

THE NECHUNG ORACLE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN THE TIBETAN DIASPORA

PEMA CHOEDON

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LOCATION

ZOOM MEETING

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/TGSOXFORD](https://bit.ly/tgssoxford)

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, Tibetans in the diaspora are increasingly conscious of what they consider as their 'culture,' and certain cultural elements are therefore crucial in their identity formation.

Today the *Gnas chung rgyal po*, known among Tibetans as "the state oracle of Tibet," is one of their most important cultural traditions. Nevertheless, it has become the object of controversy, and some factions are wholly opposed to the oracular practice. In my presentation, I will discuss questions concerning the contemporary relevance of this institution: Why is the Nechung Oracle still so important for Tibetans in the 21st century? Why are some Tibetans against the practice? And in what way is the Nechung Oracle one of the Tibetan identity markers within the diaspora communities?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Pema Choedon is a Ph.D. student from the University of Tartu in Estonia, Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore Studies. She is currently working on her dissertation, "The unseen homeland – the construction of Tibet in contemporary discourse and belief in the Tibetan diaspora," concentrating on the formation of cultural narratives including the gender narrative in the diaspora.



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