



Call for communications

CANTHEL and CRPMS

Witchcraft and moral harassment workshop : forms of insidious violence

University of Paris, April 14 and 15, 2021

Workshop led by the Cultural Anthropology Center (CANTHEL, SHS Sorbonne Faculty, University of Paris) and the Psychoanalysis, Medicine and Society Research Center (CRPMS, UFR Psychoanalytic Studies, University of Paris). This event is funded through support from the University of Paris and IDEX.

Argument

A comparative study of witchcraft and bullying has never been attempted, although these two forms of insidious violence seem comparable. This workshop aims to show, by mobilizing the tools of clinical psychology and social sciences, how insidious violence develops as a system with real agents in certain contemporary societies (in Europe and outside Europe), but also in the form of a collective belief in the existence of essentially harmful characters (the “narcissistic pervert”). Witchcraft and harassment thus seem to be organized around a distribution of roles that could be compared: the culprit (sorcerers / stalkers), the experts (counter-sorcerers / psychological or legal experts), witnesses / accusers and the victims. Basically, there are many proven attempts at bewitchment and harassment, but also situations of suspicion of bewitchment or harassment, fueled by socially constructed representations. In other words, we start from the idea that insidious violence can be both a practice of actual aggression and a system of interpreting signs supported by a community.

From this general configuration, participants of the workshop will explore three themes:

1 - On the one hand, are the players' systems really indicative of both types of aggression? Is moral harassment just a secularized reflection of witchcraft? How do they differ?

2 - On the other hand, how does the discourse that intends to describe insidious violence develop? The attribution of witchcraft or moral harassment makes it possible to interpret enigmatic events through a global system that gives meaning. How does the certainty of being bewitched / harassed come to be?

3 - How is the response to insidious violence developing? How do those who neutralize witchcraft and moral harassment intervene? In other words, what is the mode of therapy or ritual response involved in a configuration of symbolic aggression, in a magico-religious situation or in an "unenchanting" context?

Speakers should present concrete cases (clinical cases, field ethnography) and not purely theoretical presentations, in order to engage in a fruitful dialogue between disciplines on well-identified examples. Each presentation should not exceed 20 minutes.

Contribution modalities

Please send your paper proposals in French or English (**maximum 350 words**) before **March 15, 2021 at 9 p.m. (GMT-5)**, to anthropsy.mobwitch@gmail.com

Please indicate your last name, first name and institutional affiliation, and include a short biography (maximum 50 words) with your proposal.

Scientific committee

- Thamy Ayouch, Professor of Psychology, University of Paris
- Serena Bindi, Senior Lecturer in Anthropology, University of Paris
- Erwan Dianteill, Professor of Anthropology, University of Paris
- Thierry Lamote, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, University of Paris
- Laurie Laufer, Professor of Psychology, University of Paris
- Delphine Manetta, Post-doctoral fellow in Anthropology
- Nadège Mézié, Post-doctoral fellow in Anthropology