

# 'Potent Substances' between Asia and Europe: Redefining *materia medica* in Tibetan and Himalayan Medicine and Buddhist Ritual



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A Workshop held at the Department of South Asian, Tibetan, and Buddhist Studies  
(ISTB), UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA

CONVENOR: DR. BARBARA GERKE, MSc (Lise-Meitner Senior Research Fellow, ISTB)

**Thursday, September 1, 2016**

**9am - 5pm**

Seminar Room 1, Spitalgasse 2, Hof 2.7, 1090 Vienna

## MORNING SESSION

### Translation Issues and Medico-Ritual Identification of Potent Substances

9:00 (s.t.): Tea/coffee and short welcome address

9:15 - 9:45: DR. MED. FLORIAN PLOBERGER B. AC., MA: **Translating substance names & Tibetan pharmacological ideas of substances and their potency, based on the *Four Treatises***

9:45 - 10:15: ANNA SEHNALOVA, MA (PhD Cand. University of Oxford, UK and Charles University, Prague): **Exploring Bonpo *mendrup* ritual texts: On flexibilities of interpretation, potencies of ritual and medicinal substances, and the implications for their translation**

10:15 - 10:30: Tea/coffee break

10:30 - 11:00: Round circle discussion of the first two presentations

11:00 - 11:30: Dr. CATHY CANTWELL, MA (University of Oxford, UK; Ruhr-Universität Bochum, KHK, Germany): **Substances used in Tibetan and Himalayan Buddhist rituals: Buddhist tantric understandings of their potencies and questions of comparison with Tibetan medical understandings**

11:30 - 12:00: LOPON P. OGYAN TANZIN RINPOCHE (Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh and Payingdem Village, Arunachal Pradesh, India): **Preparing potent substances for Buddhist tantric rituals**

12:00 - 12:30: Round circle discussion of the second two presentations

12:30 - 2:00: Lunch break

## **AFTERNOON SESSION**

### **Materiality, Efficacy, and the Politics of Substances**

2:00 - 2:30: JAN VAN DER VALK, MA (PhD Cand., University of Kent, UK): **Situated knowledge and botanical identification, Ingoldian materiality, and the reformulation of Tibetan healing materials between India and Switzerland**

2:30 - 3:00: DR. HERBERT SCHWABL (PADMA AG, Switzerland): **Sanitizing European herbal *materia medica*: The loss of potency in modern European herbalism**

3:00 - 3:30: Tea/coffee break with round circle discussion of the first two afternoon presentations

3:30 - 4:00: DR. BARBARA GERKE, MSc: **Potent substances in Tibetan multicomponent formulas: Anthropological considerations**


4:00 - 5:00: Open discussion (Discussant: DR. MED. KATHARINA SABERNIG MA, Medical University of Vienna)



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