

“GOING UP, GOING DOWN:
TRANSGRESSIONS IN SHAMANISM AND IN ANCIENT CULTURES”
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, KRAKÓW, JUNE 1ST–3TH 2017.
INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY UJ, INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION UJ
JAGIELLONIAN CENTRE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF CULTURE UJ

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Key note speakers:

Apostolos Athanassakis (University of California)

Jan N. Bremmer (University of Groningen)

Juha Pentikäinen (University of Helsinki)

Deadlines:

Conference: June, 1st–3rd, 2017

Call for Papers: January 23st 2017, deadline: February 28th 2017

Acceptance of the papers: March 15th 2017

Conference fee: 50 EUR

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The idea of communication with the “other world” constitutes the core of religious *phaenomena*, rituals and beliefs. “The other world” in religious imagination is situated “out there”, in the other place, most often metaphorically expressed and represented as “somewhere up” or “somewhere down”.

Shamanism belongs to the most widespread terms within the domain of the history of religions. At the same time it has a long history of abuse and used to be overestimated by some scholars, evoking criticism by others who objected to the application of universal religious terminology outside of the “true” shamanism in its Siberian or American environment. This ‘shamanic controversy’ lasts since the first criticisms of fundamental Mircea Eliade’s work. Nevertheless shamanism or shamanic experience are by no means ‘dead’ categories, being successfully used by such influential scholars as David Lewis-Williams, Michael Winkelman or Roberta Hamayon.

The aim of the conference is to discuss the limits of a rightful usage of the results of research on ‘classic’ shamanism in other cultures, from ancient to modern times.

Shamanism has become a pattern idea for transgression adapted by modern scholarship for the description and analysis of any human transgressive religious behaviour. This adaptation has also been taken up by Classical Antiquity, following publications by Erwin Rohde, Eric Dodds, Walter Burkert and Jan N. Bremmer.

We are convinced that it is the right moment to review and reinterpret these widely known and accepted ideas and ask if the hermeneutic tools of the shamanic interpretation have been verified and effective for developing our understanding of the ancient world.

Transgressive behaviours and ideas contain any kind of human activity performed in the horizon of religious or transcendental ideas and actions. Therefore, possible subjects of the presentations can focus, but are not be limited to, on:

- heuristic values of shamanism and transgression in the study of culture and religion
- paradigms of interpretation in the shamanic categories
- reinterpretation and reevaluation of the phenomenon of shamanism and transgression

- fundamental categories for shamanism in historiographical and anthropological approaches, invariable universals of shamanism
- establishing and fixing boundaries of the world in religious systems *versus* blurring of the boundaries and transgression
- misconceptions associated with shamanism
- transgression in the spatial and temporal sense
- universalism of the shamanic categories
- social function of the shaman
- the idea of mediation
- ecstatic communication, ecstatic code, kinetic code
- ecstatic techniques and instruments
- shamanic healing methods
- shamanism and music, shamanism and rock art
- migration of the idea and practice of shamanic and transgressive concepts
- interior journey, descending to the underworld, *metempsychosis*
- frenzy and mystery cults as an ecstatic journey
- attachment processes and trance induction in shamanism
- shamanistic interpretations of myths and rituals in ancient Near East and Egypt
- shamanism and origin of initiation rituals
- elements of shamanism in mysticism
- ancient Greece and “Greek shamanism” – reinterpretation and reevaluation
- Epimenides, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Zalmoxis, Hermes *Psychopompos*
- Dionysiac and Apollonian ecstasies – transformations, seeing, foreseeing, understanding
- limits of shamanic experience across the ages
- shamanism and cognitive evolution
- shamanism and the evolution of language (rhythm, repetition and onomatopoeia)
- shamanism and group leadership
- shamanism and sexual dimorphism