



CALL FOR PAPERS

"Emerging Tibetan Scholars in Tibetan Studies" (2026-2027)

The Modern Tibetan Studies Program (MTSP) at Columbia University is proud to announce an online serial conference entitled "Emerging Tibetan Scholars in Tibetan Studies," which will run from September 18, 2026 through June 18, 2027.

The primary aim of this initiative is to bring attention to the dissertation research of a growing cohort of Tibetan-heritage PhD graduates. In a preliminary survey, we have identified nearly one hundred Tibetans worldwide who have earned doctoral degrees in the past couple of decades. The webinar series celebrates this milestone and will highlight the work of ten recent graduates. The talks will be held on the third Friday of each month via Zoom webinar. Each session will feature a 40-minute (approx.) presentation by a single scholar, followed by discussion. The webinars will be recorded only if requested by the speaker, and AI functionality (note-taking, etc.) will be disabled. Registration (first name, last name, institution and e-mail) is required of all attendees.

The serial conference is funded by the Weatherhead East Asian Institute following two productive gatherings hosted by Columbia earlier this year: "Tibetan Education Workshop: Theory and Praxis" (April 24) and "Living with Climate Change in the Himalayas and on the Tibetan Plateau" (May 27-28). Indigenous Knowledge frameworks were central to the presentations and conversations at both events, which were co-led respectively with Tsepakjab Washul (PhD, University of Virginia, 2026) and Tashi Dekyid Monet (PhD, University of Virginia, 2025) in conjunction with MTSP.

"Emerging Tibetan Scholars in Tibetan Studies" is further inspired by the Henry Luce Foundation which in 2024 renewed its support of the Modern Tibetan Studies Program after twenty-five years, affirming our commitment to prioritizing community engagement and education as we seek to expand Tibetan Studies in collaboration with a more diverse range of knowledge co-creators.

See below for the Fall Schedule; all talks will be held from 10am-11:30am ET. The Call for Papers herewith is for the second half of the series. To apply, please fill out and return the attached form to mtspdiretor@columbia.edu by October 1, or click here for a [Google Form](#).

To register for the Zoom webinars, click [here](#).

We hope you will join us!

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DATE	SPEAKER <i>Conferring Institution</i>	DISSERTATION TITLE
Sept. 18, 2026	Dr. Dhondup T. Rekjong <i>Northwestern University</i>	Courage and Creativity under Chinese Rule: The Untold Story of Tibetan Cultural and Religious Survival in the 1980s
Oct. 16, 2026	Dr. Khenpo Kunga Sherab <i>University of Toronto</i>	Incarnation on the Roof of the World: A History of Practices to Identify Trülku (sprul sku) in Tibetan Buddhism
Nov. 20, 2026	Dr. Somtsobum <i>Northwestern University</i>	Ḍākinīs and Demonesses: Women, Buddhism, and Land in Modern Tibetan Literature.
Dec. 18, 2026	Dr. Yewong Dongchung <i>Columbia University</i>	Wood Carvers and Deep Forests: The Expansion of Tibetan-Language Woodblock Printing Houses (1642-1900)
Jan. 15, 2027	Dr. Palden Gyal <i>Columbia University</i>	Shifting Terrains of Authority: Religio-Political Governance in the Sino-Tibetan Borderlands, 1650-1911

SPEAKERS FOR THE FOLLOWING DATES IN 2027 TO BE DECIDED:

Feb. 19 | Mar. 26* | Apr. 16 | May 21 | June 18

** 4th Friday of the month to avoid conflict with the Association for Asian Studies 2027 Annual Conference.*

Speaker Application Form

1. Name:
2. Alternative forms of name:
3. E-mail:
4. Dissertation title:
5. Institution of degree conferral:
6. Date of PhD conferral
7. Advisor's name:
8. Brief abstract of dissertation:
9. Title of proposed talk, if different than dissertation title
10. Abstract of alternate presentation:
11. Current country of residence:
12. If we are unable to include you in the series, would you be interested in opportunities to exchange with other recent Tibetan PhD graduates?
13. What needs are you facing at this point in your academic path and career?
14. Plans for future research (optional):