

S W E D I S H  
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Lecture

## MICHAEL LACKNER

Short-term visitor, SCAS. Professor of Chinese Studies and Director, Internationales Kolleg für Geisteswissenschaftliche Forschung, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

### *Traditional China: 'Superstitious' or 'Rational'? Another View of Cross-cultural Master Narratives*

Thursday, 28 January, 6:15 p.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall  
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala

This is an event of the Bernhard Karlgren Programme.

The lecture will be followed by a reception. Prior registration is required.  
Please contact [rsvp@swedishcollegium.se](mailto:rsvp@swedishcollegium.se) no later than 25 January to sign up.



## ABOUT MICHAEL LACKNER

Michael Lackner received his Ph.D. from Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München in 1983, with the thesis “The Chinese Forest of Dreams: The Ming Dream Encyclopedia Meng-lin hsüan-chieh”. Among other things, he has been a research fellow at the Institute of Far Eastern Civilizations, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, at Maison des sciences de l’homme, Paris and at Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. Following Professorships of Chinese Studies at Georg-August-Universität Göttingen and Université de Genève, he is currently Professor of Chinese Studies at the Department of Middle Eastern and Far Eastern Languages and Cultures, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. He is also Director of the Internationales Kolleg für Geisteswissenschaftliche Forschung, “Schicksal, Freiheit und Prognose. Bewältigungsstrategien in Ostasien und Europa”, also at Erlangen-Nürnberg.

In addition to being a member of the External Review Panel, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, Lackner is also a member of the Advisory Board, German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). He is a member of the Nationale Akademie der Wissenschaften Leopoldina.

Lackner’s research interests include Classical studies in the Song dynasty; Sino-Western cross-cultural transfer (language, philosophy, history of ideas), 16th to 20th centuries; Chinese assertions of identity (from late imperial China to the 20th century); and the history of political thought in China. He is the (co-)editor and author of many articles and books including *Mapping Meanings: The Field of New Learning in Late Qing China* (2004), *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China* (2001) and *Polyphony Embodied: Freedom and Fate in Gao Xinjian’s Writings* (2014); as well as co-editor of *Neue China Studien*.

## ABSTRACT

This talk examines the age-old western debate on “superstition” and “rationality” in Chinese culture. First, representative statements for the different points of view will be introduced. In a second step, I will present Ji Yun’s (1724-1805) assessments of traditional ways of forecasting that provide elements for a more appropriate understanding of the problem.