

Spring 2021 Arts of Asia Lecture Series  
The Power of Images in Asian Art: Making the Invisible Visible  
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## **Navigating the Afterlife through the Tibetan Book of the Dead**

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### **Historical Figures:**

Karma Lingpa (1326-1386): Tertön (revealer) of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

Padmasambhava (8th c.): Inspirational source/purported author of the *Book*.

### **Concepts:**

*Bardo* ("intermediate state"): Most typically, the intervening period between death and rebirth, though other *bardos* are also named, e.g. the *bardo* of dreaming.

*Dream Yoga*: Contemplative practice within a lucid dream.

Dzogchen ("Great Perfection"): A Tibetan contemplative tradition considered by followers of the Nyingma school to be the highest form of Buddhist practice.

Lucid dream: A dream in which the dreamer is aware it is a dream.

Nyingma ("Ancient") school: One of today's four schools of Tibetan Buddhism, which traces its lineages back to the earliest period of Buddhism in Tibet, i.e. the eighth century and the days of Padmasambhava.

*Terma* ("treasure"): Tibetan revelations, often attributed to Padmasambhava but "revealed" in a later century.

**Suggested Readings:**

Coleman, Jinpa, et al. 2007. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead: First Complete Translation*. New York: Penguin Classics.

Cuevas, Bryan. 2003. *The Hidden History of the Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Evans-Wentz. 1960. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead, or, The After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane*. London: Oxford University Press.

Lopez, Donald S. 2011. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead: A Biography*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

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Rinpoche, Sogyal. 1992. *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*. San Francisco: Harper.