Skill and Scale in Transnational Mediumship II

December 13-14, 2018
**VENUE**

a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities Cologne  
Aachener Str. 217 | 50931 Köln  
3. OG | Raum 3.A06

**ORGANIZATION**

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Over the last decades, scholars have discussed the “Return of the Religious” as to deeply question the narratives of modernity and its disenchantment worldwide (de Vries and Weber 2001). Scholars engaged in an intense debate about the quality and substance of religion, and its mediation in new technical media, and discussed its various forms of transnationalization and diversification in the context of globalization processes (cf. Csordas, 2009; Behrend and Zillinger 2015).

“Skill and Scale in Transnational Mediumship II” sets out to discuss new communities of practice and enskilment that evolve around techniques of mediumship in an interconnected world. The increased mobility of people and organizations, things, signs and symbols that take part in or reformulate trance practices and spiritual experiences has significantly widened the scope and outreach of adepts of trance, spirit possession and spiritual body arts. The various body techniques, symbols and artifacts play a major role in the re-organization of spirituality on site and contribute to the emergence of transnational spirited publics across time and space. This workshop, and the volume we intend to produce, therefore explores how the “local” and the “global” of religious and spiritual practice is co-produced. We invite all participants to zoom in on how these practices are taught and learned, transformed and re-invented in different settings and to reflect upon „apprenticeship“ as a process of enskilment (Ingold). While enskilment continuous to takes place in context of co-participation, it is increasingly transformed through technologization, standardization and interaction at a distance: co-participation does not necessarily entail co-presence. “Skill” denotes the “know how” of mediumship, the ability to discern, invoke and elaborate mediumistic experiences, while “scale” reminds us of both, (1) the scale, in which mediumistic practices take place and invoke transcendental powers, the Maßstab in German – in which signs, things, and person are drawn together in a ritual setting and, (2) the scale, by which the practitioners reach out to new audiences, clients and cooperation partners - or refuse to do so by delimiting their practices to a certain group of practitioners and their intimate publics. Both aspects are a matter of controversies among academics and practitioners alike and we are looking forward to discuss this along the ethnographic case-studies.
**Thursday, 13th December**

10:00 - 10:30  
Introduction: Martin Zillinger

10:30 – 10:50: **Coffee Break**

10:50 - 11:10  
Bettina Schmidt: Glocalizing Mediumship and other Forms of Non-Ordinary Experiences: the Significance of the Study of Non-ordinary Experiences for Anthropology

11:10 - 11:40 – Discussion

11:40 - 12:00  
Ruy Blanes: The Prophetic Skill. Learning to discern and de-scale in the Angolan Tokoist Church

12:00 - 12:30 – Discussion

12:30 - 14:00: **Lunch**

**Friday, 14th December**

10:00 - 10:30: **Coffee & Snacks**.

10:30 - 10:50  
Inger Sjørslev: Enskilment as Embodied Spirituality. From possession to precision in two Brazilian religions

10:50 - 11:20 – Discussion

11:20 - 11:40  
Joana Bahia: The Romanticism of the Oyá: Feelings, bodies, memories, and the multiple space-times of the medium.

11:40 - 12:10 – Discussion

12:10 - 12:30  
Emily Pierini: The Mediumistic Body: Transnational Ways of Knowing the Spirits in the Vale do Amanhecer

12:30 - 13:00 – Discussion

13:00 - 14:30: **Lunch**

Diana Espirito Santo: New media and the digitalized paranormal: instrumentation and the production of traumatic history in Chile
14:20 - 14:50 - Discussion

14:50 - 15:10
Alberto Groisman: Ethnographic Incorporation: research, mediumship and (re)flexible(ve) ontologies
15:10 - 15:40 – Discussion

15:40 - 16:00
Fiona Bowie: Voices, possession and healing: Spirit release therapists and their clients
16:00 - 16:30 – Discussion

16:30 – 16:50: Coffee Break

16:50 - 17:10
Helmar Kurz: Voices of Spirits, Patients, and Healers – Skills and Scale of Mediumship as Transnational Therapeutic Practice: Kardecism in Brazil and Germany
17:10 - 17:40 – Discussion

Dinner

14:30 - 14:50
Viola Teisenhofer: tba
14:50 - 15:20 – Discussion

15:20 - 15:40
Marcello Müscari: “Wir lernen von den Wesen”: Experiencing Umbanda entities in Germany
15:40 - 16:10 – Discussion

16:10 - 16:30
Ehler Voss: The transatlantic divide: Bringing the British way of doing mediumship to the US
16:30 - 17:00 – Discussion

17:00 - 17:30: Coffee & Snacks
17:30 - 18:30
Final Discussion.
Book Organization