



De materia medica

Herbals and botanical classification from ancient to early modern times in cross-cultural perspective



Tuesday 31 July 2018

Epistemological patterns of classification and linguistic patterns of description have shaped, and served to pass, knowledge on botanical traits and healing powers of officinal plants from early on. Rendered into written language, such knowledge could and did spread across boundaries of time, language and culture, and has come down to us, inter alia, in the format of 'herbals'.

The textual genre of herbals is in the focus of the international workshop DE MATERIA MEDICA: Comparing herbals from Babylonian, Ancient Egyptian, Late Antique, Medieval, and Early Modern contexts, it aims to address their cross-cultural commonalities, their cultural and historical peculiarities, as well as kinds of relationship between various corpora.

The workshop's contributors include colleagues from several Berlin projects working on ancient, medieval, and early modern herbals – DDGLC (FU), BabMed (FU), RIDGES (HU), Medicine of the Mind, Philosophy of the Body (HU) – as well as international experts in the field.

Topoi Building Dahlem
Hittorfstraße 18
14195 Berlin

9.00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

9:30 Franziska Desch (Berlin)
Choose your Plant – the Mesopotamian
"Verzeichnis der Simplicia"

10:00 Maddalena Rumor (Cleveland)
A Methodological Precursor to Theophrastus' Herbal Descriptions

10:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:00 Jonny C. Russell (Leiden)
Herbals and Classification in Egyptian
Healing Papyri from the Late Second
Millennium BCE

11:30 Kim Ryholt (Copenhagen)
The Indexed Herbal from Tebtunis

12:00 Anne Grons (Berlin)
The Coptic Herbal P. Carlsberg 500

12:30 LUNCH

14:30 Robert Hawley (Paris)
The Herbal as a Text Type in the Syriac
Tradition

15:00 Sean Coughlin (Berlin)
Writing about Plant Simples from Theophrastus to Aetius of Amida: Some Case Studies

15:30 COFFEE BREAK

16:00 Irene Calà (Berlin) and
Caterina Manco (Montpellier)
On the Latin Translations of Galen's Treatise
Simple Drugs in the Middle Ages: the Reception of Greek Knowledge about the Plants in the Latin West through Arabic

16:30 Anke Lüdeling (Berlin)
RIDGES: On the Development of a Register –
a Diachronic Corpus of Herbal Texts in German

17:30 COFFEE BREAK

18:00 FINAL DISCUSSION

19:30 RECEPTION

Convenors

Anne Grons (Freie Universität Berlin)
Robert Kade (Freie Universität Berlin, BerGSAS)
Tonio Sebastian Richter (BBAW / Freie Universität Berlin)

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www.topoi.org/event/46148/

Pictures from: Codex medicus graecus 1 of the Austrian National Library ("Wiener Dioskurides"). © Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt.
Epinolia (central figure), allegory of intellectual capacity, presenting the Mandagora root to Dioskurides (right) who describes this miraculous healing plant by words while a painter (left) draws its image.
Plants: Mandagora root, White beet (bryony), Blackberry

EXCELLENCE
CLUSTER



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