

# IHPST Colloquium

Wednesday February 1, 2017, 2:00 pm  
Victoria College 215, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor



**Timothy Walker**

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## **The Circulation of Medical Knowledge in the Portuguese Colonial World: Assimilation, Codification, and Dissemination of Indigenous Healing Practices through Ethno-Botanical Manuscripts (16th-18th centuries)**

### **Abstract**

This presentation will examine how that transfer and diffusion of medical knowledge occurred by focusing on descriptive ethno-botanical texts produced in Portuguese colonies during the early modern period, and the worldwide implications of such media for the transfer and evolution of healing practices in the Lusophone world. This talk will explore these texts as conduits of multicultural medical knowledge, wherein European and Indian, African, Malaysian, Indonesian, Chinese and South American concepts about healing blended. By the mid-seventeenth century, practical medicine in Portuguese colonial enclaves had become thoroughly hybridized, with applied remedies in colonial health institutions (whether state-sponsored or religious) relying significantly on the use of indigenous medicinal substances and methods. The illustrated lecture will explicate these missionary and medical practitioners' texts, their intermingled medical cosmology, and the colonial environment that placed so much importance on the remedies supplied through indigenous healing plants. Further, the presentation will describe various medicinal plants cultivated in Portuguese colonial hospital gardens, their applications and effects, as well as the social context in which the medical practitioners who employed these plants operated.

Co-sponsored by the Department of French.

Refreshments to follow outside VC215.

If you have an accessibility or accommodation need for this event, please email Denise Horsley at [denise.horsley@utoronto.ca](mailto:denise.horsley@utoronto.ca) to make appropriate arrangements.

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