



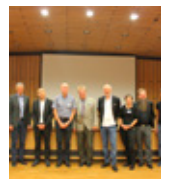
INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM
for Research in the Humanities

Schicksal, Freiheit und Prognose. Bewältigungsstrategien in Ostasien und Europa



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Editorial (Prof. Dr. Michael Lackner, Prof. Dr. Klaus Herbers, Prof. Dr. Andrea Bréard)

Past, Present and Future of Prognostication at the IKGf

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

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for Research in the Humanities



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Dear Readers,

This 18th edition of the *fate* newsletter will not only report on the consortium's activities during the summer term 2019, but will also mark the end of a series. This newsletter was initiated in June 2010 by former research coordinator, Esther-Maria Guggenmos, and No. 18 will be its final issue. There is, however, no reason for sadness, as the end of one thing usually also marks the beginning of something new.

In their editorial, our three (!) directors look back at the past activities of the IKGF and offer an outlook regarding its future. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that former IKGF Visiting Fellow, Prof. Dr. Andrea Bréard, has just joined the IKGF's directorate. Having received the prestigious Alexander-von-Humboldt-Professorship, she recently took over the Chair of Sinology at the FAU. Furthermore, the IKGF's funding has been secured for the coming three years. During this period, we will, of course, keep you informed about our center's activities. To this end, we are currently establishing a weblog that will keep you up-to-date with the latest news.

This last issue's focus article informs you about the Conference on the "Future of Prognostics," which took place in July 2019 and assembled experts from various fields, such as demography, meteorology, climatology, future studies, innovation management, psychiatric genetics, paleontology, and psychology. In addition, the newsletter contains again short reports of talks presented in the framework of our lecture series and reports on four conferences and workshops: *The Classic of Changes in East and West, Rethinking Interdisciplinary Approaches to Decision-Making: Choice, Culture, and Context* (in cooperation with the Elite MA Programme Standards of Decision-Making Across Cultures), *Spirit Writing in Chinese History*, and *Divination and Decision-Making by Lot and Randomization in East Asia and Europe*.

For the last time, I hope that you will enjoy our newsletter and hope that you will like our new weblog just as much.

Dr. Rolf Scheuermann
(Research Coordinator)

Title page: Exhibition "Signs of the Future",
Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg

Editorial (Lackner, Herbers, Bréard)



Prof. Dr. Michael Lackner
Managing Director of the IKGF

After 12 years of research, the IKGF can proudly look back at 440 publications, 156 audio and video recordings of lectures and 26 other video productions, a specialized bibliography, as well as handbooks on the subject (the Handbook on "Prognostication in the Medieval World" was published recently and the Handbook on Divination and Prognostication in China is under review), a book series ("Prognostication in History") and a journal ("International Journal of Divination and Prognostication"), both with Brill in Leiden, that have emerged from the IKGF so far. Apart from the 25 conferences and 41 workshops held in Erlangen, the IKGF is well represented, together with its topic, at international conferences. The cooperation between the two core disciplines, Sinology and Medieval Studies, as well as with numerous other disciplines, has proven extremely fruitful and the presence of 170 international scholars who have carried out transcultural and transdisciplinary research on traditional and modern forms of prediction bears witness to our success.

The extension of our funding for a further three years beyond June 2021 will enable us to lay the ground for a stable institutional basis for critical research on prognostication. For this purpose, we will have to delineate both the principal areas of demand for prognosis – in the past and present – as well as a "morphology" of the various forms of challenges that prognostication has always faced. While the first endeavor requires a repertory of fields where prediction played (and continues to play) an important role, the second appears more complicated, because it aims to analyze the continuities and discontinuities, indeed

even ruptures, in the history of prognostication, including its limitations. Let me briefly outline a very provisional overview of some of the topics that we already have explored, but which require further consolidation:

- No planning without a forecast; but it turns out to be a constant that, although the prognosis should serve to reduce the planning horizon of expectations in the sense of an orientation knowledge, its respective methods tend to become increasingly complicated, and this applies to techniques that are thousands of years old as well as to those of the present.
- How should we define the characteristic differences between predictions for individuals and for collective bodies? Modern and contemporary forms of prognostication may be more inclined toward the latter, but prediction for individuals still prevails in areas like, for instance, forensic psychiatry.
- How can we account for the resilience of mantic practices on a global scale? May they not be considered as mere "survivals", but rather as a challenge to the modern myth of "disenchantment"
- For the decision-making horizons, it is also useful, if not essential, that the predictions have a certain plausibility; Stefan Maul has been the first to elaborate on this issue.
- But what can be considered plausible? To many people in the past and present, an apocalypse, whatever its cause, appeared and still appears to be confirmed and settled by prognoses, but to many others not. Contradictory forecasts can have their respective plausibility.

That would mean, however, that we would be compelled to trust just one counsel. This may already be an issue for individuals seeking advice, but may have disastrous consequences for collectives.

- This brings us to the question of verification, which also has a fundamentally ethical dimension: what happens to the forecaster if a forecast fails to materialize? The answer is initially: usually nothing. This may be due to the character of the respective forecast, which was either cryptic or ambiguous, or to the fact that forecasters may admit formal errors, but rarely question the core of their statement. The momentum of the enormous ethical responsibility that a prognosis brings

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with it was rarely voiced in the past by forecasters, and we can confidently raise this question also with regard to the prognoses of the present. Modesty is not a virtue of expertise and not all forecasts take into account their own capacity for revision.

- Another focus of our research was the extent to which future designs in literary or philosophical utopias or dystopias

represent prognoses in the actual sense or have an influence on the corresponding designs of a society.

In the near future, we will definitely keep an eye on the various ways in which societies attempt to cope with that future!

Prof. Dr. Michael Lackner (IKGF, Managing Director)

Critical Reflections on the Function of Prognosis



Prof. Dr. Klaus Herbers, Director of the IKGF

The various functions that prognosis fulfills in modern societies did not emerge from nowhere. Therefore, not only as historians but also as critical contemporaries, we need to reflect on the extent to which conceptions of prognosis in modern societies are influenced by, continue, borrow from, or stand out from the experiences of prognosis in past societies. At the IKGF, we have attempted to examine the field of prognostication extensively, from antiquity to the present time, and to depict those different historical perceptions. This also means, however, that the comparison between various societies in Karl Löwith's classical description of global history and salvation requires a reassessment. Comparisons have never been simple, but here they can raise awareness in many ways. They can relativize the uniqueness of one's own object, and they can reveal asymmetry and, possibly, what one might call the simultaneity of the non-simultaneous. The starting points for these comparisons are varied and we have tried to take them into account in our work.

The voluminous manual, "Prognostication in the Medieval World: A Handbook," which was published two months ago, already reflects the heterogeneity in the field of prognosis. Not

only does it discuss the traditions in the Latin West, but it also investigates those in the Byzantine East, in the Arab-Muslim, and in the Hebrew-Jewish world. (A sinological volume will follow shortly.) This broadening of the research subject, which is not easy to put into practice, is necessary and fruitful, as our volumes entitled *The Impact of Arabic Sciences in Europe and Asia* (Micrologus: Nature, Sciences and Medieval Societies 24, Firenze 2016) and *Longevity and Immortality: Europe – Islam – Asia* (Micrologus. Nature, Sciences and Medieval Societies 26, Firenze 2018) have shown.

If one takes a closer look at the various sections of the above-mentioned manual, one thing becomes clear: topics such as eschatology-millennialism, prophecy and visions, dream

interpretation, mantic arts, astronomical and astrological sciences, medical prognosis, calendar calculation, weather forecasts, and risk analysis, in some form, still appear relevant today. Indeed, some modern functions of forecasting may not seem very far removed from their historical predecessors. The continuities and breaks in the history of prognosis became evident during our symposium on "Die Zukunft der Prognostik", which is introduced in the focus article of this edition of *Fate*.

Perhaps some may think that the ability of foresight can be attested rather for modern societies, but even before Charlemagne and his calendar reform, numerous calculations took the course of the sun, moon, and stars into account. In the Latin West, the calculation of the end of the world raised further questions and stimulated scientific search. This was reflected in practice, as visible in the transculturally significant calendar of Córdoba from the 10th century, in which astronomical calculations from the Arab-Muslim world are combined with the calendar of Christian saints and salvation

history. These calculations took on even more tangible forms in the astronomical tables attributed to King Alfonso the Wise in the 13th century. Boards, tables, diagrams, and drawings belong in this context. The political decision-making at the courts of premodern Europe depended on these increasingly precise calculations and their interpretation, as our volume *Astrologers and their Clients in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Böhlau 2015) has shown. Moreover, even calculations and predictions in a more modern form were carried out in Florentine offices and by other traders, who not only anticipated profits and losses but also the risks associated with maritime trade. What can perhaps become even more important from a historical perspective are questions about people's attitudes to prognosis, why they engaged in prognosis, what kind of social and religious resistance or encouragement they encountered, and how they dealt with these challenges.

Prognostication, however, not only deals with knowledge related to the future. This becomes evident when we look at the topic of prophecy, which the volume *Hagiographie et prophétie* (Micrologus' Library 80) has studied by using several examples, especially the genre of visions, which make prophetic knowledge possible. According to Gregory the Great (d. 604), the prophet not only reveals what lies in the future but also what is usually hidden. Prognosticating thus also means looking deeper and more closely. In medieval literature, for example, there exists a multitude of narratives that deal with what the afterlife looks like, a genre which Dante developed to great literary perfection. These texts construct an absent transcendence, if you wish, while objects such as relics can take on a medial function. The stories also helped people to cope with everyday life and addressed questions that could not otherwise be answered.

Religious norms in the Middle Ages were often critical of these prognostic practices. In recent years, we have built a database of prohibitions in legal texts in the secular as well as ecclesiastical realm, which gives us an idea of a differentiated legal picture.

Changing the Wheel

This is both my first and last editorial for the IKGF newsletter – nuance: for the IKGF newsletter in its traditional paper format. It is with both nostalgia and excitement that I see the

The fluidity of legal texts has usually been inadequately taken into account, especially in studies on prognosis and manticism. The cooperation with lawyers and legal history is fruitful, as the direct cooperation with a larger academy project shows, revealing tensions between norms and practice.

This editorial is not only a glance at the past of the IKGF, at all that has been accomplished, but also a reconsideration of the big questions that our Consortium has raised and which should be taken into account in future research as well. These are:

- What is it that people want to know? Is it only about the future or perhaps even more about the significance and truth that is hidden beneath the surface?
- Related to this: What do we want to know and what can we know?
- What kind of potential do transcultural comparisons harbor, and how can they make us more sensitive in our research?
- How do normative statutes - prohibitions or commandments - relate to practices?
- How do prognoses bring relief and help us to master life and channel the search for happiness? Are they becoming representations of the possible?
- Which relation existed and should exist between calculation and interpretation? Because the battle over prognosis was far too frequently a battle not merely over procedure, but also over the authority to interpret.

I could easily expand this catalog of questions and this editorial should perhaps also contribute to a relativization of the understanding of the past and the modern. If I can express a prognosis as a wish for the future of the IKGF, then I would like a form of prognostic research that allows a wide range of approaches and uses it fruitfully.

Prof. Dr. Klaus Herbers (IKGF, Director)

wheel change of the IKGF chariot, that has carried news and research reports to the ever-growing community linked to the Consortium and that will soon go online in the format of

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Prof. Dr. Andrea Bréard, Director of the IKGF

a blog. In this sense, my relation to the past and the future is very much unlike what Bertolt Brecht describes in his 1953 poem *Changing the Wheel*. It was also the leitmotif of Professor Alfred Nordmann's techno-philosophical intervention at the recent workshop *Vorausschauen, Vorausdenken, Vorausrechnen* held at the IKGF in early February:

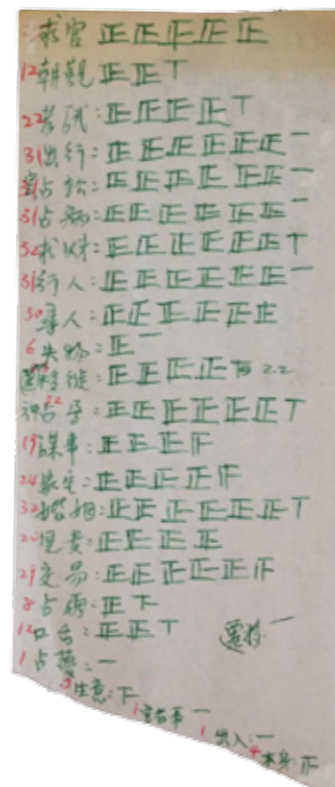
Der Radwechsel

Ich sitze am Straßenhang.
Der Fahrer wechselt das Rad.
Ich bin nicht gern, wo ich herkomme.
Ich bin nicht gern, wo ich hinfahre.
Warum sehe ich den Radwechsel
mit Ungeduld?

I liked to be where research at the IKGF comes from as a fellow in 2011-2012 and I also like where it goes as one of its directors. Instead of impatiently awaiting a new course, moments in between the past and the future are times for creative discussions and active constructions. Moving the newsletter into a digital format parallels a new research orientation at the IKGF which has started to take shape over the last few years: the critical study of prognostication in close dialogue with contemporary science and technology. Climate science, forensic medicine, and artificial intelligence are just some examples of predictive sciences or technologies based mainly, but not exclusively, on mathematical algorithms and large amounts of data. Many divination techniques that are employed to forecast individual fate, too, are algorithmic in nature and based on long-term observations and statistical

records – they have even moved online massively over the last few years.

Being algorithmic does not equate to having a deterministic, unbiased, and trustworthy nature, however, and negative connotations associated with the predictive sciences are not ruled out by a perceived scientificity of their methods and instruments. The complex cultural, historical, social, and global political conditions and mechanisms at play for the construction of plausibility and authority for only apparently pure quantitative calculation procedures to predict future events or behavior still need to be understood; as is also the case regarding feedback analysis. How are prediction errors dealt with by the actors themselves and by their audience? And how does the obvious necessity of personal sure instinct and the art of judgment in modelization decisions and parameter choices cohabit with the scientific objectivity of a calculatory regime? These are some of the issues that we shall address in the years to come.



Diviner's records of the number of clients asking certain categories of questions

Even if predictions become automatized and the newsletter digitized, the hidden role of human intervention remains tangible. I therefore also like to be where the newsletter goes, looking – this time impatiently – forward to your feedback and input to the past, present, and future IKGF research themes under a new format.

Prof. Dr. Andrea Bréard
(IKGF, Director)

Special Event and the Catalogue of the Exhibition “Signs of the Future”

After several years of preparation, the IKGF, in cooperation with the Institute of History at the University of Münster, has achieved a milestone in the transcultural study of divination and prognostication.

In December 2020, the exhibition entitled “*Zeichen der Zukunft. Wahrsagen in Ostasien und Europa. Signs of the Future. Divination in East Asia and Europe. 此命當何: 歐亞的卜術、數術與神術*”, which was initiated by the Consortium and displays 130 extraordinary objects from the National Museum of Taiwan History, the Academia Sinica, and the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, has been virtually opened to the public. Covering both Europe and East Asia during a period spanning from the 13th century BCE (Chinese oracle bones) to the 21st century (European tarot cards), the exhibition allows visitors to explore and compare the history of divination through time and space. Through a cross-cultural comparison of instruments, methods, forms and practices of prognostics, it is a testimony

to the interdisciplinary work pursued at the Consortium. We would like to invite you to join this journey by listening to the cross-cultural dialogue formed by 130 objects and, most crucially, to reflect on the question: ‘What will the future bring?’

The first link below directs you to the Digital Story of the exhibition, featuring interactive images, videos and short descriptions. The second link takes you to the Open Access to the bilingual catalogue, containing detailed entries on the 130 objects, written by distinguished international experts. Should you have a chance to pay a visit to Nuremberg, Germany, the exhibition at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum will be opened for live tours from March until September 2021.

<https://zeichen-der-zukunft.gnm.de/>
<https://books.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/arhistoricum/catalog/book/763?lang=en>



Exhibition “Signs of the Future”, Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg,
<https://www.gnm.de/ausstellungen/aktuell-und-vorschau/zeichen-der-zukunft/>.

FOCUS

Conference on the Future of Prognostics

What can we say about the future today? What new methods and techniques have the sciences developed for this purpose? And what might prognostication look like in 2050?

Fascinating questions like these were the focus of the conference entitled “The Future of Prognostics - What we can predict today and tomorrow” (Die Zukunft der Prognostik – Was wir heute und morgen vorhersagen können), which was held on July 23-24, 2019, in Erlangen, organized by Michael Lackner and Christof Niederwieser. Building on the IKGf’s long-standing work on traditional forms of prognostication, the conference brought together leading scholars in the field of modern prognostics who gave insights into their work and showed the progress that their disciplines are making toward ever more accurate predictions.

In the opening lecture, entitled “The Tradition and Present of Prognostics,” the two organizers, Michael Lackner and Christof Niederwieser, presented several comparative cultural patterns by drawing on the prognostic research of the IKGf. Michael Lackner elaborated on some of the key differences between the East Asian and European traditions. For example, the concept of free will, which has almost obsessively preoccupied Western cultures, is virtually absent from Chinese culture. Instead, one can negotiate with fate through moral self-perfection or supernatural interference. He also cited some amusing contemporary examples. Thus, even today, it is relatively common for academics to postpone scheduled flights if the fortuneteller recommends it. Such examples indicate that the need for prognosis remains an anthropological constant to this day.

Christof Niederwieser offered a brief overview of the continuities, breaks and developments over the past 4,000 years. Thus, personality models like the four temperaments are an enduring presence in European intellectual history, beginning with Hippocrates and Galen right up to medieval medicine and the treatises of Goethe and Kant, before becoming the tools of modern management diagnostics. In these differing contexts, prognostic tools always fulfill three social functions: they are

the basis of planning, they serve as an instrument of power—especially when institutionalized –, and they give meaning to our actions, providing inspiration and new ideas.

Next, Nazar Rasul, Global Head of Technology & Innovation Management at Siemens, provided insights into the global corporation’s long-term strategic planning. For this purpose, Siemens has developed the “Pictures of the Future” method, a variant of the scenario technique for which various trends and forecasts are summarized at the end in the form of a story and a picture. The examples he touched upon included housing and transportation in the megacities of 2050 or an underground Industry 4.0 manufacturing facility in 2030. Based on these pictures of the future, the company then uses reverse extrapolation to determine which technological developments must be initiated in the present to enable these future scenarios to become a reality.

Manuel Mattheisen, Professor of Psychiatric Genetics and Epigenetics at the University Hospital Würzburg, explained the extent to which mental illness, such as schizophrenia or depression, can be genetically decoded. By now, the attempt to assign these illnesses to individual genes has given way to the approach of “polygenetic risk prediction” for which machine learning is used in order to identify complex correlations and combine them into “genetic profile scores.” To date, genetics has only been able to identify slightly increased risk probabilities. More effective for predicting depression, for example, is “mobile sensing,” which analyzes smartphone behavior as well as voice and video recordings to make surprisingly accurate risk predictions.

Thomas Mölg, professor of climatology at FAU Erlangen and co-author of the UN’s fifth world climate report, showed which parameters are used to create climate scenarios. Climate researchers generally agree that even the optimistic scenarios indicate a significant rise in temperature by 2050. The extent of this rise depends largely on current and future human behavior, especially with regard to CO2 emissions. Consequently, the simulation model encompasses various scenarios, which

are called “Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs).” The most important of these are RCP2.6, RCP4.5, RCP6.0 and RCP8.5, each of which provides different previews for the coming decades. The future is open and can be shaped. Climate researchers, therefore, speak, not of forecasts, but of projections.

Detlev Majewski, the chief modeler of the German Weather Service (DWD), explained the impressive network of meteorological measuring stations that now spans the entire globe with a mesh size of only 13 kilometers – covering the entire globe up to the stratosphere. Weather forecasts are calculated from the more than 150 million data points which these stations provide every day; a process that runs largely automatically. Thanks to an enormous improvement in data quality, in the early 2020s, it is possible to predict the weather within the next five days with the same degree of accuracy as the weather for the following day was predicted in the 1980s. One potential threat to the improvement of weather forecasts that Majewski identifies in the restriction of the free and open exchange of data between nations by totalitarian governments.

Finally, during his evening lecture, the well-known representative of future studies Matthias Horx reported on his experiences arising from 25 years of trend and future research. One observation he shared is that most people actually prefer some uncertainty when it comes to the future.

While it is possible, for example, to predict the duration of a marriage with a fair amount of accuracy by using the Gottman method, very few people actually want to know the result. Our preference for ambiguity may be one reason why we prefer to cite the many brilliant minds whose predictions proved incorrect rather than the many astonishingly accurate visions of the future that were recorded in the past. Horx therefore considers the narrative shaping of the future, in the sense of a “humanistic futurism” that helps us to move forward as the

most important task of future studies rather than making exact forecasts.

The following morning, Rainer Sachs, an expert in reinsurance, provided insights into the mass psychology of risk awareness. For example, very rare, extreme events, such as plane crashes, are generally perceived as more dangerous than far more likely events, such as car accidents or heart attacks. He presented the “Emerging Risk Radar,” which is used in the field of reinsurance to assess possible hazard scenarios and their probability. In practice, however, the human factor prevents rational decision-making. The mechanisms contributing to non-rational decisions range from peer pressure and a fear of making career-limiting moves to “willful blindness;” i.e., the deliberate and convenient disregarding of inconvenient facts.

Wolfgang Kießling, professor of paleontology at the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, introduced the fascinating world of deep time. Deep time refers to the geological time scale, which divides the Earth’s history into different time periods. From the patterns of these past millions of years, conclusions can be

drawn about the millions of years to come. Thus, the geographical spread of the majority of animal species over the course of time follows a symmetrical curve. Once this curve has passed its peak, the timing of the future extinction

of a certain species can be calculated. Previous mass extinctions were always caused by climate change. After the volcanic eruptions and meteorite impacts of the past, however, current climate change is, for the first time, anthropogenic in nature. According to projections, by the year 2100, climate change will make the habitable zone with the greatest biodiversity, the equatorial belt, almost uninhabitable (RCP8.5).

The well-known psephologist Günther Ogris joined the conference directly from engaging in the parliamentary



Hansjörg Neth, Detlev Majewski, Rainer Sachs, Nazar Rasul, Wolfgang Kießling, Michael Lackner, Matthias Horx, Corinna Mayerl, Christof Niederwieser, Thomas Mölg (from left to right)

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PROGRAM

23.07.2019

Tradition und Gegenwart der Prognostik

Michael Lackner, Christof Niederwieser (IKGF, FAU Erlangen)

Enhancing Innovation Capabilities in the Digital World through Foresighting and Scenario Development

Nazar Rasul (Global Head of Technology & Innovation Management, Siemens Healthcare Erlangen)

Künstliche Intelligenz und maschinelles Lernen in der Psychiatrie – aus der Grundlagenforschung in die Klinik?

Manuel Mattheisen (Psychiatrische Genetik und Epigenetik, Universitätsklinikum Würzburg)

Prognose und Projektion. Pfade in die Zukunft für die Klimaforschung

Thomas Mölg (Klimatologie, FAU Erlangen)

Numerische Wettervorhersage. Physikalische Grundlagen und praktische Realisierung

Detlev Majewski (DWD Deutscher Wetterdienst, Offenbach)

Das Zukunfts-Geheimnis. Kann man das Morgen voraussagen – und warum sollte man das tun? Über die Perspektiven der Prognostik in einer hyperkomplexen Welt. Erkenntnisse und Erfahrungen aus 25 Jahren Trend- und Zukunftsforschung

Matthias Horx (Zukunftsinstitut, Frankfurt & Wien)

24.07.2019

Zwei Minuten nach Wahlschluss ist alles klar. Die SORA Hochrechnung für den ORF

Corinna Mayerl, Günther Ogris (SORA Institute for Social Research and Consulting, Wien)

Die Kinder von heute sind die Eltern von morgen – Demographische Prognosen und die Prozesse, auf denen sie beruhen

Jutta Gampe (Max Planck Institut für demografische Forschung, Rostock)

Emerging Risk Management – vom Umgang mit der Unsicherheit in der Rückversicherung

Rainer Sachs (Experte für Rückversicherung, München)

Forecasting Life's Future from its Deep-Time History

Wolfgang Kießling (Paläoumwelt, FAU Erlangen)

Warum einfache Vorhersagen besser sind. Effiziente Werkzeuge für erfolgreiche Prognosen

Hansjörg Neth (Social Psychology and Decision Sciences, Universität Konstanz)

elections in Ukraine, where his institute (SORA) was responsible for the official projection. SORA are known internationally for their precise forecasts. In Austria, for example, they produced the best projections in 12 out of 14 elections. Their average deviation from the final result is less than 0.5%. To accomplish this accuracy, SORA aggregates all electoral communities in a country into clusters that have shown similar voting behavior in past elections, even if they differ demographically or geographically. Statistical principles are abandoned, however, when experience demands. The secret of their success, Ogris pointed out, was their willingness constantly to question themselves and their methods and, if a problem arises, first turn to themselves to look for mistakes.

Finally, Hansjörg Neth from the Institute for Social Psychology and Decision Sciences at the University of Konstanz examined prognostication from the psychological perspective. He pointed out that not even many physicians were able to interpret risk probabilities correctly in medical tests. However, since decision-making processes often have to be very fast, especially in hospitals, a decision-making tool was developed based on “fast-and-frugal-trees” (FFT), a special type of classification tree. It hierarchically deconstructs the complex diagnostic process into the most important parameters. These are grouped into simple yes-no questions, allowing the physician to make a predominantly correct diagnosis in a very short time by using a standard questionnaire.

During the lively discussion sessions between the presentations, some commonalities shared by the modern future sciences became obvious. For example, the most important methodological basis of most disciplines today is data analytics. Without large quantities of measurement devices and complex algorithms, extremely few predictions can be made. The quality of the predictions therefore largely depends on the size of the teams and budgets. Nevertheless, there is a new sense of modesty. While, in past decades, supercomputers, genetics or brain research inspired hope that soon everything could be calculated, such euphoria has today been replaced by an awareness of the limits of predictability. Instead of predictions, there is now a preference for speaking of scenarios and probabilities.

Christof Niederwieser

LECTURE SERIES SS 2019

Overview of the lectures in the sommer semester 2019

30.04.2019: Chan 禪 Narratives about Death Premonitions and Avoidance of Fate

Mario Poceski (Buddhism and Chinese Religions, University of Florida; IKGF Visiting Fellow)

07.05.2019: Figuristische Exegese als Bewältigungsstrategie innerkirchlicher Marginalisierung: Die Appellanten gegen die päpstliche Bulle *Unigenitus* (1713) lesen die Apokalypse [Figurative Exegesis as a Strategy for Coping with Marginalization within the Church: The Appellants against the Papal Bull *Unigenitus* (1713) Read the Apocalypse] - Lecture in German, with English screen presentation

Philipp Stenzig (Medieval and Early Modern History, University of Düsseldorf)

21.05.2019: Planetary Astrology in Medieval China and the Sassanian Connection

David Pankenier (Chinese Studies, Lehigh University; IKGF Visiting Fellow)

28.05.2019: Representations of Suicide between Fate and Freedom on the “Genoese” World Map of 1457

Gerda Brunnlechner (History of the Middle Ages, University of Hagen)

04.06.2019: Foundations of Decision-Making: Liberties, Liabilities, and Lies

Joachim Gent (Chinese Philosophy and Religion, University of Edinburgh)

04.12.2018: Decision-Making between Path Dependencies and Freedom of Choice: Ethical Reasoning in Public Policy Advising

Sven Grundmann (Political Sciences, Elite Master's Programme “Standards of Decision-Making Across Cultures,” Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg)

18.06.2019: History as Prophecy: Alexander Minorita's *Expositio in Apocalypsim*

Andrea Worm (Art History, University of Graz)

02.07.2019: (Re-)Writing Fate: Predicting and Dealing with the Future in Chinese Character Divination

Anne Schmiel (Chinese Studies, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg)

09.07.2019: The *Lingtai jing* 靈臺經 (Scripture of the Imperial Observatory): Hellenistic Astrology in the Taoist Canon

Wen Zhao (Buddhist Studies, Nankai University; IKGF Visiting Fellow)

16.07.2019: Musical Numbers: Divining with Sound in the Late Warring States and Western Han Periods

Noa Hegesh (Chinese Studies, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg; IKGF Visiting Fellow)

LECTURE SERIES SS 2019

Chan 禪 Narratives about Death Premonitions and Avoidance of Fate

Mario Poceski (Buddhism and Chinese Religions, University of Florida; IKGF Visiting Fellow)

The lecture explored the scope and function of prophecies and premonitions that were articulated and transmitted within the Chan 禪 school of Chinese Buddhism, as it developed during the late medieval period. The discussion was primarily focused on a somewhat limited range of texts, especially those that purport to record the lives and teachings of Chan masters from the Tang 唐 era (618-907). Specifically, the lecture examined in great detail a particular type of foretelling or prediction of forthcoming events, as recorded in Chan literature: a premonition about an upcoming demise, especially one's own. Additionally, it related this peculiar type of religious phenomenon, which in general terms is not unique to the Chan tradition, to nascent ideas about the possibility of changing individual fate, especially when facing death or coming to terms with the prospect of a disagreeable afterlife.

More broadly, the lecture dealt with aspects of Buddhist literature, especially the profusion of narratives that feature prophecies, portends, and predictions, expressed in a variety of genres, and covering a broad range of canonical and non-canonical sources. This type of material conveys a mélange of implicit and explicit meanings. It is also deployed in a variety of contexts, and is open to a range of interpretations. Some basic tropes, such as the Buddha's prophecies about the future enlightenment of individuals or groups, are observable across a number of

different Buddhist traditions. Others are reflective of sentiments, proclivities, or ideas that developed within the contexts of specific times, places, or traditions, such as the Chan school in Tang China. As such, they provide glimpses into the concerns and aspirations of particular individuals or groups of believers, or insights into localized expressions of Buddhist beliefs and practices. Often, they are set in relation to relevant socioreligious milieus or institutional strictures, even if the lacunae in the extant sources may make it difficult to reconstruct all relevant frameworks.

During his stay in Erlangen, Prof. Poceski also produced an article based on the lecture that was published in an IKGf journal: “Chan narratives about death premonitions and avoidance of fate,” *International Journal of Divination and Prognostication* 2 (2019): 288–321.



Mario Poceski at the IKGF (Photo: IKGF)

Figuristische Exegese als Bewältigungsstrategie innerkirchlicher Marginalisierung: Die Appellanten gegen die päpstliche Bulle *Unigenitus* (1713) lesen die Apokalypse

(Figurative Exegesis as a Strategy for Coping with Marginalization within the Church: The Appellants against the Papal Bull *Unigenitus* [1713] Read the Apocalypse)¹

Philipp Stenzig (*Medieval and Early Modern History, University of Düsseldorf*)

In 1713, Pope Clement XI yielded to the pressure of the Jesuits and the envoys of the French King Louis XIV and condemned an emblematic writing of the Jansenist school, the “Nouveau Testament avec des réflexions morales” of Pasquier Quesnel. Among the concerned theologians, Oratorians, Benedictines, and professors at the Sorbonne, the news was received with horror. They concluded that, through this act of censorship, Rome had – *horribile dictu* – become unfaithful to the theology of the Church Fathers. A number of bishops addressed a general council to appeal against the bull but were reprimanded, plunging the French Church into deep crisis.

“Figurists” in the narrow sense are those among the Jansenist theologians (especially Jacques-Joseph Duguet, the abbé d’Étemare, and their disciples) who responded to this crisis by identifying in the Bible foreshadowing of all of the adversities that they now faced due to the papal bull. They went beyond the traditional figurism of the Church Fathers by attempting to recognize in the persons and episodes of the Old Testament not only the antetypes of Christ and his saving work but also secret ciphers for the concrete events they experienced in the present; a horoscope, as it were, for the history of the Church. The key

to understanding all of the images hidden in the Bible were, for them, the predictions of the apostasy of the majority of believers, the future persecution of the small band of the faithful, and the salvation of the righteous on the Day of the Last Judgment, as narrated in Dan. 7, Mt. 24 and especially in the biblical book of the Apocalypse. The dissident theologians identified themselves with the “cognitive minority” evoked therein (the guardians of the truth), which now had to suffer harassment for a short time, and derived from this identity eschatological expectations for the near future. This strategy for “coping with fate” placed them in the tradition of millenarian exegetes of the Middle Ages, such as Jean de Roquetaillade.



Fontaine, Nicolas (1625-1709), Pseudonym: Sieur de Royaumont, prieur de Sombrevail, credited to: Lemaistre de Sacy, Louis-Isaac, L'Histoire du Vieux et du Nouveau Testament, représentée avec des figures, et des explications édifiantes, tirées des saint pères pour régler les mœurs dans toutes sortes de conditions, dédiée à monseigneur le dauphin, par feu monsieur Le Maître de Sacy, sous le nom du sieur de Royaumont, prieur de Sombrevail, Paris (Lesclapart) 1723, copperplate engraving: Claude-Augustin-Pierre Duflos (1700-1786). Source: gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

¹ The talk was held in German.

Planetary Astrology in Medieval China and the Sassanian Connection

David Pankenier (*Chinese Studies, Lehigh University; IKGF Visiting Fellow*)

Portentous clusters of the five visible planets are repeatedly implicated in historical sources in connection with dynastic transitions in early China. Such conjunctions of planets during the pre-imperial period and again at the beginning of the Han (206 BCE-220 CE) established the precedents for this genre of astral portentology. During the medieval period, which is the focus of our investigation here, the History of the Three Kingdoms records how timely planetary portents during the declining decades of the Later Han dynasty (184-220 CE) were exploited as celestial signs justifying the usurpation,

the assumption of Heaven’s Mandate *tianming* 天命 and the founding of the (Cao-)Wei 曹魏 dynasty by Cao Pi 曹丕. Half a millennium later, during the mid-Tang 唐 dynasty, the impetus for the devastating rebellion of An Lushan 安祿山 (703-757) that nearly brought down the dynasty can likewise be shown to have been strongly influenced by the same historical precedents, and more immediately by the conjunction of all five visible planets that occurred in 750. That ominous astral omen, coupled with portentological speculations based on Han dynasty apocryphal texts, together with the parallels

However, because the link they wished to establish between biblical images and contemporary events was arbitrary, there could be no standard by which to judge the validity of their interpretation that was intrinsic to the text of the Bible. Rather, their interpretation required, for its legitimation, the invocation of a special prophetic vision (one had to be a prophet oneself, so to speak, to understand correctly the prophecies of the Bible) or of obvious miracles in favor of their party. Some Figurists saw confirmation of their claims in the “convulsions” that seized visitors to the tomb of the Jansenist Deacon François Pâris in the parish cemetery of Saint-Médard in Paris. Ultimately, however, these events contributed to the decline of figurism. Due to the grotesque features of the spectacle, other Jansenist theologians, such as Louis de Bonnaire, distanced themselves not only from the “convulsionnaires,” but also from figurist millenarianism in general, fearing that this would discredit their theological concerns. In the end, it was these “anti-Figurists” who carried the day and won the Church over to their point of view.

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between An Lushan and Cao Cao's 曹操 (155-220) careers, played an important role in prompting An Lushan to attempt to overthrow the Tang. Contemporaneous developments in mid-eighth century Persia, a period marked by major political upheavals across Inner Asia, suggested the potential mutual influence of planetary astrology in China and Persia. However, incompatibility between the two portentological traditions in terms of their respective astral-terrestrial correlations would seem to militate against the possibility of the existence of a mutual influence on a theoretical level. In the absence of precise information concerning the origins and theoretical foundations of Sassanian planetary astrology, the case for mutual influence between China and Persia remains inconclusive.

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David Pankenier at the IKGF (Photo: IKGF)

Representations of Suicide between Fate and Freedom on the 'Genoese' World Map of 1457

Gerda Brunnlechner (*History of the Middle Ages, University of Hagen*)

Maps are a highly suggestive and also manipulative medium. This applies to modern as well as medieval maps. Latin Christian medieval maps represent the point of view of their makers and their view of the world, which intertwines history, geography and the Christian faith. This lecture focuses on the so-called 'Genoese' World Map, dated 1457. Its provenance and makers are unknown, however, one of its principal sources is connected to the church council of Florence, 1439-1443. Florence was one of the most important centers where humanist ideas were discussed, inspired by the influx of Greek scholars and knowledge of the ancient philosophers. At the same time, its population was reputed to be prone to suicide. Throughout the Middle Ages, suicide had a very negative reputation within Latin Christianity. It was seen as insurgency against fate, comprising a mortal sin against God. Yet, during the later Middle Ages, especially in Florence, different opinions were voiced. Manuscript findings initiated a rising interest in the Greek philosopher Epicurus, who used to be shunned for his hedonist ideas, one of them the conception of suicide as a legitimate last means to evade pain. Also, from the side of scholastic thinkers came new ideas on the subject: around 1450, the archbishop of Florence, Antoninus Pierozzi, accorded exceptions to the general rule that suicide comprised a mortal sin, depending on the intention and attitude of the penitent. Antoninus also wrote about human free will, thus relating to an old discourse which became reignited in the context of the council of Florence. Two travelers on their way from Constantinople to the council forwarded opposing ideas on the subject: Nicholas of Cusa, legate of the Latin Church, and the Greek scholar Gemistos Plethon, a member of the Greek delegation. Relatively unique for a

world map of that time, the 'Genoese' World Map shows three representations of suicide. This lecture analyzed these representations as a contribution to the ongoing Florentine discussions about suicide between fate and freedom.



Gerda Brunnlechner at the IKGF (Photo: IKGF)

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Foundations of Decision-Making: Liberties, Liabilities, and Lies

Joachim Gentz (*Chinese Philosophy and Religion, University of Edinburgh*)

The main argument of this talk was that, in both modern and ancient decision-making practices, we find two main strategies that determine decision-making: a linear concept that constructs a chain of cause and effect and a cyclical concept that provides analogue patterns. Whereas the cyclical pattern concept appears to be relatively stable over time and across cultures, the linear cause and effect model shows considerable cultural and historical differences.

The talk first provided a few general glimpses into the complexity of this field. It first discussed some of the basic features of the decision theories and then turned to the modern models of decision-making and forecasting in which we find factors that are not reflected in decision theory. For this purpose, five examples of modern decision making and forecasting were discussed: weather, the stock market, policy, medicine and law, pointing out a consistent pattern of two approaches to decision-making: one which examines the cases on which decisions have to be made individually as unique cases with their own line of causality that has to be reconstructed in order to make appropriate predictions of plausible future scenarios and an adequate choice accordingly; and a second one, which assumes that past patterns reoccur cyclically. Therefore, they look for an analogue to the present case in order to gain knowledge about its outcome which they assume will be the same as that in the analogue past case.

In a second step, the talk then narrowed down its analytical perspective to the cultural comparative dimension in the discussion about decision-making by examining ancient Chinese examples, where the second approach of identifying patterns is omnipresent. Examples of the first approach also exist but are harder to find. We find them in historiography as well as early Han law. In early

Chinese texts, we find instead an approach that we do not find today, that assumes that the order of knowledge, including the relationships between action and outcome, can only be understood by persons with a certain degree of moral integrity. All other persons need to make their decisions either by means of divination, which provides access to Heavenly knowledge, or with the help of texts and commentaries that reflect the virtuous insights of the ancient sages that produced them.



Joachim Gentz at the IKGF (Photo: IKGF)

History as Prophecy in Alexander Minorita's *Expositio in Apocalypsim*

Andrea Worm (*Institute of Art History, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen*)

This talk introduced a commentary of the Apocalypse that was composed by an otherwise unknown North German Franciscan by the name of Alexander (d. 1271) in the mid-thirteenth century. It is one of the most remarkable of its kind, as the writer for the first time understood the Revelation of John consistently from a historical perspective: all signs recorded in the Book of Revelations Alexander Minorita interpreted as historical persons and events, reaching back to his immediate past, the time of Pope Innocence IV. (1243-1257). His interpretation

is shaped by the immediate expectancy of the apocalypse, for only the last two chapters of the Book of Revelations remain prophecy in the eyes of Alexander; all other chapters have already been fulfilled. For the art and cultural history of the Middle Ages, this commentary is of utmost importance. Not only does it appear to be an

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early and independent appropriation of the historical theology of Joachim of Fiore, but it also relies heavily on images in addition to text in its interpretation of salvation history. This talk therefore devoted special attention to explaining the relationship between text (the Revelation) and commentary on the one hand, as well as text, paratexts and imagery on the other. It was found that the images in particular were ascribed a special significance. This is borne out by a closer examination of the later tradition as almost all known copies of the *Expositio in Apocalypsim* are furnished with lavish sequences of images, which represent among the most substantial cycles about the Apocalypse of John in medieval art. Thereby, this talk was also able to demonstrate the importance of an interdisciplinary approach – combining art history, theology and history – for investigating the relationships between text and image.



(Re-)Writing Fate: Predicting and Dealing with the Future in Chinese Character Divination

Anne Schmiedl (*Chinese Studies, Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg*)

In this presentation, I take one Chinese method of prognostication, Chinese character divination (*cezi* 測字), as a foundation to explore humankind's struggle with fate in imperial China. As a corpus for my analysis, I study excerpts from different genres, ranging from the dynastic histories to brush writings (*biji* 筆記). I incorporate material from the Three Kingdoms Period (220-280 CE) to the Qing dynasty (1644-1912 CE). While these sources bear witness to their protagonists' strategies not only to understand but also to shape their own future, the anecdotes ultimately present fate as determined.

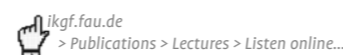
The Chinese have created a broad repertoire of methods for predicting the future, some of which have a long-standing history of a thousand or more years and are still in use today. Anecdotes and philosophical treatises depict the possibility of changing one's fate following an unfavorable prediction: querents may use a number of approaches to do so, be it by cultivating moral behavior, performing ritual counter-measures, or others. Chinese character divination, however, is special in this regard: in anecdotes on character divination, querents are unable to change their future.

Two different qualities of character divination enable querents to attempt to negotiate their fate. Firstly, at the beginning of a divinatory act, querents spontaneously select a Chinese character as a basis for the prediction. Querents use and undermine this stage of randomization to influence the prediction. Secondly, Chinese character divination is a script-based medium. During the

process of divination, practitioners manipulate the graphic, phonetic, and semantic structures of Chinese characters to assess the future. In character divination, characters are understood as polyvalent in a de Saussurian sense.

Querents use these two qualities as opportunities to influence predictions. I draw on the concepts of apotropism and creativity to explain the strategies that querents apply during these windows of opportunity. To impact or transform the outcome of predictions, protagonists make use of apotropism, repetition, mimesis, name changing, and the interpretative techniques of diviners.

In the end, however, these anecdotes present fate as determined. While Chinese character divination as a system allows attempts to be made to influence fate, it does not enable protagonists to actually realize this possibility.



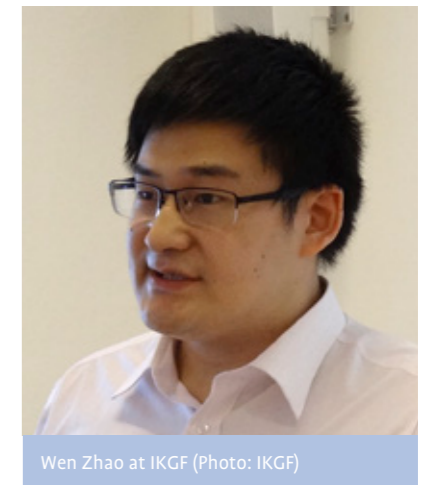
The Sinicized Dorotheos Astrology Handbook: The *Lingtai jing* 靈臺經 (Scripture of the Imperial Observatory) in the Daoist Canon

Wen Zhao (*Buddhist Studies, Nankai University; IKGF Visiting Fellow*)

This lecture dealt with an astrology manual entitled *Lingtai jing* 靈臺經, preserved in the Daoist Canon (DZ 288). It contains rich information about the sinicized Hellenistic astrology, which refers to an eleven-planet system. This system includes not only the seven planets of classical astrology, but also the ascending lunar node (Sanskrit: Rahu) and the descending lunar node (Sanskrit: Ketu) in the Buddhist astrology, together with two other pseudo-planets; namely, Yuebei 月孛 and Ziqi 紫氣. The most important event connected to this type of astrology occurred during the Tang Dynasty, around the year 800 CE, when the *Duli yusi jing* 都利聿斯經 (Duli yusi being the transliteration of "Dorotheos") was translated from the astrological treatise, *Carmen Astrologicum*, which is attributed to the Greek astronomer Dorotheos of Sidon.

Despite possessing several distinctive characteristics, most of the techniques contained in the *Lingtai jing* follow the model as laid out in the *Carmen Astrologicum* and in the works of the followers of Dorotheos in the Perso-Arabic tradition. The central technique of the *Lingtai jing* concerns the calculation of the power of the planets in the horoscope during the birth of a certain person, particularly that of certain key planets, such as the ruler of the house of life (Ascendant), the ruler of the moon sign, etc.; when the planets in the horoscope are more powerful, it indicates a happy life. The calculation of the power of the planets also relies on the dignities, such as the Domicile, the Exaltation, and the Triplicity, rather than the Term and the Face - which is in line with the Islamic scientist Al-Biruni's discussion of the dignities in his time (ca. 1000 CE).

When the author of the *Lingtai jing* introduces Hellenistic astrology, he mainly uses the Chinese horoscope that consists of the twelve earthly branches (*dizhi*



地支) and the twenty-eight lunar stations, due to the fact that the application of the Chinese horoscope made the calculations far easier for the Chinese fortunetellers. We suspect that the author of *Lingtai jing* was an official astrologer who was active during the late Tang or Northern Song dynasty, but there is still much to be explored concerning the authorship of this valuable astrological manual.

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 summer semester 2019 summarize their contributions.

Musical Numbers: Prognosticating with Sound in the Late Warring States and Western Han Periods

Noa Hegesh (*East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin*)

This presentation introduced three cases that demonstrate the use of sound in the context of prognostication during the late Warring States (475-221 BCE) and the Western Han (206 BCE-9 CE). First, we examined the use of sound in practices of name changing, especially in the case of the Western Han polymath Jing Fang 京房 (78-38 BCE), an expert on the *Changes* (*yi* 易), prognosticator, and uniquely gifted acoustician who changed his own surname from Li 李 to Jing after consulting the tuning-standards (*lü* 律). We then analyzed Jing Fang's use of sound in relation to the transition of *qi* throughout the calendric year, as well as his use of sound in weather prognostication and the prediction of natural disasters. Jing constructed a model for the distribution of sound throughout the year, which solved an acoustical-cosmological problem in the existing models. This model may have also served as the foundation for his own prognostication techniques. Finally, we turned our attention to the use of the numerical representation of sound in prognosticating techniques as seen in sections of the daybooks (*rishu* 日書) excavated at Fangmatan. This utilization of sound served more quotidian situations, and may have been accessed by those outside elite society.

We concluded by showing that, at least since the mid-third century BCE, the meaning of sound derived from its function as a measurement and manifestation of *qi* in the cosmos, and the ability to quantify sound implied control over the outcome of actions.



Noa Hegesh at IKGF (Photo: IKGF)

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

The Classic of Changes in East and West

May 14-15, 2019

Organizers: International Consortium for Research in the Humanities (IKGF)/
International Association of *Yijing* Studies (*School of Philosophy, Renmin University of China*)

On May 14-15, 2019, the IKGF hosted a workshop entitled "The Classic of Changes in East and West." The workshop was co-organized together with the International Association of *Yijing* Studies that is based at the School of Philosophy, Renmin University and held in

cooperation with the Confucius Institute Nürnberg. The idea for this workshop was conceived when Prof. Michael Lackner (Director IKGF) held a meeting in 2018 with Prof. Wen Haiming 温海明 of Renmin University and several of his Master and doctoral students who study the *Yijing* from different viewpoints. At this workshop, the students had the opportunity to present their findings

and their presentations were accompanied by talks by well-known international experts in *Yijing* studies.

One of the guiding ideas of the workshop was to view the *Yijing* as a global classic that has been studied by many different scholars and thinkers in various countries. One talk thus analyzed the translation of the *Yijing* produced by German missionary (and later professor of Chinese Studies in Frankfurt) Richard Wilhelm (1873-1930), which contributed – perhaps more than any other work – to the global popularity of the text. Prof. Zhang Wenzhi 张文智 from Shandong University, a renowned expert in *Yijing* studies and a trailblazer within the field, in turn, pointed to some of the similarities and differences between the Chinese philosophical approaches to the *Yijing* and C.G. Jung's psychological reading of the text. The workshop also showed the richness of the *Yijing* and the many different ways in which it can be used and interpreted. Prof. Wen Haiming offered an innovative modern-day philosophical reading of the text and presented his recently-published translation of the work during the workshop. Prof. Michael Lackner, on the other hand, situated the *Yijing* within the field of divination by introducing the participants to Shang Binghe 尚秉和 (1870-1950) and his ingenious attempts to grapple with the success and failure of *Yijing* prognostication. Other speakers showed how the *Yijing* continues to be of relevance today and how it can spark innovation in fields such as management and education. The workshop finished with a round table discussion led by Hon Tze-ki 韓子奇, an eminent scholar of the *Yijing* from the City University of Hong Kong.

Matthias Schumann

PROGRAM

14.05.2019

The Method of Changing Fate: Situational Study of ZHOUYI and SWOT Analysis 改命之学:《周易》境遇学 SWOT 分析法

Prof. Zhao Wei 赵薇 (Professor, Institute of Chinese Culture, Ji'nan University 济南大学中国传统文化研究所, 教授)

Taiji Methodology and the Relationship between Longevity and the Foundation of a House “太极圈点穴法与人寿及宅基地”

Ye Binghui 叶炳辉 (President, Yang Gong Culture Society, Gaozhou 广东高州市杨筠松文化研究会会长,《杨公文化》(省内刊)杂志社主编)

A New English Translation of the Book of Changes (The Commercial Press, 2019)《易经英文新译》商务印书馆 2019

Prof. Haiming Wen 温海明 and Benjamin Coles (寇哲明 Ph. D. Candidate, School of Philosophy, Renmin University of China, 哲学学院博士生)

Round table presentations

Renmin University graduate students (人民大学硕博生论坛)

On the Image in Richard Wilhelm's translation of *Yijing* 卫礼贤《易经》象论思想研究

Qin Kaili 秦凯丽 (M. A. Student, School of Philosophy, Renmin University of China, 哲学学院硕士生)

The studies about Xiong Shili's Philosophy of YIN and XIAN from The Changes 熊十力易学之“隐、显”论说

Sun Shiliu 孙世柳 (M. A. Student, School of Philosophy, Renmin University of China, 哲学学院硕士生)

Zhengwei of Guabian in Li Daoping's philosophy 李道平卦变思想中的正位内涵

Zhao Chen 赵晨 (M. A. Student, School of Philosophy, Renmin University of China, 哲学学院硕士生)

The History and Philosophical Significance of the Book of Changes from the Perspective of the Philosophy of Mind 心学易的历史与哲学意义

Han Meng 韩盟 (Ph. D. Candidate, School of Philosophy, Renmin University of China 哲学学院博士生)

The Book of Changes and the Education of Life Wisdom 易经与生命教育

Liu Na 刘娜 (Post-doctorate Researcher, School of Chinese Classics, Renmin University of China 国学院博士生)

15.05.2019

宋明理学的蒙卦诠释与儒家启蒙思想 A Study on the Confucian Thought of Enlightenment Based on Neo-Confucian Scholars' Explanation of Hexagram Meng

Prof. Liu Zengguang 刘增光 (Associate Professor, School of Philosophy, Renmin University of China, 副教授)

Yijing and modern Science and Technology

Tao Anjun 陶安军 (General Manager, Anhui Huayi Equipments Technology Co., Ltd. 安徽华艺生物装备技术有限公司, 总经理)

An Exploration on Yin and Yang

Lin Zhenghuan 林正焕 (President, Kunyi New Energy Auto Co., Ltd. 坤意 新能源汽车有限公司, 董事长)

Establishing the correct meaning, restoring the hidden path of interpretation. Some remarks on Shang Binghe's 尚秉和 (1870-1950) approach to the *Classic of Change*

Prof. Michael Lackner (Director IKGF, FAU)

The Philosophy of the *Yijing* and Jungian Analytical Psychology: A Comparative Study

Prof. Zhang Wenzhi 张文智 (Associate Professor, Center for *Yijing* Studies, Shandong University 山东大学周易研究中心)

Final discussion

with Prof. Hon Tzeki 韩子奇 (City University of Hong Kong) and IKGF/FAU scholars (Prof. David Pankeier, Prof. Mario Poceski, Prof. Fabrizio Pregadio, Prof. Michael Höckelmann, Prof. Stéphanie Homola, Dr. Dimitri Drettas, Dr. Michael Lüdke, Matthias Schumann, PhD candidate Alexandra Fialkovskaya, PhD candidate Liu Keyan)

Rethinking Interdisciplinary Approaches to Decision-Making: Choice, Culture, and Context

June 3-4, 2019

Conveners: Prof. Stéphanie Homola (SDAC, FAU)/ Prof. Alexander Smith (SDAC, FAU)

The academic study of decision-making constitutes a highly interdisciplinary field that incorporates research from a variety of disciplines, including, but not limited to, branches of behavioral economics, political science, economic anthropology, business management, and social and cultural anthropology. At the moment, the Elite Master's Program "Standards of Decision-Making Across Cultures" (SDAC) is hoping to broaden its disciplinary horizons by opening a discourse exploring different cultural approaches to decision-making processes, which we will contextualize within the program's emerging theoretical perspective. Drawing from the IKGf's comprehensive experience in studying issues related to modes of prognostication, as well as the relationship between prognostication and forms of goal-oriented behavior, the SDAC and IKGf jointly hosted a workshop on June 3-4, 2019, entitled

"Rethinking interdisciplinary approaches to decision-making: Choice, culture, and context."

One of the workshop's primary goals was to address the complexity of the term 'decision-making' itself and explore its variable usage across the disciplines represented by the workshop participants. Additionally, the scope of the workshop included questions of intercultural rationality, time as an aspect of decision making, and the comparative cultural dynamics of different decision-making processes.

In order to catalyze a shared conversation on the subject, in addition to their principal presentation, the participants discussed the following questions:

- What is your disciplinary understanding of decision-making?
- Is your understanding of decision-making linked to broader discourses on rationality, ethics, or free will? If so, how?
- In what way is your research relevant to the concept of decision-making?
- Is the study of theoretical and material decision-making tools or processes relevant to your research?

By drawing from the IKGf's comprehensive experience in studying issues related to modes of prognostication and forms of goal-oriented behavior, as well as relating them to SDAC's different disciplinary approaches to decision-making,

the workshop provided an environment in which to exchange knowledge and offered new perspectives to the participants. A highlight was the keynote lecture by Prof. Joachim Gentz (University of Edinburgh) on "Foundations of Decision-Making: Liberties, Liabilities, and Lies" as well as the final discussion about decision-making theories with all participants. Pointing at the lack of transdisciplinary theories and literature about decision-making, the workshop is a foundational step toward developing research and teaching publications projects in the context of the SDAC Program which will introduce and combine different theoretical approaches.

Spirit-Writing in Chinese History

June 25-26, 2019

Organizers: Matthias Schumann (IKGF Erlangen)/ Elena Valussi (Loyola University Chicago)

This conference investigated the role of spirit-writing (*fujū* 扶乩/ *fuluan* 扶鸞) in China, past and present. Commonly, spirit-writing refers to the transmission of messages ascribed to deities and spirits by using a wooden instrument that is wielded above a tray of sand or ashes. As such, spirit-writing can be used to obtain knowledge about the future, receive medical prescriptions, or compose religious scriptures. Spirit-writing experienced periods of suppression, particularly in mainland China after 1949, but its practitioners have been able to adapt the practice to the changing social, political, and cultural contexts. It has therefore remained popular to date, not only among Chinese-speaking communities but also in countries that have adopted aspects of the Chinese religious traditions, such as Vietnam. This conference brought together scholars from various disciplines to provide an overview of the historical evolution of spirit-writing to date, and also to address the issues that deserve further attention.

Since the 1980s, research in the field of spirit-writing has benefitted from numerous efforts to explore the sources and make them available to the larger academic community. A very important factor for the field of spirit-writing was the *Daozang jiyao* 道藏輯要 project, spearheaded by Monica Esposito (1962-2011) in the 1990s, that brought many scholars into contact

with spirit-written materials. The project set out to map this important collection of texts – first published in the early nineteenth century – and uncovered precious information about the communities that transmitted these texts and the networks that they maintained. Combining the efforts of 74 international scholars, this project culminated in the production of a three-volume companion to the *Daozang jiyao*, which has been edited by Lai Chi-tim 黎志添, who was unfortunately unable to attend the conference, and was published by the Chinese University of Hong Kong Press in 2021.² Since the late 1990s, scholars around Wang Chien-chuan 王見川, Fan Chunwu 范純武, Philip Clart, and Li Shiwei 李世偉 have published numerous collections of "morality books" (*shanshu* 善書) and religious scriptures that have proved indispensable for the study of spirit-writing. Currently, moreover, Vincent Goossaert is launching the China Religious Text Authority project together with other scholars, which is a bibliographic effort that aims "to map out detailed webs of relationships among the producers, publishers, and distributors of religious texts."³ The project covers a wealth of spirit-written documents and its contributions will certainly amount to another major step in the study of spirit-writing.

The availability of these sources, and the growing community of scholars who explore them, for the first time ever, allows us to

2. https://cup.cuhk.edu.hk/index.php?route=product/product&product_id=4143
3. https://crta.info/wiki/Main_Page.

PROGRAM

03.06.2019

Power and Destiny: Decision-Making Between Agency and Contingency, Perspectives from Religious Studies

Prof. Klaus Hock (University of Rostock)

Decision-Making and Religious Studies - A Fruitful Endeavor?

Dr. Esther-Maria Guggenmos (FAU)

Through a Glass Darkly: the Specter of 'Savage Thought' in Social Anthropology

Prof. Alexander Smith (SDAC, FAU)

Decision-Making in Human Resource Management: Science or Superstition?

Dr. Christof Niederwieser (IKGF, FAU)

Two Shades of Blackness: The Impact of Double Consciousness on Collective Decision-Making in African American Sports Activism

Yasmine Nawar (SDAC, FAU)

Concepts of Decision-Making in Political Science in an Interdisciplinary Perspective

Sven Grundmann (SDAC, FAU)

04.06.2019

The Emperor's Teacher: Decision-Making in the World's Greatest Empire

Prof. Robert LaFleur (Beloit College/ SDAC, FAU)

Categorizing and Selecting: Modular Counting Procedures in Decision-Making Processes

Prof. Stéphanie Homola (SDAC, FAU)

Unclogging Strategies: The Challenges of Establishing Sinology-Based Heuristics

Dr. Dimitri Drettas (SDAC, FAU)

Decision-Making Processes and Cultural Values in China: Rethinking Approaches with Social Media Application

Dr. Martina Gottwald-Belinic (SDAC, FAU)

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

attempt to delineate the broader strokes of the history of spirit-writing, look for breaks and continuities, identify networks, and explore the lines of transmission both within China as well as beyond the Chinese-speaking world. At the conference, various relevant aspects were discussed but, in this report, I wish to focus on a few issues that resonate across multiple papers and presentations.

Two papers in particular attempted to provide an outline of the history of spirit-writing from a broader perspective. In his paper, Hu Jiechen 胡劫辰 gave an overview of the development of spirit-writing, building on recent studies by scholars such as Wang Chien-chuan. Hu delineated how spirit-writing evolved from the practice of “inviting the Purple Maiden” (*qing Zigu* 請紫姑), which made use of a straw figurine to transmit simple yes/no answers to questions posed by the predominantly female worshippers. During the Song Dynasty, chopsticks were added to the figurine, giving her the ability to write. Around the same time, a greater variety of deities began to descend, transmitting more elaborate messages such as poems and even essays for the civil service examinations. Spirit-writing, in this context, was intimately connected to literati culture. During the twelfth century, however, a comparable technique, called the “flying phoenix” (*feiluan* 飛鸞), also came to be used in the transmission of religious scriptures, which were later included in the Daoist canon. It was exactly this link to Daoism that attracted the attention of Vincent Goossaert. Against a palpable tendency in research to stress the lay character of spirit-writing, Goossaert argued that, during the period from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, spirit-writing was considered the preserve of Daoist ritual masters (*fashi* 法師) and practiced within the emerging exorcistic ritual traditions (*daofa* 道法). Accordingly, Goossaert pointed out, the earliest liturgical instructions for the practice of spirit-writing are found in Daoist canonical collections. Spirit-writing, in this context, served as a means of communication between the Daoist priests and the high gods, allowing the latter to be present during rituals. In light of this evidence, Goossaert calls for a re-evaluation of the role of the Daoist priest within the early history of spirit-writing, and his presentation complemented that by Hu Jiechen in providing a more comprehensive view of its early history.

Another important aspect that both presentations brought to light is the typological and terminological diversity that we find in the history of spirit-writing. In fact, while modern spirit-

writing is most commonly associated with a T- or Y-shaped wooden stylus, we do not yet know when these specific instruments first appeared. Historically, we instead see a large variety of practices, making use of instruments such as rice winnowing sieves that are only rarely used today. Some techniques, such as the “flying phoenix” mentioned above, were supposed to work without any human interference, resulting in written messages that were completely ascribed to the deities and thus akin to forms of “automatic writing.” Hu Jiechen also mentioned the technique of the “scribal register” (*bilu* 筆籙), which was popular among literati in late imperial China who “channeled” the deities through a brush that was wielded in one hand as during regular forms of writing. This indicates the close connection, and the occasionally blurred boundaries, between spirit-writing and other forms of mediumistic practices (*jiangshenshu* 降神術). This issue also featured in Wang Chien-chuan’s presentation. Wang gave a talk on “soul travels” and their relation to spirit-writing in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Taiwan and Yunnan. “Soul travels” are usually the preserve of spirit-mediums, but Wang showed that spirit-writing practitioners frequently undertook similar trips. Through spirit-writing, accounts of those trips, which were often surveys of the netherworld, were produced with the intention of admonishing the living. In his presentation, Fan Chunwu further introduced the case of the “transcendent of the plate” (*diexian* 碟仙), a practice that emerged during the Republican period (1912-1949). This technique made use of a plate that was placed on a sheet illustrated with characters. Following the unconscious movements of the practitioners’ hands, the plate would indicate specific characters in a way similar to a Ouija-board. The technique was marketed as a “scientific spirit-stylus” (*kexue lingji* 科學靈乩) and poses important questions about the technical development of spirit-writing, its boundaries as well as its links to discourses on science and spiritualism. The ethnographic data presented at the conference, moreover, made clear that, even today, spirit-writing techniques are far richer and more diverse than usually assumed. Zhu Mingchuan 朱明川 thus reported that practitioners in Fuzhou use a long, Y-shaped stylus particular to the local tradition of spirit-writing. Janet Hoskins, presenting on Vietnamese spirit-writing within Caodaism, showed the audience images of a wooden basket, which serves as the main spirit-writing tool and differs quite significantly – both in form and procedure – from the Chinese and Taiwanese “mainstream” technique.

An even greater diversity can be attested with regard to the terminology. Vincent Goossaert showed that a great number of combinations that contain the word *jiang* 降, or to descend, can and do in fact refer to spirit-writing. Some of these phrases, such as *pijiang* 批降, bear the mark of the priestly and bureaucratic context on which Goossaert focused in parts of his presentation. Today, the terms *fuji* and *fuluan* seem to be accepted as transregional and comprehensive designations for spirit-writing. However, Zhu Mingchuan pointed out that, in Fuzhou, dialect spirit-writing is usually called “sailing the wooden raft,” or *kaifa* 开筏, thus again attesting to the heterogeneity and local inflections hidden behind the Western term “spirit-writing.” In addition, spirit-writing has also traveled to non-Chinese speaking areas, such as Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia, sparking inspiring forms of “translingual practice.” Janet Hoskins thus showed that, in Caodai, spirit-writing, which is called *co bút* in Vietnamese, is practiced within a Sino-Vietnamese setting (complicated by the influence of French spiritism). Most members are unable to read Classical Chinese and messages are hence transmitted in Romanized Vietnamese, but sounding eschatological messages that would resonate with Chinese readers.

Another focus of the conference was the communities and networks that shaped the history of spirit-writing both locally and regionally over the course of time. In her presentation, Shiga Ichiko 志賀市子 investigated the nineteenth century spirit-writing movement, which grew to a national scale after 1840, from the perspective of Western Guangdong. In particular, she showed how eschatological spirit-written scriptures (*jiujiejing* 救劫經; scriptures to save humanity from the apocalypse) spread from Sichuan to Guangdong and further through networks of merchants and morality book publishers. These scriptures sounded similar eschatological themes and struck a note with local people who suffered through the Bubonic Plague of the 1890s. She also showed, however, that while spirit-writing in Guangdong was integrated into a larger transregional movement, local religious traditions and practices (such as specific deities germane to the place) persisted as well. Li Guoping 李國平 adopted a perspective similar to Shiga Ichiko and contextualized spirit-writing in the Chaozhou area of Guangdong both within the larger spirit-writing movements as well as within the local religious milieu. Li particularly focused on local “charitable halls” (*shantang* 善堂) to show their close links to spirit-writing practice, but also to offer a more precise

understanding of their nature and characteristics. In Chaozhou, there was a variety of charitable halls and, contrary to previous research, not all of them practiced spirit-writing. Many did, however, and developed local characteristics and pantheons in the process. At the same time, they were embedded within the larger spirit-writing movement that spread nationally in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and had much in common with religious organizations in other regions. This included, for example, a widespread tendency to merge eschatological discourses with charitable activism that we see in other regions as well. Some charitable halls were also of a sectarian nature and linked to transregional religious networks, such as the Xiantian dao 先天道 (Way of the Former Heavens). By being attentive to the heterogeneity of charitable halls in Chaozhou as well as their transregional links, Li was able to differentiate between halls of distinct categories but also aimed to correct an overemphasis on the distinct, separate nature of Chaozhou charitable halls in the existing research.

In his presentation, Zhu Mingchuan introduced the history of the Liu-han Altar 了闡壇, which was originally founded by members of the influential Guo 郭 family in Fuzhou during the late Qing Dynasty. The altar presents a remarkable case, as it is more than 120 years-old and regularly recorded spirit-written messages over that period. Zhu showed how the altar expanded over time, branching out to Xiamen and Hong Kong, indicating the transregional appeal of spirit-writing. At the same time, the altar remained deeply connected to the religious milieu of Fuzhou as both its deities as well as its practice of spirit-writing were connected with the local religious traditions. In her talk, Luo Dan focused on the Fei Ngan Tung Buddhism and Daoism Society, a Lüzu 呂祖 cult from Hong Kong. Through her ethnographic work, she showed how the society adapted to the changing urban setting of the city, but also to the challenges and opportunities emerging from mainland China. The society increasingly adopted Daoist rituals in an attempt to gain legitimacy as an “orthodox” religious community. Moreover, in light of the looming reunification with mainland China, the members set out on a journey to find their roots, eventually settling on Mount Heming in Sichuan as the (alleged) birthplace of their society. Spirit-writing, however, always remained crucial for the society and it was messages by Lüzu that propelled the attempt to establish links with mainland Daoism and guided the members during their journey through prophecies. These four presentations showed very clearly that part of the success

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of spirit-writing is its ability to forge transregional links while remaining grounded in the local religious milieus. These transregional links are facilitated not only by the circulation of spirit-written scriptures but also by the important role that nationally-recognized deities such as Lüzu play within various altars.

During the early twentieth century, many such networks and altars were integrated into new religious movements or redemptive societies (*jiushi tuanti* 救世團體), many of which emerged from spirit-writing altars. Janet Hoskins showed that Caodaism grew out of a number of “secret societies” that had been founded by Sino-Vietnamese traders, practiced spirit-writing and advocated a millenarian cosmology similar to many Chinese “sectarian” groups. Within Caodaism, both spirit-writing and the millenarian cosmology were integrated into a truly transcultural pantheon that included not only Cao Dài, the highest deity of the religion, but also Confucius, Shakyamuni Buddha and Jesus. Xia Shi introduced the case of the Daoyuan 道院, a redemptive society founded in Ji’nan in February 1921 by a number of local officials and merchants. The Daoyuan evolved into a national religious and charitable organization and venerated the founders of the five world religions (Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam) in a fashion comparable to Caodaism. It built on the existing religious traditions and practices, such as inner alchemy, but also engaged with new spiritualist discourses. Its spirit-written messages were published in journals, thus betraying the rise of a modern publishing industry at the time. In my presentation, I focused on the role of Confucianism within the Wushanshe 悟善社 (Society for Awakening and Goodness) and its sub-organization, the Jiushi xinjiao 救世新教 (New Religion to Save the World). The Wushanshe was another redemptive society, which was officially founded in Beijing in 1920. Starting from the mid-1920s, a number of prominent members, such as Lu Zongyu 陸宗輿, began to transmit commentaries to Confucian classics, such as the *Daxue* 大學 (Great Learning) or the *Zhongyong* 中庸 (Doctrine of the Mean). By establishing a direct rapport with the Confucian sages, the Wushanshe claimed to have finally restored the true interpretation of these important texts. Through their commentaries, they integrated the Confucian classics into their own religious program of self-cultivation and moral reform, stressing the role of the deities as agents of retribution. These exegetical activities serve as a reminder that redemptive societies provided an institutional outlet for many

who were educated within the traditional education system that was abolished in 1905.

Through the various presentations, we also gained important insights into the social context of spirit-writing and its changing perception within society. Historically, spirit-writing inhabited an ambiguous place, as it was prohibited by the Ming and Qing states, but nevertheless widely practiced, also by the literati elites. In his presentation, Michael Lackner focused on exactly such an elite; namely, Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724-1805), compiler of the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Complete Books from the Four Treasuries). In his writings, Ji frequently touched upon spirit-writing. He generally subsumed the practice under the category of the mantic arts, or *shushu* 術數 (arts and codes), and reserved the same verdict for both spirit-writing and other practices, such as tortoise shell divination. These practices could yield important predictions and insights; however, rather than ascribing these insights completely to the agency of the deities, Ji insisted that a proper human interlocutor was required to make these practices efficacious. Otherwise, they would merely produce nonsense. This ambiguous verdict allowed Ji to retain a critical distance and not accept all spirit-written messages as credible. Elite involvement has been a crucial factor in sustaining spirit-writing communities over the centuries, and many elites were less skeptical than Ji Yun. In his overview paper on phoenix halls in present-day Puli 埔里, Taiwan, Paul Katz showed that local elites, in particular, are responsible for the rapid growth of local halls. These elites, many of whom were wealthy merchants, established and maintained networks among different halls and provided crucial funds for religious activities, such as the publication of morality books. For these elites, supporting a phoenix hall is not only a means of gaining “symbolic capital” but also an expression of personal devotion. The role of elite networks and patronage was a topic that surfaced in several of the talks. The influential Guo family, on which Zhu Mingchuan focused, boasted numerous officials and civil service examination graduates and introduced other members of the elite to their spirit-writing altar. The Wushanshe was also led by a number of influential politicians and militarists who dominated Beiyang politics in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Some of these learned the craft of spirit-writing in order to develop the ability to transmit messages personally.

Another crucial and hitherto neglected constituency of spirit-writing groups is women. The role of women in spirit-writing lay

at the heart of Elena Valussi’s presentation. She thereby wanted to close a gap in the existing research, which often tends to exclude women, deliberately or not. Historically, spirit-writing is of course tightly connected to women and female deities as it emerged from the female worship of the goddess Zigu. Once the practice shifted to a male literati context, however, both women and female deities became less common participants in spirit-writing. It was mostly men, Valussi argued, who controlled the practice and shaped the “gendered relations” at the altar. Some literati, for example, used spirit-writing to communicate with female deities or deceased female relatives, thereby fostering emotional and romantic relations with the spiritual world. Yet, there are also rare cases of women serving as mediums or participating in spirit-writing practices. In her presentation, Valussi particularly focused on the practice of *nüdan* 女丹, or female alchemy, many texts of which were transmitted through spirit-writing. In this context, she not only discussed a female medium but also showed that the female self-cultivation community often communicated with female deities who were thought to resonate with female yin energies and be more knowledgeable about the affairs considered important to women. The link between spirit-writing and gender roles was also discussed by Daniel Burton-Rose in his presentation. Taking the example of the well-known literatus Peng Dingqiu 彭定求 (1645-1719), he showed how Peng used the instructions transmitted at his spirit-writing altar to advocate “masculinist values” and the orthodoxy of Cheng-Zhu-Confucianism. Peng thereby opposed exactly the kind of romantic and eroticist encounters that played out in late Ming spirit-writing activities and were mentioned by Valussi. Peng instead advocated chastity as the prime virtue that should be promoted by men and preserved by women. In this context, Burton-Rose interprets spirit-writing as a means of “disciplining” men of the generation of Peng Dingqiu’s father to force them to adapt to the new political context under Qing rule. Delivered by divinized sages, such as Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107), such messages must have been impressive. Burton-Rose thereby also raised the important issue of agency at the spirit-writing altar. The question of how far spirit-writing messages represent and are shaped by the interests of the human practitioners is seldom addressed explicitly in research. Xia Shi, in her presentation on the Daoyuan, showed how the gender views were subtly reformed in light of the context of Republican China. The Daoyuan encompassed several all-female organizations that practiced spirit-writing. By focusing

on spirit-written exhortations to its female members, most of whom did not receive a modern education, Xia showed how the Daoyuan sought to reconstruct “gendered morality” to provide stability during a period of change. In particular, it promoted charity as a means of self-cultivation but also as a contribution to the larger social good. While generally subordinating women to men and emphasizing their domestic duties, the instructions opened up room for women to assume new roles in public life. These presentations show that a careful reading of the sources can yield important insights into the role of women within the field of spirit-writing. The male perspective of the historical sources, however, can make such attempts difficult, pointing to ethnographic data as an important corrective.

In light of the growing importance of gender perspectives within the broader field of Chinese Studies, it is surprising that there remains limited research on women’s role in spirit-writing today, an oversight that Paul Katz sought to correct in his research on Puli phoenix halls. He found that women participate less frequently in spirit-writing sessions than men. They rather devote themselves to self-cultivation activities, such as the chanting of scriptures. He also showed the gendered aspect of spirit-writing, with many women only joining after hitting menopause due to concerns over ritual purity. Philip Clart, in his presentation, further showed what insights quantitative data can bring to understanding the role of women within spirit-writing. Clart is currently building a database (together with Li Guoping), which aims to analyze all spirit-written questions posed at a spirit-writing altar in central Taiwan from 1980 to date. By examining a sample of questions, he found out that – at least in the early 1980s – questions via spirit-writing were predominantly posed by men. He voiced the hypothesis that this imbalance may result from different levels of literacy, a thesis that may also apply to many historical cases. He also showed that the topics of concern vary between women and men, with the former predominantly inquiring about their body and health. This again indicates the “gendered” dimension of spirit-writing. Taken together, these presentations show that gender is an important concept for gaining a clearer understanding of the social context in which spirit-writing was practiced as well as its various roles within society. They also indicate the benefits of bringing together both historical as well as ethnographic scholarship in the study of spirit-writing.

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Most of the papers presented at the conference will be included in a forthcoming volume, which is edited by the two organizers and will be published as part of the IKGf book series, "Prognostication in History," by Brill. It is hoped that this volume will contribute toward closing at least a few of the gaps in our understanding of spirit-writing in Chinese history. However, it will certainly only be a step and many important questions remain to be addressed by future research. These particularly relate to the historical development of spirit-writing, from the evolution and change in techniques and terminology to the impact of dynastic transitions on the practice and popularity of spirit-writing. It is also imperative to get a better understanding of the interplay between local cults and the transregional

redemptive societies that emerged in the early twentieth century. The latter were also driving the globalization of spirit-writing as many founded branch societies in foreign countries. The spread and adaptation of spirit-writing beyond the Chinese borders, a process with deep historical roots, is another issue that needs to be addressed in future research. In this context, it will also be important to situate Chinese spirit-writing within the interdisciplinary study of mediumistic practices around the world. Spirit-writing, with its long history and voluminous textual archive, can provide important insights also to scholars outside the field of Chinese Studies, where the practice remains little known so far.

Matthias Schumann



Participants of the conference (Photo: IKGf)

PROGRAM

25.06.2019

Overview Paper 1: Five Questions for a Comprehensive History of the Spirit-written Literature

Vincent Goossaert (*École Pratique des Hautes Études, PSL*)

Panel 1: Spirit-Writing and the Literati Elites in Late Imperial China Discussant: Vincent Goossaert

Between Belief and Disbelief: Ji Yun 紀昀 on Spirit-Writing and the Mantic Practices

Michael Lackner (*IKGf*)

Deities on Patriarchal Spirit Altars: The Gender Dynamics of Peng Dingqiu's (1645-1719) Spirit-Writing Circle

Daniel Burton-Rose (*Northern Arizona University*)

扶乩与近代中国的忠烈成神：以闲坛为例, 1898-2018 (Spirit-Writing and the Divinization of Civil Officials' Martyrs in Modern China: A Case Study based on the Liu Han Altar, 1898-2018)

Zhu Mingchuan 朱明川 (*Fudan University 復旦大學*)

Overview Paper 2: A Typological Study on the Spectrum of Spirit-writing in Late Imperial China

Hu Jiechen 胡劫辰 (*Yuelu Academy 岳麓書院*)

Panel 2: Networks, Communities and Sites Discussant: Xia Shi

Spirit-Writing Cults in Western Guangdong: Their Position in the 19th-Century Spirit-Writing Cult Movement

Shiga Ichiko 志賀市子 (*Ibaraki Christian University 茨城キリスト教大學*)

The Rise of Spirit-Writing Cults in the Chaozhou Area (1860-1949)

Li Guoping 李國平 (*Leipzig University*)

當代香港扶乩道壇的歷史與傳承：以飛雁洞佛道社為例子 (History and Transmission of Daoist Spirit-Writing Altars in Hong Kong: A Case Study of Fei Ngan Tung Buddhism and Daoism Society)

Luo Dan 羅丹 (*Sun Yat-sen University 中山大學*)

26.06.2019

Overview Paper 3: A Motley Phoenix? On the Diversity of Spirit-writing Groups in Modern Taiwan

Paul R. Katz (*Academia Sinica 中央研究院*)

Panel 3: Spirit-Writing in Contemporary Vietnam Discussant: Shiga Ichiko

Spirit writing and Sinophobia in Contemporary Vietnam

Tam Ngo (*Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Göttingen/ Department of Comparative Religious Studies, Radboud University Nijmegen*) (talk was cancelled)

Reveal and Conceal: Spirit-Writing as a Clandestine Practice in Vietnam and its Diaspora

Janet Hoskins (*University of Southern California*)

Panel 4: Spirit-Writing in the Changing Context of Republican China Discussant: Paul Katz

碟仙：《靈乩指迷》與民初扶乩技術的改革 (The Transcendent of the Plate: The *Lingji zhimi* 靈乩指迷 (A Guide to the Spirit Stylus) and the Reform of Spirit-Writing Techniques during the Early Republic)

Fan Chunwu 范純武 (*Foguang University 佛光大學*)

'Protecting the Dao and Transmitting the Classics': The Confucian Dimension of Spirit-Writing in Republican China

Matthias Schumann (*IKGf*)

Spirit Writing and Daoyuan's Gendered Teachings

Xia Shi (*New College of Florida*)

Panel 5: Spirit-Writing and the Individual Discussant: Hu Jiechen

A Female Lineage for Female Practitioners: Goddesses, their Poems, and Bodily Practices in the Female Alchemy Corpus

Elena Valussi (*Loyola University Chicago*)

與亡靈對話：清代扶乩的另類現象與功能初探--以雲南、台灣為考察中心 (Conversing with the Dead: A Preliminary Discussion of an Alternative Phenomenon and Function of Qing-Dynasty Spirit-Writing — An Investigation Focused on Yunnan and Taiwan)

Wang Chien-chuan 王見川 (*Southern Taiwan University of Science and Technology 南臺科技大學*)

Spirit-writing as a Technique for Individual Divination: Themes and Patterns in the Divination Records of a Modern Taiwanese Phoenix Hall

Philip Clart (*Leipzig University*)

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Divination and Decision-Making by Lot and Randomization in East Asia and Europe 24-25 September 2019

Organizers: Klaus Herbers / Michael Lackner / Matthias Heiduk (IKGF, FAU Erlangen)

The casting of lots to explore the unknown and make decisions ranks among the oldest cultural techniques in different civilizations. Evidence for this can be found not only in Biblical narratives such as the partitioning of the Promised Land between the twelve tribes of Israel or the election of the apostle Matthias, but also in Chinese canonical sources, such as the *Yijing* 易經 or artifacts of temple oracles in China.

This workshop brought together scholars from different disciplines to discuss the current research on the many different forms of casting lots and to make an intercultural comparison between Europe and East Asia. Presentations ranged from Chinese Temple Oracles, Tibetan Potluck Soups and Byzantine aids for decision-making to Franconian Lotteries for Poor Souls. The discussion focused on specific techniques of questioning lots and the related mechanisms of randomization, such as geomancy or bibliomancy, as well as their social context and use for divination, decision-making, and reducing contingency. In addition, the workshop addressed the blurred boundaries between prediction and gambling as well as attempts to manipulate and calculate probabilities.

Due to the ongoing construction work at the IKGF, this workshop was held, not in the IKGF's large seminar room, but at the Villa Schwabach. Participants welcomed the different environment and used the breaks to take a stroll in the nearby forest.

PROGRAM

24.09.2019

Session 1, Chair: Klaus Herbers
The Book of Changes and Temple Oracles
Michael Lackner (IKGF, FAU Erlangen)

Latin Books of Fate in Medieval Europe: The Case of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms Ashmole 304
Allegra Iafrate (Scripta, Paris Sciences et Lettres)

Session 2, Chair: Klaus Herbers
Gambling and Manipulating the Afterlife: The Lottery for Poor Souls
Matthias Heiduk (IKGF, FAU Erlangen)

Detours and Short-Cuts in Random Selection Procedure: Counting-Out and Drawing Lots in Chinese Divination and Gambling
Stéphanie Homola (Institute for Near Eastern and East Asian Languages and Civilizations, FAU Erlangen)

Session 3, Chair: Michael Lackner
Western European Books of Fate and Bibliomancy
Marco Heiles (Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures, University of Hamburg)
Gaming and Divining in East Asian Buddhism
Esther-Maria Guggenmos (IKGF, FAU Erlangen)

Session 4, Chair: Michael Lackner
Lots and Law: Juridical Usages of Randomization in Medieval Europe
Klaus Herbers (IKGF, FAU Erlangen)
Decision-Making by Casting Lots in Byzantium
Michael Grünbart (Institute for Byzantine Studies, University of Munster)

25.09.2019

Session 5, Chair: Matthias Heiduk
Elections by Casting Lots in Medieval Italy
Christoph Dartmann (Medieval History, University of Hamburg)

Reincarnation Lotteries, Books of Fate, and Potluck Soups: Casting Lots in Tibet
Rolf Scheuermann (IKGF, FAU Erlangen)

Session 6, Chair: Matthias Heiduk
Natural Divination in Medieval Treatises on Geomancy
Alessandra Beccarisi (History of Medieval Philosophy, University of Lecce)
Jueyi 決疑 or The Taming of Chance. Some Comparative Remarks on Necessity and Statistical Stability in China and the West
Andrea Bréard (History and Diffusion of Science, University of Paris-Sud / Paris-Saclay)

Final Discussion, Chair: Klaus Herbers, Michael Lackner

VISITING FELLOWS



Dr. Helena Avelar de Carvalho, Post-doctoral Researcher Interuniversity Center of History of Science and Technology, University of Lisbon/ The Warburg Institute - University of London, research stay: January 2020-June 2020; research topic: Who Wants to Live Forever? Astrological Methods for Determining Lifespan in Western Culture



Dr. Keyang Dou, College of the Humanities, Jilin University; research stay: October 2019-September 2020; research topic: The Hermeneutics of *The Book of Changes*



Dr. Knut Graw, Institute for Anthropological Research in Africa, University of Leuven; research stay: January 2020-June 2020; research project: Divination, Time, and the Subject in Senegal and Gambia



Dr. Phillip Grimberg, Institute for Near Eastern and East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Erlangen; research stay: June 2019-February 2020; research project: Forged Prophecies: Liu Ji's Shaobingge and Late Qing Anti-Manchu Sentiments

Dr. Daniel Hausmann, Institute of Sinology, University of Frankfurt; research stay: November 2019-May 2020; research topic: Comets, Earthquakes, and other Omens: Metaphorization and Political Reform, 1874-1882



Dr. Yael Kedar, Department for Multi-disciplinary Studies, Tel Hai College; research stay: February 2020-August 2020; research topic: Roger Bacon's (ca. 1220-1292) Idea of Progress, Laws of Nature and the Laws of the Stars



Yuh-Chern Lin, National Tsing Hua University International Visiting Scholarship; research stay: November 2019-December 2019; research topic: Reestablishing the History of Divination in Taiwan by Birth Charts



Dr. Lex Jiing Lu, Clark University (USA); research stay: March 2020-July 2020; research project: What Does a Dragon Look Like? Appearance Politics in a Time of Usurpation 1380-1424



Dr. Michael Miller, Department of Theology, Philosophy and Religion, Liverpool Hope University; research stay: October 2019-April 2020; research topic: Verbal and Visual Vistas: Differentiating two modes of Prophetic Revelation and Prognostication in Medieval Jewish Mysticism



Prof. Dr. Andreas Nehring, Department of Religious Studies, University of Erlangen-Nürnberg; research stay: October 2019-March 2020; research topic: Vedic Science

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



Dr. Diarmuid O'Riain, Gerda Henkel Stiftung; research stay: March 2020-July 2020; *Sancta prophetissa Ita*: the Life of the Irish saint Íde of Killeedy and the role of prognostication in medieval Irish hagiography



Dr. Alexander Smith, École Pratique des Hautes Études, East Asian Civilizations Research Center (CRCAO); research stay: November 2019-May 2020; research topic: Rope, Silver, and Lapis: The Unique Mythology and Prognostic Technique of *ju thig*



Dr. Qiong Zhang, Department of History, Wake Forest University Winston-Salem (NC); research stay: October 2019-January 2020; research topic: Meteorology for a Troubled Age: The 'Weathermen' of Jiangnan and the Global Co-Emergence of an Early Modern Culture of Science-Making

OBITUARY

Helena Avelar de Carvalho



On March 9, 2021, our dear colleague and friend Helena Avelar de Carvalho passed away unexpectedly at her home in Lisbon. Helena came to Erlangen as a renowned expert in the field of the history of astrology. She gained

her PhD under the supervision of Charles Burnett at the Warburg Institute in London, which has been a research partner of the IKGF for many years. Her expertise was characterized by an in-depth knowledge of the theories and methods of premodern astrology as well as the 'Sitz im Leben' of astrological everyday practice. She contributed, through this expertise, in manifold ways to the research at the IKGF where she was a visiting fellow from January to June 2020. Her main focus was her project, entitled "Astrological Methods of Determining Lifespan in Western Culture," in which she demonstrated a general shift in the astrological practices for tackling questions of determinism during the Middle Ages, which is reflected in the offering of personal choices instead of predicting inevitable fate.

Helena also contributed to the IKGF handbook entitled "Prognostication in the Medieval World" with an article on the "Libro de las Suertes" (a book of lots) as evidence of intercultural exchange on the Iberian Peninsula. The IKGF set up a research cooperation with the "Astra-Project," based at the University of Lisbon. This was the main project of Helena and her partner, Luís Ribeiro, aiming to explore the impact of astrology on the history of science and ideas. The cooperation intended to establish further common projects; for instance, the attendance of the IKGF at the international conference entitled "The Tools of the Art" at the monastery of Batalha in Portugal.

During the days we spent together with Helena at the IKGF, we got to know her as a caring and always encouraging colleague who knew how to implant a longing for the beauty of her homeland Portugal into our hearts. We truly miss her warm-hearted, open-minded personality and we join her partner, relatives and friends all over the world in loving remembrance of her.

IN BRIEF

- Former IKGF Visiting Fellow Prof. Dr. Andrea Bréard has been granted the most prestigious international research prize in Germany, an Alexander-von-Humboldt-Professorship, endowed with 3.5 million euros. A mathematician, science historian, sinologist, and philosopher, Andrea Bréard not only assumes the Chair of Sinology at the FAU, but has also joined the directorate of the IKGF and will bring new interdisciplinary perspectives to our research on prognostication.
- On May 29, 2020, the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (Bundesverdienstkreuz am Bande) was awarded to IKGF Deputy Director Professor Klaus Herbers. The official award ceremony was hosted by the Bavarian State Minister of the interior, Joachim Herrmann, at the Heinrich-Lades Hall, Erlangen, on October 2, 2020.
- A Memorandum of Understanding between the Centro Interuniversitário de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia (CIUHCT) and the International Consortium for Research in the Humanities (IKGF) has been signed to foster academic, scholarly and educational cooperation between the two institutions. A particular - but not exclusive - goal of this cooperation is to develop the ASTRA Project: a project aimed at achieving a better understanding of astrology's place within the history of science and the history of ideas.
- Dr. Rolf Scheuermann and Matthias Schumann, both long-term team members of the IKGF, will be leaving Erlangen, in March and April respectively, to assume new positions at Heidelberg University. We thank them for their work over the last few years and wish them well for the future. We also would like to use this opportunity to thank all further team members of the IKGF family who will be leaving the consortium in the near future.

OUTLOOK

While there will not be a further *fate* newsletter, the IKGF will continue. We are pleased to inform you that the IKGF was granted a cost-neutral extension of the project duration of two years by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. With the additional support of the University, IKGF will be able to operate for a further third year. Furthermore, the IKGF has been granted supplementary funds by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research to organize a humanities festival in Erlangen from October 15-25, 2021. This festival will allow us to strengthen our public outreach and crown the end of our official second funding period with a festive finale. This festival will include various formats, such as an interdisciplinary conference, lectures, a science slam, a round table, film screenings in cooperation with the European TV Channel Arte and the E-Werk Erlangen, pop-up exhibitions in the city of Erlangen, a comic exhibition, hands-on workshops, and a children's program. And there is even more good news. This year, the Elite Master Program, "Standards of Decision-Making Across Cultures," which evolved from the Consortium, received a positive evaluation and will continue its program with a second funding phase of a further five years. Congratulations to Prof. Dr. Dominik Müller, Prof. Dr. Stéphanie Homola, and their team!

NO NEXT *fate* !

As mentioned at the beginning, this is the last issue of *fate*, the newsletter of the International Consortium for Research in the Humanities. However, we wish to assure you that we will continue to inform you about all the activities of our research center in the future. To this end, we are currently integrating a weblog into our website, which you will soon be able to access via the following link: <https://ikgf.fau.de/blog>.

We wish to thank all our faithful readers for the support that they have shown to us for more than a decade and hope that you will enjoy our new weblog just as much!



International Consortium for Research in the Humanities

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