

Precarity of Death: A Mini-Conference Exploring the Porous Boundary between Death and Life
in Tibetan Traditions

Sponsored by the Yale University Buddhist Studies Initiative and Institute of Sacred Music

December 3, 2021

9am to 5pm EST

[Register here](#)

What is death? How do reincarnation and the transmigration of consciousness complicate our understanding of death? What role does the body play in the process of death? How have various traditions understood the post-death experience? How are death and life inextricably linked? Using textual analysis, historical excavation and ethnographic inquiry, scholars will present research considering the ways in which death and rebirth are parts of a complex continuity. Rather than thinking of death as a permanent state, a one-way border, this conference seeks to examine the ways in which death is a tactical concept, with ever-changing boundaries and definitions.



9am – 10:30am

Introductory Remarks and Welcome

Kati Fitzgerald, Yale University

Death or no death. The ambiguity of the deloms in Bhutan

Francoise Pommaret, National Centre for Scientific Research & Royal University of Bhutan

Perception towards death, dying with dignity, preference of end-of-life care and medical aid in dying among Asian Buddhists living in Montreal, Canada

Nidup Dorji, Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan

When the Death Process Reverses: At What Point are the Dead truly Dead?

Alyson Prude, Georgia Southern University

Memories of Birth, Echoes of Death: The Entwining of Life and Loss in Mustang Women's Reproductive Histories

Sienna R. Craig, Dartmouth College

10:45am – 12:15pm

Death as Moral-Heuristic Ground: Paradigms of Generating Resilience and Cultivating Compassion among Tibetan Buddhist Practitioners in South India

Tenzin Namdul, University of Minnesota

Evoking death and the dead in Tibetan secular songs: teachings, devotion, commemoration

Isabelle Henrion-Dourcy, Laval University

Coping with (Un-)timely Deaths and Extending one's Life Span: Reflections on Ethnographic Research among Tibetans in Darjeeling, India

Dr. Barbara Gerke, University of Vienna

What is the Lifespan of a Tibetan Incarnation?

Gray Tuttle, Columbia University

Buddhism and Organ Donation: The (Dead) Body Multiple

Tanya Zivkovic, University of Adelaide

2pm - 3pm

Keynote Address

Mystery, Meaning, and Nature of Death: A Tibetan Buddhist Perspective

Dr. Thupten Jinpa, McGill University

3:30pm – 5pm

The 'das log, revenant experience in the Khandro Chodzo Chenmo

Padma'tsho (Baimacuo) Prof., Southwest University for Nationalities

The Miracle of Yama's Little Helpers: Problems and Practices of Bodiless Transference in the Kālacakra Tantra

Michael Sheehy, University of Virginia

Modes of Liberation in Tibetan Buddhist Death Practices: Purificatory, Didactic, and Yogic Approaches

Rory Lindsay, University of Toronto

Ontological Realities and the Biocultural Nexus of Life in Suspension with Death: Perceptual Cues and Biomarker Diagnostics for the Tukdam State

Tawni Tidwell, PhD, TMD, Center for Healthy Minds, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Check out ism.yale.edu/Tibetan for updates, registration, and more.