

Tibetan Buddhism

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibetan_Buddhism

See also: *[History of Tibetan Buddhism](#)* and *[Tibetan monasticism](#)*

Part of a series on
Tibetan Buddhism

Sects [show]
Key personalities [show]
Teachings [show]
Practices and attainment [show]
Major monasteries [show]
Institutional roles [show]
Festivals [show]
Texts [show]
Art [show]

History and overview[\[show\]](#)

Vajrayana
Buddhism
e

Part of [a series](#) on

Vajrayana Buddhism



Traditions[\[show\]](#)

History[\[show\]](#)

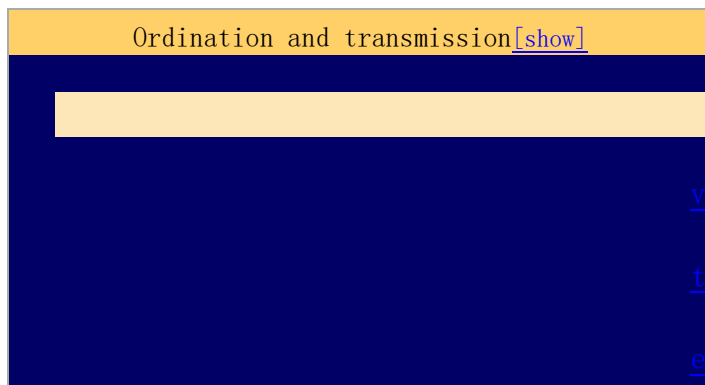
Pursuit[\[show\]](#)

Practices[\[show\]](#)

Festivals[\[show\]](#)

Tantric texts[\[show\]](#)

Symbols and tools[\[show\]](#)



Tibetan Buddhism (also **Indo-Tibetan Buddhism**) is the form of [Buddhism](#) practiced in [Tibet](#) where it is the dominant religion. It is also found in the regions surrounding the [Himalayas](#) (such as [Bhutan](#), [Ladakh](#), and [Sikkim](#)), much of [Central Asia](#), the Southern [Siberian](#) regions such as [Tuva](#), as well as [Mongolia](#).

Tibetan Buddhism is a form of [Mahayana](#) and [Vajrayana](#) Buddhism stemming from the latest stages of [Indian Buddhism](#). It thus preserves "the [Tantric](#) status quo of eighth-century India,"^[u] inclusive of native Tibetan developments and practices. In the pre-modern era, Tibetan Buddhism spread outside of Tibet primarily due to the influence of the [Mongol Yuan dynasty](#) (1271 – 1368), founded by [Kublai Khan](#), which ruled [China](#), [Mongolia](#) and parts of [Siberia](#). In the [modern era](#), it has spread outside of Asia due to the efforts of the [Tibetan diaspora](#).

Apart from classical Mahayana Buddhist practices like the [six perfections](#), Tibetan Buddhism also includes Tantric practices, such as [deity yoga](#) and the [Six Dharmas of Naropa](#). Its main goal is [Buddhahood](#) or [rainbow body](#).^[2] The main language of scriptural study in this tradition is [classical Tibetan](#).

Tibetan Buddhism has four major schools, namely [Nyingma](#), [Kagyu](#), [Sakya](#) and [Gelug](#). The [Jonang](#) is a smaller school, and the [Rimé movement](#) is a recent nonsectarian movement which cuts across the different schools. Each school is independent and has its own monastic institutions and leaders.

□

Contents

[1Nomenclature](#)

[2History](#)

[2.1First dissemination \(7th–9th centuries\)](#)

[2.2Era of fragmentation \(9th-10th centuries\)](#)

[2.3Second dissemination \(10th-12th centuries\)](#)

[2.4Mongol dominance \(13th-14th centuries\)](#)

[2.5From family rule to Ganden Phodrang government \(14th-18th centuries\)](#)

[2.6Qing rule \(18th-20th centuries\)](#)

[2.720th century](#)

[2.821st century](#)

[3Teachings](#)

[3.1Buddhahood and Bodhisattvas](#)

[3.2The Bodhisattva path](#)

[3.3Lamrim](#)

[3.4Vajrayāna](#)

[3.5Madhyamaka and tenet systems](#)

[4Texts and study](#)

[4.1Sutras](#)

[4.2Shastras](#)

[4.3Other important texts](#)

[4.4Tantric literature](#)

[4.5Transmission and realization](#)

[5Practices](#)

[5.1Pāramitā](#)

[5.2Samatha and Vipāśyanā](#)

[5.3Preliminary practices](#)

[5.3.1Guru yoga](#)

[5.4Esotericism and vows](#)

[5.5Rites and rituals](#)

[5.6Mantra](#)

[5.7Tantric Yoga](#)

[6Institutions and Clergy](#)

[6.1Women in Tibetan Buddhism](#)

[6.1.1Nuns](#)

[6.1.2Western nuns and lamas](#)

[7Schools and lineages](#)

[7.1Major Lineages](#)

[7.2Tibetan Buddhist Schools](#)

[7.2.1Nyingma](#)

[7.2.2Sakya](#)

[7.2.3Bodong](#)

[7.2.4Kagyu](#)

[7.2.5Jonang](#)

[7.2.6Gelug](#)

[7.2.7Yungdrung Bon](#)

[8Glossary of terms used](#)

[9See also](#)

[10Notes](#)

[11References](#)

[11.1Citations](#)

[11.2Sources](#)

[12Further reading](#)

[13External links](#)

Nomenclature[[edit](#)]

The native Tibetan term for Buddhism is "The [Dharma](#) of the insiders" (*nang chos*) or "The Buddha Dharma of the insiders" (*nang pa sangs rgyas pa'i chos*).^{[3][4]} "Insider" means someone who seeks the truth not outside, but within the nature of mind. This is contrasted with other forms of organized religion, which are termed *chos lugs* (dharma system), for example, [Christianity](#) is termed *Yi shu'i chos lugs* (Jesus dharma system).^[4]

Westerners unfamiliar with Tibetan Buddhism initially turned to China for understanding. In Han buddhism, the term used is *Lamaism* (literally, "doctrine of the lamas": 喇嘛教 *lama jiao*) to distinguish it from a then-traditional [Han](#) form (佛教 *fo jiao*). The term was taken up by western scholars including [Hegel](#), as early as 1822.^{[5][6]} Insofar as it implies a discontinuity between Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, the term has been discredited.^[7]

In China, the new term is 藏传佛教 *zangchuan fojiao*, literally Tibetan Buddhism.

Another term, "[Vajrayāna](#)" (Tibetan: *dorje tegpa*) is occasionally used mistakenly for Tibetan Buddhism. More accurately, [Vajrayāna](#) signifies a certain subset of practices and traditions which are not only part of Tibetan Buddhism, but also prominent in other Buddhist traditions.

In the west, the term "Indo-Tibetan Buddhism" has become current, in acknowledgement of its derivation from the latest stages of Buddhist development in northern India.^[8]

History[[edit](#)]

Main article: [History of Tibetan Buddhism](#)

First dissemination (7th–9th centuries)[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Tibetan Empire](#)



Map of the Tibetan Empire at its greatest extent between the 780s and the 790s CE



[Samye](#) was the first gompa (Buddhist monastery) built in Tibet (775–779).

While some stories depict Buddhism in Tibet before this period, the religion was formally introduced to Tibet during the [Tibetan Empire](#) (7th–9th century CE).

[Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures](#) from India were first translated into Tibetan under the reign of the [Tibetan](#) king [Songtsän Gampo](#) (618–649 CE).^[9] This period also saw the development of the [Tibetan writing system](#) and [classical Tibetan](#).

In the 8th century King [Trisong Detsen](#) (755–797 CE) established it as the official religion of the state.^[10] Trisong Detsen invited Indian Buddhist scholars to his court, including [Padmasambhāva](#) (8th century CE) and [Śāntarakṣita](#) (725–788), which are considered the founders of [Nyingma](#) (*The Ancient Ones*), the oldest tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.^[11] Trisong Detsen also invited the [Chan](#) master [Moheyan](#)^[note 1] to transmit the Dharma at [Samye Monastery](#). Some sources state that a debate ensued between Moheyan and the Indian master [Kamalaśīla](#), but they disagree on the victor, and some scholars consider the event fictitious.^{[12][13][note 2][note 3]}

Era of fragmentation (9th–10th centuries) [\[edit\]](#)

A reversal in Buddhist influence began under King [Langdarma](#) (r. 836–842), and his death was followed by the so-called *Era of Fragmentation*, a period of disunity during the 9th and 10th centuries. During this era, the political centralization of the earlier [Tibetan Empire](#) collapsed and civil wars ensued.^[16]

In spite of this loss of state power and patronage however, Buddhism survived and thrived in Tibet. According to [Geoffrey Samuel](#) this was because "Tantric (Vajrayana) Buddhism came to provide the principal set of techniques by which Tibetans dealt with the dangerous powers of the spirit world... Buddhism, in the form of Vajrayana ritual, provided a critical set of techniques for dealing with everyday life. Tibetans came to see these techniques as vital for their survival and prosperity in this life."^[17] This includes dealing with the local gods and spirits (*sadak* and *shipdak*), which became a specialty of some Tibetan Buddhist lamas and lay [ngagpas](#) (*mantrikas*, mantra specialists).^[18]

Second dissemination (10th–12th centuries) [\[edit\]](#)



The Indian master Atiśa



The Tibetan householder and translator [Marpa](#) (1012–1097)

The late 10th and 11th centuries saw a revival of Buddhism in Tibet with the founding of "New Translation" ([Sarma](#)) lineages as well as the appearance of "[hidden treasures](#)" (*terma*) literature which reshaped the [Nyingma](#) tradition. ^{[19][20]}

In 1042 the Bengali master [Atiśa](#) (982–1054) arrived in Tibet at the invitation of a west Tibetan king. His chief disciple, [Dromton](#) founded the [Kadampa](#) school of Tibetan Buddhism, one of the first *Sarma* schools.

The [Sakya](#), the *Grey Earth* school, was founded by [Khön Könchok Gyelpo](#) (1034 – 1102), a disciple of the great [Lotsawa](#), Drogmi Shākya. It is headed by the [Sakya Trizin](#), and traces its lineage to the [mahasiddha Virūpa](#). ^[11]

Other influential Indian teachers include [Tilopa](#) (988 – 1069) and his student [Naropa](#) (probably died ca. 1040). Their teachings, via their student [Marpa](#), are the foundations of the [Kagyu](#), the *Oral lineage tradition*, which focuses on the practices of [Mahamudra](#) and the [Six Dharmas of Naropa](#). One of most famous Kagyu figures was the hermit [Milarepa](#), an 11th-century mystic.

The [Dagpo Kagyu](#), founded by the monk [Gampopa](#) who merged Marpa's lineage teachings with the monastic Kadam tradition is today the most influential Kagyu sub grouping. ^[11]

Mongol dominance (13th–14th centuries) [\[edit\]](#)

Main article: [Yuan dynasty](#)

Tibetan Buddhism exerted a strong influence from the 11th century CE among the peoples of [Inner Asia](#), especially the [Mongols](#). The [Mongols invaded Tibet](#) in 1240 and 1244. ^{[21][22][23]} They eventually annexed [Amdo](#) and [Kham](#) and appointed the great scholar and abbot [Sakya Pandita](#) (1182 – 1251) as Viceroy of Central Tibet in 1249. ^[24]

In this way, Tibet was incorporated into the [Mongol Empire](#), with the Sakya hierarchy retaining nominal power over religious and regional political affairs, while the Mongols retained structural and administrative^{[25][26]} rule over the region, reinforced by the rare military intervention. Tibetan Buddhism was adopted as the *de facto* [state religion](#) by the Mongol [Yuan dynasty](#) (1271 – 1368) of [Kublai Khan](#). ^[27]

It was also during this period that the [Tibetan Buddhist canon](#) was compiled, primarily led by the efforts of the scholar [Butön Rinchen Drup](#) (1290 – 1364). A part of this project included the carving of the canon into [wood blocks for printing](#), and the first copies of these texts were kept at [Narthang monastery](#). ^[28]

From family rule to Ganden Phodrang government (14th–18th centuries) [\[edit\]](#)



The [Potala Palace](#) in Lhasa, chief residence and political center of the [Dalai Lamas](#).

See also: [Sino-Tibetan relations during the Ming dynasty](#)

With the decline of the Yuan dynasty and the loose administration of the following (Han-Chinese) [Ming dynasty](#) (1368 – 1644), Central Tibet was ruled by successive local families from the 14th to the 17th century. ^[29]

[Jangchub Gyaltsän](#) (1302 – 1364) became the strongest political family in the mid 14th century.^[30] During this period the reformist scholar [Je Tsongkhapa](#) (1357 – 1419) founded the [Gelug](#) sect which would have a decisive influence on Tibet's history. Internal strife within the [Phagmodrupa dynasty](#), and the strong localism of the various fiefs and political-religious factions, led to a long series of internal conflicts.

The minister family [Rinpungpa](#), based in [Tsang](#) (West Central Tibet), dominated politics after 1435. In 1565 the Rinpungpa family was overthrown by the [Tsangpa](#) Dynasty of [Shigatse](#) which expanded its power in different directions of Tibet in the following decades and favoured the [Karma Kagyu](#) sect. They would play a pivotal role in the events which led to the rise of power of the Dalai Lama's in the 1640s.

In China, Tibetan Buddhism continued to be patronized by the elites of the Ming Dynasty. According to [David M. Robinson](#), during this era, Tibetan Buddhist monks "conducted court rituals, enjoyed privileged status and gained access to the jealously guarded, private world of the emperors".^[31] The Ming [Yongle Emperor](#) (r. 1402 – 1424) promoted the carving of printing blocks for the [Kangyur](#), now known as "the Yongle Kanjur", and seen as an important edition of the collection.^[32]

The Ming Dynasty also supported the propagation of Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia during this period. Tibetan Buddhist missionaries also helped spread the religion in Mongolia. It was during this era that [Altan Khan](#) the leader of the [Tümed](#) Mongols, converted to Buddhism, and allied with the Gelug school, conferring the title of [Dalai Lama](#) to [Sonam Gyatso](#) in 1578.^[33]

During a Tibetan civil war in the 17th century, the chief regent of the [5th Dalai Lama](#), [Sonam Choephel](#) (1595 – 1657 CE) with the help of the [Güshi Khan](#) of the [Khoshut Mongols](#), conquered and unified Tibet and established the [Ganden Phodrang](#) government. The *Ganden Phodrang* and the successive Gelug [tulku](#) lineages of the Dalai Lamas and [Panchen Lamas](#) maintained regional control of [Tibet](#) from the mid-17th to mid-20th centuries.

Qing rule (18th–20th centuries) [\[edit\]](#)



[Yonghe Temple](#), a temple of the Gelug tradition in [Beijing](#) established in the Qing Dynasty.

The [Qing dynasty](#) (1644–1912) established a Chinese rule over Tibet after a [Qing expeditionary force](#) defeated the [Dzungars](#) (who controlled Tibet) in 1720, and lasted until the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1912.^[34] The [Manchu](#) rulers of the Qing dynasty supported Tibetan Buddhism, especially the [Gelug](#) sect, during most of their rule.^[27] The reign of the [Qianlong Emperor](#) was the high mark for this promotion of Tibetan Buddhism in China, with the visit of the [6th Panchen Lama](#) to Beijing, and the building of temples in the Tibetan style, such as [Xumi Fushou Temple](#), the [Puning Temple](#) and [Putuo Zongcheng Temple](#) (modeled after the potala palace).^[35]

This period also saw the rise of the [Rimé movement](#), a 19th-century nonsectarian movement involving the [Sakya](#), [Kagyu](#) and [Nyingma](#) schools of Tibetan Buddhism, along with some [Bon](#) scholars.^[36] Having seen how the [Gelug](#) institutions pushed the other traditions into the corners of Tibet's cultural life, scholars such as [Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo](#) (1820–1892) and [Jamgön Kongtrül](#) (1813–1899) compiled together the teachings of the [Sakya](#), [Kagyu](#) and [Nyingma](#), including many near-extinct teachings.^[37] Without Khyentse and Kongtrul's collecting and printing of rare works, the suppression of Buddhism by the Communists would have been much more final.^[38] The Rimé movement is responsible for a number of scriptural compilations, such as the [Rinchen Terdzod](#) and the [Sheja Dzö](#).

During the Qing, Tibetan Buddhism also remained the major religion of the [Mongols under Qing rule](#) (1635 – 1912), as well as the state religion of the [Kalmyk Khanate](#) (1630 – 1771), the [Dzungar Khanate](#) (1634 – 1758) and the [Khoshut Khanate](#) (1642 – 1717).

20th century[[edit](#)]



Colorized photo of [Gandantegchinlen Monastery](#) in 1913, [Ulaanbaatar](#), Mongolia

In 1912, following the fall of the Qing Dynasty, Tibet became de facto independent under the 13th [Dalai Lama](#) government based in [Lhasa](#), maintaining the current territory of what is now called the [Tibetan Autonomous Region](#).^[39]

During the [Republic of China \(1912 – 1949\)](#), the “Chinese Tantric Buddhist Revival Movement” ([Chinese](#): 密教復興運動) took place, and important figures such as [Nenghai](#) (能海喇嘛, 1886 – 1967) and Master Fazun (法尊, 1902 – 1980) promoted

Tibetan Buddhism and translated Tibetan works into Chinese.^[40] This movement was severely damaged during the cultural revolution, however.

After the [Battle of Chamdo](#), Tibet was annexed by the [Chinese People's Republic](#) in 1950. In 1959 the [14th Dalai Lama](#) and a great number of clergy fled the country, to settle in India and other neighbouring countries. The events of the [Cultural Revolution](#) (1966 – 76) saw religion as one of the main political targets of the Chinese Communist Party, and most of the several thousand temples and monasteries in Tibet were destroyed, with many monks and lamas imprisoned.^[41] During this time, private religious expression, as well as Tibetan cultural traditions, were suppressed. Much of the Tibetan textual heritage and institutions were destroyed, and monks and nuns were forced to disrobe.^[42] Outside of Tibet, however, there was a renewed interest in Tibetan Buddhism in places such as Nepal and Bhutan, while the spread of Tibetan Buddhism in the Western world was accomplished by many of the refugee Tibetan Lamas who escaped Tibet.^[41]

After the liberalization policies in China during the 1980s, the religion began to recover with some temples and monasteries being reconstructed.^[43] Tibetan Buddhism is now an influential religion among educated Chinese, and also in Taiwan.^[43] However, the Chinese government retains strict control over Tibetan Buddhist Institutions in the [PRC](#). Quotas on the number of monks and nuns are maintained, and their activities are closely supervised.^[44]

21st century^[edit]



The [14th Dalai Lama](#) meeting with U.S. President [Barack Obama](#) in 2014. Due to his widespread popularity, the Dalai Lama has become the modern international face of Tibetan Buddhism.^[45]

Today, Tibetan Buddhism is adhered to widely in the [Tibetan Plateau](#), [Mongolia](#), northern [Nepal](#), [Kalmykia](#) (on the north-west shore of the Caspian), [Siberia](#) ([Tuva](#) and [Buryatia](#)), the [Russian Far East](#) and northeast China. It is the [state religion](#) of [Bhutan](#).^[46] The Indian regions of [Sikkim](#) and [Ladakh](#), both formerly independent kingdoms, are also home to significant Tibetan Buddhist populations, as are the Indian states of [Himachal Pradesh](#) (which includes [Dharamshala](#) and the district of Lahaul–Spiti), [West Bengal](#) (the hill stations of [Darjeeling](#) and

[Kalimpong](#)) and [Arunachal Pradesh](#). Religious communities, refugee centers and monasteries have also been established in [South India](#).^[47]

The 14th Dalai Lama is the leader of the [Tibetan government in exile](#) which was initially dominated by the Gelug school, however, according to Geoffrey Samuel:

The Dharamsala administration under the Dalai Lama has nevertheless managed, over time, to create a relatively inclusive and democratic structure that has received broad support across the Tibetan communities in exile. Senior figures from the three non-Gelukpa Buddhist schools and from the Bonpo have been included in the religious administration, and relations between the different lamas and schools are now on the whole very positive. This is a considerable achievement, since the relations between these groups were often competitive and conflict-ridden in Tibet before 1959, and mutual distrust was initially widespread. The Dalai Lama's government at Dharamsala has also continued under difficult circumstances to argue for a negotiated settlement rather than armed struggle with China.^[47]



[Kagyu-Dzong](#) Buddhist center in [Paris](#).

In the wake of the [Tibetan diaspora](#), Tibetan Buddhism has also gained adherents in the West and throughout the world. Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and centers were first established in Europe and North America in the 1960s, and most are now supported by non-Tibetan followers of Tibetan lamas. Some of these westerners went on to learn Tibetan, undertake extensive training in the traditional practices and have been recognized as lamas.^[48] Fully ordained Tibetan Buddhist Monks have also entered Western societies in other ways, such as working academia.^[49]

Samuel sees the character of Tibetan Buddhism in the West as

...that of a national or international network, generally centred around the teachings of a single individual lama. Among the larger ones are the FPMT, which I have already mentioned, now headed by [Lama Zopa](#) and the child-reincarnation of [Lama Yeshe](#); the New Kadampa, in origin a break-away from the [FPMT](#); the [Shambhala network](#), deriving from [Chögyam Trungpa](#)'s organization and now headed by his son; and the networks associated with [Namkhai Norbu](#) Rinpoche (the Dzogchen Community) and [Sogyal Rinpoche](#) (Rigpa).^[50]

Teachings[[edit](#)]

Part of a series on
<u>Mahāyāna Buddhism</u>

Transmission [show]
Teachings [show]
Mahāyāna sūtras [show]
Mahāyāna schools [show]
Other traditions [show]
v
t
e

Tibetan Buddhism upholds classic Buddhist teachings such as the [four noble truths](#) (Tib. *pakpé denpa shyi*), [anatman](#) (not-self, *bdag med*), the [five aggregates](#) (*phung po*) [karma](#) and [rebirth](#), and [dependent arising](#) (*rten cing ’ brel bar ’ byung ba*). ^[51] They also uphold various other Buddhist doctrines associated with [Mahāyāna](#) Buddhism (*theg pa chen po*) as well as the tantric [Vajrayāna](#) tradition. ^[52]

Buddhahood and Bodhisattvas[[edit](#)]



[Samantabhadra](#), surrounded by numerous peaceful and [fierce deities](#).



The eleven faced and thousand armed form of the bodhisattva [Avalokiteshvara](#).

The Mahāyāna goal of spiritual development is to achieve the enlightenment of [Buddhahood](#) in order to most efficiently help all other [sentient beings](#) attain this state.^[53] This motivation is called [bodhicitta](#) (mind of awakening) — an altruistic intention to become enlightened for the sake of all sentient beings.^[54] [Bodhisattvas](#) (Tib. *jangchup semba*, literally “awakening hero”) are revered beings who have conceived the [will and vow](#) to dedicate their lives with *bodhicitta* for the sake of all beings.

Widely revered Bodhisattvas in Tibetan Buddhism include [Avalokiteshvara](#), [Manjushri](#), [Vajrapani](#), and [Tara](#). The most important Buddhas are the [five Buddhas](#) of the Vajradhatu mandala^[55] as well as the [Adi Buddha](#) (first Buddha), called either [Vajradhara](#) or Samantabhadra.

Buddhahood is defined as a state free of the obstructions to liberation as well as those to omniscience (*sarvajñana*).^[56] When one is freed from all mental obscurations,^[57] one is said to attain a state of continuous bliss mixed with a simultaneous cognition of [emptiness](#),^[58] the [true nature of reality](#).^[59] In this state, all limitations on one’s ability to help other living beings are

removed.^[60] Tibetan Buddhism claims to teach methods for achieving Buddhahood more quickly (known as the [Vajrayāna](#) path).^[61]

It is said that there are countless beings who have attained Buddhahood.^[62] Buddhas spontaneously, naturally and continuously perform activities to benefit all sentient beings.^[63] However it is believed that one's [karma](#) could limit the ability of the Buddhas to help them. Thus, although Buddhas possess no limitation from their side on their ability to help others, sentient beings continue to experience suffering as a result of the limitations of their own former negative actions.^[64]

An important schema which is used in understanding the nature of Buddhahood in Tibetan Buddhism is the [Trikaya](#) (Three bodies) doctrine.^[65]

The Bodhisattva path[[edit](#)]

A central schema for spiritual advancement used in Tibetan Buddhism is that of the [five paths](#) (Skt. *pañcamārga*; Tib. *lam nga*) which are:^[66]

The path of accumulation – in which one collects wisdom and merit, generates [bodhicitta](#), cultivates the [four foundations of mindfulness](#) and [right effort](#) (the "four abandonments").

The path of preparation – Is attained when one reaches the union of calm abiding and higher insight meditations (see below) and one becomes familiar with [emptiness](#).

The path of seeing – one perceives emptiness directly, all thoughts of subject and object are overcome, one becomes an [arya](#).

The path of meditation – one removes subtler traces from one's mind and perfects one's understanding.

The path of no more learning – which culminates in Buddhahood.

The schema of the five paths is often elaborated and merged with the concept of the [bhumis](#) or the bodhisattva levels.

Lamrim[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Lamrim](#)

Lamrim ("stages of the path") is a [Tibetan Buddhist](#) schema for presenting the stages of spiritual practice leading to [liberation](#). In Tibetan Buddhist history there have been many different versions of *lamrim*, presented by different teachers of the [Nyingma](#), [Kagyü](#) and [Gelug](#) schools.^[67] However, all versions of the

lamrim are elaborations of [Atiśa](#)'s 11th-century root text [A Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment](#) (*Bodhipathapradīpa*).^[68]

Atiśa's *lamrim* system generally divides practitioners into those of *lesser*, *middling* and *superior* scopes or attitudes:

The lesser person is to focus on the preciousness of human birth as well as contemplation of death and impermanence.

The middling person is taught to contemplate [karma](#), [dukkha](#) (suffering) and the benefits of liberation and refuge.

The superior scope is said to encompass the four [Brahmaviharas](#), the [bodhisattva](#) vow, the six [paramitas](#) as well as Tantric practices.^[69]

Although *lamrim* texts cover much the same subject areas, subjects within them may be arranged in different ways and with different emphasis depending on the school and tradition it belongs to. [Gampopa](#) and [Tsongkhapa](#) expanded the short root-text of Atiśa into an extensive system to understand the entire Buddhist philosophy. In this way, subjects like [karma](#), [rebirth](#), [Buddhist cosmology](#) and the practice of [meditation](#) are gradually explained in logical order.

Vajrayāna^[edit]



A depiction of the tantric figures [Hevajra](#) and [Nairāṭmyā](#), Tibet, 18th Century.

Tibetan Buddhism is a form of [Vajrayāna](#) (*Vajra vehicle*), "Secret Mantra" (Skt. *guhyamantra*) or Buddhist [Tantra](#), affirming the views espoused in the texts known as the [Buddhist Tantras](#) (dating from around the 7th century CE onwards).^[70]

[Tantra](#) (Tib. *rgyud*) generally refers to forms of religious practice which emphasize the use of unique visualizations, ideas, symbols and rituals for inner transformation.^[70] The Vajrayana is seen by its adherents as the fastest and most powerful vehicle for enlightenment because it contains many skillful means ([upaya](#)) and because it takes the effect ([Buddhahood](#) itself, or [Buddha nature](#)) as the path (and hence is sometimes known as the "effect vehicle", *phalayana*).^[70]

An important element of Tantric practice are tantric deities and their [mandalas](#). These deities come in peaceful (*shiwa*) and [fierce \(*trowo*\) forms](#).^[71]

Tantric texts also generally affirm the use of sense pleasures and other [defilements](#) in Tantric ritual as a path to enlightenment, as opposed to non-Tantric Buddhism which affirms that one must renounce all sense pleasures.^[72] These practices are based on the theory of transformation which states that negative or sensual mental factors and physical actions can be cultivated and transformed in a ritual setting. As the [Hevajra tantra](#) states:

Those things by which evil men are bound, others turn into means and gain thereby release from the bonds of existence. By passion the world is bound, by passion too it is released, but by heretical Buddhists this practice of reversals is not known.^[73]

Another element of the Tantras is their use of transgressive practices, such as drinking [taboo](#) substances such as alcohol or [sexual yoga](#). While in many cases these transgressions were interpreted only symbolically, in other cases they are practiced literally.^[74]

Madhyamaka and tenet systems[\[edit\]](#)



A statue of one of the most important Buddhist philosophers for Tibetan Buddhist thought, [Nagarjuna](#), at [Samye Ling](#) (Scotland).

[Madhyamaka](#), also called *Shunyavada* (the emptiness doctrine) is the dominant [Buddhist philosophy](#) of Tibetan Buddhism and is generally seen as the highest view, but is interpreted in various ways. [Shunyata](#), the true nature of reality, or the emptiness of [inherent existence](#) (*svabhava*) of all things, is traditionally propounded according to a [hierarchical classification](#) of four classical Indian philosophical schools.

While the classical tenets-system, as propagated by the Gelug school, is limited to four tenets (Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra, and Madhyamaka), more complicated systems include also the *shentong*-view of the Jonang and the Kagyu, and also differentiates between the radical emptiness of the Gelugpa-school, and the experiential emptiness of the Nyingma and the Sakya.^[75]

Two tenets belong to the path referred to as the [Hinayana](#), and are both [Sarvastivada](#)-subschoools. They do not include [Theravada](#), the only surviving of the 18 classical schools of Buddhism:^[76]

[Vaibhāṣika](#) ([Wylie](#): *bye brag smra ba*). The primary source for the Vaibhāṣika is the [Abhidharma-kośa](#) of [Vasubandhu](#) and its commentaries. This system affirms an atomistic view of reality as well the view that perception directly experiences external objects.^[77]

[Sautrāntika](#) ([Wylie](#): *mdo sde pa*). The *Abhidharmakośa* was also an important source for the Sautrāntikas. [Dignāga](#) and [Dharmakīrti](#) are the most prominent exponents. As opposed to Vaibhāṣika, this view holds that we do not directly perceive the external world, only phenomenal forms caused by objects and our senses.^[77]

The other two tenets are [Mahayana](#):

[Yogācāra](#), also called *Cittamātra* "Mind-Only" ([Wylie](#): *sems-tsam-pa*). Yogācārins base their views on texts from [Maitreya](#), [Aśaṅga](#) and [Vasubandhu](#). Yogacara is often interpreted as a form of [Idealism](#).^[77] The system is entirely rejected by the Gelugpa, but elements of it form part of the teachings of the other schools.^[78]

[Madhyamaka](#) ([Wylie](#): *dbu-ma-pa*) – The philosophy of [Nāgārjuna](#) and [Āryadeva](#), which affirms that everything is empty of essence ([svabhava](#)) and is ultimately beyond concepts.^[77]

[Rangtong](#), a term introduced by [Dolpopa](#), which rejects any inherent existing self or nature.^[79] This includes:

[Svatantrika](#)

Sautrantika Svātantrika Madhyamaka – [Bhāviveka](#)

Yogācāra Svātantrika Madhyamaka – [Śāntarakṣita](#) and [Kamalaśīla](#), the oldest Buddhist teachings to be introduced in Tibet^[80]

[Prasaṅgika](#), based on [Buddhapālita](#) and [Candrakīrti](#). Within prasangika, a further division can be made:

Intellectual emptiness, which is realized by absolute denial. This is the view of Tsong Khapa and the Gelugpa school, which rejects any statements on an absolute reality beyond mere emptiness.^[81]

Experiential emptiness, which is realized when the understanding of intellectual emptiness gives way to the recognition of the true [nature of mind](#), c.q. [rigpa](#). This is the view of Nyingma (Dzogchen) and Sakya.^[81]

[Shentong](#), systematised by Dolpopa, and based on [Buddha-nature](#) teachings and influenced by Śāntarakṣita's Yogacara-Madhyamaka. It states that the [nature of mind](#) shines through when emptiness has been realized. This approach is dominant in the Jonang school, and can also be found in the Kagyu tradition.^{[82][83][84]}

The tenet systems are used in monasteries and colleges to teach Buddhist philosophy in a systematic and progressive fashion, each philosophical view being seen as more subtle than its predecessor. Therefore, the four tenets can be seen as a gradual path from a rather easy-to-grasp, "realistic" philosophical point of view, to more and more complex and subtle views on the ultimate nature of reality, culminating in the philosophy of the Mādhyamikas, which is widely believed to present the most sophisticated point of view.^[85] Non-Tibetan scholars point out that historically, Madhyamaka predates Yogacara, however.^[86]

Texts and study[\[edit\]](#)



A leaf from a *Prajñāpāramitā* (Perfection of Wisdom) manuscript.

Main article: [Tibetan Buddhist canon](#)

Study of major Buddhist Indian texts is central to the monastic curriculum in all four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism. [Memorization](#) of classic texts as well as other ritual texts is expected as part of traditional monastic education.^[87] Another important part of higher religious education is the practice of formalized debate.

The canon was mostly finalized in the 13th century, and divided into two parts, the [Kangyur](#) (containing sutras and tantras) and the [Tengyur](#) (containing *shastras* and commentaries). The [Nyingma](#) school also maintains a separate collection of texts called the [Nyingma Gyubum](#), assembled by Ratna Lingpa in the 15th century and revised by [Jigme Lingpa](#).^[88]

Among Tibetans, the main language of study is [classical Tibetan](#), however, the Tibetan Buddhist canon was also translated into other languages, such as [Mongolian](#) and [Manchu](#).

During the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties, many texts from the Tibetan canon were also translated into Chinese.^[89]

Numerous texts have also recently been translated into Western languages by Western academics and Buddhist practitioners.^[90]

Sutras[\[edit\]](#)

Among the most widely studied sutras in Tibetan Buddhism are [Mahayana sutras](#) such as the perfection of wisdom or [Prajñāpāramitā](#) sutras,^[91] and others such as the [Samdhinirmocana-sūtra](#), and the [Samādhirāja Sūtra](#).^[92]



Buddhist monk Geshe Konchog Wangdu reads [Mahayana sutras](#) from an old woodblock copy of the Tibetan [Kangyur](#). He is seated at a special sutra stool, wearing the traditional woolen Ladakhi hat and robe, allowed by Vinaya for extremely cold conditions.

Shastras[\[edit\]](#)

The study of Indian Buddhist texts called [shastras](#) is central to Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism. Since the late 11th century, traditional Tibetan monastic colleges generally organized the exoteric study of Buddhism into “five great textual traditions” (*zhungchen-nga*).^[93]

[Abhidharma](#)

[Asanga](#)’s [Abhidharma-samuccaya](#)

[Vasubandhu](#)’s [Abhidharma-kośa](#)

[Prajnaparamita](#)

[Abhisamayalankara](#)

[Shantideva](#)’s [Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra](#)

[Madhyamaka](#)

[Nagarjuna](#)’s [Mūlamadhyamakakārikā](#)

[Aryadeva](#)’s *Four Hundred Verses* (*Catuhṣataka*)

[Candrakīrti](#)’s [Madhyamakāvatāra](#)

[Śāntarakṣita](#)’s [Madhyamākalāmkāra](#)

[Shantideva](#)’s [Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra](#)

[Pramana](#)

[Dharmakīrti](#)’s [Pramāṇavarttika](#)

[Dignāga](#)’s [Pramāṇa-samuccaya](#)

[Vinaya](#)

[Gunaprabha](#)’s [Vinayamula Sutra](#)

Other important texts[[edit](#)]

Also of great importance are the “[Five Treatises of Maitreya](#)” including the influential [*Ratnagotravibhāga*](#), a compendium of the [*tathāgata-garbha*](#) literature, and the [*Mahayanasūtrālaṅkāra*](#), a text on the Mahayana path from the [Yogacara](#) perspective, which are often attributed to [Asanga](#). Practiced focused texts such as the [*Yogācārabhūmi-Śāstra*](#) and [Kamalaśīla](#)’s [*Bhāvanākrama*](#) are the major sources for meditation.

While the Indian texts are often central, original material by key Tibetan scholars is also widely studied and collected into editions called *sunbum*.^[94] The commentaries and interpretations that are used to shed light on these texts differ according to tradition. The Gelug school for example, use the works of [Tsongkhapa](#), while other schools may use the more recent work of [Rimé movement](#) scholars like [Jamgon Kongtrul](#) and [Jamgon Ju Mipham Gyatso](#).

A corpus of extra-canonical scripture, the [treasure texts](#) (*terma*) literature is acknowledged by [Nyingma](#) practitioners, but the bulk of the canon that is not commentary was translated from Indian sources. True to its roots in the *Pāla* system of North India, however, Tibetan Buddhism carries on a tradition of eclectic accumulation and systematisation of diverse Buddhist elements, and pursues their synthesis. Prominent among these achievements have been the [Stages of the Path](#) and [mind training](#) literature, both stemming from teachings by the Indian scholar [Atiśa](#).

Tantric literature[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Tantras \(Buddhism\)](#)

In Tibetan Buddhism, the Buddhist Tantras are divided into four or six categories, with several sub-categories for the highest Tantras.

In the Nyingma, the division is into *Outer Tantras* ([Kriyayoga](#), [Charyayoga](#), [Yogatantra](#)); and *Inner Tantras* ([Mahayoga](#), [Anuyoga](#), [Atiyoga](#) (Tib. [Dzogchen](#))), which correspond to the "Anuttarayogatantra".^[95] For the Nyingma school, important tantras include the [Guhyagarbha tantra](#), the [Guhyasamaja tantra](#),^[96] the [Kulayarāja Tantra](#) and the 17 [Dzogchen tantras](#).

In the Sarma schools, the division is:^[97]

Kriyayoga – These have an emphasis on purification and ritual acts and include texts like the [Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa](#).

Charyayoga – Contain "a balance between external activities and internal practices", mainly referring to the [Mahāvairocana Abhisambodhi Tantra](#).

Yogatantra, is mainly concerned with internal yogic techniques and includes the [Tattvasamgraha Tantra](#).

[Anuttarayogatantra](#), contains more advanced techniques such as [subtle body](#) practices and is subdivided into:

Mother class tantras, which emphasize illusory body and [completion stage](#) practices and includes the [Guhyasamaja tantra](#) and Yamantaka tantra.

Father class, which emphasize the development stage and [clear light mind](#) and includes the [Hevajra Tantra](#) and [Cakrasamvara Tantra](#).

Non-dual class, which balance the above elements, and mainly refers to the [Kalacakra tantra](#)

It is important to note that the root tantras themselves are almost unintelligible without the various Indian and Tibetan commentaries, therefore, they are never studied without the use of the tantric commentarial apparatus.

Transmission and realization[[edit](#)]

There is a long history of [oral transmission](#) of teachings in Tibetan Buddhism. Oral transmissions by [lineage](#) holders traditionally can take place in small groups or mass gatherings of listeners and may last for seconds (in the case of a [mantra](#), for example) or months (as in the case of a section of the [Tibetan Buddhist canon](#)). It is held that a transmission can even occur without actually hearing, as in [Asanga](#)'s visions of [Maitreya](#).

An emphasis on oral transmission as more important than the printed word derives from the earliest period of Indian Buddhism, when it allowed teachings to be kept from those who should not hear them.^[98] Hearing a teaching (transmission) readies the hearer for realization based on it. The person from whom one hears the teaching should have heard it as one link in a succession of listeners going back to the original speaker: the Buddha in the case of a [sutra](#) or the author in the case of a book. Then the hearing constitutes an authentic lineage of transmission. Authenticity of the oral lineage is a prerequisite for realization, hence the importance of lineages.

Practices[[edit](#)]

See also: [Tantra techniques \(Vajrayana\)](#)

In Tibetan Buddhism, practices are generally classified as either Sutra (or *Pāramitāyāna*) or Tantra (*Vajrayāna* or *Mantrayāna*), though exactly what constitutes each category and what is included and excluded in each is a matter of debate and differs among the various lineages. According to [Tsongkhapa](#) for example, what separates Tantra from Sutra is the practice of [Deity yoga](#).^[99]

While it is generally held that the practices of Vajrayāna are not included in Sutrayāna, all Sutrayāna practices are common to Vajrayāna practice. Traditionally, Vajrayāna is held to be a more powerful and effective path, but potentially more difficult and dangerous and thus they should only be undertaken by the advanced who have established a solid basis in other practices.^[100]

Pāramitā[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Paramitas](#)

The [*Pāramitās*](#) (perfections, transcendent virtues) is a key set of virtues which constitute the major practices of a bodhisattva in non-tantric Mahayana. They are:

[*Dāna*](#) *pāramitā*: generosity, giving of oneself (Tibetan: སྤྱོན་པ་ *sbyin-pa*)

[*Śīla*](#) *pāramitā* : virtue, morality, discipline, proper conduct (ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ *tshul-khrims*)

[*Kṣānti*](#) *pāramitā* : patience, tolerance, forbearance, acceptance, endurance (བཟོད་པ་ *bzod-pa*)

[*Virya*](#) *pāramitā* : energy, diligence, vigor, effort (བརྩོན་ལྷགས་ *brtson-' grus*)

[*Dhyāna*](#) *pāramitā* : one-pointed concentration, contemplation (བསམ་གཏན་ *bsam-gtan*)

[*Prajñā*](#) *pāramitā* : wisdom, insight (ཤེས་རབ་ *shes-rab*)

The practice of *Dāna* (giving) while traditionally referring to offerings of food to the monastics can also refer to the ritual offering of bowls of water, incense, butter lamps and flowers to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas on a shrine or household altar.^[101] Similar offerings are also given to other beings such as hungry ghosts, [*dakinis*](#), protector deities, local divinities etc.

Like other forms of Mahayana Buddhism, the practice of the [five precepts](#) and [Bodhisattva vows](#) is part of Tibetan Buddhist moral (*śīla*) practice. In addition to these, there are also numerous sets of Tantric vows, termed [Samaya](#), which are given as part of Tantric initiations.

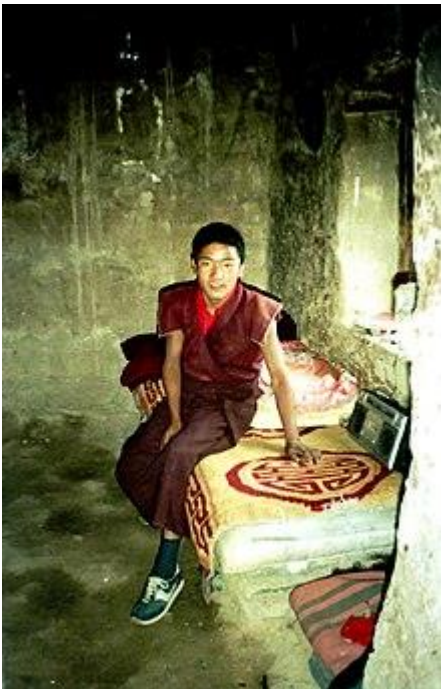
Compassion ([*karuṇā*](#)) practices are also particularly important in Tibetan Buddhism. One of the foremost authoritative texts on the Bodhisattva path is the [*Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*](#) by [Shantideva](#). In the eighth section entitled *Meditative Concentration*, Shantideva describes meditation on Karuṇā as thus:

Strive at first to meditate upon the sameness of yourself and others. In joy and sorrow all are equal; Thus be guardian of all, as of yourself. The hand and other limbs are many and distinct, But all are one—the body to kept and guarded. Likewise, different beings, in their joys and sorrows, are, like me, all one in wanting happiness. This pain of mine does not afflict or cause discomfort to another's body, and yet this pain is hard for me to bear because I

cling and take it for my own. And other beings' pain I do not feel, and yet, because I take them for myself, their suffering is mine and therefore hard to bear. And therefore I'll dispel the pain of others, for it is simply pain, just like my own. And others I will aid and benefit, for they are living beings, like my body. Since I and other beings both, in wanting happiness, are equal and alike, what difference is there to distinguish us, that I should strive to have my bliss alone?"^[102]

A popular compassion meditation in Tibetan Buddhism is [Tonglen](#) (sending and taking love and suffering respectively). Practices associated with [Chenrezig](#) (Avalokiteshvara), also tend to focus on compassion.

Samatha and Vipāśyanā^[edit]



Young monk in meditation retreat, [Yerpa](#), [Tibet](#) in 1993

The [14th Dalai Lama](#) defines meditation (*bsgom pa*) as "familiarization of the mind with an object of meditation."^[103] Traditionally, Tibetan Buddhism follows the two main approaches to [meditation](#) or mental cultivation (*bhavana*) as taught in all forms of Buddhism, [śamatha](#) (Tib. *Shine*) and [vipāśyanā](#) (*Ihaktong*).

The practice of [śamatha](#) (calm abiding) is one of focusing one's mind on a single object such as a Buddha figure or the breath. Through repeated practice one's mind gradually becomes more stable, calm and happy. It is defined by [Takpo Tashi Namgyal](#) as "fixing the mind upon any object so as to maintain it without distraction...focusing the mind on an object and maintaining it in that state until finally it is channeled into one stream of attention and evenness."^[104] The [nine mental abidings](#) is the main progressive framework used for śamatha in Tibetan Buddhism.^[105] Once a meditator has reached the ninth level of this schema

they achieve what is termed "pliancy" (Tib. *shin tu sbyangs pa*, Skt. [*prasrabdhi*](#)), defined as "a serviceability of mind and body such that the mind can be set on a virtuous object of observation as long as one likes; it has the function of removing all obstructions." This is also said to be very joyful and blissful for the body and the mind. ^[106]

The other form of Buddhist meditation is [*vipaśyanā*](#) (clear seeing, higher insight), which in Tibetan Buddhism is generally practiced after having attained proficiency in [*śamatha*](#). ^[107] This is generally seen as having two aspects, one of which is [*analytic meditation*](#), thinking rationally about ideas and concepts in a scholarly or philosophical manner. As part of this process, entertaining doubts and engaging in internal debate over them is encouraged in some traditions. ^[108] The other type of [*vipaśyanā*](#) is a non-analytical, "simple" yogic style called *trömeḥ* in Tibetan, which means "without complication". ^[109]

A meditation routine may involve alternating sessions of *vipaśyanā* to achieve deeper levels of realization, and *śamatha* to consolidate them. ^[69]

Preliminary practices^[edit]

See also: [*Ngöndro*](#)



Buddhist praying at a shrine in [*urga*](#).



Buddhists performing prostrations in front of [*Jokhang Monastery*](#).

[*Vajrayāna*](#) is believed by Tibetan Buddhists to be the fastest method for attaining Buddhahood but for unqualified practitioners it can be dangerous. ^[110] To engage in it one must receive an appropriate initiation (also known as an "empowerment") from a lama who is fully qualified to give it. The aim of [*preliminary practices*](#) (*ngöndro*) is to start the student on the correct path for such higher teachings. ^[111] Just as *Sūtrayāna* preceded *Vajrayāna* historically in India, so *sūtra* practices constitute those that are preliminary to *tantric* ones.

Preliminary practices include all *Sutrayāna* activities that yield merit like hearing teachings, prostrations, offerings, prayers and acts of kindness and compassion, but chief among the preliminary practices are realizations through meditation on the three principle stages of the path: renunciation, the altruistic [bodhicitta](#) wish to attain enlightenment and the wisdom realizing emptiness. For a person without the basis of these three in particular to practice Vajrayāna can be like a small child trying to ride an unbroken horse. ^[112]

The most widespread preliminary practices include: taking [refuge](#), [prostration](#), [Vajrasattva](#) meditation, mandala offering and [guru yoga](#). ^[113]

The merit acquired in the preliminary practices facilitates progress in Vajrayāna. While many Buddhists may spend a lifetime exclusively on sutra practices, however, an amalgam of the two to some degree is common. For example, in order to train in [calm abiding](#), one might use a tantric visualisation as the meditation object.

Guru yoga[\[edit\]](#)

See also: [Guru in Buddhism](#)

As in other Buddhist traditions, an attitude of reverence for the teacher, or guru, is also highly prized. ^[114] At the beginning of a public teaching, a [lama](#) will do [prostrations](#) to the throne on which he will teach due to its symbolism, or to an image of the Buddha behind that throne, then students will do prostrations to the lama after he is seated. Merit accrues when one's interactions with the teacher are imbued with such reverence in the form of guru devotion, a code of practices governing them that derives from Indian sources. ^[115] By such things as avoiding disturbance to the peace of mind of one's teacher, and wholeheartedly following his prescriptions, much merit accrues and this can significantly help improve one's practice.

There is a general sense in which any Tibetan Buddhist teacher is called a *lama*. A student may have taken teachings from many authorities and revere them all as *lamas* in this general sense. However, he will typically have one held in special esteem as his own root guru and is encouraged to view the other teachers who are less dear to him, however more exalted their status, as embodied in and subsumed by the root guru. ^[116]

One particular feature of the Tantric view of teacher student relationship is that in Tibetan Buddhist Tantra, one is instructed to regard one's guru as an awakened Buddha. ^[117]

Esotericism and vows[\[edit\]](#)



A [sand mandala](#)

In Vajrayāna particularly, Tibetan Buddhists subscribe to a voluntary code of self-censorship, whereby the uninitiated do not seek and are not provided with information about it. This self-censorship may be applied more or less strictly depending on circumstances such as the material involved. A depiction of a [mandala](#) may be less public than that of a deity. That of a higher tantric deity may be less public than that of a lower. The degree to which information on Vajrayāna is now public in western languages is controversial among Tibetan Buddhists.

Buddhism has always had a taste for [esotericism](#) since its earliest period in India. ^[118] Tibetans today maintain greater or lesser degrees of confidentiality also with information on the [vinaya](#) and [emptiness](#) specifically. In Buddhist teachings generally, too, there is caution about revealing information to people who may be unready for it.

Practicing tantra also includes the maintaining of a separate set of vows, which are called [Samaya](#) (*dam tshig*). There are various lists of these and they may differ depending on the practice and one's lineage or individual guru. Upholding these vows is said to be essential for tantric practice and breaking them is said to cause great harm. ^[119]



Ritual musical instruments from Tibet; MIM Brussels.

Rites and rituals[[edit](#)]



The reading of the text – the 'lung' – during an empowerment for [Chenrezig](#).

There has been a "close association" between the religious and the secular, the spiritual and the temporal^[120] in Tibet. The term for this relationship is *chos srid zung 'brel*. Traditionally Tibetan lamas have tended to the lay populace by helping them with issues such as protection and prosperity. Common traditions have been the various rites and rituals for mundane ends, such as purifying one's karma, avoiding harm from demonic forces and enemies, and promoting a successful harvest.^[121] [Divination](#) and [exorcism](#) are examples of practices a lama might use for this.^[122]

Ritual is generally more elaborate than in other forms of Buddhism, with complex altar arrangements and works of art (such as [mandalas](#) and [thangkas](#)), many ritual objects, hand gestures ([mudra](#)), chants, and musical instruments.^[72]

A special kind of ritual called [an initiation or empowerment](#) (Sanskrit: *Abhiseka*, Tibetan: *Wangkur*) is central to Tantric practice. These rituals consecrate a practitioner into a particular Tantric practice associated with individual mandalas of deities and mantras. Without having gone through initiation, one is generally not allowed to practice the higher Tantras.^[123]

Another important ritual occasion in Tibetan Buddhism is that of [mortuary rituals](#) which are supposed to assure that one has a positive rebirth and a good spiritual path in the future.^[124] Of central importance to Tibetan Buddhist [Ars moriendi](#) is the idea of the [Bardo](#) (Sanskrit: *antarābhava*), the intermediate or liminal state between life and death.^[124] Rituals and the readings of texts such as the [Bardo Thodol](#) are done to ensure that the dying person can navigate this intermediate state skillfully. [Cremation](#) and [sky burial](#) are traditionally the main [funeral](#) rites used to dispose of the body.^[39]

Mantra[[edit](#)]



An elderly [Tibetan](#) woman with a [prayer wheel](#) inscribed with mantras

The use of (mainly [Sanskrit](#)) prayer formulas, incantations or phrases called [mantras](#) (Tibetan: *sngags*) is another widespread feature of Tibetan Buddhist practice.^[117] So common is the use of mantras that [Vajrayana](#) is also sometimes called "*Mantrayāna*" (the mantra vehicle). Mantras are widely recited, chanted, written or inscribed, and visualized as part of different forms of meditation. Each mantra has symbolic meaning and will often have a connection to a particular Buddha or Bodhisattva.^[125] Each deity's mantra is seen as symbolizing the function, speech and power of the deity.^[126] Tibetan Buddhist practitioners repeat mantras in order to train the mind, and transform their thoughts in line with the divine qualities of the mantra's deity and special power.^[127]

Tibetan Buddhists see the etymology of the term mantra as meaning "mind protector", and mantras is seen as a way to guard the mind against negativity.^[128] According to [Lama Zopa Rinpoche](#):

Mantras are effective because they help keep your mind quiet and peaceful, automatically integrating it into one-pointedness. They make your mind receptive to very subtle vibrations and thereby heighten your perception. Their recitation eradicates gross negativities and the true nature of things can then be reflected in your mind's resulting clarity. By practising a transcendental mantra, you can in fact purify all the defiled energy of your body, speech, and mind.^[129]

Mantras also serve to focus the mind as a [samatha](#) (calming) practice as well as a way to transform the mind through the symbolic meaning of the mantra. In Buddhism, it is important to have the proper intention, focus and faith when practicing mantras, if one does not, they will not work. Unlike in Hinduism, mantras are not believed to have inherent power of their own, and thus without the proper faith, intention and mental focus, they are just mere sounds.^[130] Thus according to the Tibetan philosopher [Jamgon Ju Mipham](#):

if a mantra is thought to be something ordinary and not seen for what it is, it will not be able to perform its intended function. Mantras are like non-conceptual wish-fulfilling jewels. Infusing one's being with the blessings of mantra, like the form of a moon reflected on a body of water, necessitates the presence of faith and other conditions that set the stage for the spiritual

attainments of mantra. Just as the moon's reflection cannot appear without water, mantras cannot function without the presence of faith and other such factors in one's being. ^[131]

Mantras are part of the highest tantric practices in Tibetan Buddhism, such as [Deity Yoga](#) and are recited and visualized during tantric [sadhana](#)s. Thus, [Tsongkhapa](#) says that mantra "protects the mind from ordinary appearances and conceptions". ^[132] This is because in Tibetan Buddhist Tantric praxis, one must develop a sense that everything is divine.

Tantric Yoga^{[[edit](#)]}

See also: [Deity yoga](#)



[Chöd](#) ritual, note the use of [Damaru](#) drum and hand-bell, as well as the [Kangling](#) (thighbone trumpet).

In what is called [higher yoga tantra](#) the emphasis is on various yoga practices which allow the practitioner to realize the true nature of reality. ^[74]

[Deity Yoga](#) (Tibetan: *lha'i rnal 'byor*; Sanskrit: *Devata-yoga*) is a fundamental practice of [Vajrayana Buddhism](#) involving [visualization of mental images](#) consisting mainly of [Buddhist deities](#) such as Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and [fierce deities](#), along mantra repetition. According to Geoffrey Samuel:

If Buddhahood is a source of infinite potentiality accessible at any time, then the Tantric deities are in a sense partial aspects, refractions of that total potentiality. Visualizing one of these deities, or oneself identifying with one of them, is not, in Tibetan Tantric thought, a technique to worship an external entity. Rather, it is a way of accessing or tuning into something that is an intrinsic part of the structure of the universe — as of course is the practitioner him or herself. ^[133]

Deity yoga involves two stages, the **generation stage** and the **completion stage**. In the generation stage, one dissolves the mundane world and visualizes one's chosen deity ([yidam](#)), its [mandala](#) and companion deities, resulting in identification with this divine reality. ^[134] In the completion stage, one dissolves the visualization of and identification with the yidam in the realization of [sunyata](#) or emptiness.

Completion stage practices can also include [subtle body](#) energy practices,^[135] as well as other practices such as the [Six Yogas of Naropa](#).

The views and practices associated with [Dzogchen](#) and [Mahamudra](#) are often seen as the culmination of the tantric path.^[136] These practices focus on the very nature of reality and experience, termed [dharmakaya](#) or [rigpa](#).

Institutions and Clergy^[edit]

[Rangjung Rigpe Dorje](#), the 16th [Karmapa](#), with [Freda Bedi](#) (the first Western nun in Tibetan Buddhism), at [Rumtek Monastery](#), [Sikkim](#).



A small *gompa* (religious building) in [Ladakh](#)



[Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche](#), a tulku and a ngagpa (note the white and red robes).

[Buddhist monasticism](#) is an important part of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, all the major and minor schools maintain large monastic institutions based on the [Mulasarvastivada Vinaya](#) (monastic rule) and many religious leaders come from the monastic community. That being said, there are also many religious leaders or teachers (called [Lamas](#) and [Gurus](#)) which are not celibate monastics. According to Geoffrey Samuel this is where "religious leadership in Tibetan Buddhism contrasts most strongly with much of the rest of the Buddhist world."^[137] Lamas are generally skilled and experienced tantric practitioners and ritual

specialists in a specific initiation lineage and may be laypersons or monastics. They act not just as teachers, but as spiritual guides and guardians of the lineage teachings that they have received through a long and intimate process of apprenticeship with their Lamas. ^[138]

Tibetan Buddhism also includes a number of [lay clergy](#) and lay tantric specialists, such as [Ngagpas](#) (Skt. *mantrī*), *Gomchens*, *Serkyims*, and *Chödpas* (practitioners of [Chöd](#)). According to Samuel, in the more remote parts of the Himalayas, communities were often led by lay religious specialists. ^[139] Thus, while the large monastic institutions were present in the regions of the [Tibetan plateau](#) which were more centralized politically, in other regions they were absent and instead smaller [gompas](#) and more lay oriented communities prevailed. ^[140]

Samuel outlines four main types of religious communities in Tibet: ^[141]

Small communities of lay practitioners attached to a temple and a lama. Lay practitioners might stay in the *gompa* for periodic retreats.

Small communities of celibate monastics attached to a temple and a lama, often part of a village.

Medium to large communities of celibate monastics. These could maintain several hundred monks and might have extensive land holdings, be financially independent, and sometimes also act as trading centers.

Large teaching monasteries with thousands of monks, such as the big Gelug establishments of [Sera](#) (with over 6000 monks in the first half of the 20th century) and [Drepung](#) (over 7000). ^[142]

In some cases a lama is the leader of a spiritual community. Some lamas gain their title through being part of particular family which maintains a lineage of hereditary lamas (and are thus often laypersons). One example is the Sakya family of Kon, who founded the [Sakya](#) school and another is the hereditary lamas of [Mindrolling monastery](#). ^[143]

In other cases, lamas may be seen as "[Tülkus](#)" ("incarnations"). [Tülkus](#) are figures which are recognized as reincarnations of a particular bodhisattva or a previous religious figure. They are often recognized from a young age through the use of [divination](#) and the use of the possessions of the deceased lama, and therefore are able to receive extensive training. They are sometimes groomed to become leaders of monastic institutions. ^[144] Examples include the [Dalai Lamas](#) and the [Karmapas](#), each of which are seen as key leaders in their respective traditions.

The system of [incarnate lamas](#) is popularly held to be a Tibetan alteration to Indian Buddhism.

Another title unique to Tibetan Buddhism is that of [Tertön](#) (treasure discoverer), who are considered capable of revealing or discovering special revelations or texts called [Termas](#) (lit. "hidden treasure"). They are also associated with the idea of [beyul](#) ("hidden valleys"), which are power places associated with deities and hidden religious treasures. ^[145]

Women in Tibetan Buddhism^{[[edit](#)]}

Further information: [Women in Buddhism](#) and [Ordination of women in Buddhism](#)



[Machig Labdrön](#), a famous female tantrika, teacher and founder of the [Chöd](#) lineage



Painting of Ayu Khandro at Merigar West. The seat of Chogyal Namkhai Norbu and The Dzogchen Community in Italy.

Women in Tibetan society, though still unequal, tended to have a relatively greater autonomy and power than in surrounding societies. This might be because of the smaller household sizes and low population density in Tibet. ^[146] Women traditionally took many roles in Tibetan Buddhism, from lay supporters, to monastics, lamas and tantric practitioners.

There is evidence for the importance of female practitioners in Indian Tantric Buddhism and pre-modern Tibetan Buddhism. At least one major lineage of tantric teachings, the [Shangpa Kagyu](#), traces itself to Indian female teachers and there have been a series of important female Tibetan teachers, such as [Yeshe Tsogyal](#) and [Machig Labdrön](#).^[147] It seems that even though it might have been more difficult for women to become serious tantric yoginis, it was still possible for them to find lamas that would teach them high tantric practices.

Some Tibetan women become lamas by being born in one of the hereditary lama families such as [Mindrolling Jetsün Khandro Rinpoche](#) and Sakya Jetsün Kushok Chimey Luding.^[148] There have also been cases of influential female lamas who were also tertöns, such as [Sera Khandro](#), [Tare Lhamo](#) and [Ayu Khandro](#).

Some of these figures were also tantric consorts (*sangyum*, *kandroma*) with male lamas, and thus took part in the sexual practices associated with the highest levels of tantric practice.^[149]

Nuns[\[edit\]](#)

While monasticism is practiced there by women, it is much less common (2 percent of the population in the 20th century compared to 12 percent of men). Nuns were also much less respected by Tibetan society than monks and may receive less lay support than male monastics.^[150]

Traditionally, Tibetan Buddhist nuns were also not "fully ordained" as [bhikṣuṇīs](#) (who take the full set of monastic vows in the [Vinaya](#)). When Buddhism traveled from India to Tibet, apparently the quorum of [bhikṣuṇīs](#) required for bestowing full ordination never reached Tibet.^{[151][note 4]} Despite an absence of ordination there, bhikṣuṇīs did travel to Tibet. A notable example was the Sri Lankan nun Candramāla, whose work with Śrījñāna ([Wylie](#): *dpal ye shes*) resulted in the tantric text *Śrīcandramāla Tantrarāja*.^{[note 5][152]}

There are accounts of fully ordained Tibetan women, such as the [Samding Dorje Phagmo](#) (1422–1455), who was once ranked the highest female master and tulku in Tibet, but very little is known about the exact circumstances of their ordination.^[153]

In the modern era, Tibetan Buddhist nuns have taken full ordinations through East Asian Vinaya lineages.^[154] The Dalai Lama has authorized followers of the Tibetan tradition to be ordained as nuns in traditions that have such ordination.^[note 6]

Western nuns and lamas[\[edit\]](#)

Buddhist author Michaela Haas notes that Tibetan Buddhism is undergoing a sea change in the West, with women playing a much more central role.^[157]

[Freda Bedi](#)^[note 7] was a British woman who was the first Western woman to take ordination in Tibetan Buddhism, which occurred in 1966.^[158] [Pema Chödrön](#) was the first American woman to be ordained as a Buddhist nun in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition.^{[159][160]}

In 2010 the first Tibetan Buddhist nunnery in America, Vajra Dakini Nunnery in Vermont, was officially consecrated. It offers novice ordination and follows the [Drikung Kagyu](#) lineage of Buddhism. The abbot of the Vajra Dakini nunnery is [Khenmo Drolma](#), an American woman, who is the first bhikṣuṇī in the Drikung lineage of Buddhism, having been ordained in Taiwan in 2002.^{[161][162]} She is also the first westerner, male or female, to be installed as an abbot in the [Drikung Kagyu](#) lineage of Buddhism, having been installed as the abbot of the Vajra Dakini Nunnery in 2004.^[161] The Vajra Dakini Nunnery does not follow [The Eight Garudhammas](#).^[163]

In April 2011, the [Institute for Buddhist Dialectical Studies](#) (IBD) in Dharamsala, India, conferred the degree of [geshe](#), a Tibetan Buddhist academic degree for monastics, on [Kelsang Wangmo](#), a German nun, thus making her the world's first female geshe.^{[164][165]} In 2013 Tibetan women were able to take the geshe exams for the first time.^[166] In 2016 twenty Tibetan Buddhist nuns became the first Tibetan women to earn [geshe](#) degrees.^{[167][168]}

[Jetsunma Ahkon Lhamo](#) gained international attention in the late 1980s as the first Western woman to be a His Holiness [Penor Rinpoche](#) enthroned [tulku](#) within the [Nyingma Palyul](#).^[169]

Schools and lineages^[edit]

Major Lineages^[edit]

The Tibetan [Rime](#) (non-sectarian) scholar [Jamgon Kongtrul](#), in his *Treasury of Knowledge*, outlines the "Eight Great Practice Lineages" which were transmitted to Tibet. His approach is not concerned with "schools" or sects, but rather focuses on the transmission of crucial meditation teachings. They are:^[170]

The [Nyingma](#) traditions, associated with the first transmission figures such as [Shantarakshita](#), [Padmasambhava](#) and King [Trisong Deutsen](#) and with [Dzogchen](#) teachings.

The [Kadam](#) Lineage, associated with [Atisha](#) and his pupil [Dromtön](#) (1005 – 1064).

[Lamdré](#), traced back to the Indian Mahasiddha [Virupa](#), and today preserved in the [Sakya](#) school.

Marpa Kagyu, the lineage which stems from [Marpa](#), [Milarepa](#) and [Gampopa](#), practices [Mahamudra](#) and the [Six Dharmas of Naropa](#), and includes the four major and eight minor Kagyu lineages.

[Shangpa Kagyu](#), the lineage of [Niguma](#)

Shyijé and [Chöd](#) which originate from [Padampa Sangyé](#) and [Machig Labdrön](#).

Dorje Naljor Druk (the 'Six Branch Practice of Vajrayoga') which is derived from the [Kalachakra](#) lineage.

Dorje sumgyi nyendrup ('Approach and Accomplishment of the Three Vajras'), from the [mahasiddha](#) Orgyenpa Rinchen Pal.

Tibetan Buddhist Schools[[edit](#)]

There are various schools or traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. The four main traditions ones overlap markedly, such that "about eighty percent or more of the features of the Tibetan schools are the same".^[171] Differences include the use of apparently, but not actually, contradictory terminology, opening dedications of texts to different deities and whether phenomena are described from the viewpoint of an unenlightened practitioner or of a Buddha.^[171] On questions of philosophy, there has historically been disagreement regarding the nature of [Yogacara](#) and [Buddha-nature](#) teachings (and whether these are of expedient meaning or ultimate meaning), which still colours the current presentations of [sunyata](#) (emptiness) and [ultimate reality](#).^{[172][83][84]}

The 19th century [Rimé movement](#) downplayed these differences, as still reflected in the stance of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, who states that there are no fundamental differences between these schools.^[173] However, there are still philosophical disagreements between the different traditions, such as the debate regarding [rangtong and shentong](#) interpretations of [Madhyamaka](#) philosophy.^[174]

The four major schools are sometimes divided into the Nyingma "Old Translation," and [Sarma](#) "New Translation" traditions, which follow different canons of scripture (the [Nyingma Gyubum](#) along with [Termas](#) and the [Tengyur-Kangyur](#) respectively). Each school also traces itself to a certain lineage going back to India as well as certain important Tibetan founders. While all the schools share most practices and methods, each school tends to have a certain preferred focus (see table below).

Another common but trivial differentiation is into the Yellow Hat (Gelug) and [Red Hat](#) (non-Gelug) sects.

The features of each major school (along with one influential minor school, Jonang) is as follows:^[175]

Nyingma	Kagyü	Sakya	Gelug	Jonang
Old Translation	New Translation	New Translation	New Translation	New Translation
Developed in the 8th century	Transmitted by Marpa in the 11th century. Dagpo Kagyu was founded in the 12th century by Gampopa.	Sakya Monastery founded in 1073.	Dates to 1409 with the founding of Ganden monastery	Dates to the 12th century
Red Hat	Red Hat	Red Hat	Yellow Hat	Red Hat
Emphasizes Dzogchen and its texts	Emphasizes Mahamudra and the Six Dharmas of Naropa	Favor the Hevajra Tantra as the basis of their Lamdre system	Focuses on Guhyasamāja Tantra , the Cakrasamvara Tantra , and the Kalacakra Tantra	Focuses on Kalacakra Tantra and Ratnagotravibhāṣa
Key lineage figures are Śāntarakṣita , Garab Dorje , Vimalamitra , Padmasambhava , and Longchenpa .	Key lineage figures are Maitripada , Naropa , Tilopa , Marpa , Milarepa , and Gampopa .	Key lineage figures are Naropa and Ratnākaraśānti , the founder Drogmi , Khon Konchog Gyalpo , Sakya Pandita and Gorampa .	Key lineage figures are Atisa , his disciple Dromtön , the founder of Gelug, Je Tsongkhapa , and the Dalai Lamas .	Key lineage figures are Yumo Miky Dorje , Dolpopa , and Taranatha

Nyingma^{[\[edit\]](#)}



Statue of Padmasambhava (Guru Rinpoche)

Main article: [Nyingma](#)

"The Ancient Ones" is the oldest school of Tibetan Buddhism and the original order founded by [Padmasambhava](#) (8th century) and [Śāntarakṣita](#) (725 – 788).^{[\[1\]](#)} Whereas other schools categorize their teachings into the three [yānas](#) or "vehicles", [Hīnayāna](#), [Mahāyāna](#) and [Vajrayāna](#), the Nyingma tradition classifies its teachings into [Nine Yānas](#), among the highest of which is [Dzogchen](#).^{[\[176\]](#)}

[Terma](#) "treasures" (revealed texts) are of particular significance to the Nyingma school. One of the most influential terma cycles is the [Longchen Nyingthig](#) which was revealed by [Jigme Lingpa](#) (1730 – 1798).

Sakya[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Sakya](#)



[Sakya Pandita](#)

The "Grey Earth" school represents one of the first *Sarma* (new translation) scholarly traditions. Headed by the [Sakya Trizin](#), this tradition was founded by Khön Könchok Gyelpo ([Wylie](#): ' *khon dkon mchog rgyal po*, 1034 – 1102), a disciple of the great [Lotsawa](#), Drogmi Shākya ([Wylie](#): *brog mi lo tsā wa ye shes*) and traces its lineage to the [mahasiddha](#) Virūpa.^{[[u\]](#)]} A renowned exponent, [Sakya Pandita](#) (1182 – 1251CE), was the great-grandson of Khön Könchok Gyelpo. Sakyapa, the last one, was named because of the Sakya Monastery, of which the wall was painted into Red, White, and Cyan.

Bodong[[edit](#)]

The [Bodong](#) school is one of the minor schools, being much smaller and less influential than the four main schools. This tradition was founded in 1049 by the Kadam teacher Mudra Chenpo, who also established the Bodong E Monastery. Its most famous teacher was Bodong Penchen Lénam Gyelchok (1376–1451) who authored over one hundred and thirty-five volumes.

This tradition is also known for maintaining a female tulku lineage of incarnated lamas called the [Samding Dorje Phagmo](#).

Kagyu[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Kagyu](#)

[Milarepa](#)

Kagyu means "oral transmission" and consists of a series of lineages which all trace themselves back to Indian [mahasiddhas](#) like [Saraha](#) and [Tilopa](#). Its most

famous Tibetan exponent was [Milarepa](#), an 11th-century mystic. It is often divided into the larger [Dagpo Kagyu](#) and the smaller Shangpa Kagyu lineage

The Dagpo Kagyu, encompasses those Kagyu schools that trace back to the Indian master [Naropa](#) via [Marpa Lotsawa](#), Milarepa and [Gampopa](#)^[m] and consists of four major sub-sects: the [Karma Kagyu](#), headed by a [Karmapa](#), the Tsalpa Kagyu, the Barom Kagyu, and Pagtru Kagyu. There are a further eight minor sub-sects, all of which trace their root to Pagtru Kagyu's founder, [Phagmo Drupa](#). The most notable of these are the [Drikung](#) and [Drukpa Lineages](#).

The once-obscure [Shangpa Kagyu](#), which was famously represented by the 20th century teacher [Kalu Rinpoche](#), traces its history back to the Indian female siddhas [Niguma](#) and [Sukhasiddhi](#), transmitted to Tibet via [Khyungpo Naljor](#) in the 11th century.^[m]

Jonang[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Jonang](#)

The Jonang is a minor school which can be traced to early 12th century master [Yumo Mikyo Dorje](#), but was popularized by the influential master [Dölpopa Shérab Gyeltsen](#) (1292 - 1361).

The Jonang re-established their religio-political center in [Golok](#), [Nakhi](#) and [Mongol](#) areas in [Kham](#) and [Amdo](#) centered at [Dzamthang Monastery](#) and have continued practicing uninterrupted to this day. The tradition was suppressed in 1650 in Gelug-controlled regions and subsequently banned and its monks and nuns converted to the Gelug school in 1658. An estimated 5,000 monks and nuns of the Jonang tradition practice today in these areas and at the edges of historic Gelug influence.

However, their teachings were limited to these regions until the [Rimé movement](#) of the 19th century encouraged the study of non-Gelug schools of thought and practice.^[177] In modern times it has been encouraged to grow by the [14th Dalai Lama](#), who installed the [9th Jebtsundamba Khutughtu](#) as its head.

Gelug[[edit](#)]

Main article: [Gelug](#)



[Ganden monastery](#), Tibet, 2013

The “Way of Virtue” school was originally a reformist movement and is known for its emphasis on logic and debate. The order was founded in the 14th to 15th century by [Je Tsongkhapa](#), renowned for both his scholarship and virtue. He was a prominent supporter of the [Madhyamika](#) philosophy and formalized the [Svatantrika-Prasaṅgika distinction](#). Its spiritual head is the [Ganden Tripa](#) and its temporal one the [Dalai Lama](#). The Dalai Lama is regarded as the embodiment of [Avalokiteśvara](#). After the civil war in the 17th century and the Mongol intervention, the Gelugpa school dominated Tibetan Buddhism, and successive Dalai Lamas ruled [Tibet](#) from the mid-17th to mid-20th centuries. Gelugpa is the youngest but largest sect of Tibetan Buddhism. People also call it the Yellow Sect due to the hat they wear is yellow color. The founder of Gelugpa is Tsongkhapa, a great master. The discipline of Gelugpa is very strict. Followers could not get married, could not eat meat, could not drink alcoholic beverages. Most of the famous monasteries in Tibet admire Gelugpa, such as Ganden Monastery, Drepung Monastery, Sera Monastery in Lhasa, and Tashilhunpo Monastery in Shigatse.

Yungdrung Bon[[edit](#)]

While [Yungdrung Bon](#) considers itself a separate religion with pre-Buddhist origins, and it is considered as non-Buddhist by the main Tibetan traditions, it shares so many similarities and practices with mainstream Tibetan Buddhism that some scholars such as Geoffrey Samuel see it as “essentially a variant of Tibetan Buddhism”.^[178] It is much more related to Nyingma Buddhism, and includes [Dzogchen](#) teachings, similar deities, rituals and forms of monasticism.

Glossary of terms used[[edit](#)]

English	spoken Tibetan	Wylie Tibetan	Sanskrit transliteration
affliction	nyönmong	nyon-mongs	kleśa
analytic meditation	jegom	dpyad-sgom	yauktika dhyān
calm abiding	shiné	zhi-gnas	śamatha
devotion to the guru	lama-la tenpa	bla-ma-la bsten-pa	guruparyupāsata
fixation meditation	joggom	’jog-sgom	nibandhita dhyā
foundational vehicle	t’ ek män	theg sman	hīnayāna
incarnate lama	tülku	sprul-sku	nirmānakāya
inherent existence	rangzhingi drubpa	rang-bzhin-gyi grub-pa	svabhāvasiddha
mind of enlightenment	changchub sem	byang-chhub sems	bodhicitta
motivational training	lojong	blo-sbyong	autsukya dhyān
omniscience	t’ amcé k’ yempa	thams-cad mkhyen-pa	sarvajña

preliminary practices	ngöndro	sngon-'gro	prārambhika kriy
root guru	zawé lama	rtsa-ba'i bla-ma	mūlaguru
stages of the path	lamrim	lam-rim	pātheya
transmission and realisation	lungtok	lung-rtogs	āgamādhigama

See also[[edit](#)]

[Buddhism in Sri Lanka](#)

[Buddhist deities](#)

[Chinese Buddhism](#)

[Chinese Esoteric Buddhism](#)

[Death horoscopes in Tibetan Buddhism](#)

[Derge Parkhang](#)

[Fierce deities](#)

[History of Tibetan Buddhism](#)

[Karma in Tibetan Buddhism](#)

[Keydong Thuk-Che-Cho-Ling Nunnery](#)

[Mahamudra](#)

[Milarepa](#)

[Nagarjuna](#)

[Ngagpa](#)

[Padmasambhava](#)

[Pure Land Buddhism](#) (Tibetan)

[Samaya](#)

[Schools of Buddhism](#)

[Shambhala Buddhism](#)

[Songs of realization](#)

[Taklung Tangpa](#)

[Tibetan art](#)

[Tibetan Buddhist teachers \(category\)](#)

[Tibetan prayer flag](#)

[Tibetan prayer wheel](#)

[Traditional Tibetan medicine](#)

Notes[[edit](#)]

- ^ 和尚摩訶衍; his name consists of the same Chinese characters used to transliterate "[Mahayana](#)" (Tibetan: *Hwa shang Mahayana*)
- ^ Kamalaśīla wrote the three [Bhāvanākrama](#) texts (修習次第三篇) after that.
- ^ However, a Chinese source found in [Dunhuang](#) written by Mo-ho-yen says their side won, and some scholars conclude that the entire episode is fictitious. ^{[14][15]}
- ^ Under the Mulasarvastivadin Vinaya, as with the two other extant Vinaya lineages today ([Theravada](#) and [Dharmaguptaka](#)), in order to ordain bhikṣuṇīs, there must be quorums of both bhikṣuṇīs *and* bhikṣus; without both, a woman cannot be ordained as a nun ([Tibetan](#): དགེཤོང་མ་, [THL](#): *gélongma*).
- ^ [Tibetan](#): དཔལ་ལྷ་བའི་ཐེང་བའི་རྒྱལ་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་, [Chinese](#): 吉祥月鬘本續王
- ^ According to [Thubten Chodron](#), the current [Dalai Lama](#) has said on this issue: ^[155]

In 2005, the Dalai Lama repeatedly spoke about the bhikṣuṇī ordination in public gatherings. In Dharamsala, he encouraged, "We need to bring this to a conclusion. We Tibetans alone can't decide this. Rather, it should be decided in collaboration with Buddhists from all over the world. Speaking in general terms, were the Buddha to come to this 21st century world, I feel that most likely, seeing the actual situation in the world now, he might change the rules somewhat...."

Later, in [Zürich](#) during a 2005 conference of Tibetan Buddhist Centers, he said, "Now I think the time has come; we should start a working group or committee" to meet with monks from other Buddhist traditions. Looking at the German bhikṣuṇī [Jampa Tsedroen](#), he instructed, "I prefer that Western Buddhist nuns carry out this work... Go to different places for further research and discuss with senior monks (from various Buddhist countries). I think, first, senior bhikṣuṇīs need to correct the monks' way of thinking."

"This is the 21st century. Everywhere we are talking about equality... Basically Buddhism needs equality. There are some really minor things to remember as a Buddhist—a bhikshu always goes first, then a bhikshuni... The key thing is the restoration of the bhikshuni vow."

[Alexander Berzin](#) referred to the Dalai Lama having said on occasion of the 2007 Hamburg congress:

Sometimes in religion there has been an emphasis on male importance. In Buddhism, however, the highest vows, namely the bhikshu and bhikshuni ones, are equal and entail the same rights. This is the case despite the fact that in some ritual areas, due to social custom, bhikshus go first. But Buddha gave the basic rights equally to both sangha groups. There is no point in discussing whether or not to revive the bhikshuni ordination; the question is merely how to do so properly within the context of the Vinaya. ^[196]

^ Sometimes spelled Frida Bedi, also named Sister Palmo, or Gelongma Karma Kechog Palmo

References[[edit](#)]

Citations[[edit](#)]

^ *White, David Gordon (ed.) (2000). Tantra in Practice. Princeton University Press. p. 21. ISBN 0-691-05779-6.* CS1 maint: extra text: authors list ([link](#))

^ *Powers, John (2007). Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism (Rev. ed.). Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications. pp. 392–3, 415. ISBN 978-1-55939-282-2.*

^ Dzogchen Ponlop, *Wild Awakening: The Heart of Mahamudra and Dzogchen*, Glossary.

^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Powers, John; Templeman, David (2012). *Historical Dictionary of Tibet*, Scarecrow Press, p. 566.

^ *Lopez, Donald S. Jr. (1999). Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 6, 19f. ISBN 0-226-49311-3.*

^ Damien Keown, ed., "Lamaism", *A Dictionary of Buddhism* (Oxford, 2004): "an obsolete term formerly used by Western scholars to denote the specifically Tibetan form of Buddhism due to the prominence of the lamas in the religious culture. . . should be avoided as it is misleading as well as disliked by Tibetans." Robert E. Buswell Jr. and David S. Lopez Jr., eds., "Lamaism", *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton, 2017): "an obsolete English term that has no correlate in Tibetan. . . Probably derived from the Chinese term *lama jiao*, or "teachings of the lamas", the term is considered pejorative by Tibetans, as it carries the negative connotation that the Tibetan tradition is something

distinct from the mainstream of Buddhism.” John Bowker, ed., “Lamaism”, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* (Oxford, 2000): “a now antiquated term used by early W[estern] commentators (as L. A. Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet, or Lamaism*, 1895) to describe Tibetan Buddhism. Although the term is not accurate [it] does at least convey the great emphasis placed on the role of the spiritual teacher by this religion.”

^ Conze, 1993

^ [Snellgrove, David \(1987\). *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism. Indian Buddhists & Their Tibetan Successors, Vol. 2.* Boston: Shambala Publications. ISBN 0-87773-379-1.](#)

^ [Berzin, Alexander, *A Survey of Tibetan History*](#)

^ Beckwith, C.I.: *The revolt of 755 in Tibet*, in: *The History of Tibet*, ed. Alex McKay, Vol. 1, London 2003, p. 273–285 (discusses the political background and the motives of the ruler).

^ [Jump up to: ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g](#) Berzin. Alexander (2000). *How Did Tibetan Buddhism Develop?: StudyBuddhism.com*

^ [定解宝灯论新月释 Archived](#) 2013-11-02 at the [Wayback Machine](#)

^ Yamaguchi, Zuihō (undated). *The Core Elements of Indian Buddhism Introduced into Tibet: A Contrast with Japanese Buddhism*. Source: [Thezensite.com](#) (accessed: October 20, 2007)

^ [敦煌唐代写本顿悟大乘正理决 Archived](#) 2013-11-01 at the [Wayback Machine](#)

^ Macmillan *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* (Volume One), page 70

^ Shakabpa. pp. 53, 173.

^ Samuel 2012, p. 10.

^ Samuel 2012, pp. 12–13, 32.

^ [Berzin, Alexander. *The Four Traditions of Tibetan Buddhism: Personal Experience, History, and Comparisons*](#)

^ Conze, 1993, 104ff

^ Shakabpa. p.61: ‘thirty thousand troops, under the command of Leje and Dorta, reached Phanpo, north of Lhasa.’

^ Sanders. p. 309, *his grandson Godan Khan invaded Tibet with 30000 men and destroyed several Buddhist monasteries north of Lhasa*

- ^ Buell, ibid. p.194: Shakabpa, 1967 pp.61-2.
- ^ ["How Tibet Emerged Within the Wider Chinese Power-Political Zone".](#) *Long Revolution*. 2015-04-18. Retrieved 2018-03-23.
- ^ [Wylie 1990](#), p. 104.
- ^ "To counterbalance the political power of the lama, Khubilai appointed civil administrators at the Sa-skya to supervise the mongol regency."
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b The Circle of Bliss: Buddhist Meditational Art, by John C. Huntington, Dina Bangdel, Robert A. F. Thurman, p48
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 162.
- ^ Rossabi 1983, p. 194
- ^ Petech, L. *Central Tibet and The Mongols*. (Serie Orientale Roma 65). Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente 1990: 85 - 143
- ^ Robinson, David M. (2008) [*The Ming Court and the Legacy of the Yuan Mongols.*](#) [Archived](#) 2016-10-06 at the [Wayback Machine](#) in *Culture, Courtiers and Competition, The Ming Court (1368-1644)*
- ^ Silk, Jonathan. *Notes on the history of the Yongle Kanjur*. Indica et Tibetica 28, Suhrllekhah. Festgabe für Helmut Eimer, 1998.
- ^ Patrick Taveirne (1 January 2004). *Han-Mongol Encounters and Missionary Endeavors: A History of Scheut in Ordos (Hetao) 1874-1911*. Leuven University Press. pp. 67 - . [ISBN](#) [978-90-5867-365-7](#).
- ^ Emblems of Empire: Selections from the Mactaggart Art Collection, by John E. Vollmer, Jacqueline Simcox, p154
- ^ Weidner, Marsha Smith. *Cultural Intersections in Later Chinese Buddhism*, p. 173.
- ^ Lopez, Donald S. (1998). *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p. 190
- ^ Schaik, Sam van. *Tibet: A History*. Yale University Press 2011, page 165-9.
- ^ Schaik, Sam van. *Tibet: A History*. Yale University Press 2011, page 169.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 100.

- ^ Bianchi, Ester. *The Tantric Rebirth Movement in Modern China, Esoteric Buddhism re-vivified by the Japanese and Tibetan traditions*. Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hung. Volume 57 (1), 31 – 54 (2004)
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 108.
- ^ Cantwell, Cathy; Kawanami, Hiroko (2016). *Religions in the Modern World (3rd ed.)*. New York: Routledge. p. 91. [ISBN 978-0-415-85881-6](#).
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 110.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 238.
- ^ Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 109.
- ^ The 2007 U.S. State Department report on religious freedom in Bhutan notes that “Mahayana Buddhism is the state religion...” and that the Bhutanese government supports both the Kagyu and Nyingma sects. [State.gov](#)
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Samuel 2012, p. 240.
- ^ Samuel 2012, pp. 242–243.
- ^ [Bruce A \(ed\). One World – Many Paths to Peace ANU E-Press 2009 \(launched by the 14th Dalai Lama\)](#) (accessed 11 May 2013)
- ^ Samuel, Geoffrey; Tantric Revisionings: New Understandings of Tibetan Buddhism and Indian Religion, page 303 – 304
- ^ Powers 2007, pp. 65, 71, 75.
- ^ Powers 2007, pp. 102.
- ^ Cf. Dhargyey (1978), 111; [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 533f; Tsong-kha-pa II: 48–9
- ^ Thurman, Robert (1997). *Essential Tibetan Buddhism*. Castle Books: 291
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 75.
- ^ Cf. Dhargyey (1978), 64f; Dhargyey (1982), 257f, etc; [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 364f; Tsong-kha-pa II: 183f. The former are the afflictions, negative states of mind, and the [three poisons](#) – desire, anger, and ignorance. The latter are subtle imprints, traces or “stains” of delusion that involves the imagination of inherent existence.

- ^ [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 152f
- ^ [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 243, 258
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Hopkins (1996)
- ^ Dhargyey (1978), 61f; Dhargyey (1982), 242–266; [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 365
- ^ Thurman, Robert (1997): 2–3
- ^ [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 252f
- ^ [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 367
- ^ Dhargyey (1978), 74; Dhargyey (1982), 3, 303f; [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 13f, 280f; [Berzin, Alexander \(2002\). *Hinayana and Mahayana: Comparison*](#)
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 54.
- ^ Powers 2007, pp. 93–96
- ^ The [Sakya](#) school, too, has a somewhat similar textual form, the [lamdré](#).
- ^ [Lamrim: the Gradual Path to Enlightenment](#)
- ^ Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 52–53.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b ^c Powers, 2007, p. 250.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 69.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 82.
- ^ Snellgrove, David. (1987) *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and their Tibetan successors*. pp 125–126.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 83.
- ^ [Cornu 2001](#), p. 145, 150.
- ^ [Cornu 2001](#), p. 135.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b ^c ^d Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 67.

- [^] [Cornu 2001](#), p. 136.
- [^] [Cornu 2001](#), p. 146–147.
- [^] [Cornu 2001](#), p. 138.
- [^] [Jump up to: [^] \[Cornu 2001\]\(#\)](#), p. 145.
- [^] [Hookam 1991](#).
- [^] [Jump up to: [^] \[Brunnhölzl 2004\]\(#\)](#).
- [^] [Jump up to: [^] \[Cornu 2001\]\(#\)](#).
- [^] Sopa & Hopkins (1977), 67–69; Hopkins (1996).
- [^] Cf. Conze (1993).
- [^] Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 63.
- [^] Samuel 2012, pp. 19–20.
- [^] Orzech, Charles D. (general editor), 2011. *Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia*. Brill, p. 540.
- [^] Samuel 2012, p. 21.
- [^] Powers 2007, p. 103–104
- [^] Luis O. Gomez and Jonathan A. Silk, *Studies in the Literature of the Great Vehicle: Three Mahayana Buddhist Texts*. Ann Arbor 1989 pgs viii
- [^] Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 64.
- [^] Samuel 2012, p. 20.
- [^] "Yoginitantras are in the secondary literature often called Anuttarayoga. But this is based on a mistaken back translation of the Tibetan translation (rnal byor bla med kyi rgyud) of what appears in Sanskrit texts only as Yogānuttara or Yoganiruttara (cf. SANDERSON 1994: 97–98, fn.1)." Isabelle Onians, "Tantric Buddhist Apologetics, or Antinomianism as a Norm," D.Phil. dissertation, Oxford, Trinity Term 2001. pg 70
- [^] Samuel 2012, p. 32.
- [^] Samuel 2012, p. 78.

- ^ Conze (1993): 26
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 271.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 50.
- ^ Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 45–46.
- ^ *The Way of the Bodhisattva* by Shantideva. Shambhala Publications. Page 122–123
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 81.
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 86.
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 88.
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 90.
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 91.
- ^ [khri byang blo bzang ye shes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho 2006](#), p. 66, 212f.
- ^ *The Practice of Tranquillity & Insight: A Guide to Tibetan Buddhist Meditation* by Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche. Shambhala Publications: 1994. [ISBN 0-87773-943-9](#) pg 91–93
- ^ Pabonka, p. 649
- ^ Kalu Rinpoche (1986), *The Gem Ornament of Manifold Instructions*. Snow Lion, p. 21.
- ^ [Pabongkhapa Déchen Nyingpo](#), 649
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 295.
- ^ *Lama* is the literal Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit *guru*. For a traditional perspective on devotion to the guru, see Tsong-ka-pa I, 77–87. For a current perspective on the guru-disciple relationship in Tibetan Buddhism, see [Berzin, Alexander. *Relating to a Spiritual Teacher: Building a Healthy Relationship*](#)
- ^ notably, *Gurupancasika*, Tib.: *Lama Ngachupa*, Wylie: *bla-ma lnga-bcu-pa*, “Fifty Verses of Guru-Devotion” by [Aśvaghoṣa](#)
- ^ Indian tradition (Cf. *Saddharmapundarika Sutra* II, 124) encourages the student to view the guru as representative of the Buddha himself.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 80.

- ^ Cf. Conze (1993), 26 and 52f.
- ^ Powers 2007, p. 315.
- ^ Cueppers, Christoph. ["The Relationship Between Religion and State \(chos srid zung 'brel\) In Traditional Tibet"](#).
- ^ Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 2.
- ^ Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 5.
- ^ Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 81.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 94.
- ^ Powers, John; Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, page 23–24
- ^ Samuel, Geoffrey. *Introducing Tibetan Buddhism (World Religions)*, 2012, p. 74
- ^ Powers, John; Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, page 265
- ^ Robert E. Buswell Jr., Donald S. Lopez Jr. *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*
- ^ Powers, John; Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, page 266–67
- ^ Powers, John; Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, page 267
- ^ Jamgon Mipham, *Luminous Essence: A Guide to the Guhyagarbha Tantra*, page 147.
- ^ Tsoṅ-kha-pa Blo-bzaṅ-grags-pa. *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra*, Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1987, page 47.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 71.
- ^ Garson, Nathaniel DeWitt; *Penetrating the Secret Essence Tantra: Context and Philosophy in the Mahayoga System of rNying-ma Tantra*, 2004, p. 52
- ^ Garson, Nathaniel DeWitt; *Penetrating the Secret Essence Tantra: Context and Philosophy in the Mahayoga System of rNying-ma Tantra*, 2004, p. 45
- ^ Kapstein, Matthew T. *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, p. 87.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 130.

- ^ Samuel 2012, pp. 131–134.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 141.
- ^ Samuel 2012 p. 158.
- ^ Samuel 2012 pp. 159–162.
- ^ Chapman F. Spencer. *Lhasa the Holy City*, p. 195. Readers Union Ltd., London.
- ^ Samuel 2012, pp. 140–141.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 146.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 144.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 206.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 214.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 216.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 215.
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 211.
- ^ [Tsomo 1999](#), p. 22.
- ^ [Tsomo 1999](#), p. 76.
- ^ Haas, Michaela. "Dakini Power: Twelve Extraordinary Women Shaping the Transmission of Tibetan Buddhism in the West." Shambhala Publications, 2013. [ISBN 1559394072](#), p. 6
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 213.
- ^ [A New Possibility: Introducing Full Ordination for Women into the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition](#)
- ^ [Human Rights and the Status of Women in Buddhism](#)
- ^ ["A Female Dalai Lama? Why It Matters". *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved May 4, 2013. Of all these changes that we are watching Buddhism undergo in the West, the most momentous may be that women are playing an equal role.](#)
- ^ ["Nonfiction Book Review: The Revolutionary Life of Freda Bedi: British Feminist, Indian Nationalist, Buddhist Nun by Vicki Mackenzie. Shambhala, \\$16.95 trade paper \(208p\) ISBN 978-1-61180-425-6". *Publishersweekly.com*. Retrieved 2017-06-10.](#)

- ^ ["Works by Chögyam Trungpa and His Students"](#). Dharma Haven. Dharma Haven. June 23, 1999. Retrieved 2013-10-14.
- ^ ["Ani Pema Chödrön"](#). Gampoabbey.org. Archived from [the original](#) on 2010-11-17. Retrieved 2010-11-19.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b ["Women Making History"](#). Vajradakininunnery.org. Archived from [the original](#) on 2010-06-01. Retrieved 2010-11-19.
- ^ ["Khenmo Drolma"](#). Vajradakininunnery.org. Archived from [the original](#) on 2010-06-01. Retrieved 2010-11-19.
- ^ ["Vajra Dakini Nunnery"](#). Vajra Dakini Nunnery. Retrieved 2010-11-19.
- ^ Haas, Michaela (2011-05-18). ["2,500 Years After The Buddha, Tibetan Buddhists Acknowledge Women"](#). Huffington Post.
- ^ ["Geshe Kelsang Wangmo, An Interview with the World's First Female Geshe « Mandala Publications"](#). Mandalamagazine.org. Archived from [the original](#) on 2013-04-15. Retrieved 2014-08-25.
- ^ Haas, Michaela. ["Buddhist nun professors or none? - OnFaith"](#). The Washington Post.
- ^ Nuns, Tibetan (2016-07-14). ["Tibetan Buddhist Nuns Make History: Congratulations Geshema Nuns! - The Tibetan Nuns Project"](#). Tnp.org. Retrieved 2016-10-04.
- ^ ["Twenty Tibetan Buddhist nuns are first ever to earn Geshema degrees - Lion's Roar"](#). Lionsroar.com. 2016-07-15. Retrieved 2016-10-04.
- ^ Stevens, William K. (1988-10-26). ["U.S. Woman Is Named Reborn Buddhist Saint"](#). [New York Times](#). Retrieved 2008-07-26.
- ^ Kongtrul, Jamgon; Harding, Sarah (translator). *The Treasury of Knowledge: Book Eight, Part Four: Esoteric Instructions*, Shambhala, 2009, pp. 27-28.
- ^ [Jump up to:](#) ^a ^b [How Do the Tibetan Buddhist Traditions Differ?](#), Retrieved 04.06.2016
- ^ [Hookham 1991.](#)
- ^ [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=The four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism](#), retrieved 31.07.2013
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 56.

- ^ [fpmt.org *Getting to know the Four Schools of Tibetan Buddhism*] (https://fpmt.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2007/10/getting_to_know_the_four_schools_of_tibetan_buddhism.pdf)
- ^ Kagyuoffice.org [Archived](#) 2013-05-11 at the [Wayback Machine](#) See section: *The Nine Yana Journey*
- ^ Gruschke 2001, p.72; and A. Gruschke, "Der Jonang-Orden: Gründe für seinen Niedergang, Voraussetzungen für das Überdauern und aktuelle Lage", in: Henk Blezer (ed.), *Tibet, Past and Present. Tibetan Studies I* (Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of The IATS, 2000), Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden 2002, pp. 183-214
- ^ Samuel 2012, p. 232.

Sources[[edit](#)]

- Brunnhölzl, Karl (2004), The Center of the Sunlit Sky: Madhyamaka in the Kagyu Tradition, Shambhala, [ISBN 1-55939-218-5](#)*
- Coleman, Graham, ed. (1993). *A Handbook of Tibetan Culture*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc. [ISBN 1-57062-002-4](#).
- [Conze, Edward](#) (1993). *A Short History of Buddhism* (2nd ed.). Oneworld. [ISBN 1-85168-066-7](#).
- Cornu, Philippe (2001), "Nawoord", Schijn en werkelijkheid. De twee waarheden in de vier boeddhistische leerstelsels, KunchabPublicaties*
- Dhargyey, Geshe Ngawang (1973 - 79). Lamrim Lectures (Speech). Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharmasala, HP, India.*
- Dhargyey, Geshe Ngawang (1978). Alexander Berzin (ed.). Tibetan Tradition of Mental Development. Translated by Sharpa Tulku (3rd ed.). Dharmasala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. [A pithy lam-rim by a geshe appointed in 1973 by the Dalai Lama as head of the translation team at the Tibetan Library.]*
- Dhargyey, Geshe Ngawang (1982). Alexander Berzin (ed.). An Anthology of Well-Spoken Advice on the Graded Paths of the Mind, Vol. I. Translated by Sharpa Tulku. Dharmasala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. [ISBN 81-86470-29-8](#). [The first part of a more extensive lam-rim by a geshe appointed in 1973 by the Dalai Lama as head of the translation team at the Tibetan Library. The language of this publication is very different from that of the 1978 work by the same lama due to widespread changes in choice of English terminology by the translators.]*

Hill, John E. "Notes on the Dating of Khotanese History." *Indo-Iranian Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 3 July 1988. To purchase this article see: [\[1\]](#). An updated version of this article is available for free download (with registration) at: [\[2\]](#)

[Hookham, S.K.](#) (1991), *The Buddha within : Tathagatagarbha doctrine according to the Shentong interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, [ISBN 978-0791403587](#)

[Hopkins, Jeffrey](#) (1996). *Meditation on Emptiness*. Boston: Wisdom. [ISBN 0-86171-110-6](#). [Definitive treatment of emptiness according to the Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka school.]

[Lati Rinpoche](#) (1980). [Elizabeth Napper](#) (ed.). *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism: Oral Commentary on Ge-shay Jam-bel-sam-pel's "Presentation of Awareness and Knowledge Composite of All the Important Points Opener of the Eye of New Intelligence"*. Translated by Napper. Valois, NY: Snow Lion. [ISBN 0-937938-02-5](#).

[Mullin, Glenn H](#) (15 December 2008). [Living in the Face of Death: The Tibetan Tradition](#). Snow Lion Publications. [ISBN 978-1-55939-908-1](#).

[Nyanaponika Thera](#) (1965). *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*. Boston: Weiser. [ISBN 0-87728-073-8](#).

[pha bong kha pa byams pa bstan 'dzin 'phrin las rgya mtsho; khri byang blo bzang ye shes bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho; Richards, Michael](#) (3 November 2006). [Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand: A Concise Discourse on the Path to Enlightenment](#). Simon and Schuster. [ISBN 978-0-86171-500-8](#).

Powers, John. *History as Propaganda: Tibetan Exiles versus the People's Republic of China* (2004) Oxford University Press. [ISBN 978-0-19-517426-7](#)

Powers, John. *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism, Revised Edition* (2007) Snow Lion Publications. [ISBN 978-1559392822](#)

[Ringu Tulku](#) (2006). *The Ri-Me Philosophy of Jamgon Kongtrul the Great: A Study of the Buddhist Lineages of Tibet*. Shambhala. [ISBN 1-59030-286-9](#).

[Samuel, Geoffrey](#) (2012), *Introducing Tibetan Buddhism*, Routledge (World Religions). [ISBN 978-0415456654](#)

Smith, E. Gene (2001). *Among Tibetan Texts: History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*. Boston: Wisdom Publications. [ISBN 0-86171-179-3](#)

[Sopa, Geshe Lhundup; Hopkins, Jeffrey](#) (1977). *Practice and Theory of Tibetan Buddhism*. New Delhi: B. I. Publications. [ISBN 0-09-125621-6](#). [Part Two of this book, "Theory: Systems of Tenets" is an annotated translation of

‘ ‘ Precious Garland of Tenets (Grub-mtha’ rin-chhen phreng-ba)’ ’ by Kön-chok-jik-may-wang-po (1728-1791).]

Tsomo, Karma Lekshe (1 April 1999). [*Buddhist Women Across Cultures: Realizations*](#). State University of New York Press. [ISBN 978-0-7914-4138-1](#).

The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment

[Tsong-kha-pa](#) (2000). Joshua Cutler; Guy Newland (eds.). *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, Volume I*. Canada: Snow Lion. [ISBN 1-55939-152-9](#).

[Tsong-kha-pa](#) (2002). Joshua Cutler; Guy Newland (eds.). *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, Volume II*. Canada: Snow Lion. [ISBN 1-55939-168-5](#).

[Tsong-kha-pa](#) (2004). Joshua Cutler; Guy Newland (eds.). *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, Volume III*. Canada: Snow Lion. [ISBN 1-55939-166-9](#).

Wallace, B. Alan (1999), "The Buddhist Tradition of Samatha: Methods for Refining and Examining Consciousness", *Journal of Consciousness Studies* **6** (2-3): 175-187 .

Yeshe De Project (1986): *Ancient Tibet: Research Materials from The Yeshe De Project*. Dharma Publishing, Berkeley, California. [ISBN 0-89800-146-3](#).

Further reading[\[edit\]](#)

Introductory books

John Powers (1995, 2007), *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, Snow Lion Publications

John Powers (2008), *A Concise Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, Snow Lion Publications

Matthew T. Kapstein (2014), *Tibetan Buddhism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press

Wallace, B. Alan (October 25, 1993). *Tibetan Buddhism From the Ground Up: A Practical Approach for Modern Life*. Wisdom Publications. [ISBN 0-86171-075-4](#), [ISBN 978-0-86171-075-1](#)

"Insider" texts

Yeshe, Lama Thubten (2001). "The Essence of Tibetan Buddhism". Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive. [ISBN 1-891868-08-X](#)

Other books

Coleman, Graham, ed. (1993). *A Handbook of Tibetan Culture*. Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc. [ISBN 1-57062-002-4](#).

[Ringu Tulku](#) (2006). *The Ri-Me Philosophy of Jamgon Kongtrul the Great: A Study of the Buddhist Lineages of Tibet*. Shambhala. [ISBN 978-1-59030-286-6](#).

Smith, E. Gene (2001). *Among Tibetan Texts: History and Literature of the Himalayan Plateau*. Boston: Wisdom Publications. [ISBN 0-86171-179-3](#)

Snellgrove, David (1987). *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism. Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors. 2 volumes*. Boston: Shambhala.

Articles

Cabezón, José Ignacio (2006-10-26). ["Tibetan Buddhist Society"](#). In Juergensmeyer, Mark (ed.). *The Oxford Handbook of Global Religions*. [doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195137989.003.0010](#).

External links[[edit](#)]



Wikimedia Commons has media related to [Tibetan Buddhism](#).



[Wikisource](#) has the text of the [1911 Encyclopædia Britannica](#) article [Lāmāism](#).

[Tibetan Buddhism](#) at [Curlie](#)

[A Day In The Life Of A Tibetan Monk](#) – article and slideshow by [National Geographic](#)

[Britannica article on Tibetan Buddhism](#)

show

v

t

e

Tibetan Buddhism

Nyingma (Dzogchen)

[Padmasambhava](#)

Sakya

[Sakya Pandita](#)

[Drogön Chögyal Phagpa](#)

Kagyu

[Milarepa](#)

[Thang Tong Gyalpo](#)

Gelug

[Je Tsongkhapa](#)

[Trisong Detsen](#)

[Vairotsana](#)

[Dampa Sangye](#)

[Drukpa Kunley](#)

[Namkhai Norbu](#)

[Godrakpa](#)

Other

[Gorampa Sonam Sengye](#)

[Jigdral Yeshe Dorje \(2nd Dudjom Rinpoche\)](#)

[Shamarpa](#)

[Dilgo Khyentse](#)

[Jamgon Kongtrul](#)

[Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo](#)

[Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö](#)

[Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen](#)

[Longchenpa](#)

[Jigme Lingpa](#)

[Patrul Rinpoche](#)

[Gampopa](#)

[Marpa Lotsawa](#)

[Chögyam Trungpa](#)

[Penor Rinpoche](#)

[Ratna Lingpa](#)

[Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche](#)

[Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche](#)

[Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche](#)

[Shakya Shri](#)

[Thinley Norbu](#)

[Chogye Trichen](#)

[Tenzin Ösel Hita](#)

[Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche](#)

[Taranatha](#)

[Mikyö Dorje, 8th Karmapa Lama](#)

[Minling Tertön](#)

[Rendawa](#)

[Rongtong Shenrab Kunrig](#)

[Orgyen Chokgyur Lingpa](#)

[Pema Lingpa](#)

[Tai Situpa](#)

[Thubten Yeshe](#)

[Jamgon Ju Mipham Gyatso](#)

[Tenzin Palmo](#)

[Sakya Chokden](#)

[Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche](#)

[Tsele Natsok Rangdröl](#)

[Ganden Tripa](#)

[Lama Jampa Thaye](#)

[Rangjung Dorje, 3rd Karmapa Lama](#)

[Thubten Zopa Rinpoche](#)

[Nyoshul Khenpo Rinpoche](#)

[Tarthang Tulku](#)

[Dodrupchen Rinpoche](#)

[Anagarika Govinda](#)

[Alexandra David-Néel](#)

[Vimalamitra](#)

[Atiśa](#)

[Ngorchén Kunga Zangpo](#)

[Tsangnyön Heruka](#)

[Go Lotsawa Shonnu Pal](#)

[Sogyal Rinpoche](#)

[Second Beru Khyentse](#)

[Alexander Berzin \(scholar\)](#)

[Chatral Rinpoche](#)

[Dezhung Rinpoche](#)

[Tulku Thondup](#)

[Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche](#)

[Akong Rinpoche](#)

[Khenpo Abbey Rinpoche](#)

[Kangyur Rinpoche](#)

[Dudjom Yangsi](#)

[Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche](#)

[Orgyen Tobgyal](#)

[Kathok Ontrul Rinpoche](#)

[Zurmang Tenpa Rinpoche](#)

[Adzom Drukpa](#)

[Yudra Nyingpo](#)

[Ratna Vajra Sakya](#)

[Gyana Vajra Sakya](#)

[Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche](#)

[Dawa Chodrak Rinpoche](#)

[Kalu Rinpoche](#)

[Tenga Rinpoche](#)

[Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche](#)

[Thrangu Rinpoche](#)

[Chetsang Rinpoche](#)

[Trijang Rinpoche](#)

[Phabongkha](#)

[Reting Rinpoche](#)

[Zong Rinpoche](#)

[Ling Rinpoche](#)

[Khandro Rinpoche](#)

[Trulshik Rinpoche](#)

[Karma Thinley Rinpoche](#)

[Khamtrul Rinpoche](#)

[Gyalwang Drukpa](#)

[Luding Khenchen Rinpoche](#)

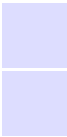
[Rechung Dorje Drakpa](#)

[Phagmo Drupa Dorje Gyalpo](#)

[Arija Rinpoche](#)

[Hugh Edward Richardson](#)

[Charles Alfred Bell](#)



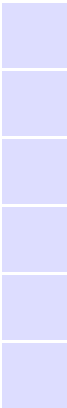
show

v

t

e

Indian philosophy



show

v

t

e

Bodhisattvas



show

v

t

e

Topics in Buddhism

show

v

t e Tibet articles		
	Overviews	Timeline List of rulers European exploration Historical money Prehistory (Neolithic) Zhangzhung Yarlung dynasty Empire (7th - 9th century) List of emperors Lönchen Relations with Tang (618 - 907)
	Chronology	Era of Fragmentation (9th - 11th century) Guge kingdom Tsongkha Yuan dynasty rule (1270 - 1350) Bureau of Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs Phagmodrupa dynasty Relations with Ming (1368 - 1644)

	Rinpungpa dynasty
	Tsangpa dynasty
	Ganden Phodrang
	Kashag
	Qing dynasty rule (1720 - 1912)
	Lifan Yuan
	List of imperial residents
	Post-Qing to 1950
	Tibetan Army
	People's Republic of China (PRC) rule
	PRC incorporation
	political leaders
	Tibetan attack on Songzhou
	Battle of Dafei River
	Mongol invasions of Tibet
Wars and conflicts	Tibet - Ladakh - Mughal War
	Battle of Dartsedo
	Battle of the Salween River
	Chinese expedition to Tibet (1720)
	Jinchuan campaigns
	Lhasa riot of 1750
	Sino-Nepalese War

	<u>Sino-Sikh War</u>
	<u>Nepalese - Tibetan War</u>
	<u>Sikkim expedition</u>
	<u>British expedition to Tibet</u>
	<u>1905 Tibetan Rebellion</u>
	<u>Chinese expedition to Tibet (1910)</u>
	<u>Xinhai Lhasa turmoil</u>
	<u>Sino-Tibetan War</u>
	<u>Qinghai - Tibet War</u>
	<u>1938 - 39 German expedition to Tibet</u>
	<u>1939 Japanese expedition to Tibet</u>
	<u>Battle of Chamdo</u>
	<u>Protests and uprisings since 1950</u>
	<u>1959 Tibetan uprising</u>
	<u>1987 - 1989 Tibetan unrest</u>
	<u>2008 Tibetan unrest</u>
	<u>Self-immolation protests by Tibetans in China</u>
	<u>Treaty of Tingmosgang (1684)</u>
	<u>Treaty of Chushul (1842)</u>
Documents	<u>Treaty of Thapathali (1856)</u>
	<u>Treaty of Lhasa (1904)</u>



[Convention Between Great Britain and China Respecting Tibet \(1906\)](#)

[Treaty of friendship and alliance with Mongolia \(1913\)](#)

[Simla Accord \(1914\)](#)

[Seventeen Point Agreement \(1951\)](#)

[70,000 Character Petition \(1962\)](#)

[Flora](#)

[Fauna](#)

[Environment](#)

[Mountains](#)

[Lhotse](#) / [Changtse](#)

[Namcha Barwa](#)

[Tanggula](#)

Rivers

[Yarlung Tsangpo](#)

[Grand Canyon](#)

[Rongbuk Glacier](#)

[Tibetan Plateau](#)

[Changtang](#)

[Nature Reserve](#)

[Valleys](#)



[Amdo](#)

[Kham](#)

[Ü-Tsang](#)

[Ngari](#)



[Tibet Autonomous Region \(TAR\)](#)

[Central Tibetan Administration](#)

[Parliament](#)

[Definitions of Tibet](#)

[Foreign relations](#)

[Human rights](#)

[LGBT](#)

[Patron and priest relationship](#)

[Golden Urn](#)

[Tibet Area](#)

[Independence movement](#)

[Serfdom controversy](#)

[Sovereignty debate](#)

[CIA Tibetan program](#)



[Government](#)



[Regional Government](#)



[Postage and postal history](#)

[Qinghai-Tibet Highway](#)

[Qinghai - Tibet railway](#)

[Education](#)

[Languages](#)

[Religion](#)

[Bon](#)

Tibetan Buddhism

[Sakya](#)

[Imperial Preceptor](#)

[Dpon-chen](#)

[Nyingma](#)

[Kagyu](#)

[Jonang](#)

[Gelug](#)

[Ganden Tripa](#)

[Dalai Lama](#)

[list](#)

[Lhamo La-tso](#)

[Panchen Lama](#)

[list](#)

[Islam](#)

[Sinicization](#)

[Social classes](#)

[Tibetan people](#)

	Changpa
	Yolmo
	Diaspora
	Names
	Art
	Calendar
	Cuisine
	Dzong architecture
	Emblem
	Festivals
	Flag
	Historical and cultural sites
	Culture
	Khata(ceremonial scarf)
	Literature
	<i>Annals</i>
	<i>Chronicle</i>
	writers
	Music
	Tibetology
	Traditional medicine
Authority control 	GND: 4034157-4
	NDL: 00569271

Retrieved from

"[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Tibetan Buddhism&oldid=954038320](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Tibetan_Buddhism&oldid=954038320)"

Categories:

[Tibetan Buddhism](#)

[History of Buddhism in Asia](#)