**Position:**

**Country: Bhutan**

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : DORJI PENJORE  
**Organisation** : Centre for Bhutan Studies & Gross National Happiness  
**Position** : Head of the Research Division  
**Country** : Bhutan



An anthropologist by training (PhD, 2016, the Australian National University), Dorji Penjore is a chief researcher at the Centre for Bhutan and Gross National Happiness Studies, established in 1998 as a social science research centre for advancing social, cultural, economic and political wellbeing through inter-disciplinary studies of Bhutan.

His research areas are Bhutanese anthropology, Bhutanese oral literature, oral interviews, village ethnography, and social surveys. He has experience in conducting long-term anthropological fieldwork and doing home ethnography.

His published books and articles are mostly on Bhutanese anthropology, folklore, development, history and culture. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

**Chukor: Water sharing institution for sharecropping and subsistence in Samcholing, Bhutan**

**Dorji Penjore**

This paper discusses the principles and dynamics of irrigation water sharing institution called *chukor* in Samcholing, a village in central district of Trongsa, Bhutan. As sharecroppers who depend on sharecropping paddy fields of absentee landowners, irrigation water is crucial to their subsistence. The communities manage, renovate and expand the existing irrigation channels without any outside help, and water is shared efficiently and equitably through *chukor*. The channels, built by integrating local agro-ecological conditions and using local ingenuity, knowledge, skills, and materials, may be less efficient and labour intensive, but they are easy to maintain, repair, and above all reliable. The government classifies Samcholing irrigation channels as community-managed system (CMIS), and there are over 1000 CMIS in the country, irrigating over 64,000 acres of land. However, the government's plan is to develop irrigation, through outside assistance, by improving existing CMIS, expanding irrigation to dryland to cultivate cash crops and other cereals (other than paddy), and providing irrigation to already rain-fed paddy fields, when more CMIS appears to be a proven water source to attain the national food sufficiency goal. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name** : KUENGA WANGMO  
**Organisation** : The School of Field Studies  
**Position** : Resident Lecturer in Political and Socioeconomic Dimensions of Environment  
**Country** : Australia



Kuenga Wangmo is Bhutan's first archaeologist. She has worked on archaeological sites in Bhutan, India, and the United States. She was a member of a Policy Think Tank under His Majesty's Secretariat and advises the Centre for Historical and Archaeological Studies at the Royal University of Bhutan. She was a post-doc research fellow at the Courtauld Institute of Art, UCL, in London and guest lectured at the Leon Levy Foundation Centre for Conservation, Royal Thimphu College, and Sherubtse College. Kuenga is a National Geographic Explorer. She has an undergraduate degree from Harvard University and post-graduate degrees from Cambridge University and The Courtauld Institute of Art. She was born in Bhutan and calls Thimphu, the capital of her country, home. She holds a PhD in Archeology and an MPhil in World Archeology both from from the Cambridge University. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts in Social Anthropology and Archeology from Harvard University. [Back](#)

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Archaeology in Bhutan**

#### **Kuenga Wangmo:**

#### **Archaeology in Bhutan: Studying the Phobjikha Mounds**

The existence of several mounds (27°26'11" N, 90°12'17" E) about a hundred meters beyond the village of Kilkhorthang in the south-eastern edge of the Phobjikha valley remains a mystery to locals and visitors alike. Four of these mounds lie within the newly built Ngelung Drachagling Monastery complex while another three can be seen besides the road leading to the villages further east. The Monastery itself was built on a site that held an existing ruin, which was demolished during the construction of the new structure.

The presence of the mounds, which are manmade, suggests that mound making was practiced by ancient people of the Phobjikha valley. What the practice meant or what the mounds hold is still unknown but an excavation of one of these mounds later in the year should reveal, at least in the first instance, the contents of the mounds. These finds could then be used to study and establish the function/s of the mounds.

It is, however, likely that the features are burial mounds. Burial mounds of various types and sizes have been found in other parts of the country. The most telling indication of these being burial mounds is the solicitous landscape in which they are found; the mounds are perched on a surface that extends from a hilly back overlooking bodies of water. These were the very qualities of land sought for burials in ancient Tibet and are also true for the single known major burial site in Bhutan, the Bangtsho burial mound in Lhuntshe. It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the mounds in Phobjikha contain (or had once contained) human remains.

For centuries, there have been sightings of intriguing objects and ancient features in the Bhutanese landscape. They have collected and used stone tools as objects of worship, objects that are shrouded in elaborate religious myths. Believing a stone adze to be *Doring* or *Namchag*, weapon of the demigods fallen during battles in the skies, to viewing prehistoric rock paintings as creations of Guru Rinpoche and the Zhabdrung, we have imposed our current beliefs onto what is found from a distant past. The mounds in Phobjikha too have lost their context as mound making as a burial practice is far removed from the psyche of the general Bhutanese.

Yet it is important to understand these past human markers in their rightful contexts. This paper will, therefore, try to address the need for a systematic investigation of archaeological features and artefacts in the country so that marks such as the Phobjikha mounds could be used as

mnemonics that sustain the faithful transmission of knowledge with few 'out of context' belief impositions. It will delve into issues of relatively understanding ancient features and of dating archaeological sites in Bhutan. [Back](#)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Name : CHELSEA FERREL**

**Organisation : Tufts University**

**Position : Program Manager**

**Country : Global Operations**

Chelsea Ferrell is a Program Manager (Global Operations) at Tufts University in the USA.

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Sacred Groves under a shadow: Importance of religious forests for the rural Himalayan communities of Bhutan**

**Hemanta Kafley<sup>1</sup>, Chelsea Ferrell<sup>2</sup>, Bradly Thornton<sup>3</sup>, and Julia Worcester<sup>4</sup>**

1 Tarleton State University, Stephenville, TX 76401

2 Tufts University, Somerville, MA 02155

3 Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501

4 Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA 01075

Forest resources and religious values are constitutionally protected in Bhutan. Buddhist religion and culture value natural resources as an integral part of their spiritual need that simultaneously provides ecosystem services vital for rural Himalayan livelihoods. We studied three community forests and a sacred grove, a forest patch that is considered religiously sacred, to understand the importance of such community-based natural resource management regimes. We interviewed over 100 people from 3 different local communities in Bumthang Dzongkhag (district) to assess their views on the shift of the Bhutanese Government towards natural resource management. We also conducted key informant surveys and secondary literature searches on the importance of sacred groves in Bhutan. While community forest management has been recently recognized by the law and is a potential modality for forest conservation, the potential for sacred groves to be a conservation strategy has yet to be recognized by Bhutanese law. Few studies conducted have emphasized the tremendous value of sacred forests have for cultural and ecological preservation. Several studies and our field observations have shown that there are tremendous benefits of adopting this traditional approach of forest conservation. However, lack of legal instruments to protect the sacred groves have threatened these old-growth forest patches and left them vulnerable to modern developments such as road construction, hydropower development, and lack of management. Undermining sacred forests could lead to erosion of religious and cultural values of rural communities in addition to other bio-physical and environmental values that the undisturbed forest patches may carry. We recommend carrying out a nationwide survey of sacred forests, documenting their history and relevance to the local community at present. Sacred groves can serve as the source patches for conserving diversity of Himalayan plants and wildlife and simultaneously help preserve the religious and cultural integrity of a country that heavily emphasizes on conservation of natural and cultural resources. [Back](#)