

Einladung zum Kolloquium

Trust, Global Traders and Commodities in a Chinese International City, Insights from Ethnography on Afghan Trading Networks

Prof. Magnus Marsden
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Dienstag, den 10. Januar 2016, 12:00 Uhr c.t.

Yiwu, a city of 2 million in China's commercially vibrant Zhejiang province, is known by traders from countries including Afghanistan and Syria, Ukraine and Mexico, and the UK and Russia as the world's hub for the wholesale of 'small commodities'. In October 2015, a team of eight scholars led by Professor Magnus Marsden began an integrated programme of research about the ways in which transnational trading activities are conducted in the cosmopolitan and dynamic city of Yiwu. The project, scheduled to last five years, and funded by the European Research Council, will provide new empirical data and comparative analysis on the global trade in Chinese-made commodities. Its in-depth investigation of Yiwu, and its connections to the wider world through networks and flows of people, commodities, and knowledge, will explore the precise ways in which trade, while facilitating the exchange of commodities, does or does not simultaneously promote the transfer of practices, ideas, and identities. In the first half of the presentation, Professor Marsden will discuss the theoretical questions this project aims to answer. In the second he will explore the commercial activities of Afghan merchants in Central Asia, Russia and Ukraine, and the Middle East, addressing the development of these trading networks over the past forty years, and documenting the importance of Yiwu to them. The paper will also highlight some of the key nodes of Afghan commercial activities and explore their commercial and affective significance to the lives of the traders