



CENTRE FOR ASIAN AND  
TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES

**SOUTH ASIA INSTITUTE**



**UNIVERSITÄT  
HEIDELBERG**  
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SEIT 1386

The Medical Anthropology Forum presents

## Animal Bodies, Divine Presences and the Interpretation of Control in Contemporary Singapore



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Notions of control tend to be divided between self-control and control of others. This division entails contrary moral implications. Self-control is the epitome of ethical realization, while control over others has increasingly taken on negative implications associated with forms of domination—a divide that emphasizes an a priori separation between bodies and between subjects. In this paper, I consider how thinking across this partition enables control to be more productively retheorized. In it, I explore the intersubjective qualities associated with being controlled or being in control in both the accounts of contemporary Singaporean spirit mediums of an animal deity and in everyday interactions between humans and monkeys. By doing so, I show that attending to how control emerges intersubjectively in different interactive contexts enables a more empirically rich and pragmatically accurate theory of what control is and how it is experienced.

**Tuesday, June 07**

**Venue:** Institute of Anthropology, room 110.02.05 (2nd Floor)

**Time:** 17:15–18:45 (CET)