



# Entangled Medical Futures

Plural Medicine, Climate-Altered Worlds, and More-Than-Human Care  
in Highland Asia

## INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

University of Edinburgh | 8–10 October 2025

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*Hosted by the Centre for South Asian Studies and the Edinburgh Centre for Medical Anthropology, University of Edinburgh in collaboration with UiT The Arctic University of Norway and The Highland Institute*

*Supported by the British Academy Visiting Fellowship programme*

Co-organisers:

Dr. Michael T. Heneise (UiT The Arctic University of Norway / Highland Institute)

Prof. Jeevan R. Sharma (University of Edinburgh)

Prof. Rebecca King (University of Leeds)

Dr. Amrit K. Virk (University of Edinburgh)

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## Wednesday, 8 October 2025

*Morning only; all-hybrid sessions to prioritise South Asia participants.*

🌐 = Hybrid / Online presentation

**08:30–09:00 — Registration & Coffee/Tea**

**09:00–09:30 — Opening & Welcome**

- **Michael T. Heneise** (UiT The Arctic University of Norway / Highland Institute)
- **Jeevan R. Sharma** (University of Edinburgh)

**09:30–11:00 — Panel 1: Embodied Worlds: Illness, Spirits, and Becoming Healers**

Chair: **Jelle J.P. Wouters** (Royal Thimphu College, Bhutan)

- **Deki Yangzom** 🌐 (Royal Thimphu College, Bhutan)  
*Embodying the Invisible: Illness, Spirits, and Ritual Healing in Bon-Buddhist Bhutan*
- **Tsering Sangmo Lama** 🌐 (Sowa Rigpa International College, Nepal)  
*Indigenous Health Workers, Community and Village-level Practitioners and Alternative Health Infrastructure*
- **Rajya Laxmi Gurung** (Tribhuvan University, Nepal)  
*Becoming a Dhami: From Suffering to Healing Others*

*Format: 3 x 20 min papers + 3 x 10 min Q&A (90 min total)*

### 11:00-11:30 — Coffee/Tea Break

### 11:30-13:00 — Panel 2: Sacred Resonances: Ritual, Sound, and Faith in Healing Practices

Chair: **Rebecca King** (University of Leeds)

- **Debashree Dattaray** 🌐 (Jadavpur University, India)  
*Reconstituting Indigeneity: Medicinal Knowledge and Ontological Realities in Karbi Anglong in Northeast India*
- **Vineet Gairola** 🌐 (IIT Hyderabad, India)  
*Sonic Empathy and Collective Healing in the Garhwal Himalaya: Bhāva, Rasa, and Divine Embodiment in Jāgar Ritual*
- **Hiba Haroon** 🌐 (Jawaharlal Nehru University, India)  
*Enduring Pain, Enacting Faith: Medical Pluralism, Sufism, and Healing Practices in the Lakshadweep Islands, India*

*Format: 3 x 20 min papers + 3 x 10 min Q&A (90 min total)*

### 13:00-14:00 — Pre-booked Lunch at Canopy Kitchen & Court

*Afternoon: free time for city visits (on your own for dinner).*

## Thursday, 9 October 2025

*Full day – Edinburgh-based and international participants; thematic sessions & discussions.*

*Venue: 6th Floor Violet Laidlaw Room, Chrystal Macmillan Building, George Square*

🌐 = Hybrid / Online presentation

**09:00–10:30 Panel 3: Santhal Healing Worlds: Ritual, Gender, and Transitions in Indigenous Medicine**

Chair: **Michael T. Heneise** (UiT - The Arctic University of Norway / Highland Institute)

- **Jagriti** 🌐 (IIT Gandhinagar, India)  
*Reimagining Indigenous Healing: Nature, Missionaries, and the Ojhas of the Santhal Religion*
- **Ram Kishor Soren** 🌐 (India)  
*Exploring the Transition from Indigenous Healthcare Practices to Western Medicine Among the Santhal Tribe of Jharkhand*
- **Nibedita Mukherjee** 🌐 (Sidho-Kanho-Birsha University, Purulia, India)  
*Indigenous Women Healers: A Case Study from the Santals of Purulia*

*Format: 3 x 20 min papers + 3 x 10 min Q&A (90 min total)*

**10:30–10:45 — Coffee/Tea Break**

**10:45–12:15 — Panel 4: Learning to Heal: Transmission, Gender, and Pedagogies of Medicine**

Chair: **Amrit K. Virk** (University of Edinburgh)

- **Indranil Pramanik** 🌐 & **John Bosco Lourdusamy** 🌐 (IIT Madras, India)  
*Beyond Witchcraft and Exorcism: A Comprehensive Understanding of Tribal/Adivasi Ideas of Health and Diseases in the Highlands of Jharkhand, India*
- **Meenal Rawat** (University of Edinburgh, UK)  
*Between Deity and Society: Rituals, Power, and Healing in Uttarakhand*
- **Sumeet Jain** (University of Edinburgh, UK)  
*Opening up the 'black-box': what strategies do community mental health workers use to address the social dimensions of mental health?*

*Format: 3 x 20 min papers + 3 x 10 Q&A (90 min total)*

**12:15–13:15 — Catered Lunch**

**13:15–14:15 — Discussion Session I: Beyond Public Health — Towards Anthropologies of Antimicrobial Resistance**

Chair: **Rebecca King** (University of Leeds)

## 14:15–15:45 — Panel 5: Crossing Worlds of Care: Migration, Climate, and Therapeutic Trust

Chair: **Sumeet Jain** (University of Edinburgh)

- **Jillian Schulte** (Case Western Reserve University, Ohio, US)  
*Navigating a New Pluralistic Medical Landscape: Healthcare-seeking Among Bhutanese Nepali Refugees Living in Northeast Ohio, USA*
- **Anna Conci** (University of Sussex, UK)  
*Sensing the Shape of Wind: Change and Everyday Illness Experience in Ladakh*
- **Rayana Ghosh** (Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies - IHEID, Geneva, Switzerland)  
*Reflections on Therapeutic Trust, Diagnostic Uncertainty, and the Feminist Politics of Healing in Plural Medical Worlds*

*Format: 3 x 20 min papers + 30 x 10 min Q&A (90 min total)*

## 15:45–16:00 — Coffee/Tea Break

## 16:00–17:30 — Panel 6: Entangled Horizons: Authority, Environment, and Healing Futures

Chair: **Jeevan R. Sharma** (University of Edinburgh). **Ian Harper** (University of Edinburgh) may join as chair, subject to availability.

- **Edward Moon-Little** (University of Cambridge, UK)  
*How do Traditional Healers Build and Maintain Authority?*
- **Samridha S.J.B. Rana** (University of Edinburgh / Nepal)  
*Solastalgia in the Himalayas: Making the Intangible Tangible*
- **Patricia Mudelius** (University of Edinburgh, UK)  
*More than Pharmaceuticals: Diversifying Sowa Rigpa Health Care and Creating Futures for Sowa Rigpa in Nepal?*

*Format: 3 x 20 min papers + 30 x 10 min Q&A (90 min total)*

**18:30–21:00 — Group Dinner at *Solti* (Nepalese & Himalayan Restaurant, Drummond St., Edinburgh)**

## Friday, 10 October 2025

Venue: 6th Floor Violet Laidlaw Room, Chrystal Macmillan Building, George Square

**09:00–10:30 — Panel 7: Negotiating Policy and Pluralism: State, Volunteers, and Highland Health**

Chair: **Stefan Ecks** (University of Edinburgh)

- **Jeevan R. Sharma** (University of Edinburgh / Nepal)  
*Negotiated co-existence: How do Nepal's Female Community Health Volunteers navigate the plural medical landscape?*
- **Jelle J.P. Wouters** (Royal Thimphu College, Bhutan)  
*Zomian health strategies*
- **Ramya Iyadurai** (Christian Medical College, Vellore, India)  
*To Develop A Curriculum in the Various Aspects of Medical Anthropology for General Medical Postgraduates in Internal Medicine*

*Format: 3 x 20 min papers + 30 x 10 min Q&A (90 min total)*

**10:30–11:00 — Coffee/Tea Break**

**11:00–12:30 — Discussion Session II: Future Horizons: Building Collaborative Research in Medical Pluralism**

Chairs: **Amrit K. Virk** (University of Edinburgh) & **Michael T. Heneise** (UiT The Arctic University of Norway / Highland Institute)

**12:30–13:00 — Closing Roundtable & Reflections**

**13:00–14:00 — Catered Lunch (Violet Laidlaw Room)**