

**Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften
Zentralasien-Seminar**

Tibet-Kolloquium

PD Dr. Hartmut Walravens

Freie Universität Berlin

Adventurous life of Joseph Rock: from a dish washer to a scholar of Tibet and China

Joseph Rock (1884-1962) travelled as a young man from Europe to America following his 'American dream': from a dish washer to (in his case not a millionaire but) a scholar. He was a bit of a vagabond and a restless soul. The twisted paths of his American life brought him to Hawaii where he became one of the founding fathers of Hawaiian botany. This was not the end of the road: he felt a call to leave for China. The next step was to study cultures.

Rock spent many years in the Chinese-Tibetan borderlands. He collected information not only about plants and places, but peoples and cultures populating them. He studied the religion of the Naxi people; compiled a dictionary and formed collections of manuscripts in their unique writing system. He traveled to Tibetan nomads of Amdo and took some of the first photographs of the holy Amnye Machen mountains and their inhabitants. He was in Choni, Minya Konka and many other Tibetan places about which he wrote in the National Geographic Magazine.

The talk will show the turbulent life of the eccentric explorer, but also places he visited. His photographs will let us travel back in time to see how his life developed, but also to discover faces of regions and people with whom he lived.

Mittwoch, 12. Juni 2013

18.00 Uhr c.t.

Invalidenstr. 118, Raum 507 (S-Bahn Nordbahnhof, U6 Naturkundemuseum)