The Sowa Rigpa Industry in Asia 

The Sowa Rigpa industry in Asia produced pharmaceuticals worth $15.3 million USD in 2017. Most of these products are consumed domestically, but are also exported worldwide. The industry is big enough to shape and transform Tibetan, Mongolian and Himalayan medicine overall.

The Sowa Rigpa industry’s overall size has grown tenfold between 2000 and 2017. Despite its size and growth, small, non-commercial production remains important: Private enterprises, state-operated factories, and stock corporations coexist.

China leads the Sowa Rigpa industry in absolute and relative numbers. The Tibetan exile community dominates the global Sowa Rigpa export market, and can compete in terms of per-capita value generation.

Classical prescription formulas constitute the backbone of the Sowa Rigpa pharma industry. However, newly developed over-the-counter (OTC) health products are the most profitable and fastest growing sector.

State policies and support play a crucial role in Sowa Rigpa’s industrial development. Although not unproblematic, national drug laws, pharmaceutical regulations, standardized curricula, and quality control procedures provide the framework for its growth as an industry.

The Sowa Rigpa industry is a transnational phenomenon and best understood as a pharmaceutical assemblage. It existentially depends on transnational flows of raw materials, knowledge and expertise, products, and people.

**PROJECT OUTPUTS 2014-2019**

50 scholarly articles (incl Current Anthropology & British Journal of Medicine), 2 edited volumes (Duke University Press & Routledge), 75 international conference papers (mostly invited), 40 media reports (incl New York Times, China Daily, Die Presse).

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