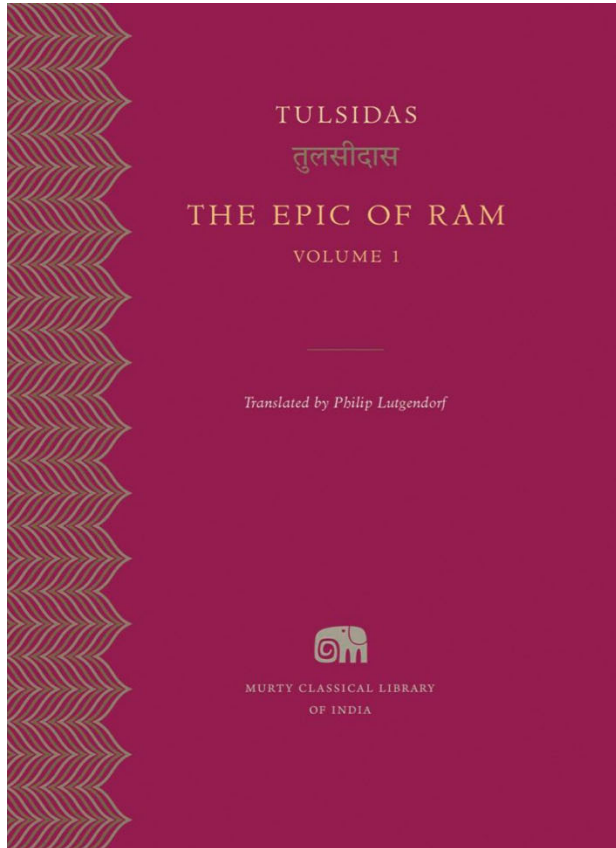


The IHC South Asian Religions and Cultures Research Focus Group Presents

*Diving Into the Lake: On the Necessity, Joy, and Anxiety
of (Re)Translating Tulsidas's Rāmcaritmānas*

Philip Lutgendorf

Modern Indian Studies, University of Iowa



Friday, June 2 / 3:00 pm / 4080 Humanities and Social Sciences Building

The epic retelling of the *Rāmāyana* composed in ca. 1574 CE by the saintly poet Tulsidas, in the dialect of Hindi known as Avadhi, has long been considered one of the most sacred and beloved texts of the North Indian Hindu tradition. It has also, through ten complete English renderings, become one of the most translated works of premodern Indian vernacular literature. In this talk Philip Lutgendorf will first briefly introduce the epic and some of its notable features as a work in the larger “*Rāmāyana* tradition,” which has its *locus classicus* in the Sanskrit epic attributed to the sage Valmiki (ca. 3rd century BCE?). He will then reflect on the difficulties that the text presents for the translator into English, discuss why he is offering a new translation at this time, and share some examples of his approach.

Philip Lutgendorf is Professor Emeritus of Hindi and Modern Indian Studies at the University of Iowa. His research focuses on written and oral narrative traditions of South Asia and on Indian film. He served as President of the American Institute of Indian Studies (2010–2018) and currently chairs its Board of Trustees. His publications include *The Life of a Text Performing the Ramcaritmanas of Tulsidas* (1991); *Hanuman's Tale, The Messages of a Divine Monkey* (2007); and *The Epic of Ram*, a seven-volume edition and translation of the *Rāmcaritmānas* for the Murty Classical Library of India (2016–2023).



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