

# fate

06|11



INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM  
for Research in the Humanities

*Fate, Freedom and Prognostication. Strategies for Coping with the Future in East Asia and Europe*

## Fate, Freedom, and Prognostication

Objectives and Research Perspectives of the  
International Research Consortium\*



Within some reports and comments in the European media about the earthquake, the tsunami and the nuclear disaster in Japan, the apparently unlimited trust of the Japanese in the technological controllability of nuclear energy was perceived with astonishment or even disconcertment. The image of a cultural-specific extent of belief in technology constructed by the Western media with a critical and distancing intention is, without doubt, also easily found in recent reports about China – especially in comments about

the construction of the Three-Gorges-Dam. The latter is considered an expression of technocratic hubris and symbolizes an unlimited optimistic belief in progress, which might have been thought of as outdated in the modern world. The underlying apprehension is that exactly this belief could gain ground again in the guise of globalization, coined by East Asia. “Sustained optimism” and the “continued faith in providential reason” could again get a ruling paradigm, described by Anthony Giddens in his book *“The Consequences of Modernity”* – without reference to East Asia – as being one of the four “adaptive reactions to the risk profile of modernity”.

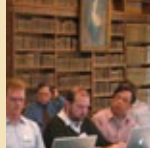
It must remain undecided whether in China or Japan today such an optimistic belief in progress is prevalent among the majority of the population – any sound statement on this matter would require a sociological investigation. Ideas such as technocracy, rule of experts, the long-term planning and predictability of social developments as well as targeted modernization, have spread – if not even been accepted enthusiastically – all over China since the

beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this context, not only must the dominant ideologies of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese National Party (KMT) be mentioned, but also ideas of the far-reaching plannability of social progress are very well received within the Chinese concepts of liber-

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Dear reader,

This is already the third issue of “Fate” – the newsletter of the International Consortium for Research in the Humanities, “Fate, Freedom and Prognostication. Strategies for Coping with the Future in East Asia and Europe”, at the University Erlangen-Nuremberg. Published bi-annually, this newsletter intends to give an insight into the past semester – in this case, the winter semester 2010/11. At the beginning, you will find a reflection of the deputy director Prof. Dr. Thomas Fröhlich on the research perspectives of our consortium in reaction to the tsunami and nuclear disaster in Fukushima of March 11 this year. Our thoughts are with the victims and their families. There follows a conference report by Prof. Dr. Martin Kern (Princeton University, IKGF Visiting Fellow) that leads us back to Early China: twelve leading specialists from the field of this formative epoch of Chinese culture came together at the consortium for an intense exchange over two days on the topic of “Fate, Freedom and Creation in Early China”. As always, we also collected for you the contributions to our lecture series of the winter semester 2010/11. All presenters have briefly summarized their topics and intend to give all our readers a concise insight into the broad variety of topics at the consortium. It is our pleasure to introduce at the end an array of new faces to you and to say good-bye to those researchers who have enriched the work at our consortium for the past months. Perhaps you are already familiar with the consortium and its guests, and might recognize some of these faces. As first evidence of a good exchange with our dear readers, this would be our particular delight!

Dr. Esther-Maria Guggenmos  
Research Coordination

# Fate, Freedom and Prognostication. Strategies for Coping with the Future in East Asia and Europe

alism and even among the advocates of Confucianism.

Technocratic ideas first appeared in Francis Bacon's theories, were later formulated by Auguste Comte, Saint-Simon and others, took hold in the United States at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and can also be found in the Marxist concepts of the communist final state of human society. The reasons why they found fertile ground in China are manifold. At any rate, many Chinese reformers and revolutionaries were mesmerized by the idea of an ending to politics as such in the near future. Now, the never-ending conflict of interests and the infinite variety of opinions seemed to be conquerable in the course of the progress of civilization. This would scotch the basic experience of political agency, generally leading to results that are in a "completely inadequate and often even paradox relation to its original meaning", as stated by Max Weber in his lecture, *Politics as a Vocation*. From now on, leading a country would be the duty of new ruling elites that are – acting according to scientific rationality – best at formulating, in the name of the *ratio* and for the sake of everybody, detailed targets and are reliable in putting them into practice.

Obviously, technocratic rhetoric is often part of a strategy for immunizing governance against political criticism. According to the technocratic consequence, the latter would finally become completely obsolete in a world which is under instrumental control: why keep on arguing about political decisions, if diagnostics and prognostication are already driven to perfection by experts? Just as in Europe and the United States, in China, the ideal of a technocratic regime also becomes apparent in cases where expert knowledge and the general knowledge of the public are played off against each other. Sun Yat-sen's writings contain numerous examples of this, and these are among the most influential of their kind in modern China. Therefore, it is an important fact that Sun Yat-sen always linked the elite's higher level of competence with their alleged moral superiority. Still, in comparison with Europe and the United States, there is one noticeable difference: the concept of a technocratic regime in China was rarely considered a negative utopia. This can be attributed not least to the way in which new ideas about progress were accepted in late 19<sup>th</sup> century China in the course of coping with the West. Soon, different varieties of optimistic belief in progress developed, each subject to the notion that China's future could be shaped sys-

tematically. Thus, modernity was (and remains) not perceived as an uncontrollable process or historic destiny, but as a result of modernization, the positive outcome of which can basically be predicted. The questions about the purpose of this process, and by which means and procedures it was to be designed and by whom, were the main subject of the many political controversies that raged between Chinese reformers during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Unlimited progress euphoria is also characteristic of the omnipotent rhetoric of the so-called "Great Leap Forward" of the late 1950s, the culture-revolutionary belief in a renewal of the revolution and the continued application of the target stipulations of the so-called Four Modernizations established after the Cultural Revolution. The historic, all-embracing plan appears here in the form of long-term predictions. The basis of both planning and prognostication is the idea that nationally controlled modernization is a process and can be created in the dimensions of world history. It is not an overstatement that this idea of modernity is one of the most popular in relation to China's confrontation with the West. Therefore, China can "learn" from modern western countries and cultures – if nothing else, from their faults – and is thus able to catch up with and even overtake western nations in the wake of their economic, political, social and technological progress. By doing so, China will adjust its modernization to a future which is already the past in its "western" versions. Thus, the process of modernity will no longer be tintured by contingency.

The optimistic belief in progress and acceptance of contingency appear to go hand in hand here. Interdisciplinary research at the IKGF has shown that the concepts of prognostication, fate, history and governance from the Chinese past still continue to have an effect upon the present. An understanding of modernity that excludes the knowledge of its origins cannot be called such – this applies to both East Asia as well as Europe. In this respect, the IKGF also contributes to diagnosing contemporary society.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Fröhlich, Deputy Director  
Erlangen, March 21, 2011

## CONFERENCE

### Fate, Freedom, and Creation in Early China

International Conference; Convener: Prof. Dr. Martin Kern  
(Princeton University; IKGf Visiting Fellow) – May 19-21, 2011

The conference, which brought together leading international scholars from Europe, East Asia, and North America, addressed the general topic of the IKGf by focusing on the question of textual, artistic, and institutional creation in Chinese antiquity. Together, the twelve conference presentations, ranging from the analysis of bronze décor in the late second millennium BC to the discourses of fate in the early centuries of the common era, addressed seminal questions of freedom, creativity, and destiny that shaped the world of Chinese antiquity and in many ways have remained influential to the present day.

The conference was organized by Professor Dr. Martin Kern, a yearlong IKGf visiting fellow from Princeton University, whose research at the IKGf concentrates on the relations between fate, freedom, and authorship in the formative period of Chinese literature and intellectual history. While the conference emerged directly from his project, it was designed to inspire new interdisciplinary research much beyond Kern's focus of study. Thus, the twelve presenters included world-renowned specialists in intellectual history, archaeology, religious studies, philosophy, literature, history, and philology who took up the challenge to think about both the IKGf's general topic and the special focus on creation within their own fields of expertise. For two intense days of presentations and discussion, they were joined by a sizeable audience that also included other early China specialists from several German universities as well as from France, Italy, England, and the Czech Republic.

The conference started out with Prof. Dr. Joachim Gentz's (University of Edinburgh) presentation on "Divinatory Authority and Author's Divinity in Early China" that drew striking parallels between divinatory and commentarial practices, arguing that the early hermeneutics of the Chinese classics followed the model of divination in addressing open and underdetermined texts that required and enabled sophisticated methods of interpretation. Next, Prof. Dr. David Schaberg (University of California at Los Angeles) introduced the example of the *Jiaoshi Yilin* 焦氏易林 as an enormously complex divinatory and poetic text that used all possible combinations of broken and unbroken lines of the hexagrams from the *Classic of Changes* to generate a body of 4,096 verses that, however bookishly and scholastically, could then serve in divination and bibliomancy. Prof. Dr. Dennis Cheng (National Taiwan University) continued the focus on the *Classic of Changes* by discussing in great detail the notion of "ending and beginning" (*zhongshi* 終始) in binary pairs of hexagrams, where every ending leads to another beginning in the dynamic cosmology of ever-continuing circulation. Prof. Dr. Paul R. Goldin (University of Pennsylvania) surveyed early Chi-



## Conference schedule

### Friday, May 20, 2011

- 9:30 a.m. Welcome and Opening Addresses  
Prof. Dr. Heidrun Stein-Kecks (Dean of Faculty)  
Prof. Dr. Michael Lackner (Director IKGf)  
Prof. Dr. Martin Kern (Convener)
- 10:00 a.m. Divinatory Authority and Author's Divinity in Early China  
Prof. Dr. Joachim Gentz
- 11:00 a.m. Literary Expression and Fate-Effects in Western Han *Yi* Divination: *Jiaoshi yilin* as Example  
Prof. Dr. David Schaberg
- 11:45 a.m. The Philosophy of "Change": On the Notion of "Zhong Shi" (Beginning and Ending) in the Ten Wings  
Prof. Dr. Dennis Cheng
- 2:30 p.m. The Consciousness of the Dead as a Philosophical Problem in Ancient China  
Prof. Dr. Paul R. Goldin
- 3:15 p.m. Human and Non-human Destinies in *Zhuangzi* and Aristotle  
Prof. Dr. Lisa Raphals
- 4:15 p.m. Disquisitions on Fate in Early Medieval China  
Prof. Dr. Alan K. Chan

### Saturday, May 21, 2011

- 09:30 a.m. Wine, Women, and the Creation of Ritual in Early China  
Prof. Dr. Scott Cook
- 10:15 a.m. Family Fortunes and Dynastic Change in Early Imperial China: the Example of the Ban Family  
Prof. Dr. Griet Vankeerberghen
- 11:15 a.m. Fate and Heroism in Early Chinese Poetry  
Prof. Dr. Martin Kern
- 2:00 p.m. On the Appearance of Sages: Dispensational Schemes and Ideas of Contingency in Early China  
Prof. Dr. Mark Csikszentmihalyi
- 2:45 p.m. Authorship and Interpretation: The Hermeneutics of Cosmology in Early Chinese Commentarial Practice  
Prof. Dr. Michael J. Puett
- 3:45 p.m. Stylistic Developments in Shang and Zhou Bronze Décor: Inexorable or Deliberate?  
Prof. Dr. Lothar von Falkenhausen
- 4:30 p.m. Closing Discussion



Prof. Dr. Griet Vankeerberghen (McGill University) during her lecture on the Ban family in the „Sitzungssaal“ of the old university library.

nese philosophical texts to explore ancient beliefs in the sentience of the dead and the existence of ghosts, arguing that the ancient Chinese were not only intensely concerned with the sentience of the dead but also that any negation of such sentience arose only in response to its earlier acceptance. Prof. Dr. Lisa Raphals (National University of Singapore and University of California at Riverside) explored the different notions of *ming* 命 (fate, mandate) in the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, where they are extended to all living things, including animals and plants; in Prof. Raphals' argument, the *Zhuangzi* sees the fulfillment and enhancement of fate as being rooted in the understanding of one's inborn nature. Concluding the first day, Prof. Dr. Alan K. Chan (Nanyang Technological University, Singapore) reviewed ideas of *ming* across a range of early medieval Chinese literary texts where he found an ongoing concern with the capacity of the *junzi* 君子 (gentleman of noble morality) either to attain sagehood or to fulfill his fate by devoting himself to the pursuit of morality and intellectual creativity.

The second day began with Prof. Dr. Scott Cook (Grinnell College) who traced the early Chinese discourse on excessive indulgence (especially of alcohol) and the resulting loss of both dynastic mandate and personal fate (both *ming* 命). Cook then showed how a system of ritual prescriptions was designed not to proscribe the use of alcohol but to create the proper channels and limits for its consumption. Prof. Dr. Griet Vankeerberghen (McGill University) investigated how illustrious families in the late first

century BC devised strategies to ensure their continuous success, status, and influence; in particular, Vankeerberghen emphasized the creation and use of elaborate genealogies to claim fate as the origin of their fortunes. Prof. Dr. Martin Kern (IKGF and Princeton University) analyzed the appearance of the figure of the author as a fated voice in early China, showing how ancient narratives created the paradoxical figure of the author as both the protagonist in the text and the origin of it – a cultural construction that claimed the possibility of replacing fate (*ming* 命) with posthumous reputation (*ming* 名). Prof. Dr. Mark Csikszentmihalyi (University of California at Berkeley) discussed dispensational and eschatological schemes in the *Mengzi*; starting from the *Mencian* 500-year cycle of the appearance of sages, he examined how this formulaic cycle of history was still compatible with the philosophical scheme of the *Mengzi* that allowed even a person below the status of a sage to realize a fully moral life. Prof. Dr. Michael Puett (Harvard University) introduced the audience to several early medieval texts, prominently the *Zhouyi cantong ji* 周易參同契 and the *Baopuzi* 抱朴子, and showed how they devised schemes of cosmology, progressive history, and the quest for immortality, and how these schemes contrasted with earlier totalizing systems from the Han dynasty, including the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 and the “Liyun 禮運” chapter of the *Liji* 禮記. Finally, Prof. Dr. Lothar von Falkenhausen delivered a spirited critique of the way typological sequencing has been used in the dating of early Chinese bronze vessels. Against an inexorable continuity of stylistic development, Prof. von Falkenhausen argued for the contemporaneous availability of different styles and thus for the possibilities of agency, choice, and conscious artistic creation on the side of the bronze casters and their donors as early as in the Shang dynasty.

Taken together, the twelve papers presented a wide range of current scholarship. What is more, they showed how much new research the IKGF can inspire in the highly dynamic field of early China studies, and how this vibrant international field can in return contribute critically important results to the interdisciplinary and cross-cultural goals of the consortium.

Prof. Dr. Martin Kern  
Princeton University, IKGF Visiting Fellow

## Divination and Fate Manipulation in a Popular Myth of Late Imperial China: The Wedding of Zhougong 周公 and Peach Blossom Girl.<sup>1)</sup>

Dr. Vincent Durand-Dastès (Institut National des Langues et Civilisation Orientales, Paris)

The talk focused on a vernacular Qing Dynasty novel that depicts a fight between divination and magic embodied by one of the tutelary patrons of Chinese diviners, Zhougong 周公, the Duke of Zhou, and a young girl, Taohua nü 桃花女, Peach Blossom Girl. The novel – itself one of many versions of what seems to have been a widespread popular myth of late imperial China – recounts how Zhougong, leaving his post as a minister within the corrupt Shang dynasty, establishes himself as a professional diviner. All of his readings of fate prove accurate until Taohua nü begins to help those whom he has doomed to die to escape their fate. Enraged by this unexpected opposition, Zhougong tries to turn his divinatory skills into a mortal device.

He asks his young opponent to wed his own son, while carefully selecting the most baleful days and hours for the moment of the wedding in order to have her perish. Thanks to her own divinatory and magical skills, Peach Blossom girl survives the ordeal and ridicules Zhougong. This rather brilliant comedy, poking fun at the prestigious name of the Duke of Zhou, sheds interesting light on the Chinese conception of divination and fate seen from the point of view of popular culture. Zhougong is portrayed as a skilled, well-wishing diviner. Peach Blossom Girl is a diviner too, but she is also a mistress of the white magic arts that permit people who are doomed to die to escape their fate and thus disprove the very decrees of Heaven. She uses some specifically feminine magic to disturb the *yin-yang* 陰陽 order of fate, and is thus able to “break the trigrams” (*pogua* 破卦) of her opponent.

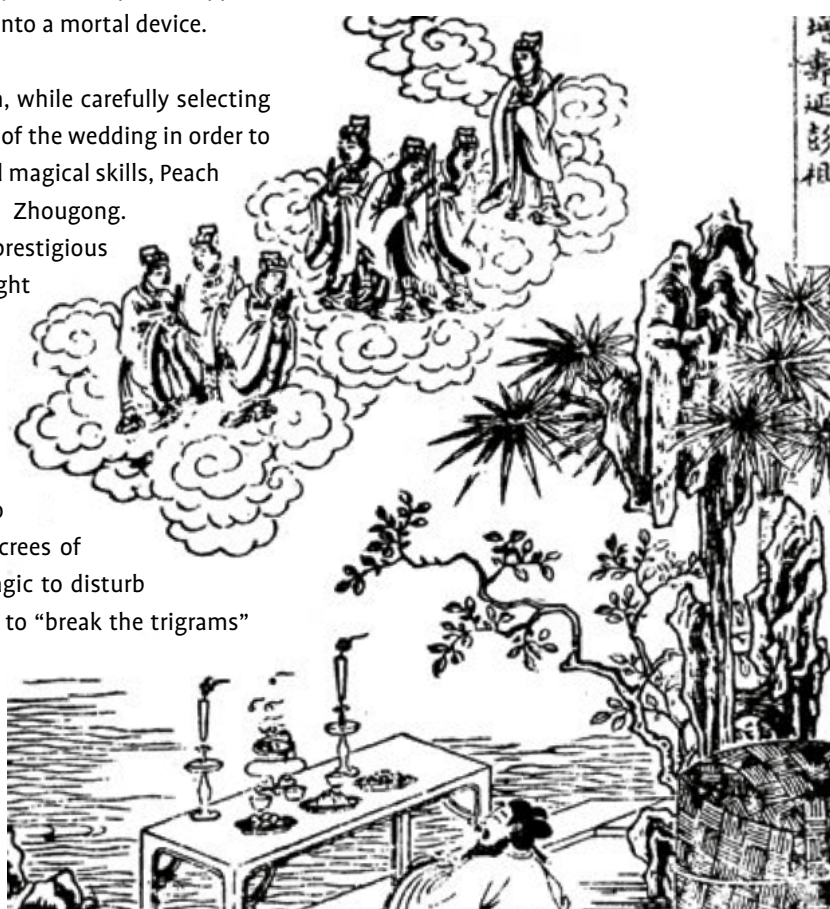
This narrative is a late imperial comic illustration of a very old Chinese conception: that, though we all have a *ming* 命, an allocated lifespan, this “fate” can be manipulated in various ways, and that it may always be possible to *yanshou* 延壽, “extend longevity”.

<sup>1)</sup> The whole lecture – as well as other “occasional papers” (such as selected lectures, reading sessions) – is available as a PDF-download via the website.

## Lecture Series

Tuesday Evenings 6:15 - 7:45 p.m.

During the semester, the IKGf holds a lecture series at which the visiting fellows are given the opportunity to present results of their research and invited guests lecture on the topic of the consortium from the perspective of their respective expertise. In the following the presenters of the past winter semester 2010/2011 summarize their contributions (Overview about lectures please see p. 9). The lectures of the current summer semester 2011 will be part of the next issue of “Fate”.



Following Peach Blossom advice, Peng Jian 彭翦 prays for longevity to the Seven Stars of the Northern Dipper (Woodblock illustration for the Yuan 元 *Zaju* 雜劇 dramatic version of the Peach Blossom story, *yuán qū xuǎn* 元曲選, edition of Zang Maoxun 臧懋循, 1615).

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## Astrology and the Rise of Science in Medieval Europe

Dr. David Juste (The University of Sydney, IKGf Visiting Fellow)

It has long been acknowledged that the history of science in Western Europe properly started in the twelfth century with the translation movement from Arabic. By 1200 A.D., at least 150 texts – and perhaps as many as 200 – were translated into Latin, making available for the first time all of the major Greek and Arabic authors who were to form the canon of scientific knowledge in Western Europe until the seventeenth century.

This paper focused on the first generation of translators, who were active mainly in Northern Spain between 1120 and 1150 A.D. Seven of them are known to us: Adelard of Bath, John of Seville, Plato of Tivoli, Hermann of Carinthia, Robert of Ketton, Robert of Chester and Hugo of Santalla. These scholars came from the four corners of Europe and travelled to or settled in various places in Northern Spain at about the same time (all were active in the late 1130s to early 1140s), even though they seem to have worked largely in isolation from one another. Very little is known regarding their motivations. What prompted them to travel to Spain and to learn Arabic? How did they come into contact with Arabic science? What was the range of Arabic texts available to them? How did they choose which texts to translate? These questions remain unanswered. What we know is the result of their endeavours: in less than three decades they translated altogether at least 83 texts, most of which are preserved intact today.

According to traditional narratives on the history of science, these early translators were primarily interested in astronomy and mathematics, but a closer look at the texts reveals a different picture. Out of the 83 translations, only 15 deal with astronomy or mathematics, while 11 are concerned with various other subjects, including philosophy, medicine, alchemy, magic, divination (spatulomancy), as well as Muslim religion and history. The prime interest of the translators lies elsewhere, namely in the field of astrology, with no less than 57 translations being related to this area. All seven translators translated at least one astrological text and, with the exception of the two Roberts, produced more translations related to astrology than other fields combined.

How can we explain this prominence of astrology? It should first be noted that the enterprise was not straightforward, for astrology had been vigorously and repeatedly condemned by the Church Fathers and ecclesiastical authorities in late Antiquity and throughout the early Middle Ages, something the translators could not have been unaware of. At the same time, the translators did not wait for permission, nor was their work shrouded in secrecy, as shown by Robert of Ketton and Hugo of Santalla, who were both clergymen during or after their translating activity. In one of his prefaces, Robert promised to Peter the Venerable, the abbot of Cluny, a comprehensive work covering all aspects of astronomy and astrology, while Hugo dedicated five of his astrological transla-

tions to Bishop Michael of Tarazona (who, presumably, accepted the dedications).

A possible answer lies in the natural and irresistible appeal of astrology. After all, it was a discipline of no little promise, meant to reveal the nature and fate of individuals and collectivities. The purely divinatory side of astrology is, however, rarely emphasised by the translators. As noted above, the translators did not normally spell out their motivations, but we

## IMPRESSIONS

### Academic Life

at the IKGf



Welcome Dinner – Welcoming the newly arrived visiting fellows in spring 2011.



Return visit from China: Prof. Dr. Fu Youde, Professor of Philosophy and Jewish Studies at Shandong University, during his lecture on the concept of prophecy in the work of Maimonides (1135-1204), February 2011.

do have at least two prefaces in which Hermann of Carinthia expresses his views on the status and importance of astrology, and his statements are partly confirmed by Robert of Ketton and Hugo of Santalla. Hermann's views can be summarised as follows:

1. Astrology is a branch of mathematics, even the culmination of all mathematical studies. While it is clearly distinguished from astronomy, it cannot be dissociated from it, for 'if one is removed, the other cannot be left' (i.e. without astronomy, no astrology is possible; without astrology, astronomy is pointless);
2. Astrology is the science which investigates all happenings in the world, on the grounds that all terrestrial events are caused by the movement of the celestial spheres, in agreement with Ptolemy. In this sense, astrology, together with astronomy, embraces 'the whole of science' (*integritatem scientie*) and represents 'the deepest principle and root of all studies of humanity';
3. Christianity is not threatened by astrology. God is the creator of all things, including the sun and the planets, which, in turn, exert control over everything in the world.

## **Fate. History and Facets of a Religious Concept in Modern Times\***

Franziska Rehlinghaus, MA (Ruhr University Bochum)

Modern times are beset by a peculiar discrepancy: on the one hand, the scope of human disposal is continuously expanding while on the other, recent interest in the residues of undisposability can be perceived, reconquering the minds of politicians, economists, writers and scientists through the back door. Serious debates are subject to the contrast between the "feasible" (dem „Machbaren“) and the "fateful" (dem „Schicksalhaften“), in which fate is often mentioned but seldom reflected upon. This lack of reflection becomes visible e.g. when fate is perceived as an objective term of analysis which is allegedly supported by a social consensus. Fate, however, has ever since been subject to historical change, which means that the concept of fate itself has its own historical fate according to the principle "Habent sua fata fata".

In her lecture, Rehlinghaus made a plea for historical sensitivity in dealing with the concept of "fate/destiny" („Schicksal“). Already regarding its time reference (past, present, future), the concept of fate shows a semantic ambiguity, with an emphasis that changes over time. A semantic historical approach, that deals with the change in meaning and function of the term "Schicksal" in various social discourses, can clarify the polyvalency of this religious key term and answer the question of whether the processes of secularization in modern society can be described as a "refatalisation" („Refatalisierung“, Odo Marquard) of modernity.

The comparison between the application of "fate" in two different epochs sheds light on the historicity of fate itself. During the Enlightenment, under the key concept of "fate", the

questions about existence and the realization of the underlying structuring principle of the world, about its relation to Christian theology, and about the position of human beings within this structure were subsumed. These questions arose especially through the mechanization of the conception of the world and Leibniz's principle of sufficient reason. Both questioned the traditional explanations of the world and theological doctrine on the basis of the exact sciences and natural philosophy. Fate as a causal and deterministic law of nature corresponded with the quest for an enlightening, rational view of the world; however, it could also be perceived as the bugbear threatening society, e.g. regarding the question of human freedom, and therefore to be combatted by all means. The lecture took Karl Ferdinand Hommel, a self-confessed determinist, who integrated fate into the reasoning behind his penal reform of 1770, as an example to demonstrate the meaning, accomplishments and dangers linked to the enlightened concept of fate.

During the classical period, the wave of enthusiasm for antiquity led to the re-discovery of the belief in fate of antiquity. From this, later, during Romanticism, developed the personification of fate as a demon floating above humans, who only interfered with immanence in order to cause destruction. After 1800, Napoleon became the incarnation of this concept of fate, as he dared to provoke a break in the historical causal chain through his conquering expeditions, and thus exemplified the impossibility of planning human life. Through this, a key concept which had been considered the culmination of rational science for decades became the epitome of the mystical and the irrational. Hence, the expulsion of divine providence by a fate that was

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subject to the cause and law of nature was opposed to the re-empowerment of a deity of fate acting as a symbol of existential contingency. This concept of fate was applied not only to poetry, but also to theology, science and politics.

The divergence between the two semantics of fate in the Enlightenment and under Romanticism makes it possible to draw conclusions about the dominant conceptions of the world and the specific problems of both epochs, and also provides conceptual depth to these findings. In direct comparison, continuities and breaks within its meaning, use, function and relevance become apparent. For this reason, the time-specific semantics of each epoch should be taken into account in scientific research in order to distinguish between the homophones: each epoch has its own historical fate and each fate has its own historical time.

## Paving the Way for Daoism: Mantic Arts and Religion under the Han

Licia Di Giacinto (Ostasienwissenschaften, Universität Bochum)

Several studies have aptly emphasized the link between mantic practices and religion in early China (Csikszentmihalyi 2000; Poo 2000; Harper 2007; Kalinowski 2010). Perhaps one of the most explicit stances is Poo's contention that "the most enduring substrate of religion in China [...] is the religion of personal welfare and personal access to mantic knowledge". While grasping a crucial and substantially irrefutable tenet, it is questionable whether this standpoint can adequately survey the countless facets of the early Chinese cults or shed light on the historical process which had to lead to the formation of Daoism, certainly the religious novelty of the first centuries AD.

Two points lay at the core of this speech. First, the role of mantic practices within the early religious field went far beyond the "search for personal welfare", since the adepts of the early cults also aimed to speak to the state; hence the relevance of political mantic techniques such as judicial astrology (*tianwen*) in the early imperial religious discourse. Second, the formation of medieval Daoism in the first centuries AD was a fairly relevant rupture. On the one hand, the development of the medieval Daoist priesthood appears to imply the configuration of a religious field which was endowed with a certain degree of autonomy with respect to other spheres of society (Bourdieu 1991). On the other hand, when focusing on the contents, medieval Daoism absorbed the preex-

isting beliefs and practices and remoulded them into a new religious semantics in which the role of mantic practices cannot be viewed purely as a *means to glimpse into* an individual's future. To a certain extent, the mantic arts became an integral part of Daoist rituality (DZ 884) and "theology". A reflection on the theme of "political messianism" provided an illustrative case study here.

Contrary to the usual assumption, Daoist or Buddho-Daoist messianic trends were neither medieval inventions (Zürcher 1982; Ownby 1999) nor re-elaborations of Confucian utopias (Seidel 1969, 1984). Rather, they were the evolution of an old tenet; the idea that a state was allotted a predetermined life span. Born within the mantic discourse in the last centuries BC, this motif was already ripe during the Western Han (206 BC - 9 AD), when the political officials, adherents of the Great Peace group, and even classicists actively contributed towards developing mantic schemes which announced the arrival of a political messiah at a given point in time. During the medieval era, this old belief, besides inspiring numerous messianic trends, became part of Daoist theology by taking the form of "messianic revelations" (DZ 1365).

## Notions of Fate in Contemporary Japanese Buddhism

Dr. Monika Schrimpf (Religionswissenschaft, Universität Bayreuth)

In my paper, I addressed the question of how 'traditional' Buddhist concepts are integrated into the teachings, practice and legitimisation of contemporary Buddhist movements. My example was the religious movement Shinnyo-en that describes itself as a "Buddhist community" (*bukkyô kyôdan*) and emphasises its Shingon Buddhist roots. Yet, scholars of the study of religions usually treat it as a new religion (more precisely: a 'new new religion'). Shinnyo-en thus is an example of a religious community which combines Buddhist doctrines, scriptures and rituals and 'new' forms of religious authority, interpretation of scriptures and ritual practice.

The concept of karma (*innen*) served as an example to illustrate how a traditional concept is adapted to the group's objective to provide individualised guidance based on the authority of its founders and its religious virtuosi. The form and functions of this adaptation were traced on the conceptual level, on the level of religious practice and on the level of subjective interpretations by members.



## Song as Fate and Prophecy in Early China

Prof. Dr. Martin Kern (Princeton University, IKGF Visiting Fellow)

Moving from Du Fu's 杜甫 (712-770) poem "Reflected Sunlight" (Fan zhao 返照) to Wang Can's 王粲 (177-217) famous "Seven Sorrows" (Qi ai shi 七哀詩) and then further back in time, the lecture introduced the notion of the "fated author" in early and medieval China. As Kern illustrated through detailed textual analysis, such an author is intensely personal and emotional in his expression, inscribing himself into his text and constituting his voice as that of a singular poet.

And yet, he is not the sovereign of his text but overwhelmed by the situation to which his poetry responds. As in the cases of Confucius, Qu Yuan 屈原 (trad. 340-278 BC), and Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145-ca.85 BC) long before, it is his encounter with fate that creates his text together with his



Tuesday lecture series: Prof. Dr. Martin Kern (Princeton University, IKGF Visiting Fellow) lecturing on "Song as Fate and Prophecy".

persona as author. In this persona, the experience of personal fate is fused with that of the political order; at the same time, it is presented as another reconfiguration of traumas past, and prefiguration of those to come. As both historian and prophet, the poet speaks through, and adds to, the resounding echoes of ancient and ever-present voices.

Thus, Kern showed how Du Fu and Wang Can repeat the gestures of the aristocratic singers in the early empire who burst into song at the moment of imminent demise. Yet ironically, Kern argued, their strong individual voices are also descendants of the anonymous folk from the lanes and alleys of antiquity, an ominous chorus of personal and dynastic fate that spoke directly, and prophetically, out of the historical moment.

### OVERVIEW ABOUT THE LECTURE SERIES WS10/11

All lectures mentioned here are summarized in this issue of "Fate".

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|--|--|
| 02.11.2010 <b>Dr. Vincent Durand-Dastès</b> (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris): "Divination and Fate Manipulation in a Popular Myth of Late Imperial China: The Wedding of Zhongong and Peach Blossom Girl" ( <i>English</i> ) | 11.01.2011 <b>Prof. Dr. Martin Kern</b> (Princeton University, IKGF Visiting Fellow): "Song as Fate and Prophecy in Early China" ( <i>English</i> )  |
| 09.11.2010 <b>Dr. David Juste</b> (The University of Sydney, IKGF Visiting Fellow): "Astrology and the Rise of Science in Medieval Europe" ( <i>English</i> )  | 18.01.2011 <b>Prof. Dr. Lillian Tseng</b> (Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University): "National Astrology in a Cross-cultural Context: Evidence from the Western Region of Han China" ( <i>English</i> )  |
| 30.11.2010 <b>Franziska Rehlinghaus, M.A.</b> (Neuere Geschichte, Univ. Bochum): "Das Schicksal. Geschichte und Facetten eines religiösen Begriffs in der Neuzeit" ( <i>Deutsch</i> )  | 25.01.2011 <b>Dr. Sophia Katz</b> (PhD The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, IKGF Visiting Fellow): "Holy Indifference and Sagely Worries: Thoughts on Fate and Freedom in Confucian and Christian Traditions" ( <i>English</i> )    |
| 07.12.2010 <b>Dr. Licia Di Giacinto</b> (Ostasienwissenschaften, Universität Bochum): "Paving the Way for Daoism: Mantic Arts and Religion under the Han" ( <i>English</i> )   | 01.02.2011 <b>Prof. Dr. Richard Landes</b> (Boston University, IKGF Visiting Fellow): "Active vs. Passive Millennialism at the Approach of the Apocalyptic Year 1000: Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Peace of God" ( <i>English</i> ) |
| 14.12.2010 <b>Dr. Monika Schrimpf</b> (Religionswissenschaft, Universität Bayreuth): "Schicksalsvorstellungen im Gegenwartsbuddhismus Japans" ( <i>Deutsch</i> )   | 08.02.2011 <b>Prof. Dr. Stefano Rapisarda</b> (Università di Catania, IKGF Visiting Fellow): "Shoulder-Bone Divination in Medieval (and Early Modern) Europe" ( <i>English</i> )   |



*Wu xing chu dongfang li zhong-guo* 五星出東方利中國 – “If the five Planets rise in the East, this is beneficial to China”: Characters embedded in omen design on the piece of brocade discussed, probably a bowman’s arm guard, found at a tomb in Niya, Xinjiang, 1995.

## **National Astrology in a Cross-cultural Context: Evidence from the Western Region of Han China**

Prof. Dr. Lillian Lan-ying Tseng (Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University)

This lecture focused on a piece of brocade that was unearthed at Niya in the Taklimakan desert, an area loosely termed the “Western Regions” in Han China (207 BCE - 220 CE). The brocade bears an inscription of a sign of military astrology – “The convergence of the five planets would benefit the Middle Kingdom”. Intriguingly, the design on the brocade has nothing to do with stars or military actions, but adopts the omen design that was popular in the heartland of the Han Empire. This lecture first examined the domestic contexts in which the astrological inscription and the omen design emerged respectively, and then explored possible international concerns that fused both text and textile into one magnificent entity.

It further addressed two facets of a political irony that resulted from the contest between the conquering centre and the conquered periphery. On the one hand, the luxury from the agricultural core seemed to mock the nomadic border by inserting text that exclusively favoured the ruling centre. On the other hand, the brocade, with its highly talismanic motif, only revealed the great anxiety of the Han people regarding the rapid expansion of their empire. Through the case study, this lecture sought to redefine the interrelationship between the Han Empire and its assumed western frontier, arguing that the empire, while seeking to shape its new territory, was de facto shaped by the frontier.

## Holy Indifference and Sagely Worries: Thoughts on Fate and Freedom in Confucian and Christian Traditions

Dr. Sophia Katz (PhD The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, IKGf Visiting Fellow)

The idea to present this lecture was stimulated by an article entitled “Holy Within and Without: Zhang Zai’s Teachings on Confucius’ Two Natures” by Michael Lackner (*Journal of East Asian Cultural Interaction Studies* 1 (2008): 25-40). This article, dedicated to the commentary of the Song dynasty thinker, Zhang Zai 張載 (1020-1077), on *Analects* 2.4, made it manifest that, in Zhang Zai’s understanding, the nature of the ultimate holy sage, Confucius, was both heavenly and human. This implied that the process of Confucius’ intellectual/spiritual cultivation, described in the *Analects* as a linear process of gradual maturing, that started at the age of fifteen and continued till the age of seventy, differed from that of other humans. According to Zhang Zai, Confucius did not have to progress gradually step by step, but only to fulfill his own heavenly nature. This was particularly manifest at the age of fifty, when, in Zhang’s interpretation, Confucius “arrived” at the Heavenly call or his own fate/destiny (*zhi tian zhi ming* 至天之命). For Zhang Zai, the holy sage was unique and ontologically equal to Heaven; yet, unlike Heaven, he worried or cared about other humans.

Taking these arguments as my starting point and keeping in mind the possible parallels between the dual nature of the ultimate holy sage in Confucianism and the dual nature of Jesus, who, according to the Christian view, was “true God and true man”, I attempted to present a comparative outlook on the human way to holiness in these respective traditions. Despite the multiple and obvious differences between the philosophical and theological foundations of Confucianism and Christianity, it may be safely claimed that the ideas on the nature of holiness in these two traditions were inspired by the personal stories of Confucius and Jesus respectively. While Zhang Zai’s presentation of Confucius as having a heavenly nature was quite unique within the Confucian commentarial tradition, many commentators agreed that the fact that the holy sage worried or cared, while Heaven was indifferent, marked the main dissimilarity between the two.

This tension between indifference and worry/concerns is notable also in the Christian tradition. While “holy indifference”, a term used in ascetic theology to describe an attitude of detachment from worldly possessions for the sake of the heavenly kingdom, was a desirable goal of spiritual self-cultivation for many Christian saints, it was their concern for their fellow humans that normally inspired

their sacrifice. Moreover, in both Confucianism and Christianity, sagely or saintly worries were different from the ordinary worries and anxieties caused by fears about the uncertainty of the future or dissatisfaction with one’s life; they presupposed a detachment from “selfish” wishes for one’s personal wellbeing and as such were not in contradiction, but rather complementary to an attitude of indifference. This attitude of indifference to one’s own wellbeing and the acceptance of difficulties with calmness or even joy was often referred to by the Confucian scholars as “accepting one’s fate/destiny (*shouming* 受命)” and by the Christian theologians as “submitting to the will of God”.

To understand whether an “accepting of” or “submitting to” one’s *ming* 命 in Confucianism can be considered as having a religious character (the character which is self-evident within the Christian context), I attempted to reassess the personal ways to holiness of some of the Christian and Confucian personalities, paying special attention to their testimonies in relation to this matter. I started my presentation with the stories of the Christian martyrs Dietrich Bonhöffer (1906-1945) and Edith Stein (1891-1942). Both Bonhöffer and Stein were trained scholars; their critical minds and academic background allowed them to scrutinize the meaning of their religious actions and describe clearly the process of their intellectual/spiritual transformation. For Dietrich Bonhöffer, the way which led one to accept suffering and death by consciously submitting to the will of God was simultaneously the way to realize one’s freedom. Edith Stein emphasized that a free acceptance of the will of God and of one’s destiny leads one to participate in God’s work of redemption. For both of them, as well as for many other Christian saints, such freedom and participation in the work of God were possible only when one placed God’s plan and concerns for others above one’s own plans and any private good, including concern about one’s own salvation.

Notably, the importance of such a non-utilitarian approach to submitting to one’s *ming* was emphasized by a Ming dynasty Confucian scholar, Gao Panlong 高攀龍 (1562-1626). Gao, one of the founders and leaders of the Donglin academy (*Donglin xueyuan* 東林學院), who is known as one of the seven martyrs of Donglin, not only consciously submitted to what he thought was his fate/destiny, but also wrote extensively on this subject. Unlike many of his contem-

# Fate, Freedom and Prognostication. Strategies for Coping with the Future in East Asia and Europe

poraries, who emphasized the importance of the concept of retribution (*ganying* 感應) and attempted to improve their personal fate through adopting moral behaviour, Gao made it clear that affecting one's *ming* and changing one's fate/destiny are possible only when one abandons any selfish wish to profit from one's righteous actions, and adopts the attitude of listening to Heaven, and obeying its call (*tianming* 天命). According to Gao, the ability to live in the present moment, refraining from planning or being concerned about one's own future, while caring about what is right, characterized the attitude of the ultimate holy sage, Confucius. Even though Gao, unlike Zhang Zai, did not emphasize the double nature of Confucius or Confucius' arrival at the Heavenly *ming*, he made it clear that Confucius was able fully to rely on Heaven and live without plans, because

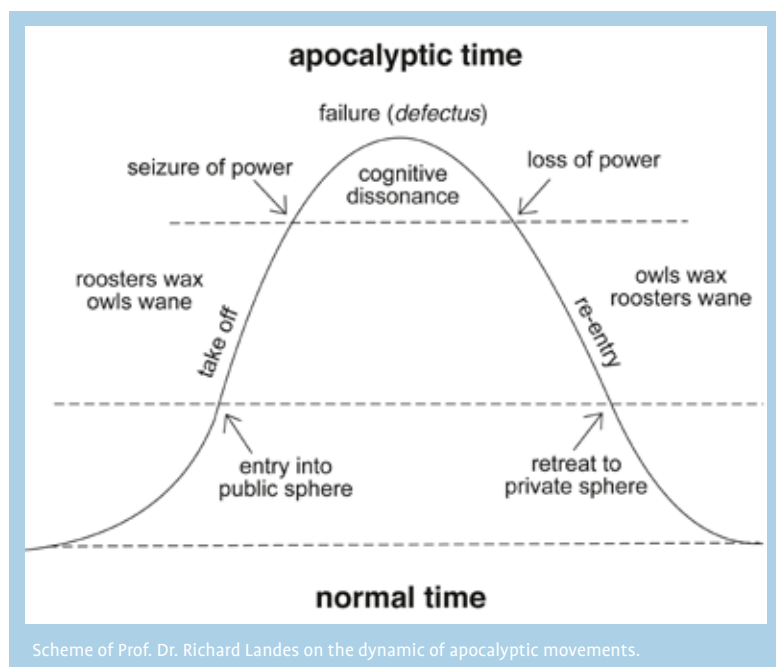
he followed the heavenly call (*shun tian zhi ming* 順天之命). According to Gao, Confucius entered into this realm of following (*shunjing* 順境) after he came to know the call of Heaven at the age of fifty. He then continued to proceed in this realm, so that, at the age of sixty, his ears could follow and, at the age of seventy, his heart could follow or obey Heaven. I suggested that this transportation within the realm of following, which marks the path to human perfection and holiness, can be described as freedom in the Confucian sense. This Confucian freedom, however, much like freedom in Christianity, does not imply an ability to be free from external constraints. It is a deeply religious freedom of acceptance and of submission: submission to the will of God in Christianity and to the Heavenly call or one's fate/destiny in Confucianism.

## Active vs. Passive Millennialism at the Approach of the Apocalyptic Year 1000: Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Peace of God

Prof. Dr. Richard Landes (Boston University, IKGf Visiting Fellow)

There are several varieties of both apocalyptic expectation and eschatological belief. For apocalyptic issues (the sense of imminence in a massive transformation which will put an end to evil and bring justice to humanity), we have active vs. passive apocalyptic (i.e., whether man's actions are critical to the grand transformation about to happen); and cataclysmic vs. transformative (i.e., whether the grand transformation will be violent and destructive, or peaceful and voluntary). Among eschatological options, we have millennial (perfect society on *earth*) and eschatological (*end of the world*, everyone goes to either heaven or hell). Finally, within the millennial option we have demotic vs. imperial millennialism (whether the "perfect society" will be an egalitarian or hierarchical).

For a variety of reasons, 1000 was the object of a great deal of prognostication as the apocalyptic date at which the great transformation would take place, and when it passed, much of the expectation was redated to the year 1000 since the Passion (i.e., 1033). At the approach of these apocalyptic dates, we have a several major manifestations of these varieties. In Germany, at the



approach of 1000, we have active transformational imperial millennialism – Otto III, the *renovatio imperii romani* and the conversion of pagan peoples (Slavs, Hungarians, Scandinavians). In France, at the approach of 1033, we have both passive cataclysmic eschatology (massive pilgrimage to Jerusalem to be present for the Parousia of Christ and the Last Judgment), and active transformational demotic millennialism (the Peace of God).

These varieties of response suggest a strong parallel with the problematic of the IKGf's research project. Predicting an apocalyptic date does not pre-determine the response. In the case of passive scenarios, the coming date has a fateful quality: God will bring human history to its just conclusion no matter what we do, we can only repent and hope He will judge us favorably. In the case of active scenarios, especially ones striving for a millennial goal (i.e., perfect society on *earth*), the approach of a predicted date can

open up a range of possibilities for transformation that present people with unprecedented degrees of choice, of opportunities to exercise human freedom. In apocalyptic time, fate, freedom, and prognostication constitute a dynamic and protean mixture of extraordinary power.

## Shoulder-Bone Divination in Medieval (and Early Modern) Europe

Prof. Dr. Stefano Rapisarda (Università di Catania, IKGf Visiting Fellow)

Scapulimancy (graphical variants *scapulomancy*/*spatulomancy*; in the Greek tradition *omoplatoscopy*) is the practice of reading prognostics from the shoulder bones of certain animals, generally ruminants. It is diffused across many parts of the world, but came to enjoy special importance in Mongolian, Arabic and Eskimo culture, and especially in China, whose most of the ancient written records are inscribed on animals' shoulder bones (1250 a.C., Shang dynasty). In Europe, it is largely recorded in the folkloric culture of Ireland, Wales and the Balcanic Peninsula, but its practice is far more recent; the last folkloric record is dated to the Greek War of Independence of 1821.

As far as written records and texts are concerned, the most ancient text seems to be an Arabic one, Al-Kindi's *Kitāb fi 'ilm al-katif*, the Book of the Science of the Shoulder Bone (ed. by Charles Burnett and Gerrit Bos), a book pertaining to the Hermetic tradition at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and alleging an unconvincing Greek derivation.

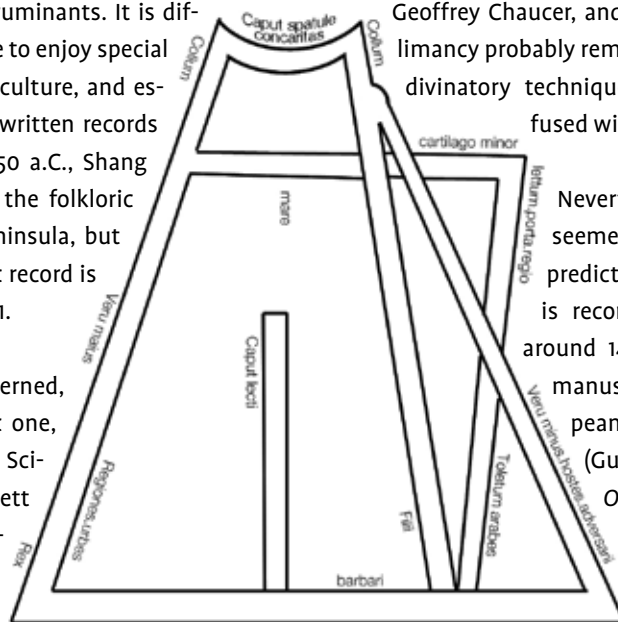
In Europe, we find the most ancient record in the *De divisione philosophiae* of Domingo Gonçalves, a Spanish cleric writing in Latin around 1150. There are no traces of it in Greek and Latin classical culture, which refers instead to extispicy, the interpretation of the divine will by inspecting the entrails of sacrificial animals, especially the size, shape, colour, markings etc. of certain internal organs, usually the liver.

From Spain, it seems to have moved to England, where we find the second record in the *Itinerarium Cambriae* of Gerald of Wales (1190 ca.). After that, some Medieval Latin texts survive but no vernacular one, apart from a very rare Anglo-Norman text in the British Library (MS. Additional 18210, 13<sup>th</sup> century or later, "Qui velt saver de scapulomancie", forthcoming in *Classiques*

Garnier, Paris). Despite the quotations and condemnations contained in Thomas of Aquinas, Geoffrey Chaucer, and Nicole Oresme, spatulimancy probably remained a highly marginal divinatory technique and was often confused with extispicy.

Nevertheless, when its story seemed to be finished, an unpredictable, ephemeral return is recorded in Northern Italy around 1450, where the latest manuscript text in the European tradition can be found (Guido Anselmi: *Divinum Opus de Magia disciplina*, Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 45.35, ed. by Charles Burnett).

Then, unlike astrology, chiromancy, *sortes apostolorum* and so on, it totally disappears from the horizon of European divinatory techniques. Why is this so? We can suggest only a few hypotheses: it was hardly compatible with courtly costumes as being a material object the shoulder-bone was connected with agropastoral societies; its ratio was insufficiently credible; it was unable to merge with astrology, as chiromancy did; or it was perceived as too close to necromancy.



Schematic illustration of a shoulder-bone with different areas of interpretation.

# Fate, Freedom and Prognostication. Strategies for Coping with the Future in East Asia and Europe

## GOODBYE AND WELCOME

### Auf Wiedersehen – Goodbye – 再见 – Au revoir – Arrivederci

Visiting Fellows 2010



**Prof. Dr. Fu Youde**, Shandong University, Center for Judaic and Inter-Religious Studies, research stay: February 2011; research topic: Maimonides' (Moses ben-Maimon, 1135-1204) Concept of Prophecy.



**Dr. Albert Galvany**, Sorbonne, Paris; PhD Granada University; research stay: February 2010 - January 2011; research topic: Divinatory Techniques and the Interpretation of Signs in the Political Theory of the Han Feizi. Death and Ritual Wailing in Early China. The Concept of Fate in the Zhuangzi.



**Dr. Sophia Katz**, PhD The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; research stay: April 2010 - March 2011; research topic: Concepts of Fate and Freedom in Confucian Religious Thought of the Song and Ming Dynasties (11<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> centuries).

### Willkommen – Welcome – 欢迎 – Bienvenue – Benvenuto

Visiting Fellows 2011

With the beginning of the new calendar and academic year, an array of new visiting fellows has arrived:



**Prof. Dr. Charles Burnett**, Warburg Institute, London; research stay: June - July 2011; research topic: 'Medieval Latin Translations of Works on Astronomy and Astrology' and 'The Astrological Library of John of Gmunden', 'The Place of the Divinatory Sciences in Arabic and Latin Divisions of Knowledge' and 'Astrologers and their Clients'.

## COMMENTS

**“W**ith regard to both scholarly and human aspects, my visit to the IKGF has undoubtedly been my best experience at a foreign research institution so far. [...] The exchanges that took place during the lectures, workshops and reading sessions have had a tremendously stimulating effect on my research. I not only felt warmly welcomed, but also supported at all times, something for which I am deeply grateful to the directorship, coordinators and the entire staff of the Kolleg.”

(Dr. Dimitri Drettas, Centre de Recherche sur les Civilisations de l'Asie orientale (Paris), IKGF Visiting Fellow 2009/2010)

**“F**or a humanist, nothing is quite as refreshing as temporarily moving out of one's own specialized research community into the world of interests one shares – knowingly or not – with colleagues from other fields. This is the core experience at the Erlangen Kolleg with its interdisciplinary and cross-cultural design. The constant exchange among the fellows (and quickly friends) from around the globe – and within an intellectual universe that spans from medieval Europe to East Asia – has been a source of intense inspiration. As it lets me do my research while also pushing me beyond my usual limits, the year at Erlangen is far too short; but the challenge and the joy I'll get to keep beyond.”

(Prof. Dr. Martin Kern, Princeton University, IKGF Visiting Fellow 2010/11)



**Prof. Dr. Chu Pingyi**, Academia Sinica, Institute of History and Philology, Taiwan; research stay: April 2011 - March 2012; research topic: Studying the Past to Decode the Future: The Jesuits' Criticism of Chinese Prognostications.



**PD Dr. Claudia von Collani**, Universität Münster, Institut für Missionswissenschaften; research stay: January - June 2011; research topic: The Case of Adam Schall between Accommodation, Superstition, and Accusation. The European Controversy about the Chinese Calendar Office.



**Prof. Dr. Patrick Henriet**, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section des sciences historiques et philologiques, Paris; research stay: April - June 2011; research topic: Coping with the Future in High Medieval Spain. Beatus of Liébana, Eschatology and Ecclesiology, or a Non-historicist View of the Present. Texts and Pictures.



**Prof. Dr. Lionel Jensen**, University of Notre Dame, East Asian Languages and Cultures; research stay: January - July 2011; research topic: Found and Lost in Tradition: Mythologies of Confucianism - Mantic and Divinatory Themes.

**Dr. Manfred Kubny**, European University Viadrina INTRAG, Frankfurt (Oder); research stay: April - September 2011; research topic: Critical Edition and Translation of the "The Leaking Essence of Heaven" (*Di Tian Sui* 滴天髓), a Central Classic Work on Birth Horoscope Theoretization, and together with Prof. Lackner: Critical Edition and Translation of Selected Biographies Found in the "Registers about Fate" (*Ming Pu* 命譜), Written by Yuan Shushan 袁樹珊 (1881-1952(?)).



**Prof. Dr. Richard Landes**, Boston University, Department of History; research stay: January - December 2011; research topic: *Disappointed Millennialism from Jesus to the Peace of God* (33-1033), a study of how Christians dealt with a long and completely unexpected string of failures of Jesus to return and inaugurate the millennial kingdom.



**Dr. Sven Sellmer**, Adam Mickiewicz University Poznan, Institute of Oriental Studies; research stay: June - July 2011; research topic: Human Agency and Fate in the Mahābhārata.



During the summer and especially at the beginning of the winter semester 2011/12, we are expecting to welcome further visiting fellows, whom we wish to introduce to you in the next edition of "Fate". Some of them are returning after an initial visit of six months for the second half of their stay, but there are also some new faces among the arrivals, such as Prof. Dr. Andrea Bréard (École Polytechnique, Paris; Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, Berlin), Prof. Dr. Scott Davis (Miyazaki International College, Anthropology), Prof. Dr. Alexander Fidora (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), Professor Han Qingming (Peking University), Prof. Dr. Marta Hanson (Johns Hopkins University), Prof. Dr. Christoph König (Universität Osnabrück), Prof. Dr. Li Fan (Peking Normal University), Prof. Dr. Gian Luca Potestà (Università Cattolica, Mailand), Prof. Michael Puett (EALC, Harvard University), Dr. Matthias Riedl (Budapest University), Prof. Ken-ichi Takashima (The University of British Columbia), and Prof. Dr. Lothar von Falkenhausen (UCLA).

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This newsletter is published in German and English, printed in 200 copies. To receive regular information about ongoing events at the consortium, please subscribe to (ikgf-info). To receive the electronic version of this newsletter, please subscribe to (ikgf-news). Both actions are possible via our website [www.ikgf.uni-erlangen.de](http://www.ikgf.uni-erlangen.de) by following the two links on the right-hand bar.



Visit of the President of the University, Prof. Dr. Karl-Dieter Gröske, and the Chancellor, Dipl.-Volksw. Thomas A.H. Schöck in February 2011: Introduction to the Consortium by Prof. Dr. Michael Lackner.

## OUTLOOK

Among other events, three conferences will be held at the consortium after the summer break: on September 29-30 2011, a conference on the topic of "Astrologers and their Clients in Medieval and Early Modern Europe" (Conveners: Dr. Wiebke Deimann/Dr. David Juste) will take place. On October 24 - 27, 2011, the International Research Consortium will host an international conference on "Gao Xingjian: Freedom, Fate, and Prognostication". We are greatly honored and delighted to have Mr. Gao Xingjian, an extraordinary novelist, dramatist, stage-director, and painter as well as Nobel Laureate in Literature 2000, here for this event. During the conference, about 25 experts on Gao and his works will engage in lectures, discussion, and exchange. The event will take place in the E-Werk, Erlangen. On November 10-12, 2011, a conference will take place about the notion of the future in pilgrimage, entitled "On the Road in the Name of Religion. Pilgrimage as a Means of Coping with Contingency and Fixing the Future in the World's Major Religions" [Convener: Prof. Klaus Herbers; organisation: H.-C. Lehner/Dr E. Niblaeus; place: ZMPT (Zentrum für Medizinische Physik und Technik)].

In the coming winter semester 2011/12 the consortium is also honoured to organize the university's „Ringvorlesung“ – a series of six lectures delivered at the university each semester and broadcast on television. This lecture series will be characterized by an exchange between the consortium's directors and researchers who contributed to the discussion in the Humanities and society regarding the notion of future and contingency in Germany. The lectures will take place in the "Aula" of the University (Schloßplatz 4) and are scheduled to take place on Wednesdays at 6-8 p.m.

## THE NEXT fate

In the next "Fate" the following issues will be covered:

- Lecture Series of the Summer Semester 2011
- Annual Conference 2011 "Fate and Prediction in Chinese and European Traditions. Key Concepts and Organization of Knowledge"
- Reflection on the conferences that take place in autumn 2011: "Astrologers and their Clients in Medieval and Early Modern Europe", "Gao Xingjian. Freedom, Fate and Prognostication", "On the Road in the Name of Religion. Pilgrimage as a Means of Coping with Contingency and Fixing the Future in the World's Major Religions"