

## ROBERT ALEXANDER FARRAR THURMAN

Jey Tsong Khapa Professor of Buddhist Studies, Columbia University  
President, Tibet House New York  
President, American Institute for Buddhist Studies  
Director, Columbia Center for Buddhist Studies  
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### EDUCATION

1947-1954 -- St. Bernard's School.  
1954-1958 -- Phillips Exeter Academy.  
1959-1961 -- Harvard College;  
1961-1962 -- First Pilgrimage to India.  
1963-1966 -- Namgyal Monastery, Dharamsala, India; Labsum Shedrub Ling Buddhist Monastery, Freewood Acres, New Jersey.  
1967-1969 -- Harvard University; B. A., English; A.M., East Asian Studies.  
1969-1972 -- Harvard University; Ph.D., Sanskrit and Indian Studies; concentration in Tibetology and Buddhology.  
1973-1985 -- Amherst College, Master of Arts, honoris causa.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Columbia University: Jey Tsong Khapa Professor of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies, 1988-; Director, Center for Buddhist Studies, 1989 - ; Chair, Dep't of Religion, 1991-95. Director of Graduate Studies, 1998- . Chair of Department, 2004-  
Tibet House New York: Founding Trustee, 1987-; President, 1992- .  
Institute for Asian Democracy: Founding Trustee, 1991; Chairman, 1992-1994.  
Amherst College: Assistant Professor of Religion, 1973-1978; Associate Professor of Religion, 1978-1985; Professor of Religion, 1985-1988.  
Institute for Advanced Studies World Religions, Stonybrook, NY: Director of Research and Translation, 1972-1976.  
American Institute of Buddhist Studies: Trustee, 1972- ; Convener, Summer Institutes, 1977-1985; President, 1976-  
Harvard University: Visiting Associate Professor of Tibetan and World Religion, spring, 1979; Visiting Professor of Tibetan and World Religions, 1986.  
Smith College: Visiting Associate Professor of Religion, spring, 1982.  
Wesleyan University: Visiting Associate Professor of Religion, spring 1983.  
Williams College: Visiting Associate Professor of Religion, fall, 1984.  
Doshisha University, Associated Kyoto Program, Kyoto, Japan: Visiting Professor of Buddhist Studies, fall, 1985.  
Boston U. Inst. for Philosophy and Religion: Lecturer, 1978-1979, 81, 83, 87, 93.  
Ecoles des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris: Senior Lecturer, 1994. Distinguished Lecturer, UCAL Santa Barbara; UCAL Berkeley; U. of Arizona, Tucson; University of Mississippi, Oxford; Harvard University; U. of Vermont; Smith College; SUNY Stonybrook; U. of Toronto; U. of Ottawa; Oxford U., England; etc.

### GRANTS

American Institute of Indian Studies: Junior Research Fellow in India, 1970-1971; Senior Research Fellow in India, 1980-1981; Senior Research Fellow in India, 1986-1986; Trustee, 1982-1985; 1992.  
Institute of Advanced Studies of World Religions, New York: Principal Investigator, American Institute of Buddhist Studies/Lamaist Buddhist Monastery Research Project for Translation of Tibetan Tanjur, 1973-1976.  
Rockefeller Brothers Fund: Principal Investigator, American Institute of Buddhist Studies Project to Expand Buddhist Studies Contribution to Liberal Arts Education, 1977-1981.  
National Endowment for the Humanities: Principal Investigator, American Institute of Buddhist Studies Research and Translation Project, 1978-1979; Reviewer, Asian Religions Film Project, 1979-1980; Senior Review Panelist, NEH Research Division, 1982-1984.

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Ada Howe Kent Foundation: Principal Investigator, American Institute of Buddhist Studies Project to Expand Buddhist Studies and Asian Humanities Offerings in Five Colleges, 1981-1984.  
George L. Hamilton Fund, Amherst College: Chairperson, convening major conferences on Comparative Philosophy, 1976-1979; Comparative Monasticism, 1981-1984; Buddhist Psychology with Dalai Lama, 1984.  
Henry Luce Foundation: Principal Investigator, Tibet House US Old Tibet Archive Project, 1993- .  
Laurance Rockefeller Fund: Chairperson, World Sciences in Dialogue Project, 1992-1994.  
Fetzer Institute: Chairperson World Sciences in Dialogue Project, 1992-1994.  
California Wellness Foundation: Principal Investigator: Peacemaking: Politics of Nonviolence, 1995-1997.  
Infinity Foundation: – Principal Investigator, Global Renaissance Inner Science Translation Series (multi-year translation and publication series), 1999- ; – Co-Principal Investigator, Indic Contributions to World Civilization (Series of Conferences and Publications) 2000-.

### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Oriental Society.  
Association for Asian Studies.  
American Academy of Religion.  
Service on Committee for Public Understanding of Religion, 2000-2003.  
American Philosophical Association.  
International Association of Buddhist Studies; Board of Directors and co-editor of Journal of International Association of Buddhist Studies, 1982-1996.  
Lindisfarne Association.  
Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy.  
International Association of Tibetan Studies.

### PUBLISHED WORKS

*The Door of Liberation*, (with G. Wangyal), Girodias Press, 1970; reprints, Lotsawa Press, 1982; Wisdom Publications, 1994.  
*Holy Teaching of Vimalakirti*, Penn State University Press, 1977. (Polish, Spanish)  
*The Life and Teachings of Tsong Khapa*, Tibetan Library and Archives, 1982.  
*Speech of Gold: Reason and Enlightenment in the Central Philosophy of Tibet*, Princeton University Press, 1984.  
*Lectures on Buddhist Inner Science*, (with H. H. Dalai Lama), Amherst, American Inst. of Buddhist Studies, 1984.  
*From the Land of Snows: Buddhist Art of Tibet*, (with M. Rhie), Catalogue, Mead Museum, Amherst, 1984.  
*The Speech of Gold*, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1990 (reprint).  
*The Central Philosophy of Tibet*, (Princeton book reprinted) 1991.  
*Wisdom and Compassion: The Sacred Art of Tibet*, (with M. Rhie), Harry Abrams, New York, 1991.  
*MindScience*, (ed., with Daniel Goleman), Wisdom Publications, Boston, 1991.  
*The Tibetan Book of the Dead: The Natural Liberation Through Understanding in the Between*, Bantam Publications, New York, 1993. (Spanish, French, German, Italian, Korean, Japanese, Chinese)  
*Inside Tibetan Buddhism*, HarperCollinsSanFrancisco, 1995.  
*Essential Tibetan Buddhism*, HarperCollinsSanFrancisco, 1995. (Spanish, French, Italian, German)  
*Wisdom and Compassion: The Sacred Art of Tibet, Expanded Edition*, (with M. Rhie), Harry Abrams Co., New York, 1996 (New English edition, translations into German, Spanish/Catalan, Japanese, Chinese).  
*Inner Revolution: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Real Happiness*, Putnam, New York, 1998. (One of “1998 Ten Best Books on Religion,” Publisher’s Weekly) (Japanese, Spanish, Italian, German, Chinese, Dutch, Portuguese)  
*Mandala: The Architecture of Enlightenment* (with Denise Leidy), Tibet House and Asia Society, New York, 1997.  
*Circling the Sacred Mountain: A Spiritual Journey Through the Himalayas*, (with Tad Wise), Bantam, New York, 1999. (Italian, Dutch, German, French)  
*Worlds of Transformation: Tibetan Art of Wisdom and Compassion*, (with M. Rhie), Tibet House, NY, 1999.  
*Infinite Life*, Riverhead Publications, 2004.  
*Anger: of the Seven Deadly Sins*, Oxford University Press, 2004.  
*The Jewel Tree of Tibet*, Macmillan Free Press, 2005.  
*Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature*, (editor & translator), American Institute of Buddhist Studies / Columbia University Press, 2004.

## ROBERT ALEXANDER FARRAR THURMAN

*Nagarjuna's Reason Sixty*, (editor), American Institute of Buddhist Studies / Columbia University Press, 2005.

### TRANSLATIONS (restricted circulation):

*The Wisdom of Nagarjuna, Mula-madhyamaka-karika*, American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1978.

*The Guhyasamaja Tantra, Chs. 1-12*, AIBS, 1981.

*The Panchakrama of Nagarjuna*, AIBS, Institute of Buddhist Studies, 1981.

*The Contemplative and Ritual Practice of the Vajrabhairava Tantra*, 360 pp., AIBS, 1987.

*The Contemplative and Ritual Practice of the Guhyasamaja Tantra*, 85 pp., AIBS, 1983.

*The Contemplative and Ritual Practice of the Kalachakra Tantra*, 210 pp., AIBS, 1986.

*The Contemplative Practice of the Paramasukhachakrasamvara Tantra*, 125 pp., AIBS, 1987.

*The Contemplative and Ritual Practice of the Vajrayogini Tantra*, 140 pp., AIBS, 1987.

*The Sravaka-tattva-isana of the Madhyamaka-Hrdaya*, in J. Takasaki, ed., *The Madhyamakahrdaya of Bhavaviveka*, Tokyo University Press, 1992.

### IN PROGRESS

*The Columbia Companion to Eastern Religions* (editor in chief), Columbia University Press, New York, 2003.

*The Vajra Hero and the Extremely Brilliant Lamp*, A Study of the Perfection Stage of the Unexcelled Yoga Tantras, based on a translation of Tsong Khapa's master work, 2005.

*The Tibetan Book of Inner Science*. (with His Holiness the Dalai Lama), forthcoming.

### ESSAYS (Partial list)

"Interiority and Confrontation in Buddhist Religious Experience," in Peter Berger (ed.), *The Other Side of God: Monotheism and the World Religions*, Doubleday, 1981.

"Transcendence and the Sacred in Mahayana Thought," in *Transcendence and the Sacred*, Notre Dame Press, 1981

"Buddhist Social Activism: Nagarjuna's Welfare State," in *The Eastern Buddhist*, May 1983, pp. 19-52

"The Practice of Unexcelled Yoga Tantra, According to Tsong Khapa," in S.B. Park (ed.), *Practice in Buddhism*, SUNY Press, in press.

"Buddhist Views of Nature," in L. Rouner, ed. *On Nature*, Notre Dame Press, 1984.

"Beyond Buddhism and Christianity: New Definition of the Dialogue of World Religions," in *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, U. of Hawaii Press, 1984.

"Human Rights and Human Responsibilities: Buddhist Theories of Justice," in *Human Rights in the World Religions*, ed. W. de Bary, W. Proudfoot, I. Bloom, Columbia University Press, (forthcoming).

"The Bodhisattva: Buddhist Messiah," D. Lopez & S. Rockefeller, eds., *Christ and the Bodhisattva*, SUNY, 1987.

"Vajra Hermeneutics," in D. Lopez, ed., *Buddhist Hermeneutics*, Kuroda Institute Series, U. of Hawaii Press, 1987.

"Homage to Nishitani," in T. Unno ed., *Religion and Nothingness, and Its Challenge to Western Thought*, Nanzan Institute for Philosophy and Religion Series, UCAL Press.

"The Tibetan Way of Dying," in H. Obayashi, ed., *Death and the World Religions*, U. Chicago Press, forthcoming.

"Tibet in the Future of Asia," in H. Steckel, ed., *Tibet in the 1990s*, Hamburg, June, 1991.

"The Spirituality of Emptiness," in Second *Buddhism* Volume of the *Encyclopedia of Spirituality*, Crossroad/Continuum, 1991.

"Tibetan Psychology: Sophisticated Software for the Human Biocomputer," in R. Thurman & D. Goleman, ed., *Mind Science, East and West*, Wisdom Publications, Boston, 1991.

"A Glimpse of Shambhala," in Shapiro ed., *The Way Ahead*, London, 1992.

"The Buddha's Smile: Buddhism on the Pursuit of Happiness," in *On Happiness*, Boston University Institute of Philosophy and Religion, Notre Dame Press, 1995.

"Tibetan Culture Under Threat Today" for Tibetan Art, Albuquerque Museum, 1998.

"Tibetan Buddhism in America," in C. Prebish, ed., *Buddhism in America*, UCAL Press, 2001.

### JOURNAL, ENCYCLOPEDIA, and MAGAZINE ARTICLES (Partial listing)

"Buddhist Hermeneutics," *Journal American Academy of Religion*, March, 1978.

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- "Voidness and Totalities: Madhyamika and Hua Yen Thought," in A.K. Narain (ed.), *Studies in Pali and Buddhism*, Delhi, 1978.
- "The Politics of Enlightenment," *Lindisfarne Letter* 8, Winter 1979.
- "Philosophical Non-egocentrism in Wittgenstein and Candrakirti and the Private Language Question," *Philosophy East and West*, June, 1980.
- "Tsong Khapa on Analytic Meditation," *Tibet Journal*, May, 1980.
- "Tibetan Buddhism Faces Modernity," *Bulletin of the Harvard Center for the Study of the World Religions*, 1979.
- "Terras Irradiant: Western Liberal and Buddhist Liberative Arts," P. La Chance (ed.), *Appalachian Journal of Higher Education*, 1982.
- "The Dalai Lamas of Tibet," *Tibet Journal*, December, 1983.
- "Buddhist Ethics: Emptiness and Compassion," in *Religious Traditions*, Nov. 1981.
- "Tsong Khapa on Integration of Sutra and Tantra," in *Tibetan Studies*, ed. Aziz and Kapstein, Harrassowitz, 1984.
- Parabola, interviews and essays: "Trials of a Teacher," June, 1978; "Sleep and the Inner Landscape," (with Dr. Yeshe Donden), September, 1981; "The Golden Bowl," February, 1984; "Pilgrimage," June, 1984; "Wholeness," (with H. H. Dalai Lama), Nov. 1984; "Tibet: Mystic Nation in Exile," April, 1985.
- J. Kitagawa et al., eds., *Encyclopedia of World Religions*, New York, Macmillan; "Tsong Khapa," "Psychic Powers," "Tibetan Cultic Life," "Indian Tantrism."
- Edward L. Farmer, et al., eds., *Encyclopedia of Asian History*, New York, Asia Society; "Buddhism," "Tibetan Religion," "The Dalai Lamas," "Panchen Lamas," Tsong Khapa."
- Yoshinori Takeuchi, et al., eds., *World History of Spirituality*, New York, Crossroad Press; "Buddhist Monasticism in the Asian Civilizations."
- "Tibetan Monastic Education," in C. Eilchert, *Padma Karpo - In Celebration of Tibetan Culture*, Snow Lion Press.
- "The Cultural Inheritance of Tibet," in *Cultural Survival*, Cambridge, Mass., 1988.
- "Spiritual Traveling", *Travel*, 1998. "Win-Win Solution for Tibet" Op-ed, *Wall Street Journal*, 1998.

Interviews with HH Dalai Lama, in *Shambhala Sun* (1998), *Mother Jones* (1999), *Rollong Stone* (2001)

### REVIEWS (partial list - forewords omitted)

- Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*: H.V. Guenther, *Kindly Bent to Ease Us*, 1974.
- Journal of the American Oriental Society*: A. Verdu, *Hua Yen Thought*, 70's. S. Beyer, *Cult of Tara*, 71; C. Trungpa R., *Visual Dharma*, 70's. D. Ruegg, *History of Madhyamika Literature*, 85.
- Parabola Magazine*: L. A. Govinda, *Creative Meditation and Multi-Dimensional Consciousness*, 70's. E. Birnbaum, *The Way to Shambhala*, 80's. Frederick Franck, *The Bottomless Well*, forthcoming.
- Journal of Religious Studies, Patiala*: F. de Jong, *Sanskrit manuscripts from Central Asia*. A. Yuyama, *Fragments of the Lotus Sutra*. L. M. Joshi, *Studies in Buddhist Culture of India*.
- Journal of Asian Studies*: M. Aris, *Hidden Lives and Treasures*, 1991.
- Critique of D. Lopez' *Prisoners of Shangrila*, *Journal of American Academy of Religion*, September 2001.

### SPOKEN ADDRESSES (partial)

Addresses given at numerous academic conferences; individual addresses given in the U. S. at Harvard, Middlebury, Columbia, Smith, University of Massachusetts, Smith, Wellesley, Williams, Wesleyan, St. John's, Hunter College, State University of New York, Stonybrook, Albany, Oswego, Grinnell College, Ohio State University, Boston University, and so on; addresses given abroad at Oxford University, Delhi University, Punjabi University, Poona University, Nalanda University, Taisho University, Otani University, Ryukoku University, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris, etc.; public lectures given at Asia Society, New York; Museum of Natural History, New York; Freer Gallery, Washington; Smithsonian Institution, Washington; Rothko Chapel, Houston; Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York; School of Sacred Art, New York; Open Center,

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New York; Interface, Boston; Omega Institute, New York; Sotheby's New York, Geneva, Zurich; seminars frequently given at Buddhist institutions, such as Buddhist Learning Center, Washington, N. J., Rochester Zen Center, Los Angeles Zen Center, San Francisco Zen Center; 1998-2000, addresses given at Stanford University, UWASH/Seattle, UCAL/Berkeley, UCAL/Santa Barbara (4 times), Vanderbilt U., Tulane U., Harvard U., Dickenson College, Amherst College, Smith College, UCOLO/Boulder, Cornell University, Princeton University, UPENN/Philadelphia, Wheaton College, Furman U., Hiram College, Binghamton College, Roorkee University, India, etc., Kunsthalle/Bonn University, La Caixa Museum, Barcelona, Spain, Tobu Museum, Tokyo, Japan, Cleveland Museum, Dayton Museum, Asia Society, New York, etc.

Radio and TV Appearances: Oprah, CNN, Charlie Rose, NPR, ABC News; CBS News; BBC news; KQED part of Moyers special, NBC Today show; local radio and TV Talk shows.

### Robert Thurman Profile Text

A recognized worldwide authority on religion and spirituality, Asian history, philosophy, Tibetan Buddhism, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Robert Thurman is an eloquent advocate of the relevance of Eastern ideas to our daily lives. In doing so, he has become a leading voice of the value of reason, peace and compassion. He was named one of Time magazine's 25 most influential Americans and has been profiled by The New York Times and People Magazine.

Thurman travels internationally lecturing to universities, companies, conferences and think-tanks. He is a gifted communicator who can make complex concepts understandable introducing new ideas with intelligence and humor in a down to earth and comprehensible way. His keynote speeches often receive standing ovations.

His own search for enlightenment began while he was a student at Harvard. After an accident in which he lost the use of an eye, Thurman left school on a spiritual quest throughout Europe, the Middle East and Asia . He found his way to India, where he first saw H.H. the Dalai Lama in 1962. After learning Tibetan and studying Buddhism he decided to become a Tibetan Buddhist monk and was ordained by H.H. the Dalai Lama, the first Westerner to earn that distinction. However, some years later, he gave up his robes when "he discovered he could be more effective in the American equivalent of the monastery: the university". He returned to Harvard to finish his PhD. Presently, Thurman is the chair of Religious Studies at Columbia University. A very popular professor, students call his classes "life-changing".

His book, *Inner Revolution: Life, Liberty, and The Pursuit of Real Happiness*, was chosen by Publishers Weekly as one of the best books of 1998. Thurman is the translator of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, renowned for centuries as a classic of Buddhist wisdom and religious thought. His other books include *The Central Philosophy of Tibet*, a book on Buddhist science; *Wisdom and Compassion: The Sacred Art of Tibet*, which illustrates and celebrates 241 of the finest examples of 9th-19th century Tibetan art; *Essential Tibetan Buddhism*, a prize-winning anthology and introduction to Tibet; and *Circling the Sacred Mountain*, teachings on mind-transformation given while exploring the high Himalayas. His 2004 book, *Infinite Life*, was nominated by the publishers' association as the best book in the self-improvement category for 2004.

As part of his long-term commitment to the Tibetan cause, at the request of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Thurman co-founded Tibet House US in 1987 with Richard Gere, Philip Glass. Since then Uma Thurman, Melissa Mathison Ford, Natalie Merchant, Leila Hadley Luce and others have joined the board. Tibet House US is a non profit organization in New York City dedicated to the preservation and renaissance of Tibetan civilization. It maintains a lively museum and cultural center, and offers programs in all aspects of the Tibetan arts and sciences. It recently founded the Menla Mountain Retreat Center in the Catskill Mountains to advance the healing arts and wisdom of Tibetan and Asian medicine traditions and offer their resources to the growing demand for alternative and complementary health practices.

Inspired by his good friend the Dalai Lama, Thurman stands on Buddhism's open ground, but thence takes us unflinching into an expanded vision of the world, whether the sweep of history, the subtleties of the inner science

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of the psyche, or the wonders of the life of the heart, helps us to clear away shrouds of fear and confusion, and leaves us with the cheerfulness of an enriched present and the realistic hope for a peaceful future.