



新加坡道教學院



TAOIST COLLEGE (SINGAPORE)

Ros 1079/2007

English Taoist Cultural Talk:
***An Analysis of
Chinese Spirit Medium Practices
in Contemporary Singapore***

by **Mr. Fabian Graham**

Date: 26th February 2011 (Saturday)

Time: 2:30PM - 4:30PM

Venue: Taoist College Singapore (San Qing Gong Level 2)

Free Admission (Registration required)

ABSTRACTS:

An historical outline of the early evolution of Chinese religion and the construction of a system of gods, ghosts and ancestors will be introduced as necessary background information to understand the philosophical framework upon which spirit medium practices are based. This will establish a theoretical link between early Chinese religion and contemporary spirit medium practices, and will encompass a theoretical explanation in religious terms illustrating how spirit possession is possible and illuminate what spirit mediums actually are.

Moving on, the main deities which are tranced through contemporary mediums will be introduced, and then bringing the topic from historic / mythological times into the present, the practical role played by spirit mediums in society will be examined including exorcism, healing, and divination. Their role as social mediators functioning en masse as a religious movement independent of, or related to Taoism will then be explored.

This will be followed by a detailed description of a typical spirit medium session, from the rituals preceding the actual possession, to the possession itself, consultations and the spirit leaving the medium. The final topic covered will be physiological trance states from a psychiatric perspective.

This will be an audio-visual presentation using PowerPoint, and include sound recordings, photos and video.

HOTLINE: 6449 2115

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER:

World traveller and academic, Fabian Graham has travelled to more than 50 countries and learned about their traditions, and where possible, participated in local culture.

At present, he is undertaking ethnographic research for his PhD in Social Anthropology at the School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, and is a visiting scholar in the Department of Chinese Studies at NUS. His thesis is a comparison of spirit mediums in Singapore and Taiwan, and their relationship to and connection with Taoism. His present research focuses on the creation of new sacred space and the invention of tradition, and how these may act as self-perpetuating mechanisms within religious culture.

**Tel: 64492115 • Fax: 64490191 • Email: info@taoistcollege.org.sg
21, Bedok North Ave 4, Singapore 489948 • www.taoistcs.org**