



The Department of Anthropology
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presents a seminar

by

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on

The Ethics of Prohibition: Islamic Tradition, the Secular State and the Ban on Alcohol in a Chinese Muslim Town

Friday, 9 March 2018

1:00 – 2:30 pm

Room 115 Humanities Building

New Asia College, CUHK

A light lunch will be served at 12:30 pm. First come first served.

This talk follows Chinese Muslims and the modern state authorities as they ban the sale and consumption of alcohol in a small Hui hamlet in China's Yunnan province. I first focus on the competing conceptions about the nature and meaning of prohibition and suggest that these conceptions authorize radically different relationships with the forbidden intoxicant. While the secular state was interested in banning alcohol altogether, local Muslims sought to enable and maintain a certain distance with it, a distance that can't fully be explained by the language of secularism. I then focus on the collaboration between Muslims and Party authorities at a time of enforcing the ban and during the most recent government crackdown on the religious revival in this town. I do so to analyze ideas about the exemplary ethnoreligious community and its relationship with the secular state. This talk concludes by foregrounding some unexpected ways in which modern state emerges as a power that both undermines and sustains the conditions of possibility for a virtuous living.

Ruslan Yusupov is an Anthropology graduate student at CUHK. He is interested in religion and secularism, tradition and modernity, morality and ethics as well as in violence and hope. Currently, he writes his thesis on Islamic revival in China.

ALL INTERESTED ARE WELCOME