

## **Energies of transformation. The Kundalini model as a map for a wholistic embodiment process**

The teachings and conceptualizations of Kundalini originate in the Tantric yoga traditions of India. They are meant as a differentiated map for the undergoing of a profound physio-psycho-spiritual process of transformation. C.G. Jung was one of the first exponents of Western psychology and psychotherapy who contributed significantly to the awareness and dissemination of the Kundalini concept in the Western hemisphere and also pointed out its potential links to processes of individuation in Western individuals. Since then, psychotherapists from the field of transpersonal psychology in particular have contributed to the further spreading of the Kundalini concept. Under the term „spiritual emergency the focus was hereby mainly on the possible crisis-type side-effects of such a physio-psycho-spiritual development process. In the respective literature, kundalini-type phenomena are regarded as the most frequent manifestation of a spiritual emergency. The lecture discusses the specific challenges posed by the increasing transcultural exchange of world views and culture-specific patterns of interpretation faced by Western psychotherapists working in a scientifically secularly orientated healthcare system. This includes among others health- and development-related concepts and methodologies from the Asian spiritual traditions and their consequences, which are brought up as an issue of psychotherapeutic treatment by an increasing number of spiritually oriented clients. Based on a review of the research in this field as well as own experiences as a staff member of a counselling service for „spiritual and meditation induced crises“, some reflections on the current state of our scientific and psychotherapeutic understanding of kundalini-type-experiences as well as on the questions that are still open in this field, will be presented. Last not least the possible benefits that might be gained by integrating such culture-specific and emic perspectives – as represented by the Kundalini model – into the psychotherapy or counselling process, will be discussed.

### **bio**

Liane Hofmann received her diploma in psychology on “Spiritual Emergencies and Kundalini-Experiences. A cross-cultural Study” and her Ph.D. with a dissertation on “Spirituality and Religiosity in Psychotherapy Practice”. Since 1995 she is a research associate at the Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health (IGPP), research unit „Cultural Studies and Social Research“, in Freiburg. Her areas of specialization are: clinical psychology, psychotherapy, transpersonal psychology, and psychology of religion. Her current research interests include: integrating the spiritual/religious dimension in psychotherapy practice, problems and crises of spiritual/religious development, meditation induced crises, transcultural flows of yoga as well as spirituality and religiosity in psycho-oncology and palliative care. She has published articles in these areas in various scientific journals and anthologies. Editor of a German language Handbook „Spiritualität und spirituelle Krisen. Handbuch zu Theorie, Forschung und Praxis“ (Spirituality and spiritual crises. Handbook on theory, research and practice). [Further informations: https://www.igpp.de/eks/liane\\_hofmann.htm](https://www.igpp.de/eks/liane_hofmann.htm)

### **Publications relevant to the conference**

Hofmann, L. (2013). The Impact of Kundalini Yoga on Concepts and Diagnostic Practice in Psychology and Psychotherapy. In Beatrix Hauser (Ed.), [Yoga Traveling: Bodily Practice in Transcultural Perspective](#). Transcultural Research: Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context. Heidelberg: Springer, pp. 81–106.

Hofmann, L. & Heise, P. (Hrsg.) (2016). [Spiritualität und spirituelle Krisen. Handbuch zu Theorie, Forschung und Praxis.](#) Stuttgart: Schattauer Verlag. [*Spirituality and spiritual crises. Handbook on theory, research and practice*]

Hofmann, L. (2016). Das Kundalini-Phänomen und andere vegetativ-energetische Störungen. In: L. Hofmann & P. Heise (Hrsg.), *Spiritualität und spirituelle Krisen. Handbuch zu Theorie, Forschung und Praxis* (S. 215–232).