

INTERNATIONAL GUEST LECTURE

Heil Chinggis: Emerging Ultrationalism in Post-Socialist Mongolia

Orkhon Myadar

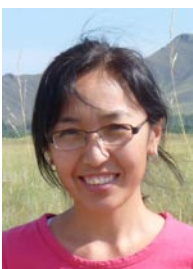
Friday, 11th of November 2011, 10.00 p.m. [s.t.]

Centre for Studies in Asian Cultures and Social Anthropology
Seminar room (ground floor), A-1030 Wien, Apostelgasse 23

In the post-Soviet era, Mongolia has excavated its past to reconstruct an identity detached from the Soviet ideological straightjacket. Mongolian identity has been synthesized with “real Mongol” signifiers that were eradicated under the socialist regime. The most prevalent of these signifiers has become Chinggis Khaan, who was “forgotten” from Mongolian public discourse during the Soviet era due to his infamy and the destruction he wrought upon the world. In the post-socialist years, however, his sins have been erased from the collective memory of Mongols. Chingiss Khaan has now been resurrected and rehabilitated, and has become the primary root and marker of Mongolian national identity.

This presentation addresses why Mongols dig up the fossil of Chingiss Khan to represent and to find a national identity. It further explores the implications of this modern yearning for identification with an ancient figure who crushed (at times literally) millions of people. It will also look at the implications of an emerging ultra-nationalistic discourse that is rooted in obsession with the Chinggis legacy.

Orhon Myadar, PhD, is a visiting scholar at the Mongolia-Inner Asian Studies Unit, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge, UK. She studied Public Administration and Political Sciences at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Her research focuses on post-socialist developments in Inner Asia, with a special focus on Mongolia, as well as nomadism in Mongolia.



Recent Publications:

- 2011 (forthcoming) Imaginary Nomads: Construction of Nomadic Identity within and outside Mongolia. *Inner Asia Journal*.
- 2009 Nomads in a Fenced land: Land Reform in Post-Socialist Mongolia. *Asian-Pacific Law & Policy Journal* Vol.11. Issue 1: 161-203.
- 2006 The Legacy of Sovietism in Central Asia and Mongolia. In: Van Wie Davis, Elizabeth/Azizian, Rouben. *Islam (eds.). Oil, and Geopolitics: Central Asia after September 11*. Rowman & Littlefield: 257-270.