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Filmmaker Yan Chun Su visited the University of Toronto's Centre for Buddhist Studies on February 28th, 2017 to introduce her film *Drokpa*, a moving visual account of her extended stay with a nomadic family on the Eastern Tibetan Plateau. With minimal stylistic interventions from the filmmaker—names on the screen for the main subjects, music only at the end of the film—this documentary brings the viewer into a community of active nomads (*drokpa* [*'brog pa*] in Tibetan) whose lifestyle and livelihood are shifting rapidly due to climate change and government policies. The film invites us to join members of the group, including Tamku, a young mother who recently divorced; Dhongya, a senior herder; and Yithan, a woman with years of experience helping to maintain the life of the camp.

As audience members, we meet the group while they are relocating their camp to start the animals grazing in lands that are increasingly becoming dry, sandy, damaged by nearby mines, and unworkable for broader grazing. The filmmaker captures some of the different types of labour that go into sustaining the camp and transforming animal products into goods and income: butter-making, yarn-spinning, herding, and trade. We likewise see the family's commitment to Buddhist practice,

with shots of a carefully tended shrine and scenes in which members of the group pass a prayer-wheel among them. The life yak, an animal who roams with the herds and is never to be killed, is a reminder of how Buddhist ideas inflect the family's work and life at multiple levels.

Yan Chun Su's vantage point as an embedded observer in the making of the film is barely visible in the final work. That is to say, we meet the family, and their environment, head on, without so much as a shadow or a microphone to indicate the presence of a person collecting these images and sounds. Her personal resonance with the people we meet on screen is perhaps most palpable in the level of disclosure and intimacy they offer to the camera. As a viewer, I get a sense of the commitment and duration of the filmmaker's interaction with this community, a long-term relationship throughout which Tamku, Dhongya, and Yithan confide in her and open up the life of their camp to the camera's eye.

Yan Chun Su was born in China and studied in both China and the USA, working as a computer software engineer before turning to documentary filmmaking. Her previous projects include *Treasure of the Lisu* (2010), *The Last Town* (2009), and *Denver Mongolian* (2008). Her work has aired on television and at multiple film festivals. *Drokpa* is her first feature-length film. She currently resides in Boulder, Colorado, and travels extensively for her work.

Drokpa screened at the The Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation Centre for Buddhist Studies at the University of Toronto as part of the Buddhism and the Environment Film Series.