

**Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften  
Zentralasien-Seminar**

# **Tibet-Kolloquium**

**Emilia Sulek**

**Humboldt Universität Berlin**

## **Hunting Fungus with Tibetan Nomads: Contemporary Situation in *yartsa gunbu* Business in Golok Highlands of Amdo**

Golok highlands in Amdo are famous for good quality *yartsa gunbu*. Tibetan name *yartsa gunbu* – “summer-grass winter-worm” – designates a parasitic fungus (*Cordyceps sinensis*) that grows on larvae of a moth of the genus *Thitarodes*. From May to June Golok nomads and seasonal migrants from other parts of Tibet and China wander through the grasslands and collect the fungus to sell it later for big money to pharmaceutical companies and Chinese medicine clinics across the whole country.

*Yartsa* is a cash crop in Golok, its harvesting is a quick way of earning extra money. It has become an important economic factor in many areas of Tibet. Its importance is highlighted by worrying news appearing on Tibet information websites on the fights breaking between groups of nomads or other harvesters over access and ownership of *yartsa* fields.

Emilia Sulek is a PhD candidate of the Central Asian Seminar of the Humboldt University. In her talk she will give an overview of the contemporary situation in *yartsa gunbu* business in Golok highlands (present day Golok Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province). The stories of the life among *yartsa* collectors and traders will be illustrated with the photos taken during a fieldwork in Golok in spring 2007.

**Mittwoch, 14. November 2007**

**18.00 Uhr**

Invalidenstr. 118, Raum 507

(S-Bahn Nordbahnhof, U6 Zinnowitzerstr.)

**Alle Interessierten sind hierzu herzlich eingeladen**

