

Delve Deeper into *My Reincarnation*

A film by Jennifer Fox

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Marc Chery of San Diego Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *My Reincarnation*.

Filmed over 20 years by acclaimed documentarian Jennifer Fox, *My Reincarnation* chronicles the epic story of exiled Tibetan Buddhist master Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and his Italian-born son, Yeshi. As Norbu rises as a teacher in the West, Yeshi, recognized from birth as the reincarnation of a famed Buddhist, spends his adulthood coming to terms with his father's place within the Buddhist culture, as well as his own. With intimate access to both the family and H.H. the Dalai Lama, Fox distills decades-long drama into a universal story about love, transformation and destiny.

ADULT NON-FICTION

Buddhism

John Powers. *A Concise Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2008. A slimmed-down version of the author's comprehensive 600 page original, *A Concise Introduction* explains, in an engaging manner, the core doctrines of Buddhism and the practices of meditation and tantra. A survey of the four main sects of Tibetan Buddhism completes this work.

Namkhai Norbu. *Crystal and the Way of Light: Sutra, Tantra, and Dzogchen: The Teachings of Namkhai Norbu*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lions Publications, 1999. Editor John Shane transcribes and translates Namkhai Norbu's lectures, putting together what is now one of the most popular books on the Tibetan Buddhist discipline called Dzogchen.

Namkhai Norbu. *Dzogchen Teachings*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lions Publications, 2006. Through this rich collection, the renowned Dzogchen master Chogyal Namkhai Norbu shares his teachings with students around the world in order to increase their understanding of the Dzogchen tradition and its value in the modern world.

Namkhai Norbu. *The Supreme Source: The Kunjed Gyalpo, the Fundamental Tantra of Dzogchen Semde*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lions Publications, 1999. The Dzogchen teaching is presented through one of its most ancient texts, the tantra *Kunjed Gyalpo*, or the "All-creating King"- a personification of the primordial state of enlightenment. This tantra is the fundamental scripture of the Semde, or "Nature of mind," tradition of Dzogchen.

Reincarnation

Allan J. Danelek. *Mystery of Reincarnation: The Evidence & Analysis of Rebirth*. St. Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications, 2005. In 1952, an American housewife under hypnosis recalled living a previous life in eighteenth century Ireland as Bridey Murphy. Danelek's book explores this case, which became widely publicized and sparked a Western interest in reincarnation that continues today.

Gananath Obeyesekere. *Imagining Karma: Ethical Transformation in Amerindian, Buddhist, and Greek Rebirth*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California and London, England: University of California Press, 2002. This book illuminates the issue of reincarnation in an accessible and appealing way. It provides a detailed, comprehensive study of karma, assessing how various cultures over the course of centuries have come to understand the notion of rebirth, and the relationship between the living and the dead.

Michael Newton. *Memories of the Afterlife: Life Between Lives, Stories of Personal Transformation*. Woodbury, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications, 2009. Fascinating case studies from around the world highlight the profound impact of spiritual regression on people's everyday lives. After recalling memories of their afterlife, the people in these studies embark on life-changing spiritual journeys, reuniting with soul mates and spirit guides, and discovering the ramifications of life and health choices, love, relationships, and dreams.

Nawang Gehlek. *Good Life, Good Death: Tibetan Wisdom on Reincarnation*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2001.

Structuring his book around the four basic questions most of us ask ourselves (Who are we? Where did we come from? Where are we going? How do we get there?), the author lays out his own personal experience and techniques, tested over the course of twenty-five hundred years, that teach us how to take control over our lives and our fears, both now and for the future.

Tibet and Tibet in Exile

Anne-Marie Blondeau. *Authenticating Tibet: Answers to China's 100 Questions*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2008. In 1989, the Chinese government published a booklet seeking to counter criticisms against Chinese rule in Tibet. This book offers responses by an international team of scholars to China's 100 Questions. Although these experts refute many of the points asserted by China, they do not offer blanket endorsements for the claims made by the pro-Tibet movement.

Alison Wright. *The Spirit of Tibet: Portrait of a Culture in Exile*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1998. This visually stunning, full-color portrait of Tibetan life in exile displays the spirit of Tibetan refugees living in the beautiful mountain settings of northern India and shows how they have preserved the best of their unique culture and identity.

Pico Iyer. *The Open Road: The Global Journey of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama*. New York: Vintage Books- Random House Inc., 2008. One of the most acclaimed observers of globalism and Buddhism gives us the first serious consideration of the 14th Dalai Lama's work and ideas as a politician, scientist, and philosopher.

Sam Van Schaik. *Tibet: A History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011. Van Schaik brings the history of Tibet to life by telling the stories of the people involved, from the glory days of the Tibetan empire in the seventh century, to

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the rise of the Dalai Lamas, to the troubled times of recent decades. The book sheds light on the often-misunderstood aspects of Tibetan culture, such as reborn lamas, monasteries, hermits, and the role of the Dalai Lama.

Cultural and Religious Identity

Judith Simmer-Brown. *Dakini's Warm Breath: The Feminine Principle in Tibetan Buddhism*. Boston, Massachusetts: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2001. Simmer-Brown provides a comprehensive and scholarly study of "dakini," the feminine principle in Tibetan Buddhism. The author defines dakini as a symbol "who personifies in Tibetan Buddhism the spiritual process of surrendering expectation and concept, revealing limitless space and pristine awareness."

Sandra Benson. *Tales of the Golden Corpse: Tibetan Folk Tales*. Northampton, Massachusetts: Interlink Publishing Group, 2006.

A young boy who has killed seven sorcerers in the defense of his master must redeem himself by carrying a talking corpse who regales him with stories on a long journey. This volume represents the first complete English version of these 25 tales of intrigue and magic.

Tupten Jinpa. *Songs of Spiritual Experience: Tibetan Buddhist Poems of Insight and Awakening*. Boston, Massachusetts: Shambhala Publications Inc., 2000. This is the first major anthology of Tibetan poetry to become available in the West. In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, poetry has long been one of the primary means of expressing spiritual experience. The collection includes original translations of poems and an introduction about the role of poetry in Tibetan Buddhism.

Yangzom Brauen. *Across Many Mountains: A Tibetan Family's Epic Journey from Oppression to Freedom*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2011. This emotional memoir explores the lives of three generations of Tibetan women (including the Swiss-born author) whose lives were forever changed following the Chinese invasion in 1950.

NON-FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Charles Prebish. *The A to Z of Buddhism*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2003. This historical dictionary provides a comprehensive framework for understanding Buddhism as a historically rich religion "spanning more than two and one half millennia."

Franz Aubrey Metcalf. *Buddha in Your Backpack: Everyday Buddhism for Teens*. Berkeley, California: Ulysses Press, 2003. Written for teenagers, this book explains the basics of Buddhism and shows how Buddha's teachings can add a little wisdom and sanity to their fast-paced lives. The book tells Buddha's life story in a way teens will relate to: Buddha as a young rebel who is not satisfied with the answers given by his elders.

Michael Burgan. *Buddhist Faith in America*. New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2003. Buddhism has been as deeply affected by America as America has been affected by it. Burgan's book describes the basic tenets of the three major schools of Buddhism, the relationship between various Buddhist immigrant communities, and the practices of American Buddhists.

Tom Shroder. *Old Souls: The Scientific Evidence for Past Lives*. New York: Simon & Schuster Ltd; 1st Fireside Ed edition, 2001. The author, a journalist, relates Dr. Ian Stevenson's forty-year search for evidence of "old souls," the spirits of the dead who travel from body to body, bringing the reader along on a global trek in search of stories about this spiritual phenomenon.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Cheryl Aylward Whitesel. *Rebel: A Tibetan Odyssey*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000. In the closed society of turn-of-the-century Tibet, the outside world is a threatening place. Ever rebellious, Thunder longs to become a trader and visit faraway places. But when he has forbidden contact with a

foreign explorer, he is banished from his village and forced to join a monastery.

Herman Hesse. *Siddhartha: An Indian Tale*. New York & London: Penguin Classics, 2005. In this classic novel inspired by the life of the Buddha, Siddhartha, a young man, leaves his family for a contemplative life, then, restless, discards it for one of the flesh. Near despair, Siddhartha comes to a river where he hears a unique sound which signals the true beginning of his life--a journey of suffering, rejection, peace, and, finally, wisdom.

Jordan Sonnenblick. *Zen and the Art of Faking It*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2007. When eighth-grader San Lee moves to a new town and school for the umpteenth time, he doesn't try to fit in or make new friends. Instead he sits back and devises a plan to be totally different. When he accidentally answers too many questions in World History on Zen (only because he just had Ancient Religions two schools ago) all heads turn and San has his answer: he's a Zen Master.

Kathe Koja. *Buddha Boy*. New York: Frances Foster Books, 2003. With his shaved head and begging bowl the new kid is an automatic target for the bully boys of Edward Rucher High. Watching this, Justin would gladly stay as far from the newcomer as possible - until their economics teacher pairs them for a project and he finds himself becoming fascinated by the kid the others mock as "Buddha Boy".

Lianne Downey. *Cosmic Dancer*. San Diego, California: Cosmic Visionary Music & Books, 2011. Amelia Longwood is a teenager, aspiring ballerina, and daughter of alcoholic parents. She's also begun to see visions, memories of her life before this life. Will her new awareness help her overcome a challenge that threatens her future as a dancer? Or will she succumb to the madness she so desperately fears?

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FILM, VIDEOS, AND BROADCASTS

***Dreaming Lhasa.* (Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam- First Run Features, 2007, 90 minutes)** A Tibetan travels to Dharamsala to make a film about the exile community, and to escape her crumbling personal life back in New York City.

***Little Buddha.* (Bernardo Bertolucci- Miramax Films, 1999, 141 minutes)** Lama Norbu comes to Seattle in search of the reincarnation of his dead teacher. His search leads him to young Jesse Conrad, Raju, a waif from Kathmandu, and an upper class Indian girl. Together, they journey to Bhutan where the three children must undergo a test to prove which is the true reincarnation.

***Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter...And Spring.* (Ki-duk Kim- Sony Pictures Classics, 2003, 103 minutes)** Set on a floating monastery on a lake in the middle of a forest, this film follows the life of a Buddhist monk from his youth to his old age. Each season corresponds to a different stage in the monk's life.

***Talking with Buddha.* (Jon Braeley- Empty Mind Films, 2010, 95 minutes)** Some of the great lamas describe the science of the inner mind that is Buddhism, the distinctiveness of Tibetan Buddhism, and the precarious state of their religion and culture, as well as their efforts to preserve and pass them on to the next generation of Tibetans.

***The Cup.* (Khyentse Norbu- Festival Media, 2007, 93 minutes)** While the Soccer World Cup is being played in France, two young Tibetan refugees arrive at a monastery in exile in India. Prevented by various circumstances from seeing the Cup finals on television, they set out to organize the rental of a TV set for the monastery.

***The Reincarnation of Khensur Rinpoche.* (Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam, 1992, 50 minutes)** One of the first films to depict a real-life narrative about Tibetan Buddhism, this documentary inspired Jennifer Fox, the director of *My*

Reincarnation, because it shows "spirituality in action." The film follows the attendant of a recently deceased Buddhist Master as he searches for his old teacher's reincarnation.

***Unmistaken Child.* (Nati Baratz- Oscilloscope Laboratory, 2009, 102 min.)** After world-renowned Tibetan master Geshe Lama Konchog passed away in 2001 at age 84, the Dalai Lama charged the deceased monk's devoted disciple, Tenzin Zopa, with the task of finding the reincarnation of this spiritual leader.