
TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH

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KALMYKO-TIBETICA: APROPOS OF SAMSAI, BSAM SE IN MEDICAL LITERATURE

1. The *Xadxaḡu tö-nö terigüüteni yeke ḡuraqsan nom*

Amid the sundry texts written in Todo Biciq (“Clear Script”) that have been made generally available to Mongolists who harbour a scholarly interest in Kalmyk (Хальмг), there is however at least one unique medical text which has yet to receive the philological treatment it deserves. By this I refer to the *Xadxaḡu tö-nö terigüüteni yeke ḡuraqsan nom* (“Compendium on Acupuncture, Cauterization, etc.”; hereinafter XT) which appears in Vol. 147 of the *Zhongguo Xibei Wenxian Congshu* 中國西北文獻叢書 (“China's North-Western Literature Series”) published in 1990 in Gansu province, China. It is regrettable that the editors failed to inform us of how and where they had retrieved this acephalous manuscript to which they merely assigned a Chinese title viz. *Zhenjiu Zonglan* 針灸總覽 (“Overview of Acupuncture and Moxibustion”). In effect, this text can be identified with certainty as being part of a translation of the 4th and

6th fascicle of the 10-fascicle Chinese medical text *Zhenjiu Dacheng* 鍼灸大成 (“Compendium on Acupuncture and Moxibustion”; hereinafter ZJDC) which was compiled by the Ming physician Yang Jizhou 楊繼洲 (1522—1620) at the turn of the 17th century. More than 15 years have elapsed since its publication and, unfortunately, it seems that this interesting Kalmyk text is still to be included in *Studia Oiratica* by the experts in the Western Mongolian language.

The present paper does not aim, however, at a thorough textual comparison of the Kalmyk translation with the Chinese. Rather, it shall focus on one single term which might invite the reflection of medical historians who might be tempted to look for Chinese affinities of Tibetan medicine which, in the course of time, has indeed its “Wahlverwandtschaften” too.

2. Kalmyk *samsai*

In the following passages of XT, one finds that *panguang*, the Chinese word for the urinary bladder, is

not rendered by *dabasaq* consistently but is sometimes, quite unexpectedly, rendered by the curious term *samsai*:

Text

zösen ḡoto ḡolḡoi gesün ḡurban ḡaluun samsai: tabun culayin ödkön uur orḡu: [1] [... ...] ḡurban ḡaluun inu: usun buda-ni zam bui: amisḡal ebelkü zoqsuxu du medekü: de-dü ḡaluun inu: zürken doro ḡoto ödü bayḡu: emneküdü dayikyung de-re bui: ḡoyor kökön dundaki onḡorḡoi töüni dayikyung du medekü: dunda ḡaluun inu: ḡotuyin dunda: (sic) aman du bui: kiyisün e-ce ö-dö dörbön cun bolḡu: emneküdü kiyisüni ḡaḡuu bolḡu: dordu ḡaluun inu: samsai de-güür bui: emneküdü kiyisün e-ce urui nige cun ḡadxaḡu: [2].

Translation

The gall bladder, stomach, colon, small intestines, the “tri-heat” (*ḡurban ḡaluun* < Ch. *sanjiao*), and the *samsai* [altogether] [3] receive the thick air (*ödkön uur*) [4] of the five viscera [5]. [... ...] The “tri-heat” is the path for water and millet. It governs breath initiation [6] and termination. The “upper heat” is beneath the heart and above the stomach. For treatment, [one should acupuncture the locus] over the *dayikyung* [7]. It governs the *dayikyung* of that cavity between the two breasts. The “middle heat” is at the middle mouth [8] of the stomach, 4 *cun* above the umbilicus. For treatment, [one should acupuncture the locus] beside the umbilicus. The “lower heat” is above the *samsai* [9]. For treatment, [one should] acupuncture [the locus] 1 *cun* beneath the umbilicus (see *fig. 1*).