

Workshop Commodification, Values & Knowledge Politics

Organised by NWO research programs ***Sustainability Trade-offs in the Netherlands'***
Entangled Modernisation (STONEM), 1900-2020 and SOY STORIES

Date: **Monday April 22th 10.00-16.00** Location: **Utrecht**

Introduction

Today we live in a polycentric world knitted together by human made material, knowledge, financial, digital, and natural flows and ecosystems. How can we study its historic developments? In this workshop we aim at exploring, unpacking and discussing some key concepts relevant to study the establishment, growth and maintenance of transnational production systems acknowledging the social pluralities in and between different regions. In this workshop we want to centre around notions of commodification, values and knowledge politics. The notion of commodities is often loosely understood as materials, goods or services that are exchanged to provide human demands. This leaves open the question on how commodities come about. How is value attributed to natural substances? Historians focussing on resources have explored the involvement of various actors in creating, capturing, and circulating commodities. (Neo)Marxists scholars have commented and critiqued on the process of commodification by pointing at the subjugation of use values to exchange values in capitalistic systems. They also argue these developments are drivers of social (global) inequalities and environmental degradation. The growing influence of western system in Africa, Asia and South America has been described in terms of commodity frontiers in which exchange and confrontations between western and non-western systems happen. These western centred views have been rebutted by describing the actions and reaction of indigenous communities with concepts such as anti-commodities. The different and various perceptions of value, and knowledge can open a polycentric and pluralistic approaches to study these developments.

In this workshop we want to discuss and engage with these themes and connect this to your research ambitions. We want to discuss the merits and limits of key concepts, and explore the means and methods integrate, combine, and/or highlight underexposed actors, practices, and views.

Speakers:

Robrecht Declercq (UGent), Harro Maat (WUR) and Evelien de Hoop (VU)

Preparation

We want to encourage a lively debate and connection to your research interest. Therefore we have some preparatory reading and activity.

Registering

The workshop is open and free of charge to all NWP graduates and fellows.

If you want to attend this workshop, please send an e-mail to f.c.a.veraart@tue.nl **before April 15th** with a short text explaining your interest, connections to your research and dietary preferences.

The workshop will be limited to 20 persons. Enrolling will follow a first come first served procedure.

After enrolment we will notify about your registration and send you the full program and location details.