

"Transmission process among religious specialists"

Seminar organised by Aurélie Nevot (CNRS, UPR 299, Centre d'Etudes Himalayennes)

2010-2011: Shamans and mediums

Knowledge passed down from one generation to the next is the foundation stone of any social structure since it guarantees social continuity and ensures the relationships within it. Though it has inspired many religious, philosophical, literary, sociological and other accounts, it would be pointless to try to formalize them in any all-encompassing manner given that they are diversified and inscribed in diverse processes. Studying the **anthropology of the way in which knowledge is passed down** therefore implies sorting through a mass of dispersed, interconnected data. In order to contribute to this broad debate, this seminar aims at examining how knowledge is passed down **among religious specialists**.

We shall question the relationship between the person teaching and the person learning in such a situation, the relationship established between them as well as the nature and the means of the transmission process in this particular context. What is the relationship between an aspiring religious specialist and the one (whether spirit or human) who initiates the former into his or her duties? What processes of transforming or developing oneself (or another self) does a person have to undergo? How is this relationship between the initiated and the initiator experienced? How is such a relationship conceived? How is this in keeping with the (written or oral) discourse, with mythology, with body language, etc.? What does observation provide? What about the personality of the teacher and the person being taught? When does one become a religious specialist? What about the autonomy of one in relation to the other, what about creativity? How does the "original" link (the chain of knowledge) last and in what form? Should it be broken instead to allow the line to continue to exist (reflections on handing down knowledge as a form of future adventure)?

Over the coming period, **2010-2011, mediums and shamans** will be at the centre of our discussions. A comparison between different social forms of handing down mediumism and shamanism throws new light on how the given societies make similar yet different logical choices. We therefore plan to examine religious "categories" which are often inaccurate and "blanket categories", in order to propose new definitions based on the different processes of handing down knowledge that are yet to emerge.

Venue: "Salle de conférences", ground floor, "Bâtiment D", 7, rue Guy Môquet, 94801 Villejuif

Programme

14 octobre 2010, 10H30-12H30

Aurélie Nevot : « Constituer un nouveau soi / Perpétuer la chaîne d'écriture : la transmission chez les chamanes et les médiums des Yi du Yunnan »

18 novembre 2010, 10H30-12H30

Brigitte Bapandier : « "Prendre son rôle". L'ascèse médiumnique en Chine, une transmission sans maître »

16 Décembre 2010, 10H30-12H30

Nicole Revel : « L'art d'une transmission orale informelle et d'une expérience personnelle : rêve, mimétisme et créativité du geste et de la parole des chamanes-médiums palawan »

6 janvier 2011, 10H30-12H30

Marie Lecomte-Tilouine : « Médiums et chamanes "sortis du sol" au Népal occidental »

3 Février 2011, 10H30-12H30

Pascale Dollfus : « Entre élection et hérédité : la transmission chez les médiums du Spiti (Himalaya occidental indien) »

3 mars 2011, 10H30-12H30

Marine Carrin : « La Transmission vue de l'Inde: passes et impasses chez les prêtres-devins et les médiums du Centre et du Sud de l'Inde »

7 avril 2011, 10H30-12H30

Pustak Ghimire : « Les phénomènes de possession par la déesse Bhagawoti chez les Chamling Rai du Népal oriental : réflexions sur les processus de transmission »

5 mai 2011, 10H30-12H30

Charles Stépanoff : « Principes cognitifs de l'identification des chamanes humains et animaux »

2 juin 2011, 10H30-12H30

Séance récapitulative