

DAS INSTITUT FÜR OSTASIENWISSENSCHAFTEN/ SINOLOGIE

The Department of East Asian Studies/Chinese Studies is pleased to invite to the lecture of



Prof. Anders Sybrandt Hansen

Aarhus University, Denmark

維也納大學漢學系

What does Chinese alternative food networks teach us about trust and mistrust?

This talk builds on a four-person research project, *Moral Economies of Food in Contemporary China*, which is reaching its conclusion in 2023. Against the backdrop of several widely publicized food (as well as medicine) safety scandals in the PRC in recent decades, the project investigates how food production and consumption intersect with morality in various ways. The talk focuses on the proliferation of alternative food networks, and asks what we can learn about trust and mistrust from the way they function. On the basis of ethnographic fieldwork in three such alternative networks (CSA-farming, special supply agriculture, and *daigou* of infant formula), we employ a system theoretical approach to capture the dynamics of trust and mistrust at play in acquiring safe food. The ethnography illustrates the benefits of *episodic* mistrust for actors when attempting to establish confidence in both personal relations and systems. Moreover, the cases reveal the existence of *selective* trust in particular exclusive systems, and concludes that system trust must be conceptually disentangled from general social trust, as trust in exclusive systems may allay anxieties exactly because they insulate the actor from involvement in more comprehensive systems, such as the conventional market, which is seen as overly risky.

Anders Sybrandt Hansen is Associate Professor of Anthropology and China Studies at the School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University, Denmark. His research in the anthropology of contemporary China focuses on ethics and society, and includes publications on language ideology, “*Guanhua!* Beijing students, authoritative discourse and the ritual production of political compliance” (2017), on moral economy, “Subsistence solidarity and the extension of trust: Moral economies of organic farming in northern China” (2020), on political culture, “Purity and corruption: Chinese communist party applicants and the problem of evil” (2013) and on existential temporality, “The temporal experience of Chinese students abroad and the present human condition” (2015).

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DATE: Friday, June 2, 2023

TIME: 18:30-20:00

LOCATION: SIN 1, at the Department for East Asian Studies/Chinese Studies, Altes AKH, Campus, Spitalgasse 2, Yard 2, Entrance 2.3

