



*Crafting Potency* explores the intricate interweaving of knowledge, practice, and materials through which potency (*nüpa*) is sculpted in Sowa Rigpa, more widely known as Tibetan medicine. Informed by extensive fieldwork with Sowa Rigpa practitioners or “amchis” from the Himalayan regions of Ladakh and Dharamsala (India), and Kathmandu (Nepal), as well as selected Tibetan medical texts, it analyzes how potency is understood and manipulated in the making of multi-ingredient medicines. The four authors bring together their varying areas of academic and practical expertise to ask: How is potency theorized in texts and cultivated through embodied practice? How is it directed, enhanced, and layered to realize the therapeutic potential of substances? How do amchis learn medicine compounding (*menjor*), and what changes when craft knowledge and skill are increasingly passed on in institutional settings rather than through lineages and apprenticeships? Drawing inspiration from Tim Ingold’s ecologically attuned phenomenology and Pamela Smith’s “artisanal epistemologies,” the authors unpack potency as efficacy-in-becoming—a fluid capacity sculpted and layered through artisanship, ritual, and environment, rather than a fixed property of stable substances. This approach locates materials and practitioners firmly within their social, ecological, technical, and spiritual lifeworlds, and foregrounds the everyday skilled practice and experiential knowledge of amchi-artisans during a period of significant societal transformation. Offering a practice-based perspective on artisanship, materiality, and the making of medicine, *Crafting Potency* tests new methodological approaches and analytical foci for anthropology and the history of science.