

Special Issue Guest Editorial

Writing with Care: Ethnographies from the Margins of Tibet and the Himalayas

Harmandeep Kaur Gill and Theresia Hofer

University of Oxford

University of Bristol

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2218/himalaya.2023.9161>

Keywords

Decolonizing area studies of Tibet and the Himalayas; margins; ethnographies of ‘ordinary’ people; everyday lives; sensitive scholarship

Recommended Citation

Gill, Harmandeep K. and Hofer, Theresia (2023). Writing with Care: Ethnographies from the Margins of Tibet and the Himalayas. *HIMALAYA* 43(1): 3-11.

Numerous projects and initiatives in Tibetan and Himalayan communities are devoted to people occupying marginal spaces; this work is led by grass-root organizations, writers, artists and social entrepreneurs who use social spaces and online social-media platforms to support and amplify marginal voices. By contrast, much work in Tibetan and Himalayan Studies continues to focus on ‘extraordinary’ persons, such as Buddhist scholars and practitioners and others in usually high socio-economic positions. They often represent a geographic, a political, a religious, a socio-cultural, or a symbolic ‘center’. This Special Issue presents alternatives to such accounts.

Publishing the presentations from a conference panel that the editors co-organized in July 2022 and an additional photo essay and poems by two Tibetan writers,¹ this Special Issue considers a wider range of people and socio-cultural practices in Tibet and the Himalayas, and focuses instead on more ‘ordinary’ people who are often at the edges of society. It presents accounts on and by children, deaf people, women and the elderly, with many of such individuals living precarious and disadvantaged lives. As such this volume complements the rather limited space so far given to this group in Tibetan and Himalayan Studies (Atwill 2018, Chan 2022, Chettri et al. 2022,

Childs 2004, Choedup 2018, Desjarlais 2003, Dolma and Denno 2013, Fjeld 2008, Fjeld 2022, Gill 2022, Gagné 2018, Gyatso and Havnevik 2005, Hofer 2020, Holmberg 2007, Jabb 2022, Makley 2007, March 2002, Nulo 2014, Paldron 2023, Ramble, Schwieger and Travers 2013, Ramble 2021, Robin 2015) and adds also to understanding Buddhist ideas and practices of ordinary people (cf. Shneiderman 2006, Childs 2014, Lewis 2014).

Some of the contributions in the Special Issue seek to describe and analyze the lived experiences of geographic, socio-cultural, political and linguistic ‘margins’, while others give space to voices that are not necessarily

‘marginalized’ in their respective communities, but have nonetheless been confined to the periphery in academia. In approaching this concept of the margins, we were inspired by anthropologist Anna Tsing who considers them as “an analytic placement that makes evident both the constraining, oppressive quality of cultural exclusion and the creative potential of rearticulating, enlivening, and rearranging the very social categories that peripheralize a group’s existence” (1994: 279). Following Tsing, we ask: how can we bring to the fore the creative potential hiding – sometimes in plain sight – at the margins of Tibetan and Himalayan worlds? And, how in the process might this rearrange and enliven social categories, such as gender, class, disability, or age, that have peripheralized a group’s existence or made them invisible and unimportant even to academic eyes?

Similar to more classic anthropological studies, regional Tibetan and Himalayan Studies have so far tended to place emphasis not just on ‘extraordinary’ people, but also on extraordinary events, such as rituals, weddings, performances, artistic and literary productions, and dramatic moments of healing. As a corollary, certain types of phenomena deemed specific and unique to Tibetan and Himalayan societies are foregrounded at the expense of everyday ground realities for individuals. This

has led to certain fixed and holistic generalizations about people, which tend to prioritize a Tibetan Buddhist framework of explanation. As articulated by the Tibetan writer and editor Bhuchung D. Sonam, Tibetan writers living in the West have long struggled against “narratives with a spiritual focus that flattened the experience of Tibetans” (Tsagong 2023). While Sonam is specifically referring to Tibetans, we believe that his statement also holds true for non-Tibetan writers, artists, or academics living across the Himalayan region. Furthermore, we argue that what is shared across various groups in Tibetan and Himalayan societies, and across different social worlds, has often been absent.

People’s inner life worlds are not only impacted by wider religious, socio-cultural, or political structures, but also by their upbringing, their desires, family dynamics, or their personalities. This has not been emphasized enough in regional scholarship, and even in certain traditions within anthropology. People’s decisions and actions have predominately been interpreted as “intellectual deliberations or conscious choices determined by cultural codes, rationalities or ideals” writes the anthropologist Michael Jackson (2008, xii). This has left little room for thinking about and engaging with doubt, dilemmas, contradictions and the messiness of lived lives. This volume

engages with these emotions and struggles in the everyday and as such adds to existing works in academia and examples in literature and films by indigenous artists, writers and directors of the region, such as Chettri 2022, Childs 2004, Craig 2020, Dasel 2016, Dhompa 2014, Dickie 2017, Dolma and Denno 2013, Gardner 2019, Gyal 1982, Gyal and Dondrup 1983, Gyeltshen 2018, Hofer 2018, McGranahan 2010, Norbu 2016, 2019, Sonam 2017, Tseden 2005, 2011, 2015, 2018, 2019, Virtanen 2000, Woesser 2020, and Yangkyi 2022.

The erasure and absence of certain groups of people and their everyday lives from academic knowledge production has resulted in hierarchies in the field of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies, something we consider to be problematic. For one, because presumed hierarchies among and between groups of people may not actually exist (such as those between ‘male’ public and ‘female’ private spaces), and secondly, because certain types of academic knowledge continue to be placed in privileged positions over others, for example, in the continuing scholarly emphasis on Buddhist and religious studies, or the privileging of textual knowledge over practical knowledge, skills and spoken and signed languages. As a result of this, certain people and phenomena continue to be overlooked and excluded not only from the cultural order

but also from the academic order of Tibetan studies (Gill forthcoming).

In *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (1984), the Black feminist writer, bell hooks, argues that feminist theory tends to be produced by privileged women who live at the center and that it thus “lacks wholeness, lacks the broad analysis that could encompass a variety of human experiences” (1984: xviii). We extend hooks’ insights to the field of Tibetan and Himalayan Studies and write as female scholars with mixed economic and family backgrounds, one of us coming from an immigrant and minority ethnic background from Norway. From these positionalities and based on observations and insights from our diverse and international network of younger colleagues and students in the field, we ask: Have marginalized persons and groups in Tibetan and Himalayan communities been overlooked or excluded as the result of an academic field being dominated by scholars from a white, privileged background, most of whom have not experienced marginalization either due to race, class, gender, sexuality, disability or any combination of them, and thus lack interest in marginal experiences and the phenomenon of marginalization? Furthermore, in Tibetan and Himalayan Studies, does this also perhaps lead to a field that ‘lacks wholeness’?

We argue that an attention to the everyday realities of persons in more varied socio-economic and more or less marginalized positions holds great potential for expanding and enriching Tibetan Studies, especially through the anthropology of Tibet and the Himalayas. Turning our gaze to the margins in all senses, holds the potential for rearticulating and broadening our understanding of the lived experiences of gender and of social class, of ability and disability, of selfhood, or lay religion, whilst also opening our eyes to other phenomena that are pressing concerns in people’s everyday lives such as love, making a living, stigmatization, or loneliness, topics that are highlighted in the contributions.

The works of native creators from Tibetan and Himalayan communities, demand, to use the words of Bhuchung D. Sonam, that the world look at them “as human beings first and foremost” (Tsagong 2023). Thus, we need to tune our attention towards the complexities, contradictions and messiness of people’s lived lives, which will—in the words of anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod—enable us to see, “that others live as we perceive ourselves living, not as robots programmed with “cultural” rules, but as people going through life agonizing over decisions, making mistakes, trying to make themselves look good, enduring tragedies and personal losses, enjoying others, and finding moments

of happiness” (1991: 157-58). Although expressed over 30 years ago, we think that “ethnographies of the particular”, one of Abu-Lughod’s strategies in ‘writing against culture’ (1991: 473-476) to avoid the pitfalls of “othering” and in making generalizations about others, are still highly relevant for Tibetan and Himalayan Studies. With this inspiration in mind, we offer to the field of Tibetan Studies this broad collection of ethnographies of people considered to be ‘ordinary’ and their everyday lives.

To uncover the creative potential of the margins, in this Special Issue, we also open up to more sensitive kinds of knowing in line with scholars such as Abu-Lughod 1986, Behar 1997, Biehl 2005, Craig 2020, D’Amico-Samuels 1991, Garcia 2010, Jackson 2017, Mattingly and Grøn 2022, McGranahan 2020, Narayan 1989, Pandian & Mariappan 2014, Stoller 1989, and Wikan 1981. By taking inspiration from these scholars and from feminist and decolonial approaches such as Abu-Lughod 1990, 1991, Asad 1995, Behar 2003, Glissant 1997, Harrison 1991, McLaurin 2001, and Morgen 1989, we steer towards a more hesitant form of knowing that does not fix people in place but strives to leave their life worlds opaque and unresolved. By writing with a great deal of care and reflexivity, such sensitive and critical approaches enable the reader to connect

with people as individual personalities and not merely as members of social or third-person categories (Gill, forthcoming), something we also attempt to put into practice in this Special Issue.

Disciplines and Methods

This Special Issue is an interdisciplinary collaboration between scholars with backgrounds in anthropology, history, and religious studies. We pay attention to the Tibetan and Himalayan margins by bringing together a variety of writing, in the forms of research articles, poetry and a photo essay, covering life phases from early childhood to old age. The contributions are set in Tibetan areas of the PRC, Bhutan, Nepal, and Tibetan exile in India and France. They range from the time period of 1950–2023. Regarding methods, the basis for most of the contributions has been long-term anthropological fieldwork in Tibetan and Himalayan regions. This has involved participant observation and community engagement, gaining language competency and self-critical forms of translation, as well as visual documentation. Several authors have also engaged deeply with historical documents and Cameron David Warner also brings with him perspectives from religious studies.

Outline

We open up the Special Issue with an intellectual and affective Foreword (pp. 12

– pp. 19) by Sienna Craig. The Special Issue itself is divided into four sections that cover life phases from childhood to old age and include the stories of boys and girls, and men and women as well as a variety of other positions and experiences, from the margins in Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan and Tibetan exile.

The first section on *Childhood* has the contribution ‘Amulets as Infrastructure: Enabling the ordinary for children in Mugum, western Nepal’ (pp. 20 – pp. 41) by Heidi Fjeld and Inger Vasstveit to explore the amulets of a boy called Tashi from Mugum in western Nepal. Fjeld and Vasstveit analyze the phenomenon of amulets as ordinary, ubiquitous and unremarkable in terms of ‘infrastructure’ and taken-for-granted techniques of child development. They show how amulets help the safe transitions of newborns and young children (toddlers) to slightly older children and how amulets structure the blurred spaces between the extraordinary and ordinary. The paper addresses marginality in three important ways: by bringing children and childhood into the focus of Tibetan and Himalayan studies; by describing amulet practices in an area marginal to religious centres and thus to the production of powerful amulet ingredients; and by exploring the marginality of Mugum as a geographical space for the placing and wearing of amulets.

From Mugum, we move to Tibet and onto the second section on *Young Adults*. Remarkably we are able to offer here two ethnographies from the city of Lhasa, which has become notoriously hard to access, let alone carry out social science research in its midst. The section opens up with Theresia Hofer’s contribution, ‘Writing from the Socio-linguistic Margins of Tibet: Deaf Students, Tibetan Literacy and WeChat at the Lhasa Special School’ (pp. 42 – pp. 70), on the writing of Tashi and Yangzom, two young deaf graduates from this boarding school, which houses over 200 deaf students as well as some blind youths and children with multiple disabilities. Tashi and Yangzom offer exceptional expressions of their minds and hearts of their desires and hopes for deaf students to gain literacy in Tibetan and for deaf people’s futures in Tibetan society. Hofer analyzes how the two multiply marginalized writers engage with and enact the state through certain terminology, yet how they simultaneously and creatively challenge and ultimately escape some of these demands of the state. Anne Kukuczka in ‘Working Out in “Sunlight Happiness Gym”: Fitness, Well-Being and Temporal Rhythms in the Contemporary Tibetan City’ (pp. 71 – pp. 88) takes as a starting point the everyday experiences of two Tibetan women spending part of their leisure time in ‘Sunlight Happiness Gym’, a high-end fitness studio in Lhasa. The

article explores how desires for particular bodies and bodily practices are linked to complex self-making projects among Tibetan women and government civil servants. Working for the government and living in the highly controlled space of Lhasa, they have to navigate multiple constraints to their self-expressions at work and other domains. By exploring the quest for well-being and self-making through an emphasis on sport and fitness, Kukuczka foregrounds a thematic lens that has been marginal within Tibetan and Himalayan Studies. The last contribution in this section are two poems ‘གལ་སྲིད་ང་རང་གཞན་ལུལ་དུ་ཤི་ན།’ (‘If I were to Die in Exile’ and ‘སྤྲུལ་ཡིས་?’ (‘Who Would?’) (pp. 89 - pp. 91) by translator and writer Kunchok Rabten who shares with his readers his pains and dilemmas of being separated from his Tibetan homeland and beloved family members there.

The third section on *Older Adults* opens up with ‘Resistance to Marriage, Family Responsibilities, and Mobility: A Turbulent Life Story from Kyidrong’ (pp. 92 - pp. 107) by Geoff Childs and Namgyal Choedup. This looks at Kyidrong during the 1950s and 1960s and gendered family dynamics through the eyes of Yangchen, the eldest of three daughters in a sonless household. By exploring her story, Childs and Choedup shed light on the connections between gender, social status and autonomy among Tibetan commoners during

the mid-twentieth century. This section continues with the contribution ‘*Thuenlam*: Keeping “Harmonious Relations” Through the Lens of Hosting and Hospitality in Bhutan’ (pp. 108 – pp. 130) by Ulrike Čokl who takes us to Bhumthang in East-central Bhutan to introduce readers to *thuenlam*, considered one of the most important prerequisites and unwritten codes of conduct for successful coexistence in daily social life in Bhutan. The article explores the different ways local people keep *thuenlam* during a trip Čokl made with them along an old trade and exchange route that connects two valleys. The focus on informal etiquette as practiced by ‘ordinary’ people sets Čokl’s work apart from an explosion of academic writings on formalized and codified etiquette in Bhutan. From Bhutan, we move to France with a contribution by Cameron David Warner on ‘Tsering: Authenticity and Dependent Origination in a Portrait of a Tibetan Woman’ (pp. 131 – pp. 147). He paints a portrait—as a scholar and a friend—of a Tibetan woman who fled from Tibet to Nepal, before she, like many Tibetan exiles, migrated to Europe in pursuit of a better life. Through Tsering’s story, Warner calls attention to the challenges and reflections brought about by a life on the move and how these come to shape a Tibetan woman’s sense of self. The final contribution in this section is the poem ‘Cotton

Singers’ (pp. 148 – pp. 149) by poet and writer Tsering Wangmo Dhompa who writes about what a young girl recalls.

The final section on *Old Age* has the contribution ‘Old Tibetan Hands’ (pp. 150 - pp. 181), by Harmandeep Kaur Gill where she shares stories—through words and images—about a group of elderly exiled Tibetans living in Dharamsala. Through intimate connections to her elderly Tibetan friends, Gill provides glimpses into their old age and lived lives.

We conclude the Special Issue with an Afterword (pp. 182 – pp. 185) by Sienna Craig who weaves together the threads that connect the individuals and communities presented within this rich volume. As editors, we are proud to have such wonderful colleagues and writers, and that we together have contributed towards understanding a group of individual personalities in Tibetan and Himalayan worlds, who are clearly living remarkable lives. We hope this Special Issue will give people like the ones featured here a much more central position in the anthropology of this region.

Acknowledgements

The editors would like to thank each other for many forms of mutual support and the intellectual engagement the IATS panel and this themed issue has meant for us. Theresia Hofer would like to specifically acknowledge the tremendous

intellectual contribution that Harmandeep Kaur Gill has had in the writing of this introduction and in her exemplary attempts in bridging anthropology and Tibetan Studies more broadly. We express our heartfelt thanks to Sienna Craig for delivering the keynote to the panel, acting as discussant on two papers and for crafting the Special Issue ends, as well as her steadfast and unwavering support well beyond this issue. Our sincere gratitude also goes to Carole McGranahan, Heidi Fjeld and Geoff Childs for their highly valuable and constructive feedback on individual papers during the panel. We are also grateful to all contributors to the panel, their generous collegiality, for seeing their papers through to publication, and thus forging new paths together. We are incredibly honored that poet and writer Tsering Wangmo Dhompa accepted our invitation to publish her work in the Special issue. A special thank you to Kunchok Rabten who did not take part in our panel during the IATS, but still chose the Special Issue as a home for his writings. Stefan Lueder has been an exemplary managing editor to HIMALAYA journal – thank you for all your hard work on this issue. Our heartfelt gratitude to Geoff Childs, Dechen Pemba and Sienna Craig for reading the Introduction to the Special Issue and offering critical feedback. Last but not least, many thanks to

the peer-reviewers who took their precious time to read and provide invaluable feedback to the contributors, to the copy-editors, Surit Das, Catriona Child, Nikhil Mathew and Lindsay Graham, and to the financial support gained from The Wellcome Trust (Grant Number 104523) and the Carlsberg Foundation (Grant Number CF21-0537) for the panel in Prague and work on this Special Issue.

Endnotes

1. The panel ‘Ordinary Lives and Ethnographies of the Everyday in Tibet and the Himalayas’ was held on 7th of July at the 16th IATS in Prague, Czech Republic (3-9 July 2022).

References

- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1986. *Veiled Sentiments. Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- . 1990. “Can there be a Feminist Ethnography?” *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 5 (1), 7 – 27.
- . 1991. “Writing Against Culture.” In *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, edited by Richard G. Fox, 137 – 162. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Asad, Talal. ed. 1995. [1973]. *Anthropology & the Colonial Encounter*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Atwill, David G. 2018. *Islamic Shangri-La: Inter-Asian Relations and Lhasa’s Muslim Communities, 1600 to 1960*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Behar, Ruth. 1997. *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart*. Boston: Beacon Press.

———. 2003. *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza’s Story*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Biehl, João. 2005. *Vita: Life in a Zone of Social Abandonment*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Chan, Michelle Jana. 2022. “Up in a tiny Himalayan kingdom, an LGBTQ revolution is on the climb.” *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 10. 2023: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2022-11-10/himalayan-kingdom-bhutan-lgbtq-revolution>

Chettri, Mona. 2022. “Next-gen Precarity: Gender and Informal Labor in the Eastern Himalaya.” *Gender, Technology and Development* 26 (1), 96 – 115.

Chettri, Mona, Ktien Hima and Nikita Rai. eds. 2022. *Gender, Sexual/Other Identities in the Eastern Himalaya*. Gangtok: Rachna Books.

Childs, Geoff. 2004. *Tibetan Diary. From Birth to Death and Beyond in a Himalayan Valley of Nepal*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- . 2014. “Hunger, Hard Work, and Uncertainty: Tashi Dondrup Reminisces on Life and Death in a Tibetan Village.” In *Buddhists: Understanding Buddhism through the Lives of Practitioners*, edited by Todd Lewis, 228 – 235. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Choedup, Namgyal. 2018. “Old people’s homes”, Filial piety, and Transnational Families: Change and Continuity in Elderly Care in the Tibetan Settlements in India.” In *Care Across Distance: Ethnographic Explorations of Aging and Migration*, edited by Azra Hromadzic and Monika Palmberger, 75 – 94. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Craig, Sienna. 2020. *The Ends of Kinship. Connecting Himalayan lives Between Nepal and New York*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- D’Amico-Samuels, Deborah. 1991. “Undoing Fieldwork: Personal, Political, and Theoretical Implications.” In *Decolonizing Anthropology*, edited by Faye V. Harrison, 68 – 87. Washington, DC: American Anthropological Association.
- Dasel, Tenzin. dir. 2016. [Film] *Royal Café*, 40m.
- Desjarlais, Robert. 2003. *Sensory Biographies. Lives and Death Among Nepal’s Yolmo Buddhists*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dhompā, Tsering W. 2014. *A Home in Tibet*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.
- Dickie, Tenzin. ed. 2017. *Old Demons New Deities. Contemporary Stories from Tibet*. New Delhi: Navayana Publishing.
- Dolma, Kunsang and Evan Denno. 2013. *A Hundred Thousand White Stones: An Ordinary Tibetan’s Extraordinary Journey*. Somerville: Wisdom Publications.
- Fjeld, Heidi E. 2008. “Pollution And Social Networks In Contemporary Rural Tibet.” In *Tibetan Modernities: Notes from the Field on Cultural and Social Change*, edited by Robert Barnett and Ronald Schwartz, 113–137. Brill: Proceedings of the Tenth Seminar of the IATS, 2003, Vol. 11.
- . 2022. *The Return of Polyandry: Kinship and Marriage in Central Tibet*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Gagné, Karine. 2018. *Caring for Glaciers; Land, Animals, and Humanity in the Himalayas*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Garcia, Angela. 2010. *The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction and Dispossession Along the Rio Grande*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gardner, Alex. 2019. *The Life of Jamgon Kongtrul the Great*. Ithaca: Snow Lion.
- Gill, Harmandeep K. 2022. “Imagining Self and Other: Carers, TV and Touch.” In *Imagistic Care: Growing Old in a Precarious World*, edited by Cheryl Mattingly and Lone Grøn, 163 – 184. New York: Fordham Press.
- . Forthcoming. *Waiting at the Mountain Pass: Coming to Terms with Solitude, Decline, and Death in Tibetan Exile*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Glissant, Édouard. 1997. *Poetics of Relation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Gyal, Dondrup. 1982. “*Sad kyis bcom pa’i me tog*” (A Blighted Flower), *sBrang char* 4, 6 – 28.
- Gyal, Dondrup and Tsering Dondrup. 1983. “*rGyu ‘bras med pa’i mna’ ma*” (A Shameless Bride), *sBrang char* 2, 41 – 55.
- Gyatso, Janet and Hanna Havnevik. eds. 2005. *Women in Tibet*. London: Hurst & Company.
- Gyeltshen, Tashi. 2018. *The Red Phallus*. A film produced by Studio 108.
- Harrison, Faye V. ed. 1991. *Decolonizing Anthropology: Moving Further toward an Anthropology for Liberation*. Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association.
- Hofer, Theresia. 2018. *Medicine and Memory in Tibet: Amchi Physicians in an Age of Reform*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- . 2020. “Goat-Sheep-Mixed-Sign” in Lhasa – Deaf Tibetans’ Language Ideologies and Unimodal Codeswitching in Tibetan and Chinese Sign Languages, Tibet Autonomous Region, China.” In *Sign Language Ideologies in Practice*, edited by A. Kusters et al., 81 – 105. Berlin: DeGruyter.
- Holmberg, David. 2007. “Outcasts in an “Egalitarian”

Society: Tamang/ Blacksmith Relations from a Tamang Perspective.” *Occasional Papers in Sociology and Anthropology* 10, 124–140.

hooks, bell. 1984. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Boston: South End Press.

Jabb, Lama. 2022. “Distilling Joys and Woes. An Appreciation of Contemporary Tibetan Women’s Writing རྒྱུད་སྐྱུག་བསྟུན་པའི་དེང་རབས་བོད་མིའི་བརྒྱུན་ཐོན་ལུང་ལྟོད་རྒྱུད་ལུང་ལྟོད་ལུང་.” *Journal of Tibetan Literature* 1 (1), 211–226.

Jackson, Michael. 2008 [2005]. *Existential Anthropology. Events, Exigencies and Effects*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books.

—. 2017. *How Lifeworlds Work. Emotionality, Sociality & the Ambiguity of Being*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lewis, Todd. ed. 2014. *Buddhists: Understanding Buddhism through the Lives of Practitioners*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

Makley, Charlene E. 2007. *The Violence of Liberation: Gender and Tibetan Buddhist Revival in Post-Mao China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

March, Kathryn S. 2002. *If Each Comes Halfway: Meeting Tamang Women in Nepal*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Mattingly, Cheryl and Lone Grøn. eds. 2022. *Imagistic Care: Growing Old in a Precarious World*. New York: Fordham Press.

McGranahan, Carole. 2010.

Arrested Histories: Tibet, The CIA, and Memories of a Forgotten War. Durham: Duke University Press.

—. ed. 2020. *Writing Anthropology: Essays on Craft and Commitment*. Durham: Duke University Press.

McLaurin, Irma. ed. 2001. *Black Feminist Anthropology: Theory, Politics, Praxis, and Poetics*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Morgen, Sandra. ed. 1989. *Gender and Anthropology*. Washington, DC: American Anthropological Association.

Narayan, Kirin. 1989. *Storytellers, Saints, and Scoundrels: Folk Narrative in Hindu Religious Teachings*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Norbu, Khyentse. 2016. *Hema, Hema: Sing me a Song While I Wait*. Film produced by: Tsong Tsong Ma Productions & Dewathang Talkie.

—. 2019. *Looking for a Lady with Fangs and a Moustache*. Film produced by: Philosojoy Production, Shatkon Arts.

Nulo, Naktsang. 2014. *My Tibetan Childhood: When Ice Shattered Stone*, translated by Angus Cargill and Sonam Lhamo. Durham: Duke University Press.

Paldron, Tenzin Mingyur. 2023. “A Capacity to Change. A Tibetan Immigrant Writer Reflects on their Gender Transition.” *Spiral Magazine*, The Rubin Museum: <https://rubinmuseum.org/spiral/a-capacity-to-change>

Pandian, Anand and M. P.

Mariappan. 2014. *Ayya’s Accounts: A Ledger of Hope in Modern India*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Ramble, Charles, Peter Schwieger and Alice Travers. eds. 2013. *Tibetans who Escaped the Historian’s Net: Studies in the Social History of Tibetan-Speaking Societies*. Kathmandu: Vajra Books.

Ramble, Charles. 2021. “Crime, Punishment and Socio-Economic Status in Mustang (Nepal) in the Early 19th Century.” *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* 57, 241–257.

Robin, Françoise. 2015. “Caring for Women’s Words and Women’s Bodies. A Field Note on Palmo and her ‘Demoness Welfare Association for Women’.” *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* 34, 153–169.

Shneiderman, Sara. 2006. “Living Practical Dharma: A Tribute to Chomo Khandru and the Bonpo Women of Lubra Village, Mustang, Nepal.” In *Women’s Renunciation in South Asia: Nuns, Yoginis, Saints, and Singers*, edited by M. Khandelwal, S. L. Hausner and A. G. Gold, 69–94. London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Sonam, Bhuchung D. 2017. *Burning the Sun’s Braids*. Dharamsala: Blackneck Books.

Stoller, Paul. 1989. *The Taste of Ethnographic Things: The Senses in Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Tsagong, Tenzin. 2023. “An Exiled Publisher Creates a ‘Brotherhood Across Tibet-

ans”. *The New York Times*, 12 July 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/12/books/bookupdate/tibetan-literature-tibetwrites.html>

Tseden, Pema Dir. 2005. [Film] *The Silent Holy Stones*, 1h42m. Written by Pema Tseden and produced by Pan Peicong and Li An. Production company: Youth Film Studio of Beijing Film Academy.

—. 2011. [Film] *Old Dog*, 93 m. Written by Pema Tseden and produced by Zhang Xianmin. Production company: Himalaya Audio & Visual Culture Communication Co., Ltd.

—. 2015. [Film] *Tharlo*, 2h18m. Written by Pema Tseden and produced by Wu Leilei, Wang Xuebo and Zhang Xianmin. Production companies: Heaven Pictures (Beijing), Culture and Media Co., Ltd. Beijing YiHe Star Film Production Ltd. Beijing Ocean & Time Culture Communication Co, Ltd.

—. 2018. [Film] *Jinpa*, 86m. Written by Pema Tseden and produced by Wong Kai-wai and Jacky Pang.

—. 2019. [Film] *Balloon*, 1h42m. Written by Pema Tseden. Production companies: Beijing Shengtang Times Culture Communication Co., Ltd. Factory Gate (Tianjin) Film Co., Ltd. Qinghai Manishi Film Co., Ltd. China Film Stellar Theatre Chain.

Tsing, Anna. 1994. “From the Margins.” *Cultural Anthropology* 9 (3), *Further Inflections: Towards Ethnographies of the Future*, 279 – 297.

Virtanen, Riika. Editor and translator. 2000. *A Blighted Flower and Other Stories*. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

Wikan, Unni. 1981. *Life Among the Poor in Cairo*. New York: Routledge Kegan & Paul.

Woese, Tsering. 2020. *Forbidden Memory. Tibet During the Cultural Revolution*. Edited by R. Barnett and Translated by S. T. Chen. Sterling: Potomac Books.

Yangkyi, Tsering. 2022. *Flowers of Lhasa*. London: Balestier Press.