

Dominic D. Z. Sur

0170 Old Main Hill, Logan, Utah. 84322-0710
dominic.sur@usu.edu — (435) 797.9058

EDUCATION

University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA

Ph.D., History of Religions, May 2015
Department of Religious Studies

Focus: Buddhism, History, Philosophy, Literature

Dissertation: “A Study of Rongzom’s *Disclosing the Great Vehicle Approach* in the History of Tibet’s Great Perfection Tradition”

Harvard Divinity School
Cambridge, MA

M.T.S., Buddhist Studies, 2009

Sarah Lawrence College
Bronxville, NY

B.A., Religion, 2007
Concentration: Buddhism

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

**Assistant Professor of
Religious Studies**
Department of History

Utah State University
Fall 2017–present

**Visiting Assistant Professor
of Religious Studies**
Department of History

Utah State University
Fall 2016–Fall 2017

Postdoctoral Fellow
Department of History

Utah State University
Fall 2015–Spring 2016

Adjunct Faculty
Religious Studies

University of Virginia
Fall 2013–Spring 2015

BOOKS

The Practice of Philosophy: Metaphysics, Argumentation, and Identity in Tibetan Buddhism.
Complete book-length manuscript currently under review by several publishers

Rongzompa's Entering the Way of the Great Vehicle: Dzogchen as the Culmination of the Mahāyāna. Boulder, Co.: Shambhala Publications, 2017

ARTICLES

"The *Dzokchen* Apology: On the Limits of Logic, Language, & Epistemology in Early Great Perfection." In *The Journal of Indian Philosophy* 50(1), 2021, pp. 1-46.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10781-021-09492-z>

"A Biography of the Translator, Rongzom." In the *Treasury of Lives: Biographies of Himalayan Masters, an Online Encyclopedia of Tibet, Inner Asia, and the Himalaya*. 2021.
(<https://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Rongzom-Chokyi-Zangpo/6194>)

"An Ocean of Buddhist Intellectual Culture in Two Intertextual Drops: Parallel Text & Issues Pertaining to Rongzom's Doctrine of 'Mere Appearance' (*snang tsam*)." In *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 43, 2020, pp. 215–52. doi:
10.2143/JIABS.43.0.3289057

"Constituting Canon and Community in Eleventh Century Tibet: The Extant Writings of Rongzom and His Charter of Mantrins (*sngags pa'i bca' yig*)." In *Religions*, Volume 8, issue 3, article number 40. doi:10.3390/rel803004

INVITED TALKS

"Some ཀླུ་མཚན་ལྟོས་འཇུག་——And Some Questions." Hosted by Universität Hamburg's Academic Research Program Initiative Conference (APRI) in association with the *Khyentse Center for Tibetan Buddhist Textual Scholarship and Tibetan Buddhist Textual Studies*. At Shechen Monastery, Kathmandu, Nepal, March 9–11, 2019

CONFERENCE PAPERS

"Contra Dzokchen Skeptics: A Critique of Rationality and Scriptural Authority in Eleventh Century Great Perfection." Paper to be given at *The Sixteenth Congress of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*. Charles University and the Oriental Institute, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague, Czech Republic, July 2022

"Metatheory & Rongzom's Eleventh Century Assessment of the Conditions that Structure the Very Possibility of Logico-Philosophical Discourse," *XVIXth Congress of the*

International Association of Buddhist Studies. At Seoul National University, Korea, August 2020. —Paper accepted; conference postponed by Covid-19

"Philosophical Ecologies in Rongzompa's Eleventh Century Critique of Philosophical Certainty." Paper given at the *American Academy of Religion* Annual Congress, San Diego, California, November, 2019

"Networks of Association Constituting Rongzompa's Authoritative Great Perfection," *International Association for Tibetan Studies* 15th Seminar, École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris, France, July 2019

"Social and Intellectual Criticism of an Eleventh-Century Tibetan Renaissance." *American Academy of Religion* (AAR) Regional, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, March 16, 2018

"Echoes of Samyé on the Path Through an 11th Century Treatise on the Great Perfection," *XVIIth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, University of Vienna, Austria, August 22, 2014

"Issues in the Translation of an 11th Century Tibetan *śāstra*," *South & Central Asian Fulbright Conference*, Cochin, Kerala (India), February 23, 2013

CONFERENCES & PANELS ORGANIZED/CONVENED

Ecology and Buddhist Philosophy Panel organizer and convener. American Academy of Religion Annual Conference, San Diego, November 2019

God & Smog Conference organizer. Utah State University, Logan, Utah, October 2018

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *The Monastery Rules: Buddhist Monastic Organization in Pre-Modern Tibet*. By Berthe Jansen. Oakland: University of California Press, 2018. 281 pp. In *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 79(2), 2020, pp. 472-474. doi:10.1017/S0021911820000169

Review of *The Uttaratantra in the Land of Snows: Tibetan Thinkers Debate the Centrality of the Buddha-Nature Treatise*, by Tsering Wangchuk, August 2017. In the American Academy of Religion's *Reading Religion*: <http://readingreligion.org/books/uttaratantra-land-snows>

Review of *Finding Rest in the Nature of Mind: The Trilogy of Rest, Volume 1*, by Longchenpa, March 2019. In the American Academy of Religion's *Reading Religion*: <http://readingreligion.org/books/finding-rest-nature-mind>

PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Faculty Instructor, Kathmandu University's Rangjung Yeshe Institute, Gomd –Austria
Salzkammergut, Austria, Summer Buddhist Studies Program: *Introduction to Buddhism: Philosophy, Practice, and the Modern World*, Summer 2019

Board Member of Directors for Light of Berotsana Translation Group. Light of Berotsana is an established 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with the goal of translating and preserving authentic Buddhist literature from masters in the esoteric Tibetan contemplative traditions

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

International Association of Buddhist Studies (IABS)

International Association of Tibetan Studies (IATS)

American Academy of Religion (AAR)

Light of Berotsana Translation Group, board

84000, reviewer

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

CHASS Committee for Tanner Talks, 2021-present

Middle Eastern History Search Committee

Judaism Lecturer Search Committee

Religious Studies Transfers Equivalency Evaluator, 2018-present

Committee for God & Smog Conference on Religion and the Environment, 2018

Chair—Religious Studies Events Committee, 2016-present

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Utah State University: *Religious Studies Research Capstone*

Introduction to Religious Studies

History of Ancient Religions

Introduction to Buddhism

Women in Buddhism

Buddhism in the West

Directed Readings in Tibetan

Directed Readings in Sanskrit

University of Virginia: *Tibetan Literature VII: Poetry, Meditation, Ritual*

Tibetan Literature VI: Canonical Literature

Tibetan Literature V: Narrative Literature

Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism

RESEARCH PROJECTS & INSTITUTIONAL EXPERIENCE ABROAD

Early Dzokchen Literature Project with Drs. David Germano and Kurtis Schaeffer, University of Virginia, 2010-2011

Tibetan-English translator Tsering Gyelpo's History of Ngari (*Mnga' ris chos byung*), Tibet Project, Tibetan & Himalayan Library, 2010 (University of Virginia) supervised by Dr. David Germano

Drepung Monastery documentation project with Dr. Georges Dreyfus (Williams College), Tibetan & Himalayan Library, 2009-2010

Sanskrit-Tibetan bibliographic reconversion project, Harvard University Library Services, 2008-2009

Instructor of Buddhist Logic and Debate, Drupthob Monastery, Pharping, Nepal, October – December 1999

FIELDWORK & STUDY IN ASIA

Solu-khumbhu, Nepal

Fulbright Dissertation Research at Serlo Monastery, three months

Focus: Canonical formation in the early Great Perfection contemplative tradition

Kathmandu, Nepal

Fulbright Dissertation Research with scholars from Shechen Monastery, Thupten Chöling Monastery, Sakya International Buddhist Academy, Kopan Nunnery, Kopan Monastery, and Kathmandu University, seven months

Kham, Tibet (Western Sichuan, China)

Residential study (seminary) at Serta Larung Gar Buddhist Institute, one month

Focus: Intellectual history

Golok, Tibet (Western Qinghai, China)

Residential study (seminary) at Bayan Monastery, one month

Focus: Contemplative theory and practice

Kapan, Parphing, and Swayambhu, Nepal

Residential study (seminary) at Kopan, Druptob, and Manangi Monastery, three years

Dharamsala, Benares, and Bodhgaya, India

Residential study (seminary) at the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Namgyal Monastery, Sarnath, and Bodhgaya, two years

Focus: Tibetan language, Buddhist doctrine, ritual, and practice

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Classical

Tibetan
Sanskrit
Pali

Modern

Tibetan
Nepali
Spanish

Reading

French

Spanish
German

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, & AWARDS (SELECTED)

University of Virginia Travel Grant, 2014

Fulbright IIE Research Fellowship, 2012-2013: Nepal

Ellen Bayard Weedon Travel Grant, 2011

Julian Green Fellowship, 2011

Foreign Language Area Studies Grant, 2011 (selected, not accepted)

Meredith Fonda Russell Memorial Scholarship, 2006-2007