

February 16, Noon-1pm  
336 Ingraham Hall

### **CANCELLED**

**James K II Powell, Visiting Assistant Professor, Languages and Cultures of Asia, UW-Madison**

"Audio-Visualizing Buddhist Studies as a Teaching Methodology: Videography Selections from the Buddhism and Mysticism Seminar Fall 2005."

Dr. Powell began creating educational videos for the internet from 2001. Subsequently beginning 2004, he began assigning these internet-based videographies for students. He has seen a vast evolution since this time in the quality of student productions as he has acquired increasing samples to build from. From his BA studies in Buddhism at Northwestern through his MA/BA in Theology at Cambridge and his MDiv at the University of Chicago prior to his PhD from the UW Madison, Dr. Powell's principal interest has been on-going research into the best method of educating students in what for them are often alien and strange concepts. Dr. Powell has found the obvious, along with Howard Gardner and Harvard's Project Zero: humans learn more effectively when intellectual data is accompanied by other sense-faculty data, in this case, visual and aural data from the student projects. As they say, 'a picture is worth a thousand words'"

**February 23, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**VELCHERU N RAO, Professor of Languages and Cultures of Asia**

"When was India Modern? Precolonial Modernities in Indian Literature"

Modernity in India is a gift of the British. India had a glorious past, a great classical period, with its dazzling poets, philosophers and thinkers. But then things began to deteriorate, many would say because of the Muslims -- boldly or cautiously -- depending on context. The late medieval period was when things began to deteriorate badly. With the advent of the British, their language, literature and culture, Indian civilization began to open to the West. Exposure to the West had given rise in India a new life, a new vitality, a "Renaissance."

In sharp contrast to this view, Narayana Rao presents several examples of literary texts from the late fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, and suggest that modernity in Indian literature had already been flourishing during this period and that this modernity continues into the twentieth century as a distinct strand, even as the colonial modernity which began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century dominates the field. In effect, He argues that colonial modernity which had its beginning with the British rule in India, is a different kind of modernity and is not the only modernity known to Indian literature.

**March 2, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**William Glover, University of Michigan, Assistant Professor of Architecture and Urban Planning**

"The Architectural Education of an Indian Engineer: Ganga Ram Goes to England"

Architectural critics in British India deplored the colonial government's minor architectural works. Critics singled out buildings designed by engineers in the colonial Public Works Department (PWD) with particular rancor. Rudyard Kipling's famous quip that the standard PWD residential design in India was "bungaloathsome," takes its place among a constellation of less-famous but equally-damning comments that span from the last decades of the nineteenth century well into the early decades of the twentieth. Given the circumstances, any interest shown by colonial engineers in acquiring a basic architectural education was both welcomed and supported by government officials. Among the first Indian employees in the PWD to avail of new educational opportunities was a young engineer from Punjab named Ganga Ram, who requested permission to travel to England in 1882 to study "practical engineering" and architectural design. My talk will trace the story of Ganga Ram's trip to England in the context of debates over what constituted architectural expertise in both England and India at the time, and over how that expertise could be most reliably secured. The provisional and often contradictory ways those debates were resolved shed important light on the practice of modern architecture in India as it emerged in the early twentieth century.

**March 9, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**Malalai Joya, Afghan Parliamentarian and Human Right Activist**  
"Women's Role in Nation Building: An Afghan Experience"

Malalai Joya is a 25 year old muslim woman elected from the province of Farah for the Afghan Loya Jirga. She is the daughter of an Afghan who lost a leg in the Afghan Jihad. She has no political affiliations with any political parties but represents the most rudimentary class -the barefooted, weakest, silent, poorest Afghans. She founded an orphanage in Farah while she was a teenager. She has worked for 4 years in Afghan refugee camps. She taught social sciences for 2 years in Herat under the pretext of a religious school without the Taliban permission. She stands for FREEDOM OF SPEECH, DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, against WAR CRIMINALS, against those who have misused the name of Islam and ruined the name of the true Jihad, and against those who oppress women.

Learn more about Malalai Joya here:

<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/civilsociety/articles/eav102805b.shtml>

[http://www.diplomatictraffic.com/opinions\\_archives.asp?ID=115](http://www.diplomatictraffic.com/opinions_archives.asp?ID=115)

[http://english.people.com.cn/200512/22/eng20051222\\_229882.html](http://english.people.com.cn/200512/22/eng20051222_229882.html)

**March 23, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**Clint Seely, University of Chicago, Associate Professor of South Asian Languages and Civilizations**  
"Who Does Your Dirty Work? NOT Michael Madhusudan Datta's Hanuman"

Two aspects of war seem universal. The one side--the side who fabricates the narrative justifying the war--makes an effort to demonize the opposition. Moreover, even helpful allies found in the field may not altogether escape a dehumanizing depiction in that same narrative. The Ramayana is a classic case of this, with the enemy forces made into monsters (raksasas) and the field-commissioned allies--affectionately, at times, but without doubt condescendingly--made into animals (monkeys and bears). Only the three northerners, Rama, Sita, and Laksmana, are genuine members of the human race. Michael Madhusudan Datta will have none of this racism in his *The Slaying of Meghanada* (Meghanadavadha kavya) (1861). Furthermore, when it comes to committing acts in violation of the ksatriya warrior's code of conduct, Datta makes Laksmana do his own dirty work and does not, as in other Ramayanas, relegate that bit of nasty business to Hanuman.

Clinton Seely's current research has focused on the emergence of modern (adhunik) Bangla literature in the 19th century, particularly the works of Michael Madhusudan Datta (1824-73). Datta's writings raise issues of what constitutes authentic "South Asian" at a time when the very presence of the colonial powers tended to impinge upon all aspects of Bengali life.

**March 30, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**Francesca Orsini, Cambridge University, Lecturer in Hindi, Faculty of Oriental Studies**

Lecture co-sponsored by the University Lectures Committee and Languages and Cultures of Asia

"Print and Pleasure: Commercial Publishing and its Genres in 19th C. North India"

This paper is about the challenges and strategies of Indian commercial publishers in Hindi and Urdu in the 19th century, and the kinds of "texts of pleasure" that managed to attract to the printed page a society that was largely illiterate and used to experiencing entertainment in visual and oral form, embodied in professional or amateur performers.

Dr Orsini's research covers multiple traditions in the north Indian literary system, popular writing in Hindi and Urdu; women and literature; Dalit writing; Hindi and Urdu fiction. Her current research concerns the impact of print and the genres of commercial publishing in Hindi and Urdu in nineteenth-century north India. She is also currently editing a book on love in South Asian traditions. Dr Orsini has recently published *The Hindi Public Sphere. Language and Literature in the Age of Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, 2002.

**April 6, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**James K II Powell, Visiting Assistant Professor, Languages and Cultures of Asia**

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April 13, Noon-1pm  
206 Ingraham hall

**Harinder Singh, Executive Director Sikh Research Institute (cosponsored by the Sikh Student Association and the multi-cultural student council)**

"Understanding the Sikhs"

This talk is geared towards those who have little understanding of the Sikh faith. Harinder Singh is the executive director of the Sikh Research Institute, a community development organization based in San Antonio, TX. An interdisciplinary researcher and global orator, Singh's expertise is on the culture, politics, religion, language, and developmental issues related to the Sikhs, Panjab, and South Asia. Singh is active with Oxford Sikh Scholarship Foundation, National Conference for Community and Justice, and Nanakshahi.

**April 20, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**Robert Goldman, University of California at Berkeley, Professor of South Asian Studies**

"Rules of Engagement: War Crimes, Riik~asa Rights and the Political and Military Strategies of the Great Sanskrit Epics"

The ancient Sanskrit epic poems of love and war, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata have been read, heard and studied for millennia as works of history, poetry, theology, philosophy and dharmasastra. All of these aspects and more are critical to our understanding of these great literary monuments.

In general, however, the two epics have been generally viewed in terms of their conspicuous thematic similarities. Both poems are regarded as illustrative of "the triumph of good over evil" exemplified by the destruction in a great battle of a tyrannical demonic warrior-king at the hands or thorough the counsel of an incarnation of the supreme divinity Visnu-Narayana. In each story the conflict between the two sides is precipitated by an assault upon the epic's principal female character, while in each the chief protagonist must undergo a long period of exile in the wilderness before his ultimate triumph in the final battle and his reclamation of his long-deferred and rightful consecration as universal monarch.

Nonetheless the military and political strategies employed to attain the heroes' ends and even those ends themselves are strikingly different in the two works. In his paper I will attempt to highlight some of these differences with an eye towards furthering our

understanding of the poems, the spirit of the times in which they were composed and their destinies in the popular and political imaginary of India past and present.

Dr. Goldman's areas of scholarly interest include Sanskrit literature and literary theory, Indian Epic Studies, and psychoanalytically oriented cultural studies. He has published widely in these areas, authoring several books and dozens of scholarly articles. He is perhaps best known for his work as the Director, General Editor, and a principal translator of a massive and fully annotated translation of the critical edition of the Valmiki Ramayana. His work has been recognized by several awards and fellowships including election as a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**April 27, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**Brian Hemphill, California State University at Bakersfield, Associate Professor of Anthropology**

"Population Interactions across the Central Asian Borderlands and Indo-Aryan Identity"

The Great Silk Road has long been known as a conduit for contacts between East and West. Until recently, these interactions were believed to date no earlier than the second century B.C. However, recent discoveries in the Tarim Basin of Xinjiang (western China) suggest that initial contact may have occurred during the first half of the second millennium B.C. The site of Yanbulaq has been offered as empirical evidence for direct physical contact between Eastern and Western populations, due to architectural, agricultural, and metallurgical practices like those from the West, ceramic vessels like those from the East, and human remains identified as encompassing both "Europoid" and "Mongoloid" physical types. Eight cranial measurements from 30 Aeneolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and modern samples, encompassing 1505 adults from the Russian steppe, China, Central Asia, Iran, Tibet, Nepal and the Indus Valley were compared to test whether those inhabitants of Yanbulaq identified as "Europoid" and "Mongoloid" exhibit closest phenetic affinities to Russian steppe and Chinese samples, respectively.

Differences between samples were compared with Mahalanobis generalized distance ( $d^2$ ), and patterns of phenetic affinity were assessed with cluster analysis, multidimensional scaling, and principal coordinates analysis. Results indicate that, despite identification as "Europoid" and "Mongoloid," inhabitants of Yanbulaq exhibit closest affinities to one another. No one recovered from Yanbulaq exhibits affinity to Russian steppe samples. Rather, the people of Yanbulaq possess closest affinities to other Bronze Age Tarim Basin dwellers, intermediate affinities to residents of the Indus Valley, and only distant affinities to Chinese and Tibetan samples.

**May 4, Noon-1pm**  
**206 Ingraham Hall**

**Dr. Robert Jenkins, Professor of Political Science, Birkbeck College, University of London**

"The Politics of Exposure: Democracy, Transparency, and Anti-Corruption Activism"

Efforts to combat corruption provide a useful lens through which to examine changes in the nature of Indian democracy. Movements attempting to expose cases of corruption -as opposed to advocacy groups proposing policy measures to address its causes- offer a revealing glimpse into the processes through which, over the past twenty years, civil society has been reconstituted and democratic rights redefined. This seminar explores these issues with the aid of case studies from several Indian states, while also assessing key constraints on anti-corruption activism, not least the extent to which corruption itself has obtained a degree of popular legitimacy.

Rob Jenkins is Professor of Political Science at Birkbeck College, University of London, and (during 2005-06) a fellow at the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library. His research has focused on Indian politics and political economy - including work on the politics of liberalization, India's engagement with the WTO, and the politics of Rajasthan. He is the author of *Democratic Politics Across India's States* (Oxford, 2004), and co-author of *Reinventing Accountability: Making Democracy Work for Human Development* (Macmillan/Palgrave, 2005). This lecture is sponsored by the University Lectures Committee and co-sponsored by the Department of Political Science.