

3e Rencontres des Études africaines en France « L'Afrique des/en réseaux »

30 juin, 1 et 2 juillet 2014 CNRS / IEP/ Université de Bordeaux

1 : La mondialisation en ses différents niveaux

Panel : Réseaux, adaptation des normes et des manières de faire (Laurence Marfaing & Alena Thiel, GIGA, Hambourg)

Résumé :

Ghanaian trade agents in China

Alena Thiel

This paper looks at Ghanaian trade agents in China and their role in facilitating their compatriots' transnational business endeavors by providing the link with Chinese markets. After giving an overview of the different services provided by these brokers, I illustrate their networked social organization – both communally and in terms of business – by re-tracing the biographies of movement of selected informants and their interrelations across several Asian sourcing destinations patronized by Ghanaian traders since the early 1980s. In response to the literature stressing the isolation and vulnerability of African residents in China, I portray these so far largely neglected stratum of those trade agents in China who have successfully consolidated their position in Asia by creatively adapting not only to global trends in consumption and mobility, but also to the varying business environments in the respective locations.