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CENTRE FOR
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The Rothermund Memorial Lectures

Friday, February 18th 2022 - 2:15 pm (CET) Online (Zoom)

Registration: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYof-igqDorE9JYm0cNPfDNGF-xwxjbtGJw>

Indian Foodways in European Discourses, 15th - 17th Centuries: A Cultural History

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Finding the origins of 'Indian' spices has been key to the European outreach to South Asia since the 15th century. An eclectic mixture of culinary, medical, religious, economic, and 'exotic' imaginations about 'Indian' spices had fuelled the European fascination with the ingredients and their 'Indian' users throughout the Middle Ages. In stark contrast stand the European views on Indian foodways during the colonial

*"People from Calicut from The Triumphal Procession
of Emperor Maximilian I" by Hans Burgkmair
(Reprint 1883-84)*

period, which purported that differences in Indian and European diets resulted in permanent and diverging physical characteristics, implicitly creating racialized body types of Indians and Europeans. This talk connects those contradictory attitudes by looking at the 15th to 17th centuries. It explores how European discourses about Indian foodways changed from desire to disregard, unweaving the underlying cultural patterns of othering.