New Directions in Tibetan Literary Studies
A Workshop on Perspectives and Prospects in Religious Auto/Biography

April 17-19
Princeton University

Reception
Friday, April 17, 5:00-7:00 PM
Chancellor Green 103, Princeton University

Workshop
Saturday, April 18, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Sunday, April 19, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Joseph Henry House, Princeton University

Organizers
Andrew Quintman (Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts, Princeton University)
Sarah Jacoby (Society of Fellows in the Humanities, Columbia University)

Overview
Biography and autobiography have recently emerged as two of the most promising avenues for the study of religious and literary cultures across the Himalayan Buddhist world. Panels at numerous academic conferences in the past year (the American Academy of Religion, the Association of Asian Studies, and the International Association of Buddhist Studies) have opened up an exciting and fruitful conversation about new directions in the study of Tibetan literature. Given that we are working in a relatively young field, we realize that scholars of Tibetan auto/biographical literature have much to gain through a sustained dialogue with specialists of other literary traditions, including those of Asian Buddhist and western cultures.

In an effort to seize upon this watershed moment the workshop, which follows upon an initial meeting convened at Columbia University in Fall 2008, will assemble group of scholars from diverse backgrounds and approaches to the study of auto/biographical literature. The workshop is envisioned as an
opportunity to share and discuss common interests in a rigorous fashion without the constraints or concerns of a larger conference format. The meetings will be open to a small group of emerging and senior scholars, representing specialists in the field of Tibetan and Buddhist literature and the study of auto/biographical literature more generally, as well as an audience invited from the local scholarly community. We therefore expect the workshops to be largely informal events, with an emphasis on conversation and, we hope, brainstorming about the future directions of Tibetan literary studies.

The workshop takes as its starting point several broad questions addressed during the first meeting in the fall: How do we understand, translate, and analyze traditional classifications of texts and literary genres? How are these categories maintained or blurred, both in traditional literature and in our own work? What sources and resources are we drawing on and how can we better make use of them?

The Princeton workshop in April will continue this conversation by foregrounding strategies for reading and interpreting auto/biographical texts across disciplinary and regional boundaries. Saturday morning will frame the conversation through a panel discussion on Models for Reading Religious Auto/Biography in the traditions of Tibet, Southeast Asia, China, and Europe/America. The afternoon session will further reflect on new frameworks for approaching auto/biographical works with a panel on New Studies in Tibetan Auto/Biography. Sunday morning will turn to an exercise in the group reading of Tibetan auto/biographical texts, highlighting early, middle, and contemporary periods of literature. Presentations will be grounded in the study of source materials (in translation and original source languages) to be circulated in advance.

**Schedule**

**Friday, April 17**
Chancellor Green 103, Princeton University
5:00 - 7:00 PM **Reception**

**Saturday, April 18**
Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts
Joseph Henry House, Princeton University
8:30-9:00 AM **Coffee and light breakfast**
9:00-9:15 AM  **Andrew Quintman** (Princeton University)
Welcome and Introduction

**Session 1: Models for the Study of Religious Auto/Biography**

9:15-9:45 AM  **Janet Gyatso** (Harvard University)
Salient Questions for the Study of Tibetan Autobiography

9:45-10:15 AM  **Wendi Adamek** (Barnard College)
Exploring Relationships between Human and Non-Human in the Work of Hagiography

10:15-10:45 AM  Coffee Break

10:45-11:15 AM  **Juliane Schober** (Arizona State University)
Performing the Life of the Buddha in Burma

11:15-11:45 AM  **Frederick Ruf** (Georgetown University)
Beyond Narrative: Opening Auto/biography to the Strange

11:45-12:15 PM  Discussion

12:15-2:00 PM  Lunch for workshop attendees
Location TBA

**Session 2: New Studies in Tibetan Auto/Biography**

2:00-2:30 PM  **Gene Smith** (Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center)
"Terton and Their Lives and Predestinations"

2:30-3:00 PM  **Sarah Jacoby** (Columbia University)
"Reading Sentiments in Tibetan Autobiography"

3:00-3:30 PM  Coffee Break

3:30-4:00 PM  **Annabella Pitkin** (Columbia University)
"Just Like the Kadampa Masters of Old": Narrative and Innovation in Tibetan Biography

4:00-4:30 PM  **Ben Bogin** (Georgetown University)
Painting Past Lives: The Auto/biographical Art of Kyerab
4:30-5:00 PM Discussion

Sunday, April 19
Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts
Joseph Henry House, Princeton University

Session 3: Readings in Tibetan Auto/Biography
8:30-9:00 AM Coffee and light breakfast

9:00-9:50 AM Kurtis Schaeffer (University of Virginia)
A Tibetan Biographer on Biography

9:50-10:40 AM Carl Yamamoto (University of Virginia)
The Gu rub re bo skyid: Lama Zhang's Self-Eulogistic, Autobiographical Mea Culpa

10:40-11:10 AM Coffee Break

11:10-12:00 PM Pema Bhum (Latse Contemporary Tibetan Cultural Library)
Readings from the Joys and Sorrows of a Boy from Naktsang (Naktsang Shilu Kyiduk)

12:00 PM Lunch for workshop attendees

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