



Sulphur spring, Furnas (São Miguel, Portugal)

## THE PHARMAKON

### Concept Figure, Image of Transgression, and Practice

We will reflect on the complex semantics, and narrative and imaginary trajectories of the term „pharmakon“ (in Greek: medicine / poison / philter), and the ways it can be addressed from diverse vantage points. The workshop format is intended to allow for the discussion of associative scenarios in relation to the „pharmakon“, rather than the deployment of a rigid academic discourse. Our reflection may span etymological and genealogical issues, as well as different narratives of reimagination. It may, at the same time, relate to threshold spaces where artistic practice, literary investigation, cultural analysis, and philosophical inquiry meet with anthropological, pharmacological, or neuroscientific concerns, as well as with specific (healing) practices.

Jacques Derrida's text „La pharmacie de Platon“ is one possible reference point; however, the workshop attempts to set a wider, and heterogeneous framework for reflection. Such perspective may include, prominently, the concept of „Rausch“ (intoxication / ecstasis) and its contradictory status in modern epistemology, literary and art history, and cultural and social practice. It may also address the numerous scenarios – transatlantic and European, local and global, artistic, anthropological and pharmacological – within which psychoactive / mind-altering substances have made up for one of the most ubiquitous phenomena in modern life.

Venue: FRIAS – Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies  
Albertstr. 19, 79104 Freiburg  
[www.frias.uni-freiburg.de/pharmakon](http://www.frias.uni-freiburg.de/pharmakon)



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International Workshop  
June 13, 2014

FRIAS, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

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Coordination: Hermann Herlinghaus

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**8:45**

### Opening Words

Bernd Kortmann (Scientific Director, FRIAS)

Hermann Herlinghaus (Universität Freiburg)

**9:00 – 9:45**

### What is a Drug? On the Construction of a Modern Concept

Mike Jay (Writer and Independent Scholar, London)

**9:45 – 10:30**

### Rewriting the 'Antidrug': The Ambivalence of the Pharmakon in the Cultural Discourse of Overdose

Nancy Campbell (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, New York)

**10:30 – 10:45** Coffee Break

**10:45 – 11:30**

### „Pharmakon“ in Ancient Greek Traditions: Between Tragedy, Philosophy, and Magic

Martin Tremel (Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung Berlin)

**11:30 – 12:15**

### From the "Pharmakon" to Affection: The Twofoldness of a Concept

Michaela Ott (Hochschule für Bildende Künste Hamburg)

**12:15 – 14:00** Lunch

**14:00 – 14:45**

### Sweet Passion, Bitter Addiction (Trobadors and the Consequences)

Cornelia Wild (Universität München)

**14:45 – 15:30**

### Kosmopharmaka: The Irony of Drugs

Leonhard Fuest (Universität Hamburg)

**15:30 – 15:45** Coffee Break

**15:45 – 16:30**

### Celebrating Equivocation. From Stable Distinctions to an Ecology of Practices

Katrin Solhdju (Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung Berlin)

**16:30 – 17:15**

### Drugs, Between Others

Todd Meyers (Wayne State University, Detroit)

**17:15 – 17:30** Coffee Break

**17:30 – 18:15** Breath, Life, and the Change of Awareness:

### On the 'Pharmacological' Possibilities of Breathwork

Bo Walström (Body Psychotherapist and Teacher of Breathwork, Stockholm)

**18:30** Dinner