



Mind over Mind: The Anthropology and Psychology of Spirit Possession

Morton Klass

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Mind Over Mind explores the phenomenon of spirit possession from both anthropological and psychological perspectives. Spirit possession is ritually important in many cultures from India to Brazil to Madagascar, but has tended to be narrowly regarded from modern American and European perspectives as a psychopathological problem of multiple personality disorder. This book proposes an integration of anthropological and psychological approaches, concluding with a new analytical framework for understanding spirit possession and resolving the controversy surrounding the "reality" of possession. The issues raised are thus essential to both the anthropology of religion and the psychology of altered states of consciousness. At the same time, *Mind over Mind* confronts the most challenging philosophical issues of human consciousness and human identity, which can not be properly formulated without the insights of social and cultural anthropology. At the most general level, this study argues for the unequivocal importance of an interdisciplinary approach to spirit possession and for the integral significance of anthropology for the other human sciences.

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