



John Powers - "A War of Words: The Creation of Tibetan Histories by the People's Republic of China and Tibetan Exiles"

This talk will look at attempts by historians in the People's Republic of China and Tibetan exiles to develop coherent discourses relating to Tibetan history. The focus will be on the tropes and language both sides use in their constructions and how these are influenced by traditional and modern Chinese historiography and Tibetan Buddhist narratives, and how their texts function as persuasive documents aimed at changing the minds of Western audiences.

The early period of Buddhism's dissemination in Tibet will be the centre point of this talk; I will examine how historical figures are portrayed in the two narratives as either Chinese patriots or devout Buddhists and how later concerns are retrospectively projected onto the histories of this period.