

## Conference Venue:

IKGF Seminar Room, Building D1  
Hartmannstraße 14  
91052 Erlangen

Spirit-writing (*fuji* 扶乩/*feiluan* 飛鸞) played an important role in Chinese history. Commonly understood as transmitting the messages of deities and spirits, it was used to obtain knowledge about the future, to receive medical prescriptions or to compose religious scriptures. Spirit-writing faced periods of suppression, particularly in mainland China after 1949, but its practitioners have been able to adapt the practice to changing social, political and cultural contexts. It has therefore remained popular until this day not only among Chinese-speaking communities, but also in countries that appropriated aspects of Chinese religious traditions such as Vietnam.

This conference brings together scholars from various disciplines to provide an overview of the historical evolution of spirit-writing until today, but also to address issues that deserve further attention. Besides the technical variety of spirit-writing and its regional spread and distribution, it is important to get a better grasp of the social groups that are involved with the practice. Women in particular have long been associated with spirit-writing, but their activities and beliefs have seldom been explored in any detail. The conference also aims to identify spirit-writing's place in China's religious landscape, in particular with regard to its relation with the established religious traditions. Thus, for example, can we speak of a specific tradition of spirit-writing communities with its own religious repertoire or are other expressions such as popular Confucianism or religionized Confucianism more useful to describe the communities as well as the contents of spirit-written materials? This conference further takes into account the broader transcultural context in which the practice was and is situated. At least since the early 20th century, Chinese practitioners began to engage with other forms of "inspired writing" around the globe to legitimize and enrich their own activities. At the same time, spirit-writing spread to many regions beyond the Chinese mainland, thereby sparking processes of innovation and appropriation.

If you would like to attend,  
please **register** by **June 17, 2019** on our website  
<http://www.ikgf.uni-erlangen.de/events/>

Organizers:

**Matthias Schumann** (IKGF Erlangen)

**Elena Valussi** (Loyola University Chicago)

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*Strategies for Coping with the Future in East Asia and Europe*

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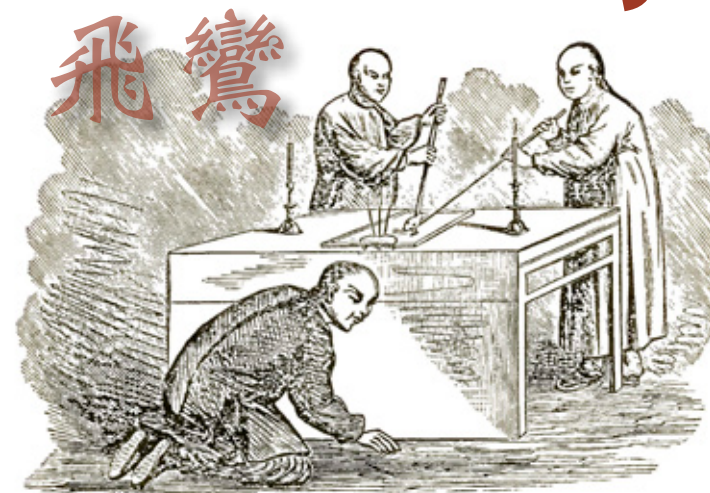


**INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM  
for Research in the Humanities**

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

## CONFERENCE

# Spirit-Writing in Chinese History



**June 25/26  
2019**



**FRIEDRICH-ALEXANDER  
UNIVERSITÄT  
ERLANGEN-NÜRNBERG**



Feiluan xin yu:

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, L.sin. K 175-1/10, S. 236.urn:nbn:de:vbv:12-bsb00075644-7.

Cover image taken from Nevius, John. *China and the Chinese* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1868), 168.

## Day 1, June 25

9:00 – 9:10 am	<b>Welcome Address:</b> Michael Lackner (Director IKGf)
9:10 – 9:30 am	<b>Introduction:</b> Elena Valussi (Loyola University Chicago) & Matthias Schumann (IKGf)
9:30 – 10:15 am	<b>Overview Paper 1: Five Questions for a Comprehensive History of the Spirit-written Literature</b> Vincent Goossaert (École Pratique des Hautes Études, PSL)
10:15 – 10:45 am	Coffee Break

### Panel 1: Spirit-Writing and the Literati Elites in Late Imperial China

	<b>Between Belief and Disbelief: Ji Yun 紀昀 on Spirit-Writing and the Mantic Practices</b> Michael Lackner (IKGf Erlangen)
10:45 am – 12:15 pm	<b>Maternist Deities on Patriarchal Spirit Altars: The Gender Dynamics of Peng Dingqiu's (1645-1719) Spirit-Writing Circle</b> Daniel Burton-Rose (Northern Arizona University)
	<b>扶乩与近代中国的忠烈成神: 以闲坛为例 1898-2018</b> (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)
	Discussant: Vincent Goossaert

12:15 – 1:30 pm Lunch Break

1:30 – 2:15 pm	<b>Overview Paper 2: A Typological Study on the Spectrum of Spirit-writing in Late Imperial China</b> Hu Jiechen 胡劫辰 (Yuelu Academy 岳麓书院)
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2:15 – 2:45 pm Coffee Break

### Panel 2: Networks, Communities and Sites

	<b>Spirit-Writing Cults in Western Guangdong: Their Position in the 19th-Century Spirit-Writing Cult Movement</b> Shiga Ichiko 志賀市子 (Ibaraki Christian University 茨城キリスト教大学)
2:45 – 4:15 pm	<b>The Rise of Spirit-Writing Cults in the Chaozhou Area (1860-1949)</b> Li Guoping 李國平 (Leipzig University)
	<b>當代香港扶乩道壇的歷史與傳承: 以飛雁洞佛道社為例子</b> (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)
	Discussant: Xia Shi (New College of Florida)

## Day 2, June 26

9:00 – 9:45 am	<b>Overview Paper 3: A Motley Phoenix? On the Diversity of Spirit-writing Groups in Modern Taiwan</b> Paul R. Katz (Academia Sinica 中央研究院)
	<b>Panel 3: Spirit-Writing in Contemporary Vietnam</b>
9:45 – 10:45 am	<b>Spirit writing and Sinophobia in Contemporary Vietnam</b> Tam Ngo (Max Planck Institute, Göttingen/Radboud University Nijmegen)
	<b>Reveal and Conceal: Spirit-Writing as a Clandestine Practice in Vietnam and its Diaspora</b> Janet Hoskins (University of Southern California)
	Discussant: Shiga Ichiko
10:45 – 11:15 am	Coffee Break

### Panel 4: Spirit-Writing in the Changing Context of Republican China

	<b>碟仙: 《靈乩指迷》與民初扶乩技術的改革</b> (The Transcendent of the Plate: The <i>Lingji zhimi</i> (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)
11:15 am – 12:45 pm	<b>'Protecting the Dao and Transmitting the Classics': The Confucian Dimension of Spirit-Writing in Republican China</b> Matthias Schumann (IKGf Erlangen)
	<b>Spirit Writing and Daoyuan's Gendered Teachings</b> Xia Shi (New College of Florida)
	Discussant: Paul Katz

12:45 – 2:00 pm Lunch Break

### Panel 5: Spirit-Writing and the Individual

	<b>A Female Lineage for Female Practitioners: Goddesses, their Poems, and Bodily Practices in the Female Alchemy Corpus</b> Elena Valussi (Loyola University Chicago)
2:00 – 3:30 pm	<b>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</b> (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)
	<b>Spirit-writing as a Technique for Individual Divination: Themes and Patterns in the Divination Records of a Modern Taiwanese Phoenix Hall</b> Philip Clart (Leipzig University)
	Discussant: Hu Jiechen
3:30 – 4:00 pm	Coffee Break
4:00 – 5:00 pm	<b>Concluding Discussion</b>