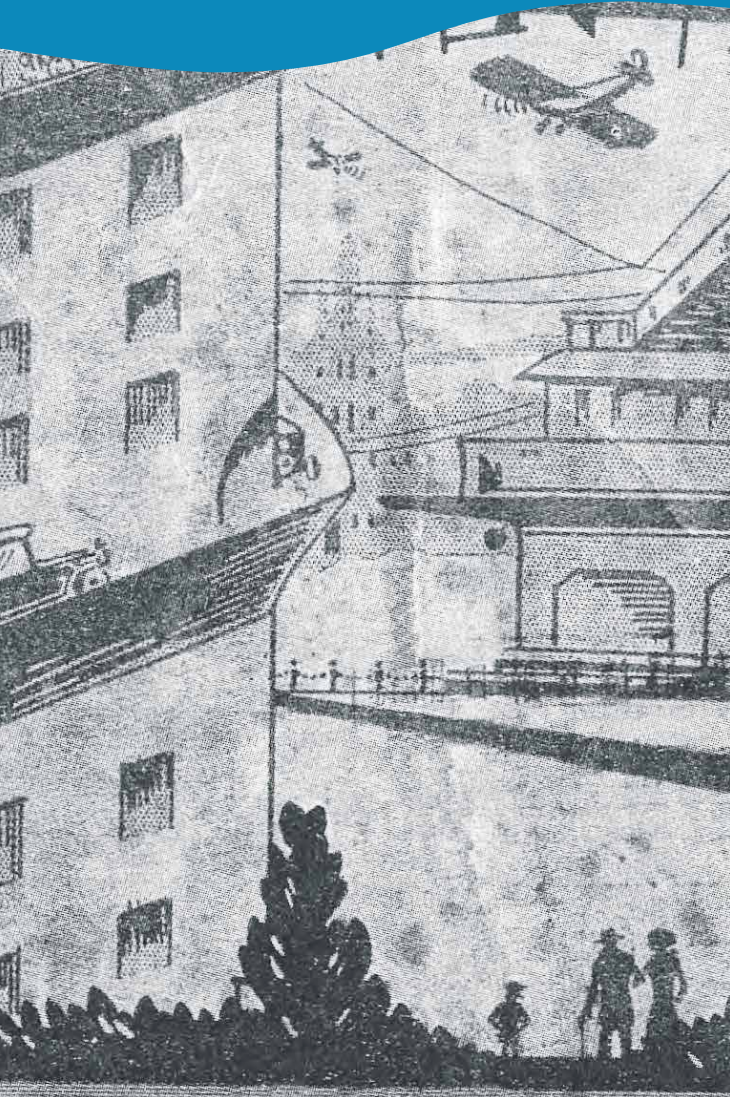


Conference Venue:
E-Werk Kulturzentrum
Fuchsenwiese 1, 91054 Erlangen



The aim of this conference is to examine expressions of optimism and scepticism regarding civilizational progress as they appeared within the circles of the Chinese intellectual and political elite.

Following crisis response strategies from the end of the 19th century, conceptions of civilizational progress, in the broad sense, social evolution and modernization quickly gained a great degree of influence in political and intellectual circles in China. Even though 'Western' ideas played a central role to varying degrees in the development of such conceptions, the evaluations, assessments and prognoses of 'progress' were by no means concurrent in China and Western societies. While optimistic views on civilizational progress tended to lose importance in Europe and North America from the late 19th century and sceptical findings were increasingly emphasized, optimism regarding progress continued to predominate in China in various forms. Fundamentally optimistic positions, in China, referred to the temporal aspects of civilizational advance: it was thus thought to be possible that progress/modernization could occur in an accelerated mode in China. This attitude reflects notions of a present and future China in which a catching up with, overtaking and surpassing of supposedly more advanced Western societies might take place. Moreover, a multifaceted and frequently ethically based diagnosis of China's current situation appeared which recognized a lack of simultaneity from an explicitly universal historical perspective and was associated with predictive statements. Here, China appeared as a historical entity that was stuck in a historically 'backwards' era in comparison to Western societies and therefore, facing considerable time pressure, needed to undertake targeted steps toward an accelerated process of development. Such optimistic assumptions can be found in a broad intellectual and political spectrum that is not adequately understood in terms of the usual classifications like 'progressive/conservative'.

Please **register** until October 20, 2013
via our website www.ikgf.fau.de

International Consortium for Research in the Humanities

Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg
Ulrich-Schalk Str. 3a · 91056 Erlangen
Phone: +49 (0)9131 85 - 20618 · Fax: +49 (0)9131 85 - 20630
www.ikgf.fau.de

SPONSORED BY THE



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research



INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM for Research in the Humanities

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

October 29 – 31, 2013

CONFERENCE
Convenor: Prof. Dr. Thomas Fröhlich

Optimism and Scepticism regarding Progress in Late 19th-Century and Republican China



**FRIEDRICH-ALEXANDER
UNIVERSITÄT
ERLANGEN-NÜRNBERG**



INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM
for Research in the Humanities

Tuesday, October 29, 2013

9:15 a.m. **Welcome addresses**

Thomas Fröhlich (Vice Director IKGF,
University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)
Antje Kley (Vice-President, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)

9:45 a.m. **The Chinese Concept of “Progress”**

Kai Vogelsang (University of Hamburg)
Respondent: Rui Kunze 王瑞 (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)

10:45 a.m. *Coffee Break*

11:00 a.m. **Despair and Utopianism in Modern China:
Abolishing Boundaries**

Peter Zarrow (University of Connecticut)
Respondent: Leigh Jenco (London School of
Economics and Political Science)

12:00 p.m. *Lunch Break*

1:30 p.m. **The Idea of Progress in Modern China.
The Case of Yan Fu**

Li Qiang 李强 (Peking University)
Respondent: Thomas Fröhlich (IKGF, University of
Erlangen-Nuremberg)

2:30 p.m. *Coffee break*

2:45 p.m. **Against the Specter of (Modern) Time: Critique
of Progressivism in Modern Chinese History**

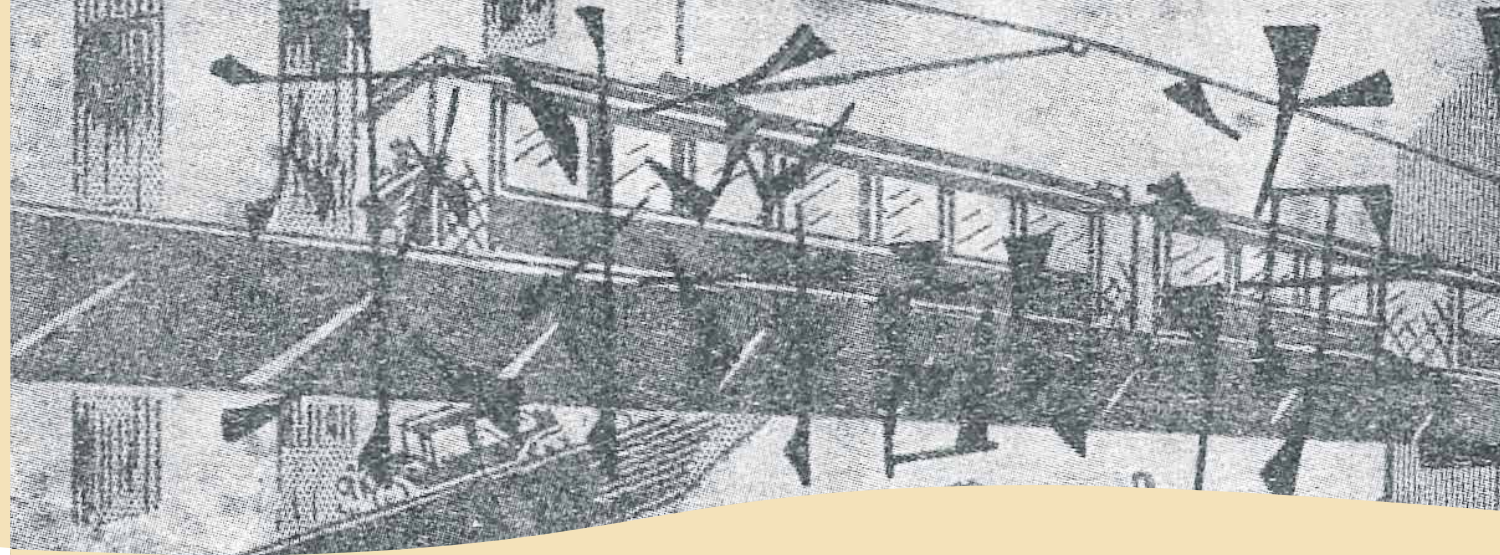
Axel Schneider (University of Göttingen)
Respondent: Li Qiang 李强 (Peking University)

3:45 p.m. *Coffee Break*

4:00 p.m. **Fantasizing Science:
Kexue xiaoshuo 科學小說 in Early
Twentieth-Century China (1902-1920)**

Rui Kunze 王瑞 (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)
Respondent: Takahiro Nakajima 中島隆博 (University of Tokyo)

5:00 p.m. *End*



Wednesday, October 30, 2013

9:15 a.m. **Prospect Optimism and the Temptations
of Expertocracy in Republican China**

Thomas Fröhlich (IKGF, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)
Respondent: Peter Zarrow (University of Connecticut)

10:15 a.m. *Coffee Break*

10:30 a.m. **The Contingency of Culture: Westernization
and Cultural Construction in the 1930s**

Leigh Jenco (London School of Economics and Political Science)
Respondent: Hsiao A-chin 蕭阿勤 (Academia Sinica)

11:30 a.m. *Coffee Break*

11:45 a.m. **Science and Religion between Optimism
and Skepticism: Minakata Kumagusu in Japan
and Hu Shi in China**

Takahiro Nakajima 中島隆博 (University of Tokyo)
Respondent: Axel Schneider (University of Göttingen)

12:45 p.m. *Lunch break*

2:15 p.m. **When Revolutionary Optimism Encountered
Local Particularity: The 1947-49 Literary and
Cultural Debate in Post-Colonial Taiwan**

Hsiao A-chin 蕭阿勤 (Academia Sinica)
Respondent: Carsten Storm (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)

3:15 p.m. *Coffee Break*

3:30 p.m. **近代思想中對「未來」的想像。
The Imagination of “Future“ in
Modern Chinese Thought**

Wang Fang-sen 王汎森 (Academia Sinica)
Reader: Rui Kunze 王瑞 (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)

4:30 p.m. *End*

Thursday, October 31, 2013

9:15 a.m. **Talking about Science and Technology in Late
Imperial and Early Republican China**

Iwo Amelung (University of Frankfurt)
Respondent: Kai Vogelsang (University of Hamburg)

10:15 a.m. **Roundtable**

11:00 a.m. *End*