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THE INTRODUCTION OF GREEK MEDICINE INTO TIBET IN THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH CENTURIES

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The introduction of foreign medical science into Tibet has hitherto not been the subject of any detailed study, although Tibetan histories of medicine contain much information on the early development of medical science in the Tibetan Empire. In the present paper, an attempt is made to interpret all of the relevant passages from available Tibetan sources concerning the Greek school, the most important of the foreign systems of medicine introduced into early Tibet.

The history of medical science in Tibet, a subject on which several major Tibetan historians wrote important treatises, is still practically unknown outside of the Tibetan-reading world. Western and Japanese Tibetologists, especially those dealing with the history of the Tibetan Empire, have so far primarily used Tibetan political (rgyal-rabs) and religious (chos’byun) historical genres and, unfortunately, much hagiographical and apocryphal literature as well, to the virtual exclusion of anything else.

At present, Tibetologists generally assume that Tibetan medicine was overwhelmingly Indian in origin or inspiration. Available historical evidence, however, points to the conclusion that medicine, at least during the first century of the Tibetan Empire (ca. 634-755 AD) was in fact primarily Western, and secondarily Chinese, in origin. This should not be too surprising, since the cultural, economic, and political centers of the world outside Tibet at the same time were the Islamic Caliphate and the Chinese T’ang Empire. Persian or Arab doctors could be found not only in Ch’ang-an, the T’ang capital, but in nearly every port of China. Thus we find that the personal or “court” physicians of all the early Tibetan emperors, so far as the former are known, through the early part of the reign of Khri sroṅ lde brtsan (755-ca. 794), are said to be from “Khrom” (that is, the Eastern Roman, or Greek Byzantine Empire) or “Tazig” (that is, the Arab-Persian Caliphate). The latter emperor appointed the three Tibetan students of his “Greek” physician as his personal physicians before appointing, according to tradition, the famous Tibetan G’yuthog yontan mgonpo “the Elder,” a contemporary of the tantric teacher-magician Padmasambhava, to the position in the late eighth century. Apart from the corpus of material concerning G’yuthogpa, there appears to be very little historical information available about medicine under the later emperors. The next period of Tibetan medical history discussed in reliable historical sources is that of the phyi dar, or “later propagation” of the Buddhist faith in Tibet (from the mid-tenth century). From this period on, Tibetan medicine appears indeed to be largely Indian in origin and inspiration.

I. According to the sober historical accounts of Dpābo gtsug-lag ’phreṇaṅ, Sdesrid sān-rgyas rgyamtsho, Dzaya paṇḍita blobzaṅ ’phrin-las and Koh-sprul blo gros mthāyas, medical books were first brought into Tibet by the T’ang princess, Wen-ch’eng, and were translated into Tibetan by Buddhist scholars in her retinue. Subsequently, physicians were invited from other countries, and also translated medical works:
Dpābo gtsug-lag 'phren-ka:

/Boddu sman-dpyad byuḥba'i thogma
ni zas-spyod spar-blaḥ phramo
ṭespa tsaṃ
shon nas byuḥ la/
gtun rgyabzās
sman-dpyad chenmo ṭespa bsnamspa
hvasāṅ mahādeva dañ ḍhārmakoṇaṣas
bsgyur/ de'i ishe rgyagar nas
badzrabhdvadza/ rgyanag nas
hen-wen-hik-de/ stag-gziṅgsi [sic]
khor nas galenostste [sic]
smampag sum spany draṅs/
sscō'ī
lugs
duma
bsgyur/
thunmoḥdu
mi
'jigspa'i mtshon-cha
ṭes bampo bdunpa
bṛṣams/11

Dzaya paṇḍita blonbsañ 'phrin-laṃ:

Chos-rgyal
sroḥ btsan
sgampo'i
dussu
rgyanobzā 'on-tiṅ-kon-jos
khyerba'i sman-dbyad chenmo ṭes byaba
hvasāṅ mahādeva dañ ḍhārmakoṇa ḍhīskiyis
bsgyurciṅ/ yah rgyagargyi smanpa
bhadravhdvadza dañ rgyanaggi smanpa
hen-wen-hak-de/ stag-gziṅgsi khromgyi
smampag galenos ṭes byaba
gsum spany draṅspla la bṛten nas/
rgyagargyi smanpas 'bu ṭag ma bu che
chuañ dañ/ sbyorba mar gsañ/ rgyanaggi
smlampas/ ḍgya dpyad thorbu che chuñ/ stag-gziṅgsi smanpa/ mgo shon bduspa
dañ/ despo'i gtañ-dpyad sogs
bsgyurciṅ ssumga bsdoms nas
mi 'jigspa'i mtshon-cha
ṭes byaba bampo bdunpa
bṛṣams
nas phul/11

Sdesrid saṅs-rgyas rgyamtho:

'Phagsga' jig-ren dpañ-phyug
mikje'i ishul bsuñba sroḥ btsan
sgampo rgyal-sar phbs nas/
mik-tshig thamscad yiger gdabtu
rubañ dañ/ rgyanobzā 'un-tiṅ-kon-jos
bsnamspa'i sman-dpyad chenmo gragspa
hvasāṅ mahādeva dañ ḍhārmakoṇa ḍhīskiyis
bsgyurciṅ/ 'phags-yulgyi smanpa
bhadravhdvadza/ rgyanaggi smanpa
hen-wen-hak-de/ stag-gziṅgsi khromgyi
smampag gales-nos gsum rgyalpo'i
shun gsoba'i phiyr gdan drañs/
rgyagargyi smanpas 'bu ṭag ma bu che
chuañ dañ sbyorba mar gsañ/ rgyanagpas
ṛya dpyad thorbu che chuñ/ stag-gziṅgsi mgo shon bduspa dañ
depha'/ rmya/ netso gsumgyi
dpyad sogs bsgyur/ gsumga
bkaṅgoṣ-te mi 'jigspa'i mtshon-cha
ṭes byaba bampo bdun yodpa'i
gsodpyadkyañ gtun gsañ bṛṣams
nas phul/11

Koṅ-sprul blogsro mthāyas:

/Sroḥ
btsan
sgampo'i
skuriṅ la
'un-tiṅ-kon-jos
sman-rtsiṅkiṅ gtun bsnamspa
hvasāṅ mahādeva dañ ḍhārmakoṇa ḍhīskiyis
bsgyur/ rgyagar nas
bhadravhdvadza/ rgyanag nas
hun-waṅ-hvaṅ/ tazig nas
galenus ṭes byaba'i
smampag gsum spany draṅs/
'bu ṭag ma bu che
chuañ/
ṛya dpyad thorbu/
mgo shon bduspa
sogs
bsgyur/ smampag gsum bhros nas
mi 'jigspa'i mtshon-cha
ṭes byaba bungs chen gsumgyi
gtun gsañ gragsspa byaṣ/11
"As for the beginning of the appearance of medicine in Tibet, formerly whereas just a few snatches of knowledge about diet had appeared, latterly the Chinese consort, having brought the (text) called Sman-dpyad chenmo,\(^{12}\) it was translated by the ho-shang\(^{13}\) Mahâdeva\(^{14}\) and Dharmakoṣa.\(^{15}\) Then, three doctors were invited, from India Bharadhvāja, and China Hsüan-yüan Huang-ti, and from Rome in Tazig, Galenos.

They translated much from their individual schools. Jointly they compiled the seven-volume text called the Mi 'jigspa'i mtshon-cha.'"

"At the time of the King of the Law Sron btsan sgampo, the (text) called the Sman-dpyad chenmo,\(^{12}\) which had been brought by the Chinese consort Wen-ch’eng kung-chu, was translated by the ho-shang\(^{13}\) Mahâdeva\(^{14}\) and Dharmakoṣa;\(^{15}\) furthermore, the three (physicians) called 'the Indian physician Bharadhvāja, the Chinese physician Hsüan-yüan Huang-ti, and the Tazig or Roman physician Galenos' having been invited, consequently the Indian doctor translated the 'Bu tag ma bu che chuk' and the Sbyorba mar gsar, the Chinese doctor the Rgya dpyad thorbu che chuk, (and) the Tazig doctor the Mgo shon bduspa and the Despo'i giar-dpyad, etc.; the three together compiled the seven-volume (text) called the 'Mi 'jigspa'i mtshon-cha' and presented (it to the throne)."

"After Sroṅ btsan sgampo—the glorious mighty world-sovereign who chose the way of justice—came to the throne, all speech could be put into writing, so the (text) known as the Sman-dpyad chenmo,\(^{12}\) which had been brought by the Chinese consort Wen-ch’eng kung-chu, was translated by the ho-shang\(^{13}\) Mahâdeva\(^{14}\) and Dharmakoṣa;\(^{15}\) and three (men)—the Indian physician Bharadhvāja, the Chinese physician Hsüan-yüan Huang-ti, and the Tazig or Roman physician Galenos—were invited to court to cure the illnesses of the king. The Indian physician translated the 'Bu tag ma bu che chuk and the Sbyorba mar gsar; the Chinese physician the Rgya dpyad thorbu che chuk; the Tazig the Mgo shon bduspa and the Depho rmabysa neiso gsumgyi dpyad, etc. The three consulted together, compiled anew a seven-volume text on medicine called the Mi 'jigspa'i mtshon-cha, and presented (it to the throne)."

"During the reign of Sroṅ btsan sgampo texts of medicine and astrology having been brought by Wen-ch’eng kung-chu, they were translated by the ho-shang\(^{13}\) Mahâdeva\(^{14}\) and Dharmakoṣa.\(^{15}\) The so-called 'three doctors'—from India Bharadhvāja, from China Hsüan-yüan Huang-ti, and from Tazig Galenos—were invited. They translated the 'Bu tag ma bu che chun, the Rgya dpyad thorbu, the Mgo shon bduspa, and so on. The three physicians consulted together and produced the Mi 'jigspa'i mtshon-cha, which became known as the Lugs chen gsumgyi gtuk."
While the schematic nature of the narrative should not lead one into making hasty conclusions about the trustworthiness of the information—a matter treated at length below—there are indeed grounds for not taking the words of these texts too literally.

First, the three foreign doctors supposedly invited to Tibet have very revealing names. "Bharadhvädža," the name of "the Indian physician," is the name of the legendary founder of Indian medicine, the Rṣi Bharadhvája, who received teachings on the science of medicine from the god Indra and passed them on to other rṣis.16 "Hen-wen Haṅ-de" is a somewhat deceptive transcription of the name Hsūn-yūan Huang-ti,17 which is one of the names of the legendary "Yellow Emperor" who is often credited with the creation of medical science in China, and who was supposedly the author of the Nei ching, or "Internal Classic," the most important book in Chinese medicine. "Galenos," as is immediately apparent, is a transcription of the name of the historical Galenos, our Galen, the Greek who was considered to be the greatest of all physicians throughout the European and Muslim Middle Ages. Thus, it is obvious that the three names are actually the names of authors, two legendary and one historical, to whom are ascribed the most famous ancient medical works of their respective civilizations. Therefore, the sources should be interpreted as indicating simply that the works of these writers or of their schools were introduced into Tibet at the time of Sron brtsan sgampo (d. 649 A.D.).

There were several persons in Tibet at that time who were involved in the work of translation. The Chinese monk Mahādeva and the Tibetan Dharma-koša were already present at court and had translated the Smaṇ-dpyad chenmo from Chinese. Furthermore, according to traditional accounts, one of the great ministers, Thon-mi 'brīṅ tore sambhoṭa, who had been educated in India and perfected the Tibetan writing system, was involved in the translation of Indian texts into Tibetan.18 Much less is known about "Galenos" and the Greek school in Tibet at the time.

In the sources translated above, "Galenos" is said to be "from Tazig or Rome" and "from Rome in Tazig," a confusion also found in the Chinese Hsin T'ang Shu, where it is stated that Rome was under Arab sovereignty.19 Because of the consistent use of the name Rome (written in Tibetan either Phrom or Khrom) in close connection with Tazig, there is no doubt but that, as proved long ago by Schaeder, the Greek "Eastern Roman" or Byzantine Empire is meant.20 The form of Galen's name is also revealing: it is not related directly to the Arabic form Galīna, or to the Syriac form,21 but is an exact representation of the original Greek form of the name as it was still pronounced in at least one Byzantine Greek dialect.22 Thus, there exists a possibility that an actual Greek transmitted the name of Galen and his medical tradition to Tibet. It is of course more likely that the name was transmitted through Sogdiana or Middle Persian, where its form could have been Galenos, since the Persians, at least from early Sassanian times on through the famous medical school at Gundīsbūr,23 were definitely familiar with Greek medicine. However, because of the absence of any recorded mention of the name of Galen in Iran or Sogdiana before the Arab conquest, potential Middle Persian or Sogdian forms are unknown, so that the Byzantines receive the credit by default. At any rate, it is not possible to conclusively decide the matter of provenance at present. One thing is virtually certain, however: the name could not have been transcribed as it was had it first been heard after the fall of the Tibetan Empire.24 Therefore, there is no reason to doubt that the name and several works of Galen (or pseudo-Galen) became known in Tibet during the reign of Sron brtsan sgampo. But what were these works? The names given, certainly in abbreviated forms, for the works ascribed to Galen or his unknown translator, are highly problematic.

One of them, the enigmatic Mgo sṅon bsduspa, which was perhaps an epitome or a collection of works dealing with the head, may perhaps be compared to Hippocrates' Peri tōn en kaphalē trōmatōn.25 This comparison is possible because both Biji Tsanpaśilaha, the next physician of the Greek school, and Halašanti, the Tazig physician who followed him, also wrote works dealing with the head. Furthermore, T'ang dynasty period Chinese sources relate that the "Romans" (i.e., Byzantine Greeks) were particularly skillful at brain surgery.26 One may then assume that any "Graeco-Arab" or "Graeco-Persian" doctors in Tibet, such as the one known as "Galenos," would have been thoroughly familiar with that kind of operation. The other two titles are certainly connected with each other, but it is difficult to determine which may be more correct. In any case, it appears more than likely that the Despo'i giar-dpyad or "Gentle (?) Phlebotomy" of Blobzan 'phrin-las's account was the same work as the first of the three parts of the corresponding work given in the other accounts: that is, the Despo('i) ... dpyad.27 It is also possible that the second version is
correct, so that its title was either a flowery one having little or nothing to do with the contents of the work, or else it was indeed a work dealing with the “Examination of Cocks, Peacocks, and Parrots”—Galen did dissect all sorts of animals, including birds, and wrote at length on his discoveries.28 None of the other texts named can be identified, with the possible exception of the Mi jigsapa'i mtshan-cha, which seems to have survived into later times.29

Subsequently, according to Dphants gtsug-lag 'phrelba and Sants-rgyas rgyamtsho, 30 the physician known as Galenos was retained as royal physician, and practiced and taught Greek medicine in Lhasa. Dphants gtsug-lag 'phrelba relates (continued from the passage quoted above):

Galenos blasmandu bzugs/ rus chunha bti slobtu sitalste rigs mtho dman medpa slobpar gnah/
“Galenos stayed on as royal physician. He gave instruction (in medicine, even) to the four lower classes, and ordered that they teach without (regard for distinctions of) higher and lower class.”

Sans-rgyas rgyamtsho gives a much more detailed account of the events (continued from the passage quoted above):

De las/ lugs chen gsumpo'i tshul-dag ma rto gs na/ /smampa chenpo'i grakshu mi 'groste/ /bdag dam gta la phanpar mi nuspas/ /bar-snath mkhâ la jiljar mthos bshag bti/ /bharadhvadza drah-sron chenpo dahn/ /gala-dnos ni rgyal-tshab thubo dahn/ /hen-wen-han-de sadbag dbah bskurba/ /'phrul chen gsumpa btsud-rtsi bumpa bshags/ /tes goodypad thamscad lugs-sde gsumdu bsdus nas 'chadpar mzdad/ /rgya dkar naggi smanpa gnis la rgyalpos byadgâ phulte rao-rang-yuldu btsud/ galanos rje'i blasmandu bzugs/ phal-cher lhasar stan chagsrin bstan-bcoskyah duma btsamspar gra/ /yum khabtu bzespar sras gsum byunba'i cheba gtsang-stoddu btsanbas biji sogskyi bgyudupa dar/ /brinpo g'yorpor brdszangspa tho rohi smanparlams 'phel/ /chunba yabkyi skur bcebar sopo smanpa tses gle/' /gala-dnos la phyis mishan 'dzorod' bodch/ de la bodkyi rigs bsahna 'gâtig slobpar 'dodpa ma gnâstse/ /rigs bshang rgyu/ /'dah/ /sniigs/ /rgom tsepa bti sman-dypad slobtu bcug/ /rigs bsah 'han dam mtho dman medpar 'chosgpar bka' bgos/ /min 'tshobayd smanpar biags/ byadgâ la gtsigs chen dgu dahn gtsigs chuñ gsumste bcugs gnah/

“Then, ‘If one were ignorant of the methods of the three schools, one would not enter the ranks of the great doctors—just as, no matter how hard one would (try to) measure empty space in the sky, it would be useless for oneself and for others. Bharadhvâja was designated “great Arhat,” Galenos “head regent,” and Hsüan-yüan Huang-ti “landlord.” They were praised as “the three great magicians, the vessels of nectar.”’ Thus, all medical science, after it was collected into ‘the three schools’, was explained (according to them). The king gave rewards to both the Indian and Chinese physicians, and they departed for their own countries. Galenos remained as the royal personal physician. He is said to have made his appearance31 all around Lhasa, and also to have compiled many scientific works. It is said that, having taken a wife, he had three sons, of whom the eldest was sent to Gtsang-stod, and the Bijji, etc., lineages spread; the middle one was sent to G'yorpo and the doctors of the southern valleys flourished; the youngest, who stayed with his father, was called ‘the Sogpo doctor.’32 Galenos was later called by the name Dzoro, and as some upper-class Tibetans did not want to study with him, he suffered to teach medicine to the four low classes, the rtug, lhan, sniigs, and rmoks. He commanded them: ‘Cure the good and bad classes without (regard for) higher or lower!’ He was given the name Tshobayd smanpo [‘The Life-giving Physician’].33 As a reward he was given twelve (gtsigs)—nine large gtsigs and three small gtsigs.”34

The most significant statement in this passage is doubtlessly that regarding the retention of a Greek (or Tazig) doctor, rather than an Indian or a Chinese one, as royal physician. At the very least, it indicates that at the Tibetan court the Greek medical tradition was sufficiently well known to be esteemed more highly than either the Indian or the Chinese tradition35 and is perhaps indicative of the close contacts then existing between the Tibetan Empire and the Iranian world bordering it on the west. It is also highly interesting that this Western physician not only deigned to teach medicine to students of the non-noble classes, but also bid his students obey a moral precept, an additional detail reminiscent of the Hippocratic ideal. On balance, despite the obscurity of some of its details, and the probably non-historical nature of others, this passage does provide a vivid description of medical activity in early Imperial Tibet.

II. “Then, from the land of Rome, one called Bitsi
TsanpaSilaha was invited.” Thus begins Dpabo gtsug-lag ‘phrepha’s account of the most important foreign physician in early Tibetan history, Biji TsanpaSilaha. The success of “Biji,” who was personal physician to the emperor and author of an enormous amount of medical literature, and of his predecessor “Galenos,” is clear proof that Greek medicine was initially the most important medical tradition in the early Tibetan Empire. Although the Indian, Chinese, and other traditions also played a part in the overall development of Tibetan medicine at the time of Emperor Khri lde gtsug brtsan (commonly known as Mes “ag-tshoms), the Greek tradition was dominant in the area stretching eastward from the Atlantic Ocean through Tibet up to the borders of China, in which latter country it also enjoyed a certain prestige.

The Sdesrid’s monumental Khog’bugs is again the most detailed source among currently available works dealing with the subject, although the texts of the royal edict and the physicians’ oath apparently promulgated due to the influence of Biji are given only in the works of Dpabo gtsug-lag ‘phrepha. The existence of a historical person named Biji TsanpaSilaha is also well attested in other earlier works, including the Rgyal-rabs gsalba’i melon of Saksya bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan, the Bsd med mdo yid-bzin norbu of Don-dam smraba’i senge, and the apocryphal Biography of Padmasambhava, where he is called “the Chinese scholar.”

The Sdesrid says:

Yan de’i tshe khromgyi yul nas de’i skadu biji tsepa’i smana mi dgos tsampaSilaha byaba dpon-slob manpo bos nas tsampaSilahas rgyud selgyi melon le’u lhabcupsa/ de la brien nas byah-khog stodkyi dmar-byah gsalba’i sgron-me le’u tshigs/ smadkyi dmar-byah phrulgyi idemig le’u ngr-Iython/ yan-laggi bcos them-byah le’u tshigsapa/ dernamskyi ’grelpa gsaN ika gsum/ ma shigi draba che chuN gnis/ bu ’grelpa dmar nag gnis-te dpyad ma bu bzi/ ika chuN/ dra chuN/ sgronma/ zi chuNste shih tig bsudspa’i bu bzi/ mde’u/ nmag/ me/ thig/ rtsa/ ’bras-dnamskyi bcos-te gcsapa’i bu drugste bsdompas ma gsum dan bu bcudbu/ de’i stedhu bgegs sel gnadkyi sgronma/ rmag brag thabs chod bshi/ skem-sman rin-chen gter btag/ nmag skysugs’ jam ’dren bdud-rtshis thun-moh ma yinpa gsanba’i bu bzi sogs rgyaspa’i skor dah/ ’brinbu bu bum snagpo ika yah-tig gnis/ sntu bsudspa yige dmar chuN rtsa ’grel tig gsum dah/ byah-khogi man-tag le’u gsumga drilba la bdud-rtsi meloNgi skor le’u cheba bryad dah chunba bcugsumsiste nergcig/ rma skor gsum stonpa thig-le gsalba’i mdo mgo byah-khog ’bremlar bcospa/ don shiN/ rnamgba’i dpyah-thag/ rgyanaggi drah-sroNghis mzdapda rin-chen dbigby le’u bdun-cupa dan/ ma dbigby le’u bdunpa drlbas bampo niSU risa lhapa/ phyag-mdorgyis mzdapda mgo’bo/ i rnos-bzlog// sprulpa’i khye’us mzdapda bdud-rtsi dar-yakan lhun-bzedskyi ’phruN’khor/ de’i ’grelpa hasahn kirN-das mzdapda/ mdobyan che chuN byaba dan/ nes-dmigs sum-co rtsa lhapa/ ro bkra ’phrulgyi melon le’u medrugpa/ ro bkra thagu dgu sbyor/ gson thig le’u thaggyi rnam-gtsang drah-sroN mii’i khogpo le’u bcupa/ drah-sroN rgyun-tekskyis mzdapda bcngs/ byah-khog khyemskyi mdo zes byaba dah/ yan-lyak la drah-sroNg khye’us mdo byah dan/ le’u bcugsumpa byaba dah/ tshigskyi sdomskyi le’u la byaba dah/ rin-poche’i mzdod phampa smangyi le’u bcupa dan/ smanka la rabtu gcsapa’i le’u biN dah/ rinpoche’i phrenba zes byaba le’u lhabcupsa dah/ rinpoche’i dbigig le’u bdun-cuparnams bcngs nas rgyalpo la phul/ dernams phyogs gcusig zo’ogs grombru btugspla la bldadpyadkyi stgh tshos/ mdo brags/ gtsanang de’i dus na hasahn mahal de’i khyunpo itse sogsksyi sman-dpyad dum bsyungbar bsadceN/ tsanpaSilaha des phyis bsdrid bskyans/ biji’i rgyud shar byub grub ruf la nskayang ’phelbar brags/ slob-brgyud la tan dah/ stoh dah brahtii gsumgyisi gtos dumar/ ’phel/ d gsumpos mdokhamskyi soks ha bruhpapo la la byaspa’i byadga la rgyalpos rgyud selskyi melon rma bcos ma bu bcubdu sogs rgyas ’brin bshad gsum yige dmar chuN dah bcaspa gnah nas rgyen nas bnyugdkyid blasmdu dnah bskurtsi dmag nskayang btonpar brags/ lalar stoh bter msep la mgo dbayad/ brahtii rgyal-mies kharbur byang-khog tan lhamo gzi la yan-lag-namskyi bcos gnahyal zer.

“And at that time, from the land of Rome, the physician (who was) in their language called biji (but) whose name was really called TsampaSilaha, after calling many scholars together, (this) TsampaSilaha translated [and/or compiled] the fifteen-chapter Rgyud selegyi melon; basing himself on that, the forty-two chapter Byah-khog stodkyi dmar-byah gsalba’i sgron-me; the twenty-five chapter Smadkyi dmar-byah ’phrulgyi idemig; the forty-two chapter Yan-laggi bcos them-byah’; their commentaries, the GsaN ika gsum [‘the three secret Tibs (commentaries)]; the mother-texts StiNghy drab che chuN gnis; and their son(-text)s ’Grelpa dmar...
nag ghis, the mothers and sons (together making) four works; the Tika chum, Dra chun, Sgroampa, and Zi chun, being the Snh-thig byduspa'i bu tsi; the treatments of Mde'u, Rnag, Me, Thig, Rtsa, and 'bras, being the Gcvespa'i bu drug; thus, added up together, three mothers and seventeen sons; on top of that, the Byegs sel gnadk'i sgronma, Rnag briag thabs chod btipa, the Skem-sman rin-chen gtir btag, (and) the Rnag skyang 'jam 'dren bsdud-risi, being the Thun-moh ma yinp gnasba'i bu tsi ['the four special secret sons'], etc., of the extensive group; (in the) middle, the Bebum stagpo tika (and) Yan-tig, two (works); the very condensed one the Yige dmar chun (in its) Rtsa, 'Grel, and Tig, three (works); the Byak-khog gi man-nag in three chapters rolled together and the Bydud-rtsi melongi skor in eight large chapters and thirteen small chapters, thus twenty-one in all; the Rma skor gsum stonpa thigle gsalba'i mdo mgo byan-khog 'brelmari bcospa; the Don sni; the Rsampa nga'i dpayang-thag; the seventy-chapter Rin-chen dbyig and the seven-chapter Mo dbyig, rolled up together in twenty-five volumes, composed by the Chinese arhat; the Mgobo'i rtsod-bzlog composed by Phyang-rodor [Vajrapani]; the Bsdud-risi dar-yakan lhun-bz既要 'phrug'khor composed by the Sprulpa's khye'u; its commentary, composed by the ho-shang Krinda, called the Mdobyah che chun, and the thirty-five (chapter) Nes-dmigs, the twenty-six chapter Ro bkra 'phrugyi meloh, the Ro bkra thaggu dgu sbyor, the ten chapter Gson thig ro thaggi ram-ttag dran-shro mi'i khogpa; the works said to have been composed by the Arhat Rgyun-ses, called the 'Byak-khog khrsemzgyi mdo', the Yan-lag la drah-srogig ket-rus che chu'n, the Le'u bcugsumpa, the 'Tshigskyi sdamskyi le'u', the Rinpoche'i mdzog phanpa smangyi le'u bcupa, the Smanpa la rabtus gcespa'i le'u btipa, the fifty chapter 'Rinpoche'i phrenba,' and the seventy-chapter 'Rinpoche'i dbyigs; and he presented them to the king. They remained [i.e., were kept] all together in a small trunk covered in heavy silk, and became known as the Bladpyadkyi gtshu 'tshoba'i mdo. Furthermore, although at that time the ho-shang Mahadeva, Khyungpo tsetse, and others had translated many medical (works and) were expounding them, that Tsanpasilaha later ruled ['?] in Tibet. Even though Biji's lineage had previously been successful, henceforth it was increasingly famous. Led by the three (lineages) of Zha, Ston, and Branti it developed into many pupil-lineages. As a reward for those three having served as guards ['?] of Mdokhams for four years, the king gave them (the medical texts) Rgyud selgyi meloh, the Rma bcos ma bu bcubdun [i.e., 'the mother and son texts of the Treatment of Wounds, seventeen texts in all'] etc., together with the three (versions), the Extensive, Middling, and Condensed [or 'Epitomized'], of the Yige dmar chun, and initiated them according to the tantras as personal physicians of his line, and also dismissed them from the army. So it is said. It is also said that to a few were given (the texts of) treatments: to Ston bzer mespo, the Mgo dpjad ['Examination of the Head'], to Branti rgyal-mbas kharbu the Byan-khog ['The Trunk'], and to Zha lhamo gzi the Yan-lag-nrams ['The Limbs']."

Since the title Biji (variously written bidzi, bibyi, bitsi, biche) is specifically said to be a foreign work meaning "physician," possible Indo-Iranian origins come first to mind. Because the person concerned is elsewhere said to be from Tazig, it is not surprising to find in Sogdian the word bžé-, which means "physician." The Tibetan form biji is a quite acceptable transcription of this word. The final syllable of his personal name, Tsanpasilaha, which is no doubt a transcription of a *Campasilaha, is so far inexplicable. However, the facts that his name is obviously of Sanskrit derivation, that he is credited with the translation of several works with Buddhist titles or authors, and that none of his works is referred to by the Tibetan Buddhist historians as "pagan" (mustegspa), unlike those of his compatriot Halašanti, make it virtually certain that he was a Buddhist. Biji's continued success under Khri sroh Iide brtsan, as well as his pupil Brantí's success, may be attributed to this circumstance. Thus the first royal physician who was also a Buddhist happened to be Biji (="Bibyi," etc.) Tsanpasilaha. This fact is very likely the origin of the later G'yuthogpa tradition that medicine was first introduced into Tibet (from India!) in ancient times by Bibyi dgābyed.

Since Biji is said to have translated many Chinese works, in addition to those translations he made from, presumably, Indian and Iranian languages, and since he is consistently referred to in the Padma bkāthah as "the Chinese scholar" (Rgyenag mkhaspa), it is indisputable that he knew Chinese, and had therefore come to Tibet via China, where he had surely practiced medicine for many years."
'phreṅba's account that this treatise was translated by a Chinese monk in collaboration with a mysterious figure named Rgyaphrug gar-mkhan. The latter statement is confirmed by the lengthy treatment of the subject by the Sdesrid, who does not include Biji among the translators. The vastness of this corpus of medical literature is all the more intriguing because of the difficulty of finding other clarifying references to the works cited, although there are a few exceptions discussed at the end of this paper.

The next accomplishment of Biji as royal physician under the rule of Khri Ide gtsug brtsan (Mes "ag-tshoms, d. 755 A.D.) was apparently the raising of the status of physicians in Tibet. The source for this is Gtsug-lag 'phreṅba, whose account quotes two texts, the first an edict concerning physicians and the second an oath administered to the physicians, both apparently promulgated during the period of Biji's tenure as royal physician:

Physis gyim-san-kon-jos risis dan sman-dpyad maṅdu bsnams/ hvaṅa mahāthitha dan rgyaphrug gar-mkhan lasogs pas somaratsa le'u bṛgya dan bcołnapa sogsg bṣgyur/ de'i tsho kḥrom nas bitsi 'tsanbaštīla ha ha ba spyaṅ draḥs/ rgyalpo'i rje yin zes lhaṅjer biaṅsste thamscad kh∇es blar kburba graṅg'i ḥgu ha 'jogs pa 'stan bṣan draṅ 'diṅspa/52 zas skom spyaṅ-gzigskiy mchog stobspa skeyel-gsu/53 rtas byedpa von gserdu 'bulpa/ byaspa drinu gzha sogskyi bكا bhaṅs/ smanparnamskisykaṅ khyim mḏes nas bsoṅskyu skeyel-gsu dan žags-gla mgen tshan yinaṅ dkar daṅ žurten bran-khol yinaṅ bkur-'ti daṅ guspa dus mindu phradkyaṅ mὸṅs gsol dan bṣen kbur/ dgraba yinaṅ dud-guskyis blo giotspa/54 zas nor la 'dod sred byas ruḥ skurpa mi 'debs/ nadpa gzha la 'tu'bul grags nas sṅaṅ-rag rīn-bskul sge'u skeyel sogsg bcołha gisgissu bṣuṅ/ mṭadbggis smanpa blaṅa daṅpo yinpas byamsps bskeyd naṅpa/55 bu dan slobma yinaṅ mchod nān phyir ma brjod māṅsāṅskiy khrel 'chöbars khyimngnas la ha/56 ma byed yarabskiy tshul la ndopspa/57 zas la ma nān sman-dpyad la lag-brnies/58 yodpas chad/59 la ma dga thugs lcogpa/60 la khyad yodcīn thal-nen yodpas lelo daṅ iṣhd-yod ma byed sman-dpyad gnāṇdu/61 mi phogpas ndopspa/62 la notsha daṅ tshul 'chos ma byed ces zilta bdun māṅsāṅ/ byaṅkho l'eu ẖabcu sogs dp'yad rgyas 'brīṅ bsduṣpa'i sman-dpyadkɪ yes bstan-bses maṅdu byuṅ/63

"Later, Chin-ch'eng kung-chu brought many (books on) Calculation and Medicine. The ho-shang Mahāthitha55 and Rgyaphrug gar-mkhan,66 etc., translated the one hundred and fifteen chapter Somarāja. At that time, the (physician) called Biji Tsanpaštīla was invited from Rome. Saying "He is the king's lord," they called him bhaṅje ('god's lord"), and the proclamation was published that everybody should honor (the physicians); seat them in the place of honor; set out excellent cushions (for them); feed them the best food and drink as presents; provide horses for them for coming and going; pay their fees in gold; be grateful for their work, and so on. And even if the physician calls from a beautiful house, (they should provide) his transportation and fees; even if he is a relative, (they should provide) clean food and presents; even if he is a servant, (they should) honor and respect him; even though he does not meet (with patients) on time, (the patients should) wish him joy and be respectful; even though he is an enemy, (they should) be confident out of faith; even though he is greedy for food and money, (they should) not mistreat him; (even) when they are sick people crying out, petitioning to be cured, (they should) give thanks (to the physician); earnestly exhort him [?]; carry his bag (for him) [?],65 and so forth, (altogether) fifteen (points), were sworn to. By the lord(s) [?]; as the physician-teacher is first (in importance), be kind (to him); as the insiders are sons and pupils, do not expound (medicine, to them) for the sake of (their) poor offerings; (as you are) pursuing learned piety, do not do evil to householders; (as you are) upholding the noble method, do not give out evil drugs; as there are assistants for (such) medical practices, be not willing to cut off (limbs, etc. [?]); as there are differences among oath-breakers, and as it is a crime to be extreme, be neither (too) lax nor (too) strict [?]; as you will meet people in the practice of medicine, do not be indecent and hypocritical to patients; these seven instructions were given. He produced many medical treatises of the extensive, middling, and abbreviated (classes), treatment (-texts) such as the Byaṅ-kḥog in fifty chapters.66

Both of the texts quoted in this passage call to mind other similar texts in traditional Tibetan medical literature, such as the Rgyud bzi70 and the Biography of G'yuṅthog the Elder.71 The second, however, appears to be close enough to the basic tenets of the Hippocratic oath to be called a version of it. A comparison with another Greek version72 of the famous Oath shows that the Tibetan one, while just as brief, is actually closer to the traditionally accepted version.73 It is hoped that publication of
better editions will perhaps clarify some of the obscurity remaining in the highly unusual language of this text. 74

Following the accession of Emperor Khri sroñ lde brtsan, three foreign doctors were appointed as royal physicians. According to the abbreviated account of Koñ-sprul blo gros mth'has:

Chos-rgyal khri sroñ lde'u bsangyis rgyal-srid thogmar skyonba'i dussu/rgyagar nas dharmarādzā/rgyanag nas mahākhyin'dā/ taziggam kham nas tsanpaśilahaste smanpačhenpo gsum zal 'dzoompa la sprulpa'i sras gsum gras/ de gsum bsros nas rgyal-khams sosoi lugs dān bstunpa'i sman-dpyadkyi bstan-bcos rin-chen spuñspa ės byaba...gtuñ chenpo byas. 75

"When the religious king Khri sroñ lde'u bsan was first ruling, three great doctors—from India Dharmarkṣa, from China Mahākhyin’dā, and from Tazig or Rome Tzanpasilaha—gathered together (in Tibet) and were known as the three miraculous princes. The three having consulted together, they wrote a great sourcebook on that medical literature of their individual countries which mutually agreed, called the Rin-chen spuñspa ['Jewel Mound']. . . ." 76

Finally, according to the Sdesrid’s account, Biji Tsanpasilaha’s three pupils were appointed as “royal doctors” together, to succeed him, and they received a number of texts from him when he was leaving Tibet “to return to his own country.” 77 Together this collection of texts, which was known as the Pusti khaser (“The Yellow Book”), 78 and also as the Rgyalpo’i blayig ’od’bar, was apparently transmitted, through the Brahtī and other lineages, down to recent times, 79 and thus continued to influence Tibetan medical thought throughout its formative period.

In the narratives of Biji’s pupils a certain schematic character may be noticed. However, as the three major medical schools (Brahtī, Zān, and Stōh) named in these accounts trace or did trace their lineages back to Biji Tsanpasilaha and his three sras (“pupils” or “disciples”), the historicity and importance of Biji himself is all the more strongly confirmed. But the question of the development of these and other Tibetan schools of medicine—including the ultimately all-pervasive and highly syncretic G’yuthogpa school—is one that is far too complicated to even touch on here.

III. The last of the Western physicians mentioned in the available historical sources as having come to Tibet during the Imperial period was a doctor from Tazig named Halañanti. He is included in the list of “the nine personal physicians of the king” 80 invited from abroad by the reigning emperor, Khri sroñ lde brtsan. 81 Again, the fullest account is to be found in the Khog’bugs, where the Sdesrid has also recorded an edict promulgated by the emperor for the benefit of these physicians. 82 He then lists the works of the individual doctors, including the one from Tazig:

Stag-gsoggi smanpa mgo bcos mustegskyi skor bryadpa rtsa ‘grel/ risa bcos man-hag jion-sīh che chu/ ‘duspa bcos thabs rin-chen sroggi ‘khor-lo/ sogo sa stagcangyi rgyud/ dug gsoba gar-log rgyalpo’i sī gsos/ ...brsamstīn bsbyur. 83

“The Tazig doctor compiled and translated (the texts) Mgo bcos mustegskyi skor bryadpa, basic text and commentary; the Rtsa bcos man-hag jion-sīh che chu; the ‘Duspa bcos thabs rin-chen sroggi ‘khor-lo; the Sogpo sa stagcangyi rgyud; and the Dug gsoba gar-log rgyalpo’i sī gsos.”

Unfortunately, this is all that is said about Halañanti. The references to a Sogdian (or Khotanese) 84 text and to the king of the Qarluq Turks 85 incline me to the opinion that this Tazig doctor, at least, came to Tibet from West Turkestan, and had perhaps been acquired during Tibetan military operations there. He may have been an Arab and a Muslim, despite his Sanskrit name, since the titles listed for him lack a Buddhist flavor and one is even said to represent a mustegspa (“pagan” or “non-Buddhist”) system. Furthermore, the first work listed, “The Eight-part Non-Buddhist System of Head-treatment,” reflects the medieval reputation which Greek and Arab physicians gained for advanced knowledge concerning head injuries and ophthalmology. Little further can presently be said about this last representative of Graeco-Arab or Graeco-Persian medicine in the Tibetan Empire.

As indicated above, Post-Imperial medical works are currently assumed by most Tibetologists to be completely Indian in origin or inspiration. 86 Thus, it may seem somewhat surprising to find any mention of non-Buddhist or non-Indian works in traditional Buddhist medical literature, beyond the occasional
reference to books translated from Chinese. In fact, however, the writings of the G’yuthogpa tradition include several comments that support the veracity of the earlier tradition discussed above. In the “Biography of G’yuthog yontan mgonpo the Elder,” the fact that the Greek school was especially strong in the area of urinalysis is correctly mentioned. Most importantly, however, this work gives the names of several of the early physicians, along with the names of texts translated or composed by them, including the so-called “Greek prince” Btsampaśila and his teachings, here called “Khrom-gyi d’Bye-ba Drug-pa.” Finally, in the narrative of the later so-called “Nine Tibetan Doctors,” the first to be mentioned is the doctor Bji legs-mgon and his “system” called “Po-ti Kha-ser,” a collection of the works of Bji Tsanpaśilaha mentioned in the accounts of the earlier tradition, as already discussed above.

It is also noteworthy that the Bonpos, who are normally so anxious to ascribe the origins of things to Zan-żuñ or Tazig, fully corroborate these traditions. The recent Bonpo religious history Legs-bsdod mdzod, which is based on much earlier works, remarks on the proficiency of the Greek scholars in medicine, and it makes the interesting comment that in pre-Imperial times, before the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet:

“... in India, Dharma flourished, in China ‘astrological calculation’ flourished, in Phrom diagnosis flourished, and in Tibet and Zhang-zhung only Everlasting Bon flourished, although other fields of study were also popular.”

Despite then, the confusion which has arisen from the superimposition of the traditions of the later “nine Tibetan doctors” and the G’yuthogpa legends onto the earlier tradition, it appears that the original sources for the early period are essentially quite trustworthy.

In a note at the end of his section on the history of early Tibetan medicine, Sāns-rgyas rgyamtsho writes that whereas in political and religious history there is a hiatus between the earlier and later periods, in medicine there was no break in the tradition. He then lists some of the foreign medical “schools” or “systems” known in Tibet, with the names of their purported founders, and unequivocably states that the texts of their systems had been transmitted down to his own time, the early eighteenth century. He includes in this list, among others, the UdGUIyana school of Jinamitra, the Nepalese school of Sumatikirti, the Tazig school founded by a still unidentified Urbaya (or Urwaya, Urvaya, etc.), and the Greek school of Tsanpaśilaha. The brilliant nineteenth century scholar Koh-sprul blogros mhāyās similarly confirms the trustworthiness of the early tradition:

“...in India, Dharma flourished, in China ‘astrological calculation’ flourished, in Phrom diagnosis flourished, and in Tibet and Zhang-zhung only Everlasting Bon flourished, although other fields of study were also popular.”

One need not add much to this plea for broad-minded acceptance of the heterogeneous origins of early Tibetan science.

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that one of the three disciples of Bji Tsanpaśilaha was Braṇţi rgyal-mtse, who was the founder of the very important Braṇţi lineage which survived in Tibet in direct descent down to the last century and in indirect descent down to the present day. As a consequence, it would appear that the Khrom lugs or “Greek school” of medicine indeed exercised a profound influence on the development of Tibetan medical science.
ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CTS</td>
<td>Chiu T'ang Shu, see Liu Hsü.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DBLB</td>
<td>Dpag bsam ljon bsan, see Sumpa mkhanpo ye'ses dpal byor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dpergyun</td>
<td>see 'Akhu chin' tes-rab rgyamtho.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DTT</td>
<td>Documents de Touen-houang... See Baco, et al.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTS</td>
<td>Hsin T'ang Shu, see Sung Chi, et al.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kgog'bugs</td>
<td>see Sdersid sans-rgyas rgyamtho.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR</td>
<td>Ladwags rgyal-rabs, see France.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>Mkhapisa'i dg'as-ton, see dpabo gtsug-lag 'phrebla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGD</td>
<td>Rdzogs-dan gtonnu'i dg'as-ton, see Nag-dba'n blozban rgyamtho.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGM'</td>
<td>Shongyi gtim metog 'phrebla, see Nelpa Panjita.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCTC</td>
<td>Tsu-chih T'ung-chien, see Ssü-ma Kuang.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFYK</td>
<td>Ts'e-fu Yuan-kuei, see Wang Ch'in-jo, et al.</td>
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1 I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to my friend and colleague, Mr. Michael Walter of Indiana University, for helping me with various problems encountered in the course of my research for this paper.

2 I prefer to transliterate bisyllabic and polysyllabic Tibetan words without adding hyphens, except for those cases in which reconversion into Tibetan script may be unclear, as follows:

(1) Within compound words, whenever any preceding syllable ends in a consonant or consonants. Thus, whereas preceding syllables end in vowels, no hyphen is used. Likewise, all suffixes are attached to preceding syllables without hyphens, regardless of whether or not they end in consonants or vowels; when a following syllable begins with 'a chud, no hyphen is necessary; bisyllabic and polysyllabic words not analyzable into discrete morphemes—usually Chinese loanwords, such as yontan—do not require hyphens. The suffixed quotative verb, since Tibetan writers do not always follow the classical rules when using it, is best written as a separate word, without a hyphen.

(2) When the suffixed conjunctive verb in its -ste form is added to a syllable ending in -s, where a hyphen is required to distinguish the combination from ones having the -ste form.

Otherwise, the transliteration follows the English system as used by Hugh E. Richardson in his Ancient Historical Edicts at Lhasa (London, 1952) and other publications, with the following minor differences a
additions: "n" for his "n"; " in syllable-initial position, " in subscripted position, and " in final position (i.e., written on the line) for his "h"; " for the glottal stop, "a chen"; a tie "", used to indicate the omission of "tsheg" between syllables, as in Sanskrit words or abbreviations.

3 Vostrikov (1970:176) was the first Tibetologist to deal at length with histories of medicine in the course of his discussion of the different genres of Tibetan historical literature. In addition to the Khog'bugs, he also discussed several of the general works used in this study under the genre heading appropriate to each work as a whole. Unfortunately, he neglected several specialized historical works on the arts (bzorig, usually mistranslated "technology") listed in "Akhuchin ēes-rab rgyamtsho's bibliography of valuable books, Dpergyun (1974), ja:50r(p. 504)."

4 The only Tibetologist who has paid any attention to the subject, beyond a word or two in passing, is Rolf Stein, who devoted a half page to the Greek school in his Tibetan Civilization (1972:61). More recently, Rechung Rinpoche has published translations from Tibetan medical histories which provide a little more information on this school, in his Tibetan Medicine (1973). However, the belief in the Indian origin of Tibetan medicine from the very beginning is still expressed in the first line of Kania's review (1978:137) of Rechung, for example. In fact, the standard Tibetan political and religious histories state that the sciences of medicine and rtsis ("calculation," including astrology) were introduced into Tibet from China during the reign of Gnam ri slo mthshan (see for example LR:30, SGM':5v, MD:12r, RGD:10, DBLB:94v). It is not perhaps superfluous to add that Pingree (1974:67) is unfair in his criticism of Rechung Rinpoche's summary account—certainly far from perfect, it is true—of the early history of medicine in Tibet (taken apparently from the Sdesrid's Khog'bugs) which he labels "incredible" without saying why, and without citing a single Tibetan work on the history of medicine, or on any other subject for that matter. Per Kvaserne, in his review of Rechung's book, does mention Galenos very briefly as a "Persian (or perhaps a Byzantine Greek) doctor" (1973:71).

5 For a discussion of the relations between the Tibetan Empire and other contemporaneous civilizations, see Beckwith (1977).

6 A Sogdian (hu) physician, apparently specializing in ophthalmology, treated the well-known Chinese monk Kanshin during the latter's travels to Japan (Takakusu 1928:467). Two Sogdian Buddhists accompanied Kanshin, one of whom may have written or translated a work on astrology there (ibid., p. 30); and a Persian doctor accompanied a Japanese embassy on its return to Japan in 736 (ibid., p. 7). The very interesting, now fragmentary, contemporary account of the Caliphate written by Tu Huan, a relative of Tu Yu's who was captured at the battle of the Talas River in 751, states that Greek (or "Roman," Tach'in) physicians were especially good at treating the eyes and dysentery, while "some can spot a sickness before it happens, or open the brain to remove bugs" (Y. Tu 1935, 193:1041). Similarly, the Hsin T'ang Shu says of the Eastern Roman Empire that "they have excellent physicians who can open the brain and remove bugs in order to cure eye diseases" (HTS, 221b:6261). On foreign communities in China in general, see especially the fascinating work by Edward Schafer, The Golden Peaches of Samarkand (1963:14ff.).

7 See below, p. 6 and note 20.

8 But see below, p. 22ff. for a discussion of the G'yuthogpa corpus and other traditional, semi-legendary materials which corroborate the historical evidence on early Tibetan medicine.

9 The eventual obscuration of the actual origins of medicine in the imperial period is probably due to the long subsequent reign of Indian medicine over the earlier schools. This was already pointed out by Koch-sprul (see below, pp. 24-25).

10 The section of the Mkhaspa'i dgäston dealing with imperial history (MD, ja:29v) says: Gzosna bcobgryadkhyi dpe/ sman-dpyad chenmo/ rtsikskyi por-than bgyad-bcurnams bkurbar tüs-te rgyalposkyah dermans dan rinpoche dan dar-zab sogs mthäyaspar brdzahs/ "[When Princess Wen-ch'eng was about to leave for Tibet,] she requested that she be given a copy of the Gzosna bcobgryad, the Sman-dpyad chenmo, and the Rtsikskyi por-than bgyad-bcun, and the king gave along with them also precious jewels and silks beyond count." The pious Confucian Chinese historians naturally fail to mention that the princess brought non-canonical books to Tibet, but they do note that noble Tibetan youths were sent to China for education in the Confucian Classics of Poetry and History (HTS, 216a:6074).

11 MD, tsa:46r et seq.; Khog'bugs 77v (p. 583) et seq.; Blobza' 'phrin-las, thob-yig, ka:78v et seq.; Koch-sprul 1970, 1:214v (p. 583), et seq. Although the interrelationship between the four versions is not quite clear, it is obvious that they all depend ultimately upon some earlier source which has not yet been rewritten, if indeed it still exists. Therefore, the present comments will be limited to discussion of the materials available to me. Of the many works listed in "Akhuchin's Dpergyun (1974, ja:50r(p. 504)) the only medical history per se which has so far been published again is the Sdesrid's Khog'bugs. Das lists a Gsorig chos'byuh in his list of abbreviations of works consulted (1902:xxxi), but he was not able to identify this work.
This title is reminiscent of the Chinese term "ta yao" ("great medicine") used for the alchemist's drug of immortality.

13 Hso-shang, the Chinese word for a Buddhist monk and taken as a loan-word into Tibetan (hvaśata, which always refers to a Chinese monk), is only a title, and not actually a part of proper names.

14 This Chinese monk appears in lists of the early translators of Buddhist texts, such as those in MD (Vol. ja:17v) and Padma dkar-po's Chos'byun (1968:59v [p. 318]), as well as in other works.

15 Dharmakṣa is listed among the early translators as having been a pupil of Thon-mi sambhoṭa. (Loc. cit., in note 11).

16 See Filliozat (1964:2ff.).

17 The Tibetan transcriptions have lost the wazurs that they no doubt originally had, so the transcriptions should be amended to read Hven-ven-hvan-de or Hven-ven-hwa-de, a not unreasonable transcription of the Chinese name. Kno-sprul, in his brief account of the history of medicine in China, has Han-ti rgyal po ("king Hwang-ti"); the character ti is sometimes transcribed in Tibetan di (See for example Roerich 1976:57); and homophonous syllables for hsuan and yuan have been transliterated into Tibetan as hen and wen or dben (pronounced /wen/ also) (op. cit., pp. 51 &56 respectively).

18 See the thorough discussion of Thon-mi in Hoffmann (1976:15-17).

19 HTS, 221b:6261.

20 Schaeder (1933:24ff).

21 In Syriac spelled GLYSN or GLYNWS (Merx 1885: 244-245; Gotthelf 1899:187), in Arabic Galtinus.

22 Meillet (1935:316).

23 Elgood (1951:46ff.). In Arabic, the Greek school of medicine was called al-tibb al-yānaniyy.

24 Final s in Tibetan was probably silent by the time of the "later propagation" (ca. 950 on) but, more importantly, by the turn of the millenium the Arabized form was universal in Muslim lands, including especially Iran, as we know from the great activity of translation going on by the ninth century in the Muslim world (Dodge 1970, II:693ff.; Elgood 1951:102ff.; Sezgin 1970:6,13ff.), and this form could have been transcribed into Tibetan as *Gyallinu, or *Jalinu, or the like.

25 Commonly known under its Latin title De capitis vulneribus, and called in Arabic Girâhat al-ra's (Sezgin, 1970:45).

26 See note 4.

27 Most of the titles given in the sources are apparently abbreviated. Furthermore, since only volume ja of Dpābo gtsug-lag 'phreṅba's history has been photographically reproduced, and since all the important works used in the present study are still only available in one edition, it is often impossible to say what might be a real variant, and what simply a modern copying mistake.

28 The titles of two of Galen's works sound more promising than others, in that their contents might actually correspond to their titles, namely:

1) Peri tēs epi tōn zōntōn anatōmatos (or De animalis vivis dissectione) a work lost in the Greek, but apparently preserved via an Arabic translation called Kibb fi takht al-ḥayawān al-ḥayy, in an early Latin edition under the title De anatomia vivorum (Sezgin 1970:100); and

2) Peri tēs epi tōn tēshneōtōn anatōmatos (or De animali mortui dissectione) also lost in the Greek, but preserved in an unpublished Arabic translation known as Kibbd fī takht al-ḥayawān al-mayyit (op. cit., p. 100). Both of these works have so far been inaccessible to me.

29 This work might not have been written in Tibetan, but was perhaps the same as, or constituted the major part of, the Mi 'jigspa bṛgya kyi mitshon-cha translated into Tibetan by a doctor from Dolpo named Khymolma rtse a century later, under Emperor Khri sron Iude britan. According to Kno-sprul (1970,1:214v [p. 583]), this text was also known as the Lugs chen gsum gyi gzü, and it appears that this system was transmitted under the name Kyoma rurts (Rechung 1976:203).

30 Kno-sprul says only Galenus la 'dzoro tsnampo rigs-bṛgyud byun, "In Galenos the lineage of physicians called 'Dzoro originated." (Kno-sprul 1970,1:214v [p. 583]). Blobzātan 'phin-las is silent on this.

31 Literally, "(his) mat appeared," i.e., he spread out his mat and practiced medicine on it.

32 This quote does sound rather formulaic, and as the Bīja lineage had not yet appeared in Tibet by this time, the Sdesrīd's "it is said" seems justified.

33 This title is reminiscent of Tshogyed gzoonu, the name in Tibetan translation of Kumārajīva, a famous Indian physician who was the disciple of the court physician U Tāxila (Rechung 1976:12-13) and supposedly the teacher of Bībī dga'byed (ibid., p. 179).

34 Gstīgs in Classical Tibetan usually means "oath," but here it would appear to have the meaning "(royal) grant" or "deed," as is also concluded by Richardson in his edition and translation of the inscription dedicated to Stag sgru bkhu khoṅ (1952:26, 29, 31).

35 It is notable that at such an early date medical science should have reached such a high level in Tibet, and that it could claim even greater achievements in the next century. How unfortunate that the spread of religious dogma and the resulting mutual antagonism—with Islam's victory to the west and Buddhism's victory at home—cut off from the Tibetans this source of scientific inspiration.

36 Kno-sprul's account (1970, 1:214v [p. 583]) is
condensed to be of much interest, but he does confirm the
basic facts given in the other accounts, especially in the line:
Khromgyi yul nas biche tsanpašilaha byabā'i smanpa
mchaspa bkug nas lhajer bkurte... "The learned
physician called Biche Tsanpašilaha having been summoned
from the land of Rome, he was appointed Lhajer..." 
Kot-sprul also mentions (ibid.) the work Pusti khaser,
the system of Bji as it was transmitted to his lineage.

Kuznetsov's romanized version of the relevant passage
reads (1966:162): bi tsi tsan trsa śrīs sman spyod mang po
yong sgyur r0, with the variant readings (?), listed at the
foot of the page, tsandra, śrris, dpyaś, and bsgyur. Another
edition (Thuma 1973:204v(p. 406)) has pirtsi tsantra śrīs
sman-dpyad manpo yah bsgyurro. The corruption of the
same is transparent, and the line may be corrected and
translated "Bīh Tsanpašilaha also translated many medical
works."

The two editions at my disposal are essentially
identical: ... Khri sde gsitg rtaŋ 'ag-tsomgyi skurin la/
balpo'i smanpa darmacita dah/ / kmrho sman risanpa
hokar giñkīyis/ smangyi rgyud-rnams sgyur[r/o/(N. Del-
hi ed., 1969:84v[p.168]); ... Khri sde gsitg rtaŋ 'ag-tsom
skurin la/balpo,i smanpa darmacita dah/ / kmrho sman
risanpa hokar giñkīyis/ smangyi bgyud-rnams bsgyurro/
(Thimpu ed. 1976, ka:90v[p. 180]). ... During the
reign of Khri sde gsitg rtaŋ 'ag-tsom, the two (physicians),
the Nepalese physician Darmacita and the Greek physician
Risampa the ho-shang, translated many medical treatises.

See the translation by Toussaint (1933:231ff.) which
must, however, be used with some caution. The translator
has, for example, omitted the epithet and one part of Bji's
name, which should be: Rgyanag mchaspa birje btsanpašyis ...
(Peking ed. 1839:209v) "The Chinese scholar Birje
btsanpa..." 

Khog'bugs, 79v (p. 160) ff.

I have not found it possible to either identify or, in all
cases, accurately translate these titles. In certain cases
where it is not clear whether an item constitutes a title or a
descriptive phrase of uncertain identity, I have provided a
translation in brackets. The reader of Rechung Rinpoche's
book (1976:15-18) is strongly advised not to accept without
careful checking his renderings of the titles.

This might be a variant for Mahākūti. Cf. note 64.

The meaning of skokha sruṇpapo in this context remains
unclear to me.

Benveniste (1940:250). Other forms are b'ye and b'eyw
(op. cit., p. 248). The middle Persian word for "physician"
is bizīk, writen behk' (Nyberg 1974:48). The final -a of
the Indian forms, vaidya and its Prakrit developments, would
certainly not have been transcribed with a final -i, which all
of the Tibetan forms exhibit.

See below, p. 21 ff.

See for example Rechung Rinpoche's translation of the

The modern Tibetan biographical dictionary of Khetsun
Sangpo (Mkhas-btsun bzaṅpo), which strongly supports
this, relies on other sources unknown to the present writer
(1973, 1:495).

As late as the middle of the ninth century, the Persians
in Yang-chou contributed to a building project within a
Buddhist temple complex (Reischauer 1955:168). Although
the subject has not, to my knowledge, been dealt with,
the very large number of Persians in China, particularly in
Ch'ang-an and several port cities, would seem to be directly
connected, at least in part, to the fall of Khorasan and
Transoxiana to the Muslim Arabs and the subsequent
conversion of the area to Islam by various methods, which
sometimes included persecution of Buddhism and other

I have already found a considerable amount of material
on this subject, with which it is impossible to deal at length
here. The book was preserved at least until the time of the
Fifth Dalai Lama, as it is mentioned in his great gsan-yig
("

Here, and in the following notes, I have made what I
consider to be necessary corrections in the text. The Lokesh
Chandra edition (MD, tsa:46v-47t(pp. 859-860), for
textual purposes hereinafter referred to as MDlc) has
'dinsba.

skyl-gsu MDlc.
giorda MDlc.

kadpa MDlc. The usually clear distinction made in
this edition between d and h is, as Tibetologists generally
concede, mostly nonexistent in Classical dbucan texts.
Unfortunately, there is no way to determine how clearly
such distinctions were made in the original text used to
make the MDlc hand copy printed in New Delhi.

khyim nas lag han MDlc. This makes no sense to me.
gnodpas MDlc. Same comment as in note 56.
lag nes MDlc. Same comment as in note 56.

chān MDlc.

thug geogpa MDlc. Perhaps "soup" is intended to
correspond to the "beer" in note 59.

gnadu MDlc. This reading would also make sense.

nazpa, MDlc. This makes no sense in the present
context.

MD, tsa:46v(pp. 859-860).

According to the Old Tibetan Annals (DTT:20, 42)
she arrived in the capital, Rasa, in the first half of the Dog
year 710, and must have had a very speedy journey, since
she only left China on March 2, 710 (CTS 7:179). It is said in the Hsin T'ang Shu that when the princess was about to leave, "The Emperor contemplated the youth of the princess, and bestowed several myriad (pieces) each of brocades and silks, an assortment of talented craftsmen to be her attendants, and he gave her Kuchean music (tian[?])."

(HTS 216a:6081). Pelliot (1961:96) translates this passage thus: "L'empereur, songeant que la princesse était très jeune, il lui donna des [pièces de] soie brochées et unie, désigna plusieurs myriades de comédiens et d'artistes pour aller à sa suite et lui donna une musique de Kioou-tseu (Koutcha)." Again, the princess' non-canonical book collection is not mentioned by the Confucian historians, who only later note the request of the Chin-ch'eng princess for copies of the Mao Shih, the Li Chi, the Tso Chuan, and the Wen Hsuan (CTS 196a:5232). These books were granted by imperial order in 731 according to the TCTC (213:6794), which omits the Wen Hsuan from the list. The TFYK 999:11723) gives 730, but this is probably a mistake.

65 Perhaps the same as Mahākyin'dā? Cf. note 42.
66 I am unable to identify this name, which is perhaps apocryphal.
67 Some of these injunctions seem to be paralleled in the G'yuthogpa literature (Rechung 1976:186). I am not at all sure of the meaning of the last three items, of which the latter two appear to be abbreviated.
68 Since this text is generally so close in sense to the original Hippocratic Oath, it deserves a more detailed analysis of the Greek text, see the brilliant work on the subject by Ludwig Edelstein (1953; repr. 1967).
69 See above, p. 12ff., for the list of his works.
70 See for example Rechung (1976:91).
71 Ibid., pp. 186, 303, 309-310.
72 See Dindorf (1839:1133-1134).
73 Edelstein (1967) has clarified much of the obscurity in the original Greek version by demonstrating that it was purely Pythagorean in origin.
74 An indeterminable part of the uncertainty remaining in the translation is due to the deplorable condition of the only edition of this work available to me, which condition (original or not) renders parts of the first text and most of the second text unintelligible without editing. If or when original Tibetan materials stored up in the great libraries of Europe and India become more easily available to researchers, no doubt the translation and the interpretation of this and of other texts dealt with here (particularly those quoted from the Mkhaspa'i dgston) will have to be revised.
75 1970:215r (p. 584).
76 For a longer account and a more complete list of the texts, see the Sdesrid's Khot'bugs (81r-82r [pp. 163-165]).
78 According to Koh-sprul (op. cit., 215v [p. 585]) and the Khot'bugs (82r[p. 165]).
79 See Rechung (1976:203) and my concluding remarks, p. 22 ff.
80 Khot'bugs 87v (p. 176).
81 Here there is some confusion in the sources concerning the introduction of the Chinese physician Shāgaum gaṅba, also known as Mahābhiśa smanpa. For example, according to the Mkhaspa'i dgston, he is supposed to have become the personal physician (blasman) of the emperor around this time. The same book does give an interesting alternative version of the appointment, however (MO, tsa:47r [p. 860]):

/Bitsi'i slobma ston bzer mespo brahāti rgyal-mtso 'tan lhama gzigz-namskyab mkhaspar gyurte rgyalpo'i blasmandu bkur skad/

"However, it is said that Bitsi's pupils, Ston bzer mespo, Brāhāti rgyal-mtso, and 'Tan lhama gzigz, having become learned, were appointed as the king's personal physicians."

This indicates that more than one account of the same period existed. In my opinion, it is difficult to accept the historicity of the Chinese physician, who does not even have a Chinese name, despite the argument of Koh-sprul quoted below (pp. 24-25).
82 Khot'bugs 88r-88v (pp. 177-178). The only relevant passage not paralleled in other texts is the beginning:

/'tshomdzad smanpa gyurpa 'dirmams la/'bod'bo'i
mgonag yongskyi bkurbar gyis/ /chiphyir 'di ni
tshesrog sterba'i phyir/ /mgonag yongskyi lha ni
bstanposte/ /deyis bkurbar mtsangyarn lahrje
thogs/ . . .

"All of the black-headed Tibetan subjects shall be respectful to these men who have become 'Tshomdzad smanpa ['life-giving physician']. Why this? Because they give life. The god of all the black-headed people is the Emperor, and because he has honored them, they shall also receive the title Lharje [lit., 'godlord']. . . ."
83 Khot'bugs 88v-88r (pp. 178-179).
84 Taking Sogpo here as "Sogdian". However, see the article on this name by Helmut Hoffmann (1971), in which it is demonstrated that the name Sogpo usually refers to the Khotanese.
85 See Hoffmann's excellent article on the Qarluqs in Tibetan literature (1950).
86 See note 2.
87 Cited here from the somewhat unreliable translation of Rechung Rinpoche, since this important work has unfortunately not yet been reprinted in Tibetan.
89 Ibid., p. 203. Without the original Tibetan, it is difficult to ascertain what the text actually says. Rechung has translated it: "The prince of bTsam-pa Shi-la, the son of Mu-rje The-khrom, the king of Khrom, taught the teaching of Khrom-gyi dBye-ba Drug-pa."
90 Khrom ("Rome") is consistently written Phrom in this work.
91 Karmay (1972:75).
92 Ibid., p. 43.
94 Khog'bugs 90v91r (pp. 182-183).
96 See for example the quotations in the Khog'bugs (86r-86v [pp. 173-174]).
97 See the Preface (in English) to the reproduction of the Brañti tradition medical work Man-hag rinpoche'i gser-mdzod, written by G'yurul rin-chen (repr. Gaangtok, 1974). So far as I can determine, the only other Brañti tradition work recently reproduced is the Gzer bre chenmo (Lab, 1975).


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