



**Collective Identity,
Experiences of Crisis and Traumata**

New Approaches to Chinese Historiography
and Historical Culture
from a Comparative Perspective

edited by Achim Mittag,
in collaboration with Martin Hanke

Deutsche Ostasienstudien 16

December 2023

Softcover (15,0 x 23,0 cm), x + 344 pages

ISBN: 978-3-946114-42-0

€ 39,80

The present volume grew out of a conference under the umbrella project "Chinese Historiography and Historical Culture from a Comparative Perspective". Initiated by Thomas H. C. Lee and supported by the City College of New York, the Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, the Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut, Essen, and the National Taiwan University, Taipei, this project was generously funded by the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, Taipei. The conference, the proceedings of which are now being published in this volume, was held at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, Essen, on June 17–20, 1998. Since then, more than twenty-five years have elapsed. Yet, as Achim Mittag writes in his foreword, we are living in times that, especially, since the eruption following 9/11, seem to move in a spiral of conflicts, distresses, crises and traumatic events. Traumatization appears to occur on a daily basis, effecting thousands of people all over the world, seemingly inevitable as the climate change. The volume has thus gained a gruesome relevance beyond any expectation, which justifies a publication even after such a long time.

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The conference volume to which more than twenty authors have contributed comprises four parts: I: "Theoretical Considerations and General Perspectives", II: "The Shaping and Transformation of Chinese Historical Identities", III: "Historical Memory in the Face of Crises and Humiliations", and IV: "On the Fractal Structures of Historical Consciousness: Traumata and Forgetfulness".

All authors who have contributed to this volume are keenly aware that research in the specific field of their contributions has progressed beyond the state of art that had served as their starting-point. Yet it is the unique architecture of this volume that will add to the adventure of studying historiography from a comparative perspective.

Imprint:

OSTASIEN Verlag

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