

Das Institut für Sinologie und Ostasienkunde lädt ein:

Gastvortrag von

Prof. Dr. Griet Vankeerberghen

Department of History and Classical Studies, McGill University

Montag, den 21. Oktober 2024

18 Uhr c.t.

Seminarraum RS 23

Local Officials and the Making of Empire in Western Han (202 BCE–8 CE)

The Western Han empire impresses observers by its uniformity, able as it was to impose administration via commanderies and counties even on its remote territories. To accomplish such rule, the court relied on a cadre of loyal officials who staffed the bureaucracy and applied court-issued legal regulations throughout the realm.

This paper will look behind this apparent uniformity and reevaluate the role played by low- and mid-level local officials in governance. They will be presented not as instruments of the will of the central government, but as agents. Attracted by the possibility of upward career and social mobility, these local officials wanted to serve; but they also brought to the official corps of complex identities rooted in local configurations of power. As such they helped the court to bridge the divide between the political-cultural world of the capital and the diverse cultures of the regions.

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