



– Institute's Colloquium –

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Voices of Good Sense – Aesthetics of Healing in Brazilian Spiritism

Within my current PhD project "Diversification of Mental Health," I investigate the apprenticeship of mediumship in Kardecist Spiritism, its importance for mental-health-related practices, and its transformation due to transnational dynamics in Brazil and Germany. I will briefly introduce the history of Kardecism in 19th-century Europe and its development towards a healing practice in Brazil throughout the 20th century. Case studies from Brazil will serve as examples for how skills of mediumship are trained within Kardecism and how they contribute to mental health and well-being. In a further step, I will address the transfer of these health-related practices from Brazil back to Germany in the 21st century.

The theoretical focus will fuse medical-anthropological approaches on 'explanatory models' and 'embodiment' with concepts of performance and sensoriality in an attempt to equally relate the skills and scale of transnational mediumship to individual experience, socio-cultural meaning, and healthcare practice. Thus, developing an innovative understanding of aesthetics of healing affecting cognitive and sensory aspects of the therapy process, the voices of spirits, patients, healers, their relatedness to perception and agency, and their impact on cultural healing practices will be of particular interest. I will share my own sensory and emotional involvement in an attempt to elucidate how these practices affect participants. Another interesting outcome will be that mediumistic practices gradually gain more importance within the German complementary and alternative health sector and that it is not only immigrated Brazilian Kardecists who expedite this dynamic.

Wednesday, December 5th 2018

4-6 p.m.

Institute of Ethnology

Stuttstraße 21, Raum STU 105 (2.10)

Everybody is welcome!