

# The Käte Hamburger Kolleg IKGf: Insights and Outlooks

June 12 to June 14 2023

## Conference Program

**Monday, June 12**

**9:00 Welcome Addresses by Michael Lackner, Klaus Herbers, Andrea Bréard**

**9:30-10:15 First Round of Talks**

Radu Bikir (Rennes 2 University): Divination without Prediction: the other Resources of Mantic Practices during the Song Dynasty

Chair: Michael Lackner

**10:15-10:30 Coffee Break**

**10:30-12:00 Second Round of Talks**

Zhang Qiong (Wake Forest University, North Carolina): Does Heaven Speak?: Modalities of Picturing and Comprehending Atmospheric Phenomena in Seventeenth-Century China

Chang Che-chia (Academia Sinica, Taipei): The Rise and Spread of the Prophecy of “Red Goat Catastrophe”

Chair: Thomas Crone

**12:00-14:00 Buffet Lunch on Site at the Premises of the IKGf**

**14:00-15:30 Third Round of Talks**

Stefan Heilen (Osnabrück University): Hartmann Schedel and the Horoscopes of his Family Members

Charles Burnett (Warburg Institute, London): Ptolemy’s Definition of Prognostication and Its Mutations in the Course of the Translation of the *Tetrabiblos* through Arabic into Latin

Chair: Klaus Herbers

**15:30-15:45 Coffee Break**

**16:45-17:15 Fourth Round of Talks**

Marc Kalinowski (École Pratique, Paris): The Five Elements in China: a Cross-cultural Perspective

Petra Schmidl (IKGf): “Strategies for Coping with the Future” in al-Ashraf ‘Umar’s *Kitāb al Tabṣira fī ‘ilm al-nujūm*

Chair: Li Gang

**19:00 Dinner at Mireo**

Mediterranean Restaurant

Glockenstraße 4

91054 Erlangen

# **The Käte Hamburger Kolleg IKGf: Insights and Outlooks**

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## **Conference Program**

**Tuesday, June 13**

### **Round Table Discussions**

10-12 minutes for each participant, followed by a joint discussion

#### **RT I 10:00-12:00**

**Chair:** Alexander Fidora (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)  
Stefano Rapisarda (Università di Catania)  
Christoph König (Osnabrück University)  
Michael Grünbart (University of Münster)  
Gian Luca Potestà (Università Cattolica, Milan)  
Klaus Herbers (IKGF)

**12:00-14:00 Buffet Lunch on Site at the Premises of the IKGf**

#### **RT II 14:00-16:30**

**Chair:** Tiziana Lippiello (Cà Foscari, Venice)  
Zhao Lu (New York University, Shanghai Branch)  
Marta Hanson (MPIWG, Berlin)  
Stephan Kory (University of Florida, Gainesville)  
Stéphanie Homola (CNRS, Paris)  
Fabrizio Pregadio (IKGF)  
Brandon Dotson (Georgetown University, Washington DC)  
Esther-Maria Guggenmos (Lund University)

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## Conference Program

Wednesday, June 14

### Society Meeting

#### 09:30–10:45 Reports of the ISCSd

(about 15 minutes for each report and 30 minutes for discussion)

1. Report of the President (Michael Lackner)
2. Report on the Book *Series Prognostication in History* (Michael Lackner)
3. Report on the *International Journal of Divination and Prognostication* (Ulrike Pickardt, Managing Editor, with the participation of Charles Burnett and Michael Lackner)

#### 10:45–11:00 Coffee Break

#### 11:00–11:45 Outlook of the Society: Brainstorming (Chair: Michael Lackner)

1. Discussion: how can we improve the presentation of the book series and the journal on the Society's website?
2. Website of the Society:
  - The current website needs a clearer structure; the presentation of the Society's aims, activities, etc., should be improved. Ideas for extending the website:
    - Networking among scholars of the field (e.g. create a concise profile of members who are interested);
    - Publications by the society members/occasional papers (full papers, article abstracts, preview of books, etc.);
    - Introduction of ongoing dissertations (perhaps also a dissertation award as an honor of the candidate);
    - Events, information regarding conferences, lectures, new events, call for papers, etc., on the website (also via a weekly/monthly newsletter and an RSS feed);
    - Offering links to open access database and the IKGf website and bibliography, etc.
    - Enabling comments and discussions on journal articles
    - Option to buy articles/subscribe to the journal
    - Improved member area/user account functionality
    - Member access to bylaws and meeting minutes
    - Incentives for new members
    - Call for papers and authors' guidelines available online
    - Collection of links to related/relevant websites, institutions, resources
    - Photo gallery with images of exhibits, manuscripts etc. (source: 2022 exhibition?)
    - More biographical and academic information on all board members
    - Spam-protected contact option for all Society people
    - Some examples: Twitter; blog; incentives like publishing 1 article per issue or volume as open access; small trade fair equipment with flyers etc. for conferences; networking with other bodies/institutions; expansion of the Society as a competence center with help, consulting offers, knowledge base etc.;

sponsoring/award for the most interesting research idea/thesis of the year.  
Sponsorship/award for most interesting research idea/thesis of the year; monthly or quarterly greeting by the president with current thoughts on divination&prognostication (as a blog on the homepage); call for reviews of publications in the book series (great idea in <https://blog.degruyter.com/how-to-promote-your-academic-book/#reviews>: Offer free copy); use social media/YouTube for event announcements; establish a presence at ResearchGate, academia.edu or LinkedIn).

## 2. Activities of the Society:

- The Society may establish itself by organizing several events (independently or in cooperation with other institutions, such as?). Possible options are:
  - Organizing an annual or biennial conference, which may take place online or in person (participation fees required);
  - Workshops for postgraduate students, PhD candidates, and young postdocs in the field;
  - Collaborate with other organizations. Suggestions?

## 3. Other Issues:

- Reduced and more flexible membership fees for students
- Other suggestions from the members.

**11:45–12:15 Vote for Key Members of the Society (Ulrike Pickardt)**

**12:15 Lunch Break (Sandwiches, Finger Food)**

# **The Käte Hamburger Kolleg IKGf: Insights and Outlooks**

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## **Abstracts**

### **Divination without Prediction: the other Resources of Mantic Practices during the Song Dynasty**

Radu Bikir (Rennes 2 University)

Divination is always linked to the capacity to predict the future, but are diviners always infallible, and especially do they have other capacities than prognostication? The texts we are going to study will show us the close links between divination and the pleasure that the literati have in the interpretation of characters and words, and that often this interpretative pleasure is sufficient in itself.

The themes that will be addressed will thus be linked to specific techniques of the Song dynasty, such as Guaying 卦影 (Hexagram Shadow). I will also show how divination allows us to understand the immediate environment of the literati and how they can become potential diviners.

### **Does Heaven Speak?: Modalities of Picturing and Comprehending Atmospheric Phenomena in Seventeenth-Century China**

Zhang Qiong (Wake Forest University)

Since high antiquity, the Chinese have paid keen attention to what we term today “meteorological phenomena.” Various prognostic traditions seeking to understand their effects on human life evolved over the millennia. Some sought to predict the weather in the short term to serve the daily needs of private individuals and government officials; others offered readings of atmospheric phenomena as Heaven’s indication of what was to come, especially regarding political and military affairs involving state actors. How did the encounters with Aristotelian meteorology and other aspects of Jesuit science in the late Ming and early Qing intervene in these discourses on the weather? Were there significant ruptures in these discourses that may be termed their “early modern” transformations? Drawing on my research for a chapter on Chinese meteoromancy in the IKGf project, Handbook of Chinese Divination Techniques, and my manuscript in progress, “Weather Matters: The Science and Politics of Meteorological Discourses in Late Imperial China,” I will venture some preliminary answers to these questions. In particular, I will examine some seminal texts with significant coverage on atmospheric phenomena produced and/or circulated in the seventeenth century to highlight the continuities and emerging fault lines in how their authors visualized and interpreted such phenomena.

## **The Rise and Spread of the Prophecy of “Red Goat Catastrophe”**

Chang Che-chia (Academia Sinica)

Among the various prophecies of calamities in China, the “Red Goat Catastrophe” (*hong yang jie* 紅羊劫) or “Red Horse Catastrophe” (*chi ma jie* 赤馬劫) has become the most noted and provocative. The origin of this prophecy is usually attributed to Chai Wang’s 柴望 (1212–1280) memorial to Emperor Song Lizong 宋理宗 (1205–1264) warning that every future year of the Red Horse (*bing wu* 丙午) and Red Goat (*ding wei* 丁未) will be accompanied by national catastrophes. Chai’s historical research on this rule is not well grounded, but his argument received continuous attention. Chai’s historical accounts were repeatedly quoted and expanded by writers of later generations. The impression of his prophecy’s effectiveness has prolonged to the twentieth century. Sometimes it is rumored that the rise of the Cultural Revolution (1966, a year of the Red Horse) verifies this prophecy. In this essay, I try to explore the origins as well as the spread of this prophecy and argue that it commenced earlier than the Song Dynasty. From its feature of cyclical repetition, it could be considered as one of the variations of the historical turning points in the ancient Confucian prophet books *Wei shu* 緯書. Beyond that, the popular Five Phase theoretical framework could explain it more easily. Furthermore, it better echoes the millenarian prophecy of calamities accompanying *kalpa*, widespread in China since the Medieval period. All these factors together enhanced the influence of this prophet to be rooted in the Chinese people’s memory.

## **Hartmann Schedel and the Horoscopes of his Family Members**

Stefan Heilen (Osnabrück University)

The Nuremberg humanist Hartmann Schedel (1440–1514) is widely known as the compiler of the Latin text of the Nuremberg Chronicle and builder of one of the largest private libraries of late medieval and Renaissance Europe. Far less known is his personal interest in astrology. The Bavarian State Library owns numerous astrological manuscripts and incunabula from Schedel’s library. Examination of this material reveals that Schedel collected horoscopes of several (maybe all) members of his family. Only a few of them have been identified so far. This paper will discuss Schedel’s competence in astrology, survey and characterize the extant horoscopes, and investigate whether he cast any of them himself, what they add to his hitherto known biographical data, and how his astrological interests are reflected in a different sort of text, the history of his family (Familienbuch).

## **Ptolemy’s Definition of Prognostication and Its Mutations in the Course of the Translation of the *Tetrabiblos* through Arabic into Latin**

Charles Burnett (Warburg Institute)

The talk will start with the statement that Ptolemy, in the *Tetrabiblos*, regarded there to be two kinds of prognostication from the stars, the first being astronomy, by which one can predict the movements of the heavenly bodies, the second being that of astrology, by which one can predict the effects. A misreading of Ptolemy led to the belief that he claimed that these forms of prognostication were superior to any other forms, and his commentators therefore surveyed

different kinds of prognostication to show how that from the stars was the most reliable and exalted kind.

**“Strategies for coping with the future” in al-Ashraf ‘Umar’s *Kitāb al-Tabṣira fī ‘ilm al-nujūm***

Petra G. Schmidl (IKGF)  
Friedrich-Alexander Universität of Erlangen-Nürnberg

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century Yemen al-Ashraf ‘Umar authored more than ten scholarly treatises and constructed at least six astrolabes – most probably before ascending the throne and ruling over the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula until his death in 1296. To his works belongs the *Kitāb al-Tabṣira fī ‘ilm al-nujūm* (“Enlightenment in the Science of the Stars”), recently under investigation in the project “The Sultan and the Stars.” This text provides a wide variety of topics, all loosely linked to celestial phenomena, astronomical, astrological, mathematical, and geographical knowledge as well as calculating, prognostic, and magic practises. After shortly introducing the author, his oeuvre, and his treatise, this talk will focus on examples of prognostic practices that al-Ashraf ‘Umar includes in his *Tabṣira*. Their methods will be explained and their scholarly niveau discussed, since both allow to draw conclusions concerning the target audience or user community. Together with further reflections concerning the derivation and dissemination of these practices, in particular, that some of them kept being confined to Islamicate societies, while others pervaded linguistic, religious, and cultural boundaries, these deliberations will help when finally asking for the suitability of the presented prognostic practices as “strategies for coping with the future.”