Rigpa* was recently made aware of a book written by Marion Dapsance (published by Editions Max Milo) that questions the way Tibetan Buddhism is being introduced to the West. The book specifically focuses on Rigpa centres in France and their spiritual director, Sogyal Rinpoche. We think it is important to clarify a few points in this regard.

The directors and members of Rigpa take an active interest in any publication, study, or report, that concerns Buddhism or any of the other major world religions. The topic of how Eastern spiritual traditions adapt to Western culture and society is certainly a valid and relevant one, however it is imperative that any discussion of this question be carried out in an objective and open-minded spirit. It should certainly not be based on a spurious ‘investigation’ that exclusively targets Tibetan Buddhism, Sogyal Rinpoche, and our members, in a highly prejudiced and biased way.

Both Rigpa and Sogyal Rinpoche categorically reject the assertions of abuse and cult-like behaviour that have been made in this book.

Unfortunately, this book merely recycles old, unfounded rumours and accusations that have been posted on the internet since the past fifteen years which, in fact, always originate from the same sources.

Once again, the same disaffected people, who are few in number, have taken the stage using every opportunity to discredit Rigpa’s community and the integrity of its founder. Once again, without any sense of balance, the sincerity and intelligence of thousands of Rigpa members who have studied the Buddhist teachings in our centres over the years, has been mocked and disrespected.

Rigpa is shocked by the opinionated, incomplete, and biased approach of this book, which clearly lacks thorough and objective research of either our organisation or Buddhism in general.

In the end, one can only question the real interests of the author and the publisher who have used the occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s visit to France to publish and promote a controversial book about Tibetan Buddhism, a sensitive subject that certain religious and political groups take advantage of.

In fact, Marion Dapsance’s studies have been financed by Chinese benefactors and her publisher, Editions Max Milo, is the very same that, during His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s previous visit to France in 2011, published the book, ‘Dalaï-lama Pas si Zen’ (‘Dalai Lama Not So Zen’). This book presents a scathing and aggressive attack on the Dalai Lama, accusing him of being an agent of the CIA.
It is probably futile to even attempt to debate with those who seem primarily motivated by their desire for fame and sensationalism. Instead, Rigpa will remain focussed on its core mission to present the wisdom and compassion of the Tibetan Buddhist teachings in ways that are most beneficial to the lifestyle and needs of modern men and women.

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* Rigpa is a network of centres and Buddhist groups open to the wisdom of all Buddhist schools and traditions. Under the gracious patronage of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Rigpa offers a complete path of Buddhist study and practice—in an environment that allows one to experience these teachings fully—to all those who are interested in Buddhism. Likewise Rigpa examines how the wisdom and compassion of Buddha’s teachings can be used in the many areas of contemporary life. Rigpa has more than 130 centres and groups in 41 countries around the world.