



ZMO-Kolloquium

“Agency” Reconsidered: Between Life Worlds and World Order

Thursday, 25 November 2010, 6 pm

Cultivating a Complex Character

Lecture by **Dr. Magnus Marsden** and **Dr. Samuli Schielke**

Venue

Zentrum Moderner Orient
Kirchweg 33

14129 Berlin

This lecture seeks to contribute to key debates in the anthropology of morality and agency by thinking through the concept of ‘hypocrisy’ and its relevance to the long standing anthropological interest in the disjunctures between what people say they do, and what they actually do. It argues that the concept of hypocrisy, when stripped of its apriori moral significance, poses important insights into dimensions of human agency that the expanding body of work in the anthropology of morality and Islam has tended to overlook. One of these is the ways in which people set to the task not merely of perfecting their moral selves, but also embodying complex and layered forms of selfhood informed by a multiplicity of different standards and values.

The lecture draws on the complex ways in which hypocrisy has been a critical source of discussion but also practice for the people of Muslim faith with whom I have worked, and notes the extent to which such practices are themselves also central to the fieldwork process itself.

Dr. Magnus Marsden is Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He is the author of *Living Islam* (Cambridge, 2005) and, with B. D. Hopkins, *Fragments of the Afghan Frontier* (Columbia/Hurst, forthcoming). He has conducted research on various aspects of Muslim life in Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan since 1995.

Dr. Samuli Schielke (PhD in social sciences, University of Amsterdam 2006) is a research fellow at ZMO. His research interests include everyday religiosity and morality, and aspiration, migration and cosmopolitan imaginaries.

GEFÖRDERT VOM



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