

fate

09|15



INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM
for Research in the Humanities

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

Six Years of “Fate, Freedom and Prognostication” (No) Predictions for IKGF’s second funding phase



With our aim to study pre-modern and modern forms of prognostication and their relationship to notions of fate and freedom from a cross-cultural perspective, we entered what is in many ways uncharted academic territory. In the individual disciplines of research, questions regarding traditional practices of looking into the future such as divination and prophecy are often still stigmatized as “rejected knowledge”. One of our main concerns was to make the skills associated with these practices,

as well as the social interaction with them, a part of the global history of science and knowledge. For this purpose, it is not necessary to lapse into esoteric speculation; it is sufficient to look into the taxonomy or underlying worldview of these practices, to explore their psychological, social, and political effects, while always keeping the wide spectrum of belief in destiny, determinism, fatalism, and free will in sight.

After six years, we are able to state that the issues we were examining have been established as an independent research field. Not only the large number of applications for fellowships attests to the relevance of our research, but also the fact that—partly thanks to the commitment of our former fellows—panels dedicated to our research topics have been organized at numerous international conferences, as well as the growing number of specialized publications, and last but not least the many hits on our online bibliography and videos that we have produced in cooperation with experts in Media Studies. Our homepage has become the

second most visited individual page of our university.

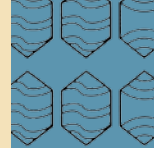
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and Research



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Dear Readers,

In the ninth edition of our newsletter *fate* we report on the Winter Term 2014/2015, which coincided with the time of transition from IKGF’s first to the second funding period. Thanks to the approval granted by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), we will continue to provide you with information on the research being carried out in Erlangen on different strategies for coping with individual and collective futures.

In this issue our director, Professor Lackner, looks back on the past years, and, in line with the research focus of the consortium, ventures a projection for those to come. Accordingly, the current newsletter also focuses on our new team for the second funding phase, whom we would like to introduce. Despite the efforts that were necessary to shoulder this phase of transition, we nevertheless managed to uphold a multi-faceted academic program, which is attested to by the brief reports on our lecture series, colloquia, workshops, and conferences. The latter dealt this time with subjects such as pilgrimage, Tibetan and Mongolian divination, Jewish divination, and theology of time in the Christian Middle Ages.

As announced in the previous issue, Dr. Esther Maria Guggenmos, IKGF’s previous research coordinator, left us at the end of the first funding phase in order to take up an interim professorship. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her, together with all other members of our staff who left us towards the end of the first funding phase, for their tireless efforts!

Finally, dear readers, I hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter and look forward to a lively exchange with you!

Rolf Scheuermann
(Research Coordination)

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

Entering “uncharted academic territory” takes time; we had to invest a lot of energy in identifying promising areas of research, and these efforts have paid off.

The second phase of our activities will now concentrate on these areas, on the basis of our own considerations and the helpful recommendations of the expert group that has favorably evaluated the Käte Hamburger Centre in Erlangen; at the same time it should be reiterated, however, that enough leeway is to be preserved for the spontaneity that has proven to be so highly productive in previous years, and which has spawned unpredictable configurations for workshops and working groups – while we deal with the practices and theories of prediction, we certainly do not wish to be able – or even have to – predict each and every development of our own research. Unplanned and in fact unpredictable encounters have evolved into ongoing projects such as a study of notions of longevity in East and West, a conference on the function of charts from a cosmological perspective, and another conferences on recent archaeological finds of divination texts in China, which we intend to carry out in the coming years as well. The motto of the Käte Hamburger Centres is “freedom for research in the humanities”, and we take this as seriously as the international nature of our research, which we regard as our commitment.

With regard to the aforementioned concentration on identified research fields, one focus of the coming years will be on compiling handbooks for divination in China and in pre-modern Europe, respectively, and therefore one consideration in deciding on applications for visiting fellowships will be the candidates’ willingness to contrib-

ute to these handbooks. A list of keywords and a preliminary outline have been created for the area of sinology, and in July 2016 a large conference will take place, with the aim of stimulating the compilation of the handbook, as well as in order to establish an international academic society for the Study of Divination in pre-modern and modern China (*Zhongguo shi shushu yanjiu xuehui*). As far as the handbook focusing on pre-modern Europe is concerned, a preparatory workshop is envisioned for March 2016.

The aforementioned detailed description of practices and their underlying worldview also has a bearing on the planned exhibition about the material culture of prediction. Unprecedented in this form, the exhibition will present objects from China (from oracle bones dating from the 13th century BC to stalk divination and present-age computer programs) together with their respective counterparts from pre-modern and early modern Europe (e.g. lot-books, astrolabes) and will analyze their similarities and differences.

However, the boundary of uncharted academic territory does not end with the description and analysis of historical and regionally specific practices and theories: along with these investigations, a series of conferences will contribute the components of an overarching and cross-cultural theory of prognostication. The academic evaluation of our project has confirmed our intention to draw on additional civilizations for a trans-epochal and transcontinental comparison, and academic events held previously that brought in colleagues from disciplines concerned with European antiquity or India are to be continued in a systematic fashion. Even the groundbreaking work that Jean-Pierre Vernant published in 1974 under the title “Divination et rationalité” is – apart from its still inspiring introduction – essentially additive insofar as it presents individual civilizations with their theories and practices of prediction. By the way, it is interesting to see that Vernant had already turned towards the ethnology of contemporary Africa in the hope of gaining deeper insights into ancient cultures. Ethnology and social anthropology will continue to play an important role in our research as well.

These cultural and historical-philological perspectives shall in turn be complemented by a further dimension: the components of a theory of prognostication can only be discovered by way of a systematic engagement with disciplines such as philosophy, sociology, religious studies, political science, and in addition also with neuroscience and computer science (among others, one keyword is “big data”). Therefore, we are planning a series of workshops that are to be devoted to the theoretical classification of prognostication in the past and present; in this context,

the issue of the relationship between pattern recognition and the generation of theories would provide an initial category of topics to which various disciplines could make substantial contributions.

The increasingly noticeable support by numerous colleagues, who have made the subject matter of the consortium their own cause and pass it on, allows at least

one prediction: we will not be short of work in the coming years!

Prof. Dr. Michael Lackner
(IKGF, Director)

¹ Cf. Hanegraaff, Wouter J., *Esotericism and the Academy. Rejected Knowledge in Western Culture*, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

FOCUS

The new Team



Dr. Matthias Heiduk

Matthias Heiduk is a specialist in the History of Knowledge and Ideas of medieval Europe. His main field of research is the study of the traditions of philosophy, divination, and occult sciences attributed to the mythical Hermes

Trismegistus. Before joining the IKGF, Matthias Heiduk worked at the universities of Freiburg i. Br. and Göttingen.

Martin Kroher's primary research interests lie in the history of pre-modern China, specifically the Song-Dynasty (960-1279). The focal point of his dissertation is the notion of ritual, or *li* (禮) in Chinese, which was a paradigmatic topic of intellectual discourse in the 11th century, but also lends itself to the comparative approaches

that interest Martin Kroher. At the same time, prognostication loomed large in many a political argument during that period, when diverse theories were offered regarding the question of how heaven responds to government policies and "mistakes".

Dr. Martin Kroher



Foto: Tom Roeper



Dr. Hans Christian Lehner

Hans Christian Lehner's main area of interest is the writing of history in the central Middle Ages. His doctoral dissertation was on the role of future prognostications in historiographical texts of the 12th and 13th centuries. Recently, his

work has focused on historical environmental research, monsters as prodigies, and the history of science.

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Dr. Michael Lüdke

Michael Lüdke is interested in the interaction between concepts and social practice in early China and beyond, and especially in the insights into intellectual and social history revealed by the recently discovered bamboo, wood, and silk manuscripts. A main subject of his work has been Chinese legal history, with an emphasis on ex-

cavated sources from the Qin and Han dynasties. His research project at the Consortium focuses on the legal, institutional, and social frameworks of prognostic practice in China.



Dr. Zhao Lu

Zhao Lu studies political prophecies and the transmission of mantic knowledge in the first five centuries AD China. He is especially interested in how individuals mastered esoteric knowledge through various daily routines, including interactions with others. His works cover topics

such as Han-dynasty classicism as well as the image of Confucius as a prophet in Han apocrypha (*chenwei* 讖緯).

ADVISORY BOARD

... of the second funding phase:

- Prof. Dr. Chia-Feng Chang (National Taiwan University)
- Prof. Dr. Johannes Fried (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt)
- Prof. Dr. Joachim Gentz (University of Edinburgh)
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STEERING COMMITTEE FAU

... which is working with the IKGf on scenarios to establish the Consortium as a permanent institution at the University:

- Prof. Dr. Philipp Balsiger (Center for Applied Ethics and Science Communication)
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- Prof. Dr. Fabian Schäfer (Japanese Studies)
- Prof. Dr. Georges Tamer (Oriental Philology and Islamic Studies)
- Prof. Dr. Christiane Witthöft (German and Germanic Philology)

LECTURE SERIES WS 2014/15

Prognostication and Diagnosis – Fate and Health of Children in Traditional Chinese Medicine

Prof. Dr. Chia-Feng Chang (Department of History, National Taiwan University; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

On 21 October 2014, Professor Chang Chia-Feng of the Department of History, National Taiwan University, delivered a lecture entitled “Prognostication and Diagnosis: Fate and Health of Children in Traditional Chinese Medicine.” During this lecture, Professor Chang explored the question of how paediatrics became an independent branch of Chinese medicine. She argues that, from the Six Dynasties to Song China, children were considered silent patients, whose symptoms were hard to detect. As the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127 CE) doctor Yan Xiaozhong 閻孝忠 (ca. 1110) stated, children’s bodies were under development, so their viscera were soft and their pulses obscure. Diagnostic methods for adults were less useful in coping with these features. In addition, Yan mentioned that children were unable to express themselves articulately, and their unstable emotions further complicated the diagnosis. Facing these difficulties, paediatricians not only improved upon the traditional method “look” (*wang* 望) but

also adopted physiognomic techniques in order to cope with the idiosyncrasies of children. These techniques served to diagnose the children’s current health status as well as to foretell their future health. With lively examples and vivid illustrations, Professor Chang proved that, on the one hand, paediatricians developed these methods in order to improve the accuracy of diagnosis; on the other hand, they used their innovative methods to claim their market and compete with other doctors. By examining the development of paediatrics, she illuminated the intertwined relationship between divinatory methods and medicine.

Dr. Zhao Lu (IKGF, Research Fellow)

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 2014/15 summarize their contributions. The lectures of this summer semester 2015 will be part of the next issue of *fate*.

LECTURE SERIES WS 2014/15

Overview of the lectures of winter semester 2014/15:

21.10. 2014: Prognostication and Diagnosis – Fate and Health of Children in Traditional Chinese Medicine. **Prof. Dr. Chia-Feng Chang** (Department of History, National Taiwan University; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

04.11.2014: Divination among Jews in the Middle Ages. **Dr. Josefina Rodríguez Arribas** (IKGF Visiting Fellow)

11.11.2014: Magical Choices. Geomancy as a Strategy in Politics and Everyday Life of Augustus, Elector of Saxony (1526-1586). **Dr. Ulrike Ludwig** (Institut für Geschichte, Technische Universität Dresden; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

18.11. 2014: A Call to Self-Determination: The Anti-Guoyu (Fei Guoyu 非國語) of Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819). **Prof. Dr. Reinhard Emmerich** (Institut für Sinologie und Ostasienkunde, Universität Münster; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

25.11.2014: Transgressing the Boundaries of Knowledge: Imagining Time and Mastering the Future in Medieval Visionary Literature. **Dr. Uta Kleine** (Historisches Institut, FernUniversität in Hagen; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

06.12.2014: Divination in History: Political Prophecies in Italian Chronicles

between Charles VIII of France and the Emperor Charles V. **Dr. Lorenza Tromboni** (Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, Firenze; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

13.01.2015: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East and Israel between Policy and Deity. **Prof. Dr. Jürgen van Oorschot** (Lehrstuhl für Altes Testament II, Fachbereich Theologie/Zentrum für die Anthropologie der Religionen, FAU; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

20.01.2015: God, the Prophet and the State in Islam. **Prof. Dr. Georges Tamer** (Lehrstuhl für Orientalische Philologie und Islamwissenschaft, FAU; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

27.01.2015: On a Travel Poet’s Trail in Modern Japan: Celebrating Matsuo Bashō’s Heritage. **Prof. Dr. Katja Triplett** (Ostasiatisches Seminar, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen)

03.02.2015: Karma, Chance, or Simulation? The Salvific Structure of the Tibetan Buddhist Game “Ascending the Spritual Levels”. **Prof. Dr. Jens Schlieter** (Institut für Religionswissenschaft und Center for Global Studies, Universität Bern)

Divination among Jews in the Middle Ages – A Defense of Astrology in Medieval Judaism

Dr. Josefina Rodríguez-Arribas (IKGF Visiting Fellow)

Abraham bar Hiyya's letter († after 1136) to the rabbi of Barcelona Yehudah ben Barzillai is, in terms of its clarity and length, a remarkable document for understanding the position of the Jews in Sefarad in relation to astrology and the kind of problems that its study and practice gave rise to within the Jewish community. The event that led to the controversy to which Bar Hiyya's letter is an answer is the choice of hour for a marriage according to the principles of electional astrology (Hebrew *mivharim*). Bar Hiyya acknowledges the predominant feature of conjecture in astrology, its subordination to experience, and its dependence on the data provided by astronomy. However, he also mentions that astrology (rather than astronomy) brings evident advantages to men, and is licit, for it respects God, acknowledging that the dependence of sub-lunary beings with respect to stars has been established

by God. The dividing line between Israel and the Gentile nations regarding the sciences of stars is that while Israel knows that the influence of the stars was given on condition and that they cannot damage of their own free will, the remaining nations believe that they can change this influence as a result of offerings and rites directed toward the stars, as if they acted of their own free will and with

their knowledge. Bar Hiyya defends astrology by examining the meaning of the rabbinic formula that one *must not consult Chaldeans*. This warning and the paradoxical

use of astrology by the rabbis in the Talmud lead Bar Hiyya to the conclusion that, first, Chaldeans and astrologers did not carry out identical practices; second, the Torah and the rabbis did not condemn any form of divination without exception, but did

make distinctions. Bar Hiyya merges in his letter the main traditions validating astrology within the Jewish religion throughout history, and states that Israel is constrained to practise astrology, for it is alluded to as the specific science of Israel in the Torah (Deut. 4:6).

“Chaldeans (mentioned in the Talmud) do not predict in the same way that astrologers do, for the former can report in detail on the influence of stars, while the latter only can do so in a general way and can change nothing that they see in the stars. This last feature distinctively separates astrology from magic, for what defines the latter is the belief in a power to alter the course of matters, while astrology is only concerned with the knowledge of future events.”

“Regarding the question of whether Israel has or has not a star ruling her, Bar Hiyya is clear: although Israel has no star, stars report on Israel. The fulfilment of the stellar testimonies depends on Israel's behavior and her special relationship with God. Stellar influence is not effective upon Israel, but it is upon the remaining nations. This is the privilege of Israel. This question re-emerges constantly throughout the history of Jewish astrology.”



Medieval synagogue in Barcelona (entrance on the right)

Magical Choices. Geomancy as a Strategy in Politics and Everyday Life of Augustus, Elector of Saxony (1526-1586) *

Dr. Ulrike Ludwig (Technische Universität Dresden; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

This talk presented some preliminary results of a project that focuses on the significance of geomancy as a divinatory technique of decision-making in the context of personal rulership. Under investigation is the court at Dresden under the Saxon Elector Augustus (1526-1586).

As an initial finding I was able to show that geomancy has, so far, been largely overlooked in the research on the importance of divination in early modern Europe. However, geomancy without doubt constituted a rather noteworthy instrument of political deliberation. Given this state of the field, the research project is breaking new ground. The first aim of the talk was to present in detail the geomantic techniques that were common in the 16th century, by drawing on the example of the Electorate of Saxony. On this basis I then provided a preliminary overview of the practical uses of geomancy at the court of the Electorate of Saxony.

As preliminary conclusions I was able to show that western geomancy in the 16th and early 17th centuries was, firstly, a very simple, and therefore easily accessible divination technique. It was not only relatively easy to generate the geomantic figures required for divination, but the interpretation of these figures was also greatly facilitated by appropriate manuals. This becomes particularly apparent in the reference works preserved in the Dresden collection, which allowed the user to look up the meanings of the generated geomantic figures as well as the predictions that could be inferred from them. At the same time, the language of these reference works rarely showed signs of hermetic encryption and was seldom symbolically charged, making it possible to acquire and apply these geomantic methods without instruction by a third party.

Secondly, the simplicity of the technique had the consequence that geomancy, in contrast to astrology, did not involve highly paid experts. In some ways, geomancy was a “self-help technique.” Therefore, it constituted an

ideal method for private and confidential inquiries, which undoubtedly was a concern in the realm of political decision-making. Thirdly, it is important to point out that the quick and easy generation of responses by way of geomancy made it possible to conduct geomantic inquiries in large numbers.

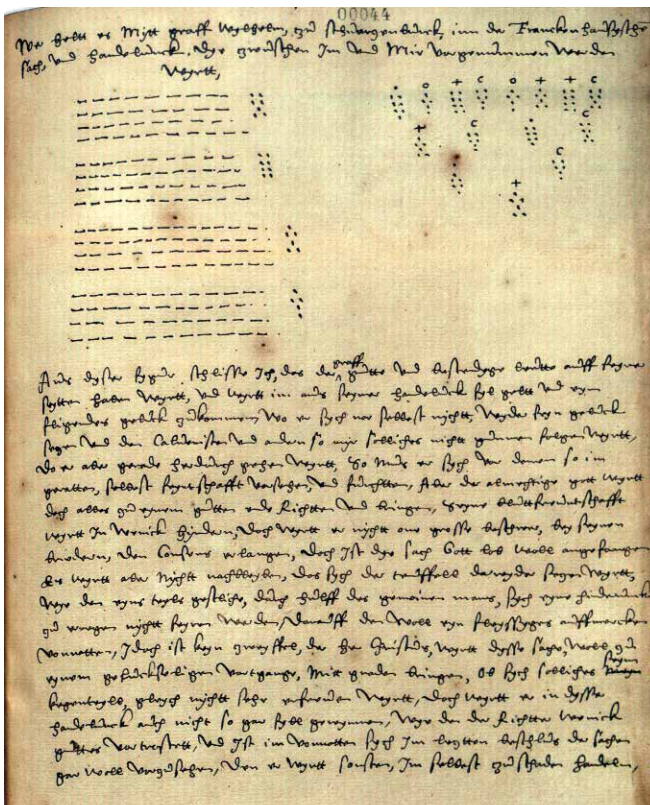
All three points combined lead to the conclusion that geomancy as an instrument of political deliberation lent itself to other uses than astrology did. With geomancy, not just another variation, but a new dimension of divination-based acts of rulership becomes visible, because unlike astrology, geomancy was also perfectly suited to be used in everyday political business.

With regard to divinatory practice, three areas of application for geomancy in everyday political affairs can be distinguished. Geomancy firstly was used by Elector Augustus for the verification of information. This mainly concerned the confirmation of messages and dispatches arriving in Dresden. In addition to the verification of incoming information, the Elector also used geomancy on a considerable scale in order to systematically obtain information on current political developments or the people in his environment. Secondly, in addition to the verification of information, geomancy thus served to proactively gather information. Finally, the third area can be summarized as involving situations where the Elector used geomancy to make concrete decisions. The first two areas concerned the use of geomancy to expand and secure the basis for decisions yet to be made, whereas the geomantic decision-making resulted in immediate action.

In all three areas, the material from Dresden shows clearly that geomantic inquiries became part of administrative procedures and to all intents and purposes also had a decision-generating function. In conclusion, it must therefore be emphasized that the use of geomancy in the early modern administration cannot be dismissed as a

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dysfunctional absurdity or characterized as a form of political deliberation that was exclusive and required many preconditions. Instead, it must be seen as a well-established, functional strategy for administrative action.



One of Augustus Elector's geomantic inquiries. SLUB, Mscr. Dresd. K 19, fol. 44a. With kind permission of the Saxon State and University Library Dresden.

One of the core issues discussed at IKGf concerns the relationship between fate and freedom. Through the study of the divination practices discussed above, a particular

understanding of fate and future becomes apparent. It can indeed be said that geomancy, like other techniques of divination, was based on the idea of a predetermined fate and a fixed future, which therefore is knowable and can be investigated. However, looking into the future did not only serve to know the future, but also to adapt one's own actions to the conditions of future developments.

Practitioners of geomantic inquiries believed that knowing the future would enable them in the present to take correct decisions without fault. The notion of a predetermined, fixed future, together with the opportunity provided by geomancy to take this future into consideration when making decisions in the here and now to some extent made it possible to shape this destiny and future.

Finally, there is the difficult question of how typical or representative the findings from Dresden are. References to similar cases of geomantic practice at other princely courts in the (Holy Roman) Empire or in Europe are absent in previous research. However, this does not necessarily mean that the findings for Dresden are exceptional, instead it probably is mainly due to the fact that the relevant material has so far not been systematically searched for. Instead, the large number and diversity of the Dresden manuscripts suggests that geomancy as a technique of political deliberation has not just been practised at the Dresden court, and that the Dresden sources merely formed part of a complex tradition of knowledge, as well as of a (more widespread) practice of application. How this tradition of knowledge can be better understood is yet to be seen in further research.

Exegetes, Visionaries, and Divine Oracles. New Horizons of Prophecy in the Twelfth Century

Dr. Uta Kleine (FernUniversität in Hagen; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

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The 12th century marks a turning point in the history of Christian prophecy, which enjoyed a resurgence after several centuries of marginalization. Whereas prophecy

had been practised widely and in public among the early Christians, in the early Middle Ages it became the task of contemplative monks and was thus largely confined

The prophetic inspiration of Hildegard of Bingen through the Holy Spirit (next to her, her secretary Volmar and a nun). Miniature from a manuscript of the Liber divinatorum operum (Lucca Codex, 1220/30). Printed with kind permission of the Bischöfliches Dom- und Diözesanmuseum, Mainz.



to the sphere of book-learning. In the 6th century, Cassiodor and Gregory the Great had set the model for this kind of scriptural prophecy (Schriftprophetie), the aim of which was not simply to foretell the future, but to reveal the *occulta* in works of edification and exegesis.

The situation changed around the year 1100; that is, in the aftermath of the important reform movement that gradually altered the appearance of the Church, leading to an increased hierarchization and the institutionalization of sacramental acts and charismatic powers. As a consequence, the newly created boundaries between the laity and clergy fostered the desire of the

excluded lay population, eager to participate more actively in religious affairs. It resulted in new forms of piety that often oscillated between orthodoxy and heresy. These developments form the historical context of what I would like to call the prophetic turn of the 12th century. It was marked by the reappearance of older forms of oral and ecstatic prophecy, which merged with the exegetic model of scriptural prophecy. Both forms increasingly drew on visions as a means of gaining access to the divine knowledge that was hidden from ordinary humans. This development encouraged reflections on the modes of seeing and gave rise to new forms of prophetic literature.

Three cases have been analyzed in detail to illustrate the argument: Rupert of Deutz (1129/30) presents himself as an inspired exegete and a scripture prophet. In a series of dream-visions that drew on the model of the biblical prophet Ezekiel, he describes his vocation to be a prophet as a mystical union of his body and soul with the divine trinity, through which his eyes and mouth were gradually opened. Whereas the reach

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of Rupert's exegetical writings was limited to the clerical elite, women like Hildegard of Bingen (†1179) and Elisabeth of Schönau (†1164/65) acted in the midst of society, although they too were original and prolific writers: as visionary oracles like Elisabeth

or as spiritual advisers, public preachers, and miracle workers like Hildegard. Both claimed that their entire oeuvre, i.e. their visionary books, their musical, exegetical, hagiographical, and medical works (Hildegard), as well as their sermons and letters (Hildegard and Elisabeth) were of prophetic origin, making the argument that their status as weak, uneducated females made them the perfect media of divine providence.

Divination in History: Political Prophecies in Italian Chronicles between Charles VIII of France and the Emperor Charles V

Dr. Lorenza Tromboni (Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, Firenze; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

The lecture concerned a group of political prophecies that were circulating between the Middle Ages and early Renaissance in Italy. The two chronological limits of the research - 1494 and 1527 - represent two fundamental moments in Italian history: in the autumn of 1494, Charles VIII of France began his Italian enterprise, claiming the heritage of the reign of Naples. In 1527, mercenary German troops of the emperor Charles V destroyed and plundered the city of Rome. The period between these two dates was called the *guerre d'Italia*, Italian

war, since the Italian enterprise of the French king sparked 30 years of conflict among Italian and foreign states.

The analysis focuses on prophecies related to the figure of the emperor (or king) of recent times, a theme arising from the Joachimit tradition. Starting from the end of the 14th century, a prophecy called *Karolus* circulated in France as a political propaganda tool intended to support the election of Charles VI. This brief text, known as the "second Charlemagne prophecy", stated that a French king named Charles, son of Charles, would accomplish an incredible military and religious enterprise, following the model of the emperor Charlemagne. Several versions of this prophecy were transmitted, copied, and printed in Italy: the lecture focuses on city chronicles written between 1494 and 1527, highlighting the historical context as the cause and origin of such texts. The *Karolus* has a structured and clear formulation of the typical topics of this kind of literature: military force, messianic mission, trip to the Holy Land. The *Karolus* frames several elements that connect it with different prophetic medieval and renaissance themes, such as the "hidden king", also referring to other major historical figures, such as King Arthur or Frederick II: popular traditions denied the death of these kings, claiming that they were in hiding, simply waiting to return.

This last passage is particularly relevant for a possible comparative approach to the study of hidden historical figures, between history and myth: in the Islamic Shi'ite tradition, indeed, the figure of the hidden imam can be compared with the hidden king. From a different time and culture is Li-Hong, exponent of the Taoist messianic tradition, linked to the philosopher, Lao-Tzu: Li-Hong is prophesied to appear again at the end of the world, to rescue the chosen one.




Dr. Lorenza Tromboni. Photo: Anna Schneider (IKGf)

Prophecy in the Ancient Near East and Israel between Policy and Deity

Prof. Dr. Jürgen van Oorschot (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg; IKGf Visiting Fellow)


This lecture presented an overview of the context of early Jewish prophecy during the Persian period, from the 6th to 4th centuries BCE: What is prophecy? What are the special features of Ancient Near East prophecy, especially in Mari (18th century BCE) and Neo-Assyrian times (7th century BCE), and how does it integrate itself into an environment of many other methods of divination? What is the relationship of prophecy in the times of the two kingdoms, Israel and Juda, and the Ancient Near East prophecy? What

factors initiate the development of prophetic literature in monarchic times in Juda and Israel? What advances this development to produce complex books linked to the prophet figures we know as the so-called Schriftpropheten? All this took place in early Judaism, influencing the Islamic and the Christian reception of prophecy.

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God, the Prophet, and the State in Islam

Prof. Dr. Georges Tamer (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

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In no other contemporary context of the monotheistic religions is the question of prophecy and political theology as sharply raised as it is currently in the Muslim world. With the proclamation of the “Islamic State,” the study of Islam and its political and religious thought is also facing a challenging reality. A political institution has been created and it claims to be a reiteration of the first Islamic state which was founded and led by the Prophet Muhammad. In addition to his prophetic mission, Muhammad became the political and military leader of the first Muslim polity in Medina. He also exerted legislative authority, partly following Qur’ānic statements, partly based on his own opinions. Declared in the Qur’ān to be the “Messenger of God”, his followers are commanded to obey him in the same way as they are obliged to obey God. Muhammad died without appointing a deputy or a successor; he did not have an



The Flag of the Islamic State.

In the upper part, the first part of the Islamic creed, “lā ilāha illā llāh” (There is no God except God), is written in white. In the center of the lower part is a white circle in which the second part of the Islamic creed, “Muḥammad rasūlu llāh” (Muhammad is the messenger of God), is written from bottom to top in black. The white circle with the inscription symbolizes Muhammad’s silver seal ring. According to Islamic sources, the Prophet used the ring to seal his letters to contemporary kings and rulers, inviting them and their peoples to convert to Islam.

Source of the Image: Wikimedia Commons

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heir who could have led the Muslim community after his death. His immediate successors were called Caliphs, i.e. Successors of the Messenger of God. Under the Umayyads' rule, a shift happened, according to which the head of the Islamic state, the Caliph, was considered as the "Deputy of God." According to the predominant view in medieval Islamic political thought, the Caliph, as the legitimate successor of the prophet, ultimately controls all things and assures that right religion becomes the principle on which society runs.

However, in the context of the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924 in modern Turkey, the issue of the Caliphate became the subject of a theologico-political debate. According to one view, the Caliphate, actually resembling the papacy, presented worldwide leadership of the Muslim

community without practical political power. According to a counterview, Islam did not lay down a precise order of government. Muhammad was a prophet with a special power; he did not set out to establish a state and Islam did not establish any particular political system. In Muhammad's unique case, politics was subject to a higher, wider power to rule over the affairs of the body and spirit, and the administration of this world and the afterlife. This view remained, however, marginalized in the majority of Muslim societies. With the establishment of influential political movements such as the Muslim Brethren, an all-embracing vision of Islam, covering all political, social, and economic aspects of life, was to be reaffirmed. Endeavours to separate religion and politics in Islam seemingly have not yet met with success.

On a Travel Poet's Trail in Modern Japan: Celebrating Matsuo Bashō's Heritage

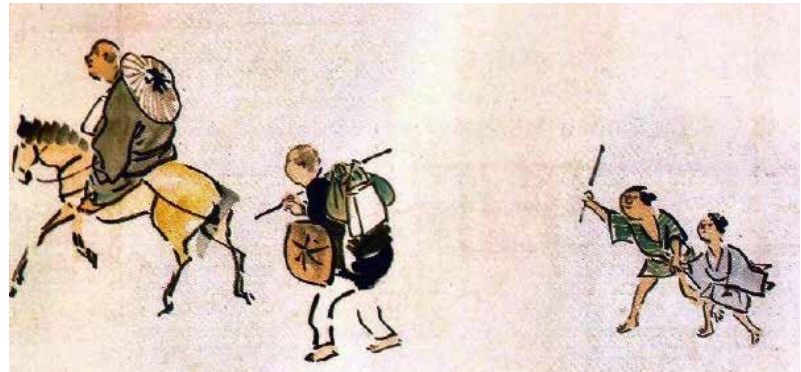
Prof. Dr. Katja Triplett (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen)

In contemporary Japan we can clearly observe a pilgrimage boom. The phenomenon of Japanese pilgrimage has been introduced and a remarkable variation of the religious pilgrimage explored: the pilgrimage to the sites visited by the celebrated 17th-century Japanese poet, Matsuo Bashō, on his famous travels. A poetic-prose travel account of the 2,400 km-long journey he undertook in 1691 remains a popular work of classical literature in Japan. Bashō worked on it for three years, but it was published only posthumously, in 1702, as "The Narrow Road to the Deep North" (*Oku no hosomichi*). In it, we follow him through the north-eastern part of the island of Honshū. One of the disciples who accompanied him, as well as other sources, documented this trip especially well. Together with the descriptions in "The Narrow Road to the Deep North," Bashō's trail is therefore known in great detail. Because of his continuously growing fame – even reaching the rank of a deity in 1793 – this figure can be seen as a semi-divine national hero. Then and now, his heritage is celebrated fervently in Japan. The establishment of

the Matsuo Bashō commemoration trail, linking the sites where he stopped with his poetic activities, has to be seen in the context of looking at Bashō as a semi-divine figure because the establishment of the trail and the activities related to it are firmly linked to the general phenomenon of pilgrimage by circularly linked sites in Japanese Buddhism. The paradigm of the circulatory Buddhist pilgrimage is so dominant that non-Buddhist religions such as Shintō or those Buddhist traditions that decline the notion of pilgrimage as a means of obtaining merit have also invented circuits.

The invention of circulatory pilgrimage in Japan based on highly successful older models is a clear sign of the immense popularity of this practice. One of the new circuits is the Bashō commemoration trail. The presentation showed how the Bashō trail is connected to Japanese Buddhist pilgrimage and the idea of celebrating the nation. By connecting with a historical figure of divine talent, visitor-pilgrims literally follow in his or her footsteps to en-

sure a vision of the future for the nation, for peace and prosperity. Celebration of a nation's heroic deeds, holy places, and natural features is not only an identity-forming project. It is a way of connecting oneself to the spirit of a semi-divine genius and the spirit of the place he, in this case Bashō, visited.



“Oku no hosomichi emaki”

Picture Scroll of the “Narrow Road to the Deep North” by Yosa Buson (1716 - 1784)

The poet on horseback followed by his travel companion Sora on the road to Nasu Kurobane. Itsuō Art Center, 18th century.


Source: Wikimedia Commons

Karma, Chance, or Simulation? The Salvific Structure of the Tibetan Buddhist Game “Ascending the Spiritual Levels”

Prof. Dr. Jens Schlieter (Universität Bern)

Board games have been used in various religious traditions to visualize soteriological paths. The Tibetan Buddhist game “ascending the [spiritual] levels” (*sa gnon rnam bzhags*), supposedly designed by the famous Tibetan scholar-monk Sa skya Paṇḍita Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (1182-1251), seems to be a perfect example of this. The game belongs to the group of “Chutes and Ladders” board games. Moves in the game, determined by casting a die, symbolize the karma of the player and will either promote the player's pawn closer to final liberation, i.e. nirvana, or demote it. In the most severe case, the pawn will be caught in the “Vajra-hell”, a hell scheduled especially for Tantric practitioners who break Tantric vows. Most interestingly, the Tibetan Buddhist game not only simulates the spiritual paths of the three major Buddhist vehicles (hearers, bodhisattvas, and Tantric adepts), but also of other religious traditions, namely, Hindu, Bon, and Islam. As a social practice, playing this game will, on the one hand, help to imagine singular as well as collective workings of karma; on the other hand, it will be entertaining, too, since individuals seem to experience in the game spiritual success or failure – in contrast to their actual lifestyle as known to the other players.

as “narration” (of the general efficacy of soteriological paths). Given, however, that the game induces its Buddhist players to identify with their individual way through the game (accepting the chances determined by die throws as the workings of karma), the game may actually be seen as propagating certain conceptions of karma. A description of the game as “narration” stresses its quality as a pedagogical means; a description as a “simulation” would, however, be compliant with the Buddhist philosophical stance of conventional reality, for which Buddhist and non-Buddhist paths are but worldly imaginations.

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By applying ludological and narrative approaches taken from recent methodological discussions of digital games, the structure of the game can be described either as “simulation” (of the player's own karma), or

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WORKSHOPS | CONFERENCES | COLLOQUIUM

On the Road in the Name of Religion II: Ways and Destinations in a Comparative Perspective – Medieval Europe and Asia *

Convened by the International Consortium for Research in the Humanities (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nuremberg) and Fundación de San Millán de la Cogolla; under the direction of Prof. Dr. Klaus Herbers (Erlangen), Prof. Dr. Carlos Alvar (Madrid) und Prof. Dr. Ángel Gómez Moreno (Madrid).

San Millán de la Cogolla (ESP), November 16-18 2014

Situated in San Millán de la Cogolla, northern Spain, the ensemble consisting of the two monasteries San Millán de Yuso and San Millán de Suso was declared a world heritage site by the UNESCO in 1997. Precious codices, valuable paintings, as well as the art-historically eminent architecture contribute to the significance of the place. Due to the relics of Saint Aemilianus that are kept here, San Millán is rather popular as a pilgrimage site. In addition, the monastery is very important from a linguistic perspective, as the so-called *Glosas Emilianas*, the oldest extant Western Aragonese text and thus a precursor to (modern) Spanish, were compiled here.

In these surroundings the International Consortium for Research in the Humanities and the Fundación de San Millán de la Cogolla under the direction of Klaus Herbers (Erlangen), Carlos Alvar (Madrid), and Ángel Gómez Moreno organized a three-day conference entitled “On the Road in the Name of Religion”, which was dedicated to the paths and destinations of pilgrimage. In terms of content,

the presentations were tied to and continued the conference “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”, which had taken place in Erlangen in 2011 and had explored the topic of pilgrimage in the five major world religions from a broad and comparative perspective. At the earlier conference the broad range of possible angles on pilgrimage had become apparent, which is why on this occasion the organizers opted for the historical perspective and a focus on medieval Europe and Asia.

In her keynote lecture on the first evening of the conference, Felicitas Schmieder (Hagen) analyzed the role of pilgrimage, sacred sites, and worship on Latin European medieval maps of the world (*Mappae Mundi*). She specifically highlighted the messages of the map-makers, their political agenda (recovering former Christian areas), the way that foreign sites such as Mekka were depicted, as well as the function of the world map as world chronicle. In analogy to the multiple meanings of the scripture known from bible exegesis, Felicitas Schmieder made use of this form of analysis to interpret a world map, by tying the literal meaning to the graphical representation, the typological meaning to the salvation history on the map, the anagogical meaning to the eschatological aspects of the depiction, and the moral meaning to the Christian duties, for example to the remembrance by visiting the graves of the apostles.

The second day of the conference began with a panel on pilgrimage trails, chaired by Klaus Herbers. In the



San Millán de Yuso, a view from San Millán de Suso. Photo by Lisa Walleit, IKGf

first presentation, Bruno Judic (Tours) discussed possible pilgrimage routes to the grave of Saint Martin in Tours, as the medieval sources do not provide precise details for them before the report of Hieronymus Münzer at the end of the 15th century. By contrast, the western routes to the Holy Land are well documented – David Jacoby (Jerusalem) subsequently provided an overview of their development from the 11th to the 15th century. He especially emphasized the increasing predominance of the sea route, which was revealed by the increasing size of the ships, as well as by the competition among Mediterranean ports to attract pilgrims. Renato Stopani (Florence) focused on two important pilgrimage trails to Rome, the Via Francigena and the Via Teutonica. Stopani explained the independent development of the two road networks, which only converged near Montefiascone, 100 km north of Rome. Santiago Gutiérrez García (Santiago de Compostela) interpreted the pilgrimage trail as lure for knightly ambitions, by drawing on the example of the legendary Paso Honroso of the summer of 1434, when all knights traveling to Santiago de Compostela were challenged to a duel by the Leonese Suero de Quiñones. Gutiérrez García claimed that the journey was undertaken by said travelers both as knights and as pilgrims, for reasons that concerned both piety and honour. The remaining talks of the panel mainly concerned texts about pilgrimage and travel: Luis Albuquerque García (Madrid) pointed to the difference between travelogues and other literary descriptions of “reality”; Joaquín Rubio Tovar (Madrid) emphasized the different approaches translators of John Mandeville’s “Libro de las Maravillas” took to interpret it; Santiago López Martínez-Morás (Santiago de Compostela) also highlighted the intention of the authors when he explained how the route was modified in the “Entrée d’Espagne”, an adaptation of the Pseudo-Turpin.

The following shorter panel on pilgrimage destinations was chaired by Carlos Alvar. In the first presentation, Jochen Johrendt (Wuppertal) discussed the Holy City of Rome as a pilgrimage destination. Many factors contributed to the attraction of this place, with its ancient cultural relics always being among them. Drawing on the example of S. Giovanni in Laterano and S. Pietro in Vaticano, Johrendt illustrated the competition for pre-eminence

PROGRAM

First Day: Sunday, November 16, 2014

- Klaus Herbers (Erlangen), Carlos Alvar (Madrid); Welcome Address
- Felicitas Schmieder (Hagen); Keynote Lecture “‘Here Many Saracens Wander to Mekka’ – on the Role of Pilgrimage, Shrines and Worshipping on Latin-European Medieval World Maps”

Second Day: Monday, November 17, 2014

Panel I: Pilgrimage Trails

- Bruno Judic (Tours) “Saint Martin de Tours”
- David Jacoby (Jerusalem) “Evolving Routes of Western Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, 11th – 15th Century: an Overview”
- Joaquín Rubio Tovar (Madrid) “Los viajes de Mandeville en la España del siglo XVI”
- Renato Stopani (Florenz) “Via Francigena”
- Santiago Gutiérrez García (Santiago de Compostela) “Caminos de la aventura y la espiritualidad. Viajeros, caballeros y devotos en el Paso Honroso de Hospital de Órbigo”
- Luis Albuquerque García (Madrid) “El descubrimiento del otro y los viajes del descubrimiento”
- Santiago López Martínez-Morás (Santiago de Compostela) “La conquista del Camino de Santiago en L’Entrée d’Espagne (s. XIV)”

Panel II: Pilgrimage Destinations

- Jochen Johrendt (Wuppertal) “Rom als Pilgerziel”
- Michelina Di Cesare (Rom) “The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem as a Medieval Christian Pilgrimage Site”
- Andreas Holndonner (Erlangen) “Politisches Pilgern? Das Jakobusgrab in den Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Compostela und Toledo im 12. Jh.”
- Andreas Berndt (Erlangen) “Wallfahrten in der chinesischen Provinz – Rituale des Wasserholens im Shanxi der späten Kaiserzeit”
- Isaac Donoso (Alicante) “Viajeros andalusíes en Asia oriental”

Third Day: Tuesday, November 18, 2014

Panel III: Literature of Pilgrims

- Philipp Maas (Wien) “Pilgrimage in Indian Literature”
- Marion Eggert (Bochum) “Intersections of Sacral and Other Ways in Korean Mountain Excursion Records of the 15th–18th Century”
- Jonathan Patrick Sell (Madrid) “Early Modern Travel as Pilgrimage, Passion and Martyrdom”
- Adeline Rucquoi (Paris) “Early Medieval Pilgrimage Literature”
- Marco Piccat (Triest) “Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago: the Legend of Charlemagne, Pilgrim Emperor”
- Klaus Herbers (Erlangen), Ángel Gómez Moreno (Madrid), Carlos Alvar (Madrid); Concluding debate

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and attracting pilgrims, which among other things manifested itself in the systematic promotion of relics and the use of indulgences. Andreas Holndonner (Erlangen) also outlined the ramifications of a competitive environment for pilgrimage with regard to the grave of the apostle St James. In this account, the pilgrimage to the grave was used for political purposes in the rivalry between the archdioceses Toledo and Santiago de Compostela. The contribution by Michela di Cesare (Rom) on Jerusalem and the Dome of the Rock as a Christian pilgrimage destination had to be cancelled due to illness, but a written version of her talk was circulated and discussed. Isaac Donoso (Alicante) made the link from Europe to East Asia when he analyzed documentary evidence for voyages from Islamic al-Andalus to China and India, and interpreted them as pilgrimages. This put

the focus on East Asia, and in the final talk Andreas Berndt (Erlangen) presented the abodes of dragon gods as destinations for pilgrimages in late-Imperial Shanxi. The pilgrims returned from there with water, and took it to the dragon god altars in their villages. By bringing in the water, a divine spirit was also introduced, as it were, to the

religious community.

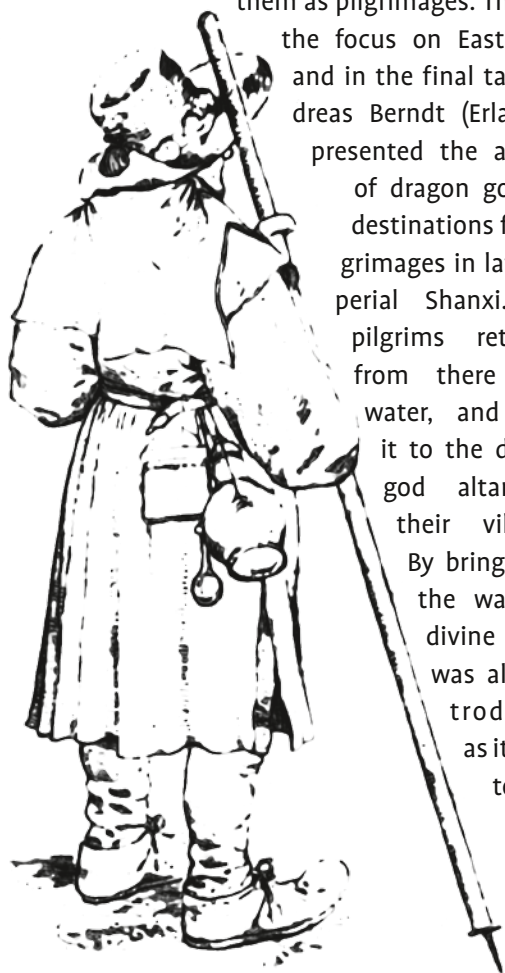
Research into the history of pilgrimage always relies on pilgrimage reports, and therefore these reports already played an important role in

the two previous sections. The final panel, which was chaired by Ángel Gómez Moreno, nevertheless was specifically dedicated to the literature of pilgrims. The first talk by Philipp Maas (Vienna) introduced the founding myth of a holy site on the South Asian pilgrimage trail, which is reported by the great Sanskrit epic “Mahābhārata”. Ascetic strength is turned into Karma through the willingness to endure the heat in this place, just as the legendary King Samoka did in the story. Marion Eggert (Bochum) showed how sacred and secular trails converge in Korean travelogues of the 15th to 18th centuries. Some elements of pilgrimage can be detected in these texts, although the question remains if that is merely a western interpretation. Jonathan Patrick Sell (Madrid) was able to respond to this question in a more conclusive way, when he showed how tropes of pilgrimage were used to frame political demands by drawing on three English travelogues dated around the year 1600. Adeline Rucquoi (Paris) highlighted the diverse literary production regarding the pilgrimage to the grave of the Apostle St James, which culminated in the 11th and 12th centuries and alternated between religious and political contexts, which is why it should be read accordingly. In the last presentation of the conference, Marco Piccat (Triest) outlined the literary rendering of Charlemagne as a pilgrim emperor, such as in the Song of Roland, as well as the dissemination of this image. The concluding discussion debated ways to compare pilgrimage across cultures and disciplines. It was suggested that a format be created to allow the collective reading of relevant texts on the topic of pilgrimage. One result of the conference was the conclusion that pilgrimage in many cases was only one of several aspects of a journey, in other words, that the pilgrim was not just a pilgrim, and therefore did not just undertake his pilgrimage for religious reasons. Accordingly, the production of literature was guided by diverse intentions, which is why sources that on first glance are irrelevant can shed light on pilgrimage as well.

The conference was framed by pertinent activities: we took a tour of the Monastery Yuso, located close to the conference venue, with



The conference took place in the premises of the Cilengua in the Monastery San Millán de Yuso. Photo by Dr. Hans Christian Lehner, IKGf



its church, the famous altarpiece depicting Saint Aemilianus in the battle of Hacinas, the precious shrines housing the relics of the aforementioned saint and his teacher Felix, as well as its impressive library. An excursion led to the Monastery Suso, situated on a hill above the village, where we saw the coffin of Saint Ae-

milianus, dating to the 11th century. After the conference, a tour of the nearby Bodega Muga was offered. A publication of selected contributions is in preparation.

Dr. Hans-Christian Lehner (IKGF, Research Fellow)

Workshop: Divination in Tibet and Mongolia. Past and Present

Convenor: Prof. Dr. Donatella Rossi (Universität La Sapienza, Rom; IKGF Visiting Fellow); Erlangen, December 2-3, 2014

The International Consortium for Research in the Humanities hosted a Workshop on “Divination in Tibet and Mongolia. Past and Present,” convened by IKGF Visiting Fellow Prof. Dr. Donatella Rossi on December 2-3, 2014. The workshop gathered internationally distinguished scholars who presented, according to their own specialized research in the field of Tibetan and Mongolian studies, a specific topic on the numerous and diversified systems and instruments for discovering hidden circumstances pertaining to these two cultural realities. The workshop, the first of its kind, was opened by Prof. Dr. Rainer Trinczek, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Theology of the Friedrich-Alexander-University, Erlangen-Nuremberg, with a very warm welcoming address.

Prof. Dr. Agata Bareja-Starzyńska from the University of Warsaw, Poland, presented a paper entitled “Some Notes on Tibetan Astrology in Mongolia: the Legacy of Lamyn Gegeen Blo Bzang bstan ‘dzin rgyal mtshan (1639-1703).” Lamyn Gegeen Blo Bzang bstan ‘dzin rgyal mtshan (1639-1703) was an eminent Mongolian Gelugpa scholar who studied in Tibet in 1655-1661 under many important masters, including the First (Fourth) Panchen Lama and the Fifth Dalai Lama. The paper provided information on Lamyn Gegeen and his activities as well as on the continuation of *zurkhai* or astrological/divination practices in Mongolia today.

Prof. em. Dr. Per Kværne from the University of Oslo, Norway, presented a paper on “A case of prophecy in post-imperial Bon.” An early (12th-13th century) text in the

tradition of “Eternal Bon” is *Grags-pa gling-bsgrags*. The text ends with a long prophecy regarding the natural disasters and social collapse which will follow the conversion of the country to Buddhism and the sending into exile of the Bon priests. The paper examined this prophecy in the context of the construction of Tibetan history.

Prof. Dr. Dan Martin from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, presented a paper entitled “Divinations Padampa Did or Did Not Do or Did or Did Not Write.” The cultural afterlife may determine why biographies continue to be written and read. What was their legacy, and what effects did they have on the broader culture? If we can answer this question, it is surely an important part of their biography. Indeed, a biography that ends in death cannot be a complete biography. With this sort of approach, we can seriously entertain the idea of “authorship” for works that were probably not composed during the lifetime of the famous Indian Siddha Padampa (d. ca 1117). He is credited with writing a highly magical medical recipe book. The paper analyzed the divination works attributed to him and looked at what the sources contemporary to him had to say about his predictions, divinations, and observations on fate.

Prof. Dr. Petra Maurer, from the Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften / LMU München, presented a paper on “How to determine the right place for construction. Glimpses of *sa dpyad*.” Tibetan geomancy (*sa dpyad*) is a field of knowledge that had and continues to have a strong impact on Tibetan cultural life. Geomantic princi-

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ples determine the sites for the construction of sacral buildings such as monasteries, stupas, or hermitages, together with houses for the living and places for the dead. *Sa dpyad* requires skill in examining the landscape and interpreting the shapes of mountains and rocks and the courses of rivers, together with experience of positioning buildings and the interior equipment. When a suitable place is found, the *rtsis pa* (diviner, astrologer) has to calculate several elements that are considered to determine time in order to fix the date for construction.

Prof. Dr. Charles Ramble, from the University of Oxford and the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, presented a paper on “Signs and Portents in Nature and in Dreams: What they Mean and What can be Done about Them.” Divination is a way of finding out what the universe holds in store for us. The different techniques that are used reveal the visible component of an otherwise unseen configuration of forces that will affect our lives for better or worse, giving us an opportunity to make due provision, but there are signs all around us that do not need to be elicited by special methods, if only we knew how to recognize and interpret them.

Prof. Dr. Donatella Rossi, from the Sapienza University of Rome and IKGF Visiting Fellow, presented a paper on “Preliminary Considerations about the Role of Semantics in Divination.” The choice of the theme was inspired by the research carried out at IKGF on the Tibetan divination system known as *Ju-thig*, an extremely rich, complex method that is ascribed to the Tibetan Bon tradition. While studying and analyzing relevant textual sources, hermeneutical themes emerged that engendered reflections upon



Welcome address by the Dean, Prof. Dr. Rainer Trinczek. Photo by Rolf Scheuermann, IKGF

the role of conceptual semantics in the field of divination and their interrelation, a field of analysis that could prove extremely significant and relevant in terms of historical and comparative religious studies.

Prof. em. Dr. Dieter Schuh, from the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, Abteilung für Mongolistik und Tibetstudien; International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies (GmbH), presented a paper entitled “How to Calculate the Future: The Mathematics of Divination in Tibet.” Complicated computations are executed mainly according to program texts in which operations on the abacus are prescribed in detail without giving any further explanation of the mathematical background. Calculations on the abacus using loose pebbles are made for fiscal purposes and are called *rde'u-rtsis*. The calculations on the sand-abacus are astronomical calculations and are called *skar-rtsis*. There is a third calculation science in Tibet, which is called *'byung-rtsis* (“calculation of the elements”) or *nag-rtsis* (“Chinese calculation”). This is actually the most important and a widely used “science” of divination in Tibet.

Prof. Dr. Mona Schrempf from the EASTmedicine Research Centre, Complementary Medicine, School of Life Sciences, University of Westminster, London, presented a paper on “*Mo*-Divination in Healing Rituals in Bhutan.” In eastern Bhutan, the site of her ethnographic fieldwork, rice *mo* is used for “seeing” and recognizing the retaliating spirit or local deity that has previously been polluted by the culprit-turned-patient. During healing rituals, *mo* can be used several times and for different purposes, such as finding the direction in which the patient’s “soul” (*bla*, *phla*, *yong*) was stolen in order to retrieve it. The healer also uses *mo* to check the outcome of the ritual.

Mr. Alex Smith, Doctoral Candidate of the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, presented a paper entitled “Prognosis, Prophylaxis, and

Trumps: Comparative Remarks on several Common Forms of Tibetan Cleromancy.” Relative to the prevalence and diversity of divination practices in Tibetan cultures, the study of divination remains grossly under-represented in the Tibetological literature. The paper discussed the structure of the prognostics offered in a form of lithomancy (pebble divination) common to the Bon religion of Tibet.

Individual paper presentations were well received by an audience of international scholars with backgrounds in a diversity of different disciplines assembled at the IKGf. Through these presentations and round-table discussions, also *ex auditorio*, the participants endeavoured to establish a blueprint for a transdisciplinary and transcultural discourse on the nature and cultural history of divination in Tibet and Mongolia, to be developed through future research.

Prof. Dr. Donatella Rossi
(Sapienza University of Rome; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

Reading Workshop: “Reading *The Stalk Method* 筮法, a 300 BCE Chinese Bamboo Divination Manuscript”

Convenor: Prof. Dr. Constance Cook (Lehigh University, IKGf Visiting Fellow); Erlangen, March 11, 2015

On Wednesday, March 11, 2015, 11.00 am–1.00 pm and 2.30 pm–5.00 pm, visiting fellow Professor Constance Cook (Lehigh University), lead a text reading workshop called “Reading *The Stalk Method* 筮法, a 300 BCE Chinese Bamboo Divination Manuscript”. This recently discovered bamboo text is a diviner’s manual and uses trigrams correlated with units of time, gender, directions, and other aspects to diagnose common problems in an elite man’s life, marriage, illness, career, etc. Prof. Cook began with a 20-minute introduction and then led a case-by-case translation and discussion of the divination methodology employed. Approximately twenty people attended, including FAU students, IKGf full-time and visiting scholars, as well as scholars who specially came for the day from Heidelberg, Munich, and Vienna.

The text consists of 63 thin bamboo strips about 35 centimeters long intertwined and bound together as a single flat manual—something like a map—and strengthened with silk strips on the back. The diviner had eighteen sections on the right half of the text that presented sample trigram patterns, sets of four (out of a total of eight) trigrams in squares, and their interpretations on a variety of subjects (life and death, achieving goals, negotiations, warfare, journeys, etc.) and the remaining twenty-one

sections on the left-side of the manual providing charts, diagrams, and lists of correlating factors to be used in determining the auspicious or inauspicious nature of the trigram sets on the right half of the manual. One section included a picture of a human body with parts of the body marked with trigrams. Another listed all the types of curses indicated by the appearance of particular trigrams.

Although trigrams are traditionally considered the basic building blocks of the hexagrams found in the well-known *Yijing* tradition, the *Shifa* manual is completely



Reading Workshop with Prof. Dr. Constance Cook. Photo by Prof. Dr. Esther-Maria Guggenmos, IKGf

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different. First, the trigrams are composed of even and odd numbers instead of using the broken and unbroken lines for Yin Yang. There are no line texts. Most significant was the relative position of the trigrams within the square and particular qualities assigned them (such as gender) in terms of the topic addressed by the diviner.

Prof. Dr. Constance Cook
(Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, College of Arts and Sciences, Lehigh University; IKGf Visiting Fellow)

Jewish Divination (Dr. Josefina Rodríguez Arribas)

Convenor: Dr. Josefina Rodríguez Arribas (IKGF Visiting Fellow);
Erlangen, March 17-18, 2015

Charles Burnett (The Warburg Institute, University of London): The Employment of Foreign and Exotic Languages (including Hebrew or Pseudo-Hebrew) in Medieval Arabic and Latin divination

Texts on magic and divination in Arabic and Latin often have single words or whole passages in other languages (real or fictitious), in code, or in a different script. This talk will explore the implications of these “exotic words.” Hebrew is among the languages used. The earliest Latin texts on onomancy (name divination) instruct the practitioner to write the client’s name in Hebrew letters, and provide tables of equivalences between Hebrew and Latin letters. In magical texts in general, some terminology is kept in its original language, while other terminology is translated. The “translation” of letters and the “translation” of terminology go hand in hand, and repay being investigated together.

Shlomo Sela (Bar Ilan University): Abraham Ibn Ezra's Views of Astrology as Reflected by the Introductions to his Astrological Treatises

From the Middle Ages until the present, the development of astrology among Jews was associated mainly with Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089–1167). Today, we know that he composed at least nineteen astrological treatises, which cover every branch of Graeco-Arabic astrology. Despite the significant contribution by his astrological oeuvre to both Jewish and Christian readers, Ibn Ezra never entertained any serious pretension to being innovative in these treatises, which were designed, on the whole, as textbooks or reference works to educate readers in conventional

astrological knowledge. However, the introductions he wrote to his astrological treatises feature remarkably creative and idiosyncratic ideas that are not only related to central concepts of his scientific, religious, philosophical, and cultural worldview but also reveal his own approach to astrology, in general, and to a specific system of astrology, in particular. The main purpose of my talk is to survey these ideas. I will focus on the introductions to (1) *Sefer ha-Moladot* (Book of Nativities), which poses a masterly defense of the doctrine of nativities by offering eight ways to explain away its essential weaknesses; (2) *Reshit Hokhmah* (The Beginning of Wisdom) and the two versions of *Sefer ha-Mivharim* (Book of Elections), where Ibn Ezra highlights the possibility that human beings can change their own destiny and thereby calls attention to the tension between free will and astral determinism; (3) the two versions of *Sefer ha-She'elot* (Book of Interrogations), which chronicle a dispute among astrologers about the validity of the doctrine of interrogations; (4) the second version of *Sefer ha-Te'amim* (Book of Reasons), which demonstrates the existence of the orbs of the planets and fixed stars, and of the ninth starless orb as well; (5) *Sefer ha-Me'orat* (Book of the Luminaries), on medical astrology, which deals with the source of the light of the Sun and Moon within a cosmology that divides reality into the supernal domain, the domain of the stars and orbs, and the sublunar domain; and (6) the two versions of *Sefer ha-'Olam* (Book of the World), on historical and meteorological astrology, which addresses the doctrine of conjunctionalism as reflected in the “120 conjunctions of the seven planets,” and the conjunctions of Saturn and Jupiter.

Michael D. Swartz (Ohio State University): Divination as Transaction: Rhetorical and Social Dimensions of Ancient Jewish Divination Texts

The act of divination inevitably involves interaction between the diviner and a client. The living contexts of such transactions may be lost to historians, but they are reflected in the rhetoric, techniques, and narratives embedded in divination manuals and descriptions—real or imagined—of divinatory encounters. In this paper, some of the ramifications of this dimension of Jewish divination texts are explored, as well as its implications for the social and economic positions of the practitioners who composed, redacted, and traded such documents. Sources for this study will include divination manuals from the Cairo Geniza and related texts and stories of divination from rabbinic literature.

Anne Regourd (University of Copenhagen and CNRS): An early 18th-Century Copy of the Kitāb Qiyām al-Khulafā' found in Yemen

A copy of the Kitāb Qiyām al-Khulafā', which I found in Yemen in 1993, is dated 8 Jumādā awwal 1150 A.H. (= Sept. 1737 AD). Under the name of the famous Jewish astrologer Masha'Allah, who practised at the early 'Abbasids Court together with the Banū Nawbakht, this book gained some renown because it displayed the horoscopes of the Prophet Muhammad and the Caliphs up to Hārūn al-Rashid. They were published by E.S. Kennedy and D. Pingree, *The Astrological History of Māshā'Allāh*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard U. Press, 1971, in their Appendix 2, on the base of "two late manuscripts", one from Berlin and the other in the Vatican. The Yemeni copy is conserved at the Waqf Library of Dhamar, and had belonged to the personal collection of a practising Yemeni astrologer (*munajjim*). At the intersection of textual studies and fieldwork, this paper, after

presenting the text, will concentrate on the circulation of the 1150/1737 manuscript and its potential uses (practice).

Eliezer Papo (Ben Gurion University of the Negev): Sephardic (Judeo-Spanish) Male and Female Folk Divination

The traditional Sephardic internal discourse was conducted simultaneously in three different languages: Aramaic (penetrable and understandable only to the educated, mostly rabbinic elite), Hebrew (whose liturgical and Biblical stratum were accessible to all Jewish men) and Judeo-Spanish (shared by the entire community, in its oral

form "even" by the females of the group). While Sephardic women, who were at the bottom of this linguistic pyramid, could not really diversify their linguistic strategy, as their only "choice" was Judeo-Spanish – the educated rabbinic elite could always switch to Aramaic (if it wanted to exclude the common masses), to Judeo-Spanish (when, on purpose, it wanted to include them) or simply stick to Hebrew when writing for a traditional male public, with the exclusion of women. This triple-braided cord was typical for all the internal spheres of the traditional Sephardic life, including the field of popular magic/medicine, including divination. Consequently, rabbinic divination



was conducted almost exclusively in Aramaic/Hebrew, the lay male divination in Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish, and female divination exclusively in Judeo-Spanish. While much has been written about High Sephardic culture, including the practical Kabbalah of the Sephardic rabbis, including its divination technics, the Sephardic folk divination was never subjected to a thorough investigation. The purpose of the present paper is to offer a primary analysis of the most common divination practices of common Sephardic women and men, such as: 1. *Meldar/Avrir el fildjan* (reading/opening of the coffee cup), also known as *Avrir el goral* (the opening of destiny) or *Mirar el fal* (looking

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up fortune); 2. *kurshumes* or *livianos* – a diagnostic technique aimed at divining the cause of the disease; and 3. *echar gorilot* – a male divination technique, based on the magical or “inspired” opening of the Hebrew Scripture. The first two techniques are shared by all Balkan (and not only Balkan) women, and my presentation will focus exclusively on Sephardic conceptual, lexical, or applicatory peculiarities. The third technique was known to the male elite already in the Middle Ages, but became a widespread popular practice among Sephardic laymen only when R. Hayim Vital popularized his “easy to follow” method in his *Sefer ha-Goralot*. A thorough analysis of Vital’s 256 questions offers a rare window into the internal world of 16th-century Safed’s Sephardic community, into the fears, hopes, and preoccupations of common men and women.

Helen R. Jacobus (University College of London): How horoscopes may have been compiled in Second Temple Judaism

I will outline my research into the zodiac calendars in the Dead Sea Scrolls and demonstrate that these are lunar ephemerides. I will compile a draft of these ephemerides using extant fragments of these texts. Finally, I will examine references to horoscopes in the Dead Sea Scrolls and suggest how existing, wider astrological knowledge and the Qumran material indicate how horoscopes could have been compiled in Second Temple Judaism.

Blanca Villuendas (Centro Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid): Ibn Sirin in the Judaeo-Arabic Dream Manuals from the Cairo Genizah

The paper will consist of an analysis of the Dream Manuals attributed to Ibn Sirin that have been preserved in Hebrew characters in several fragments from the Cairo Genizah. This study is part of a research project on a corpus of Mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic Dream Manuals, created from the different collections of Genizah manuscripts. The corpus includes nearly a hundred pieces, of which Ibn Sirin’s examples are the most numerous. The core of this type of manuals comprises lists of omens that can be found in dreams, together with the interpretations of their meaning as future events. This broad yet unexplored source will bring new elements to the study of the transmission of works across faiths, as it will be possible to see how the



Participants of the workshop “Jewish Divination,” IKGF Seminar Room. Photo by Lisa Walleit, IKGF

tradition of dream interpretation, well attested in the Bible and the Talmud, merges with later contributions from Muslim authors.

Alessia Bellusci (Tel Aviv University): Jewish Oneiric Divination: From Biblical Dreams to the Dream Requests of the Cairo Genizah

Starting from the Hebrew Bible, Jewish literature contains several accounts of dreams and dream techniques, attesting to the transmission of Jewish oneiric divinatory lore from antiquity to the medieval era. In my lecture, I will present a specific divinatory technique used to auto-induce a dream on a certain topic for gaining knowledge, i.e. the “She’elat Ḥalom” (“dream request”). The first Jewish sources that mention this *terminus technicus* date to the 11th century CE. From this period onwards, a remarkable number of magical recipes for engaging in the dream request ritual, either preserved among the fragments of the Cairo Genizah or in European and Oriental codices, prove that this oneiric technique was very common within the Jewish world. In particular, the recipes for dream request from the Cairo Genizah exhibit standard linguistic and ritualistic features, pointing to a certain degree of ritual maturity already existing by the early Middle Ages and indicating a far earlier origin for this specific technique. In discussing some of the stages of development of the Jewish dream request, I will show several points of contact between this ritual practice and earlier Jewish divinatory techniques, such as those described in the Book of Daniel and the Book of Mysteries (*Sefer Ha-Razim*). I will emphasize those aspects that characterize the She’elat Ḥalom as a “Jewish” divinatory-oneiric technique and distinguish it

from similar practices developed in the neighbouring cultures.

J. Rodríguez Arribas (IKGF, Erlangen): Power and Powers in Hellenistic and Medieval Astrology

The purpose of my paper is to analyze several quantitative terms in the field of astrology in Hellenistic and medieval sources. This study is the second and complementary part of an article that I devoted to the analysis and explanation of the astrological concept of *testimony* in Hellenistic and medieval sources. These terms were used as

countable terms, mainly in medieval sources, with the purpose of ascertaining astrological judgments as far as possible. Certain astrologers, who were practitioners of *scientific* astrology, intended to approach astrology and science by different means. Some of the strategies that they used left an imprint in the terminology coined and used throughout their writings. These linguistic imprints are the subject of my paper, with a specific focus on Jewish sources.

Dr. Josefina Rodríguez Arribas (*IKGF Visiting Fellow*)

Colloquium: Theology of Time in the Christian Middle Ages *

Convenors: Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann (Freie Universität Berlin; IKGF Visiting Fellow), Prof. Dr. Klaus Herbers (Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg; IKGF Deputy Director), Prof. Dr. Michael Lackner (Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg; IKGF Director), Prof. Dr. Georges Tamer (Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg; IKGF Visiting Fellow); Erlangen, April 29-30, 2015

On April 29-30, 2015, a colloquium on the theology of time took place at the International Consortium for Research in the Humanities “Fate, Freedom and Prognostication. Strategies for Coping with the Future in East Asia and Europe”, chaired by Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann. The main goal of the sessions was to compare the conceptions of time and history in the Christian Middle Ages with those in Islam and in China. Jürgen Gebhardt, Klaus Herbers, Michael Lackner, Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, and Georges Tamer contributed to the colloquium. The subject matter will be summarized below in three sections.

I. Jewish and Christian Conceptions of History (Jürgen Gebhardt, Klaus Herbers, Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann)

The conception of history in medieval theology is eschatological. It is shaped by the idea inherent in the history of salvation. (The term history of salvation is modern, whereas the matter it denotes is long-standing). This concept is primarily dependent on the Jewish and Christian version of messianism; in Islam, it undergoes a transformation.

History of salvation

Probably the most successful (hi)story in the world – which might even have shaped the notion of history as universal history – is about the creation of the good world and of man by a good God. It is about the fall of man that both man and nature are subjected to, and about the process of salvation required by the fall of man, the end of which is yet to come. This concept of history presupposes the separation of immanence and transcendence, and whatever form the resulting history takes, it is determined by the interaction of transcendent and immanent actors. In the end, the power of transcendence will become apparent. This messianic concept of history, which first appears in Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 40 et sqq.), is peculiar because it anticipates the revelation of God’s glory and the elevation of his people yet to come. The period before this prospective eschaton is filled with expectation schemes, i.e. biblical and post-biblical prophecies. The era of glory after the Last Judgement is timeless; the guiding principles are eternity, and salvation or damnation.

Until then prophecies of the future rule the day. The most important topoi that prevailed in the Middle Ages

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and the early modern period were the four Kingdoms of Daniel, the last of which, the Roman Empire, persisted in the German Holy Roman Empire - until the end of the world would come. In prophetic terms, the end of the world was initially marked by theological-political and cosmic calamities, as they were predicted in the Apocalypse of John and in the vision of the Antichrist/Katechon (2 Thess. 2). Before the Return of the Lord, the heathens and the Jews should have converted (Rom. 11). With the Second Coming, heavenly Jerusalem would descend to earth (Apok. 20). These biblical apocalyptic prophecies had been further reinforced by medieval prophecies: Pseudo-Methodius and Adso of Montier-en-Der further specified the idea of the Antichrist and of the kingdom of God; Joachim of Fiore hoped that after the age of the Father and of the Son, the dominion of the spirit and of the angel pope will come about in a third world age. In the European early modern period this third world age will then be considered the fifth monarchy following the four described in the Apocalypse of Daniel.

It is readily apparent that this is a linear concept of time. But linearity alone is not sufficient as an explanation. History is understood as an act "propter finem", it receives its significance from its ending, that is, from the transcendence that will show its glory at the end of history.

II. Time and History in the Koran and in Tabari's Historical Work (Georges Tamer)

Although topoi and motifs of the biblical theology of history are used in the Koran and the associated comments, there are significant differences. This is partly due to the Koran itself. As the word of God that was turned into a book, which defines both time and faith, the Koran consists of two parts with rather different characters.

The Meccan part, like many passages of the New Testament, argues from the point of view of a proselytizing minority. It consequently employs eschatological elements, knows a Last Judgment, individual immortality, and the notion of an eternal, and indeed sensual, happiness.

Having been inspired more by the Old Testament, the Medinan part of the Koran emphasizes obedience and

talks about the covenant God made with his – now Arab-Muslim – people. According to surah 7:19-25, the sin of Adam consists of disobedience, but no dogmatic consequences along the lines of an original sin are drawn from this narrative. Through obedience to the law, anyone can be reconciled with God. It is this obedience to the law that marks Muslims as the chosen ones. The question whether and when there will be an eschaton is relegated to the background during the Medinan period of the Qur'anic proclamation. While there is indeed a history of salvation in Islam, it is fulfilled in the prophet. The eschatological pressure generated by the Christian history of salvation with its concepts of original sin, Christology of salvation, and the prophecy of the coming of the Lord, is not developed in Islam. Tabari's introduction to his extensive historical work contains the Talmudic idea of a 6,000-year world history, modified by the addition of 1,000 years. He located himself at a point in this universal history when 500 of these 7,000 years remained.

III. China: Book of Changes (Michael Lackner)

Is the Book of Changes a theology of history? Chinese tradition knows no monotheistic concept of God. A history that knows no transcendence as a consequence cannot have the same internal constitution as a monotheistic one. A this-worldly narrative does not have the same sense of future as a transcendent one. Although the Book of Changes also argues that human action, like all action, has a purpose, the benchmark is not the fulfilment yet to come, which invariably implies being finite, but con-



Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann; Foto: Dr. Hans Christian Lehner, IKGf

gruence with the forever invariant cosmos and its order. In this sense, the *raison d'être* of tradition – and thus of politics as well – is to conform with the course of the cosmos. This implies that the regularity (of the cosmos) is also numerically defined. This order becomes apparent even in the elements of nature. Likewise, it is the goal of Confucian learning to document this correspondence of action and natural order through language and poetry, in order to ensure the harmonious administration of time. Thus the DAO is implemented. When successful, history is therefore mostly a reflection of cosmic regularity, but when it fails, it leads to disaster. Such disasters can be understood from a historical perspective, as they occur when rulership does not conform to the cosmic order. This leads to political upheavals, as a result of which political order is restored by new dynasties that in turn have to stand the test of correspondence with the cosmic order. Natural disasters can be interpreted in a similar manner. Their interpretation as an apocalypse along the lines of

the western understanding of the future, namely that a transcendence would show itself in them – does not fit the Chinese understanding of time and harmony.

The question remains how this traditional understanding of time and history relates to Marxism, which applies the Western eschatological pattern in a rigid, secular manner. After all, during the 20th century Chinese politics has been particularly shaped by Western theories of history, which is true in a similar manner for Sun Yat-sen, Chiang Kai-shek, and Mao Tse-Tung. Ultimately, it remains to be seen to what extent globalization itself is an aspect of the Western history of progress, which destroys the cosmological benchmark that is part of Chinese tradition.

This discussion is to be continued.

Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann
(*Freie Universität Berlin; IKGF Visiting Fellow*)

IN BRIEF

- On August 17-23, 2014, the XVIIth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies was held in Vienna. This Conference, which only takes place every three or four years, is the most important international forum for Buddhist Studies. The IKGF was represented by Dr. Esther-Maria Guggenmos, who in her talk “Throwing Dice for Divining One’s Karma – The Scripture on Divining the Retribution of Skillful and Negative Actions” presented parts of the research she undertook at IKGF.
- In September 2014, Professor Lackner was awarded the Fudan Guanghua Eminent Scholars Award by Prof. Yang Yuliang, the president of Fudan University, Shanghai. On this occasion, Professor Lackner gave four lectures as part of the Fudan Guanghua Eminent Scholars’ Lecture Series.
- On September 29-30, the 4th International Conference of the Center for “Anthropology of Religion(s)” took place at Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nürnberg. IKGF Visiting Fellow Dr. Ulrike Ludwig contributed a presentation entitled “Magical Choices: Geomancy as a Strategy in Politics and Everyday Life of Augustus, Elector of Saxony (1526-1586)”.
- Following an invitation by Prof. Tam Kwok-kan, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Open University Hong Kong, Prof. Lackner on October 17, 2014, delivered the ceremonial address on occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Open University of Hong Kong. His address was entitled “淺談中國文化對近現代的影響 The Relevance of Chinese Culture to the Modern/Contemporary World (in Chinese/Putonghua)”.
- In Fall 2014, Prof. Klaus Herbers became a member of the central board of directors of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica (MGH), representing the Academy of Sciences, Humanities, and Literature in Mainz. The MGH maintains a comprehensive collection of medieval textual sources concerning European history, publishes editions of medieval sources, and is considered a cornerstone of the cultural memory of Germany and Europe.
- On December 3, 2014, Prof. Lackner delivered the 9th F.W. Mote Memorial Lecture, “The Minor Ways Have Their Reason – Discourses on Divination in Chinese Tradition”, following an invitation by the Department of East Asian Studies at Princeton University. This renowned lectureship was founded by family

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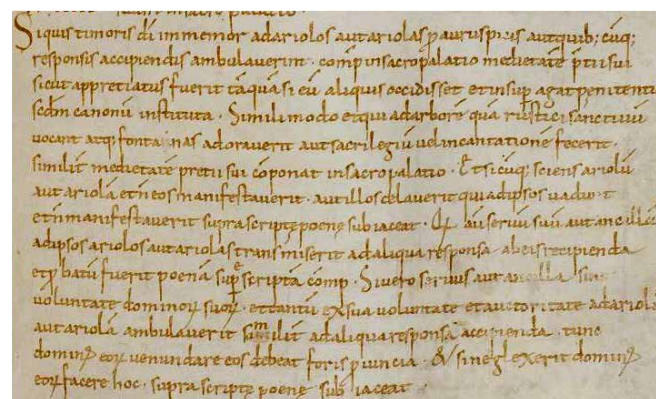
and friends of Frederick (Fritz) W. Mote in order to invite distinguished scholars of Chinese Studies to Princeton.

- IKGf is on Facebook: since January 2015 we have regularly posted about the latest activities and events at IKGf on our Facebook page “IKGf Erlangen”. There is a link to it on our website ikgf.fau.de. The page is public, and therefore its content is accessible without having a Facebook account.
- In February 2015, visiting fellows and staff of IKGf made a field trip to the exhibition “From Atlantis to the Present – Man. Nature. Disaster” in the Reiss-Engelhorn-Museum, Mannheim. From the fall of legendary Atlantis to the major disasters of recent history, the exhibition illustrated different strategies of coping with disasters. The field trip most notably provided important information for the members of a IKGf planning committee that is currently preparing an exhibition on the material culture of prediction in China and pre-modern and early-modern Europe. Professor Gerrit J. Schenk, one of the curators, gave us an expert tour of the rooms of the exhibition, and willingly responded to the numerous questions of participants.
- Our visiting fellow Prof. Hans Ulrich Vogel contributed to the TV documentary “Marco Polo – Entdecker oder Lügner”, which was aired in March 2015 by *arte*, a Franco-German TV network. The program looked into the question of whether Marco Polo really travelled to China in the 13th century.
- In April 2015, the *Erlanger Nachrichten* and *Nürnberger Nachrichten* published an article about the IKGf, entitled “From Palmistry to Statistics”. It allowed the general public to take a glimpse at the work and research subject of the Consortium.
- The special exhibition “Supermarket of the Dead” in the *Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden* was the destination of a field trip in May for a group of visiting scholars, staff, and students affiliated with the IKGf. In order to preserve in the netherworld the status and comfort enjoyed in this world, in China, items of everyday life are made of paper and ceremoniously burned to deliver them to the dead. Anything goes, from brand name shoes, to cigarettes, clothing, iPads, wheelchairs, ventilators, tableware, money, all kinds of food (Chinese, McDonald’s), even passports of various countries. The array and diversity of the exhibits was overwhelming even for scholars who were already familiar with the practice. After seeing the exhibition, some participants used the remaining time to visit museums, art exhibitions, and churches in Dresden.
- Due to the extension of our funding for another six years, the IKGf will continue to invite international researchers in various fields as visiting fellows. A call for submissions has been made, which particularly calls on those sinologists and historians to apply who are willing to participate in one of

the planned handbooks (Handbook of Prognostication and Prediction in East Asian Society, Handbook of Prognostication and Prediction in Medieval European Societies). However, a number of fellowships will still be set aside for other topics and fields. Please see the “Call for Applications” in the Job Offers section of our website for further details.



- Research work at the IKGf: Analysis of early medieval texts at the IKGf – what in modern times generally is considered “supernatural” occupied a fixed place in the worldview of the pre-modern age. It is no surprise, therefore, that these “supernatural” phenomena have found their way into the legal system, and that many references to divination and magical practices are found in early-medieval law texts that contain provisions for penitence, as well as penal and procedural regulations. A research project conducted at the IKGf systematically analyzed legal texts to learn more about how these practices were dealt with judicially. The findings were collected in a database, which contains the relevant text passages, keywords, editorial comments, and an approximate date. So far, the resulting corpus has been surveyed and discussed by a small working group, which has come up with some preliminary conclusions about who was brought to trial, what they were charged with, what divinatory or magical practices were known, and how certain practices were judged. A detailed report on this work will be published shortly as part of the IKGf “Occasional Papers” series. It is planned to continue this study, as there is still enough source material to analyze. This could be done in a larger format, such as a “Reading Session”. Within the IKGf we intend to explore promising links of our work to other research projects here.



Leges Langobardorum, chapter 84: Leges Liutprandi de anno XIII, A.D. 727. Punishment of people who consult a fortune teller.
© Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel: <http://diglib.hab.de/mss/130-blank/start.htm?image=00099>.

VISITING FELLOWS



Prof. Dr. Constance Cook, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, College of Arts and Sciences, Lehigh University; research stay: January – July 2015; research topic: Myth, History, and Music in the Creation of “The Lute Dance of Zhou Gong.”



Dr. Thomas Foerster, The Norwegian Institute in Rome, University of Oslo; research stay: January – April 2015; research topic: Prophecy, Myth and Political Culture in High Medieval Europe.



Prof. Dr. Piotr Gibas, School of Languages, Cultures and World Affairs, International and Intercultural Studies, Asian Studies, College of Charleston; research stay: April – June 2015; research topic: Reading the Future in the Past: Time, Prediction and History in Early Chinese Historiography.



Prof. Dr. Robert LaFleur, Department of History and Anthropology, Beloit College, Wisconsin; research stay: May – August 2015; research topic: Religiosity Spent: Culture, Microeconomics, and Sacrality on China’s Southern Sacred Mountain.



Prof. Dr. Lü Lingfeng, Department of History of Science and Scientific Archaeology, University of Science and Technology China; research stay: November 2014 – June 2015; research topic: Astrological Interpretation of Comets and Fate under the Impact of Western Knowledge in Late Imperial China.



Dr. Darrel Rutkin, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, Indiana University, Bloomington; research stay: March – April 2015; research topic: Astrology, Magic and Natural Knowledge ca. 1250-1500: Completing Volume I of my monograph.



Dr. Jan Vihan, Charles University, Faculty of Humanities; research stay: September 2014 – June 2015; research topic: Time, Diction, Human Agency, the Mantic Foundations of Philological Practice.



Prof. Dr. Hans Ulrich Vogel, Institute of Chinese and Korean Studies, University of Tübingen; research stay: February – July 2015; research topic: Mining and Deep Drilling in Chinese and European History: An Interface between Prognostication, Fate and Knowledge.



Prof. Dr. Xiong Yuezhi, Institute of History, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences; research stay: January – June 2015; research topic: The Intellectuals’ Belief in Fate in Modern China (1840-1949).

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‘Käte Hamburger Center (KHC) – Advanced Study in the Humanities’

is the official name of the ten ‘International Consortia for Research in the Humanities’ that are funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research. We are therefore sometimes referring to the ‘IKGF’ (Internationales Kolleg für Geisteswissenschaftliche Forschung) as KHC in our publications.

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On July 10, 2015, at 11.00 am, the ceremonial handover of the notification of approval for the second funding phase (funding period: 2015-2021, total funding: 9.6 million euros) of the IKGF took place in the Orangery of the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research was represented by the Parliamentary State Secretary Stefan Müller, MdB.



OUTLOOK

The research carried out at the IKGF during the second funding phase will focus particularly on the planned handbooks on “Prognostication and Prediction in East Asian Society” and “Prognostication and Prediction in Medieval European Societies”. For 2019, an exhibition on prognostication in East Asia and Europe is planned. The research focus will be further expanded, both thematically and regionally: in addition to China and the European Middle Ages, Tibetan and Indian techniques of prognostication will also receive more attention.

THE NEXT fate

In the next issues of *fate*, we will report on:

- the workshop “Fate, Freedom and Prediction: Reflections on Comparative Method in Early China and the Ancient Mediterranean” (Prof. Lisa Raphals/Prof. Michael Lackner), May 2015
- the IKGF at the XIVth ICHSEA Conference
- the KHC conference on „Cutting-edge Research in Social Sciences and Humanities – Aims, Approach and Impact of the Käte Hamburger Centres“ at the Jewish Museum, Berlin, June 2015
- the ceremonial handover of the notification of approval of the second funding phase, July 2015



International Consortium for Research in the Humanities

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

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