

Newsletter

Number 7 November 1985

Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud EHESS, 54 bd Raspail, 75006 Paris, France



International Association for the Study of Traditional Asian Medicine

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IASTAM plans The First International Symposium on Traditional Chinese Medical Literature

Munich, August 1986

Traditional Chinese medicine has produced, over the past two millennia, a vast body of literature. And yet, despite an increasing interest, in the West, in the contents and theoretical foundations of "Chinese Medicine", hardly a single translation of a classic Chinese medical text exists in any Western language that has followed any serious philological standard. To discuss various methodological and terminological approaches that have been employed in recent years, Prof. Paul U. Unschuld plans to hold a symposium in Munich (West Germany) from August 25 through 29, 1986. Pending the approval of third-party financial assistance, scholars from Asia, Europe, and the U.S.A. who have worked on the translation and analysis of traditional Chinese medical literature in recent years have been invited

to lecture on problems encountered in their work, and to participate in workshops focussing on a comparison of different terminologies in the interpretation of specific text examples. Because the philological analysis of ancient medical texts from India, Arabia, and Europe has produced considerable results already, representatives of these three disciplines have been invited to exchange the experiences gained in their respective fields with scholars working on Chinese texts. It is hoped that such a symposium will provide a decisive stimulus to the study of ancient Chinese medical literature. A full program of the planned symposium will be published in *Number 8* of *IASTAM Newsletter* (April 1986), if the financial questions can be solved in the meantime. Members of IASTAM interested in attending the symposium may write for further information to
Prof. Paul U. Unschuld,
Lessingstraße 2,
8 München 2,
W. Germany.

(Book Reviews)

A few books recently published are reviewed very briefly in this page (on *India* and *Japan*) and in page 7 (on *Sri Lanka* and *China*). They have been selected for their methodological insights, their richness of ethnographic details, and the way they go beyond the relatively narrow bounds of medical anthropology to address the main tenets of a culture. Our reviews are not of the critical type. Indeed we entertain reservations about some aspects of these books, but a discussion would be out of place. A *Newsletter* should only bring important books to the attention of its readers.

Fluid Signs

Being a Person the Tamil Way
by E. Valentine Daniel
Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. ISBN 0 520 04725 7

"My interest focuses on certain properties of substances, namely, their ability to mix and separate, to transform and be transformed, to establish intersubstantial relationships of compatibility and incompatibility, to be in states of equilibrium and disequilibrium, and to possess variable degrees of fluidity and combinability" (p.3). This is a book about *the semeiosis of a culture*, but other topics are discussed, such as houses and boundaries, disputes and color symbolism, marriage and compatibility, sex and divination, sickness and health, food and flavors, ghee and semen, and to the medical anthropologist it offers a detailed study of pulse reading in Siddha medicine, and of the indigenous concepts of humors, bodily tissues and fluids.

The theoretical analysis which combines in a very personal synthesis C.S. Peirce's philosophy, the spirit of Daniel's teachers at the University of Chicago, and borrowings from a few French *gurus* from Bourdieu to Derrida, is at once challenging. But this is also a book full of the flavors and saps of Tamilnadu; the

ethnography is rich and precise, the style is glittering, humorous and polished.

Illness & Culture

in Contemporary Japan
by Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984. ISBN 0 521 27786 8

The main focus of this book is "the conceptual structure or categories of contemporary Japanese thought, using some historical perspective" (p.3). Through ethnomedicine and symbolic anthropology, it attempts to make a contribution to an understanding of Japanese culture. It consists of two parts. Part I describes daily hygiene practices and beliefs of ordinary people, as well as their concepts of health and illness. Part II describes the various medical systems practiced today, illustrates how each system is embedded in Japanese culture and society, and presents a descriptive model of a pluralistic system of medicine, in which several systems of health care exist side by side within a single society, a multiple system that includes *kampo* (originally Chinese medicine consisting of herbal treatment, acupuncture, and moxibustion), health care aspects of Japanese religions, and biomedicine (Western in origin but now fully Japanese).

Written in a lucid literary style, this book is obviously bound to become a classic. Most readers will focus on Part II which covers the pluralistic system of health care in urban Japan today. As for us, since we can only allude to one or two themes here, let us say a word of Chapters 2 and 4 in Part I. "Japanese Germs" (title of Ch. 2) best illustrates the author's symbolic approach to medical anthropology. Contemporary concepts of dirt and cleanliness, which are perceived and expressed in terms of biomedical germ theory, derive from symbolic notions of

(continued in page 7)

Sanskrit MSS. of the Wellcome

Just published, the First Volume of a series of six: *A Handlist of the Sanskrit and Prakrit Manuscripts in the Library of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine*, Volume I, by Dr. Dominik Wujastyk, London: The Wellcome Institute, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BP, 1985. Price £ 14.00

Describing 1003 manuscripts on the most various topics, from Bhakti (devotional tracts) to Vyakarana (grammar), through Mantra (charms) and Vaidyaka (medicine).

Thanks to the younger generation of Indologists trained at Oxford, the really fabulous (but still uncatalogued) collections of Indian manuscripts kept at the Wellcome Institute in London and at the Indian Institute Library in Oxford (the Chandra Shum Shere collection) are now being rediscovered!

Permanence & Change in Asian Health Care

A series of symposia on Asian Medicine organized by Prof. Charles Leslie at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, 4-8 December 1985 in Washington DC

A full day of symposia on China, Japan and Korea, another full day on Hindu-Buddhist traditions in South and South-East Asia, a half day on Islamic traditions, and a half day on international agencies, pharmaceutical companies, and so on. These symposia included in the formal sessions on the AAA program will be followed by closed symposia for discussion among the invited contributors. Plans are made to edit the conference which will assemble more than forty participants.

Prof. Unschuld and Dr. Weiss will take this opportunity to hold a IASTAM business meeting with the treasurer and the publications editor.

On the way

Our readers might be slightly disappointed. They might wonder whether IASTAM publications will improve and expand in the near future. May we repeat that the present issue of *IASTAM Newsletter* appears in a transitional shape, while we are making arrangements for a more substantial, a more informative, a more scientific newsletter to be set up by the end of next year. This will be discussed in Washington D.C. in December (see other column in the same page). Shall we dissociate the question of a new Journal from that of strengthening the Newsletter? Both questions will be on the agenda. We hope that one or two Co-Editors will be appointed for the Newsletter (which does not precludes our launching a Journal on a different line). For the time being, we have kept to the eight-page unsophisticated format which does not require any secretarial help. Prof. Charles Leslie gave the Newsletter its format and first impulse. Contributors like Dr. Dominik Wujastyk and Prof. J. Christoph Bürgel, and all those of our readers who keep corresponding with us gave the Newsletter its credentials. But also, from the beginning, we have drawn our inspiration from an elder sister, *The Society for Ancient Medicine Newsletter*, wordly known as one of the best informative publications on Greek and Latin medicine, which has been produced for years by Prof. John Scarborough* single-handed on his own typewriter. This is not to say that we have become the advocate of the scholar's asceticism, or of ecological handwork! But, may we smile when we are learnedly told that nothing can be published today without a word-processor and a staff of secretaries? *Editor.*

*Prof. J. Scarborough has been recently appointed Director of the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, University of Wisconsin, School of Pharmacy, Madison, WI 53706, U.S.A.

Surabaya

An exhaustive report of ICTAM II, the IASTAM Congress held in Surabaya (Indonesia) from September 2 to 7, 1984 was prepared by Prof. Dr. Sutarjadi, Chairman of the Organizing Committee, and Prof. N. Zaman-Joenoes, Pharm.D., Chairman of the Scientific Section, which report should serve as a reference text to be consulted in preparing ICTAM III. For more information write to: Prof. N. Zaman-Joenoes, School of Medicine, Airlangga University, Jalan Darmahusada 47, Surabaya, Indonesia.

Ms. J. Parkinson, Associate Administrator of IASTAM (Department of Arts and History, Australian National University, Box 4, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia) wrote the Minutes of the IASTAM business meeting held on September 5, 1984 in Surabaya. Several reports were given at this meeting, where Prof. A.L. Basham stepped down from the Presidency of IASTAM and handed over the office to Prof. P.U. Unschuld. Quoting from Prof. Charles Leslie's Report, we should like to remind our membership that the work of all our officers "is done on a voluntary basis, that the Association only has the membership dues to sustain it so that, in fact, much of its costs are borne by the institutions which employ its officers and consider their work for the Association to be part of their professional careers." Over the five years of Prof. Leslie's tenure as IASTAM Secretary-General, the costs of office work and supplies, telephone and mailing were assumed by the Center for Science and Culture of *The University of Delaware*, which amounted to a sizeable contribution to IASTAM. Even more important has been the contribution of *The Australian National University* toward Professor Basham's costs in organizing the first conference, and the contribution of *Airlangga University* to organizing ICTAM II. Thus, we should all be grateful to the institutions as well as to the individuals who have worked for the supported IASTAM.

Received from
Prof. K. N. Udupa,
Vice-President of IASTAM

The First World Congress on Yoga and Ayurveda was held at the Republic of San Marino, Italy from the 8th to the 11th of June 1985. It was organized by the International Association of Ayurveda and Naturopathy and sponsored by several Indian Universities including Banaras Hindu University. Nearly 300 delegates from all over the world participated in the Congress. Prof. K.N. Udupa of Banaras Hindu University was the President of this congress, and Mr. Giorgio F. Barabino was the General Secretary. The inauguration ceremony was held on the 8th and followed by the presentation of scientific papers in three sessions. Arrangements were made for simultaneous translation. In addition to the scientific papers dealing with the various therapeutic aspects of Yoga and Ayurveda, there were demonstrations of yogic practices early in the morning, as well as exhibitions of books on Ayurveda and Yoga, and medicinal plants. The entire responsibility for organizing the Congress was that of Minerva Medica, and it was managed chiefly by Ms. Rosanna Gold and her able colleagues. The concluding session was held on the afternoon of June 11, and it was decided to hold the *Second World Congress at Banaras Hindu University, India, in January 1987*. There was a post-congress session on Ayurvedic massage from the 12th to the 16th of June and about 16 participants attended the session.

Plans were announced to establish an International University of Yoga and Ayurveda at Gubbio, Italy. This University is expected to start functioning from the middle of 1986. It will impart postgraduate training and research in Yoga and Ayurveda leading to the award of degrees of Ph.D. and M.D. respectively. It will offer also Diploma courses of short term duration. A detailed announcement will be published soon.

* For more information write to: The International Association for Ayurveda and Naturopathy, Villa Era, Via Rivetti 61, 13069 Vigliano Biellese, Italy.

Conferences

The Seventh Annual Polarity Therapy and Indigenous Mexican Healing Seminar will be held Jan. 11-25, 1986 near Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. The seminar offers theoretical and practical experience in the use of traditional medical techniques drawn from Chinese, Indian and Mexican systems. The seminar is oriented for health professionals who want to integrate these practices into medical and mental health models. For more information write to: Leslie Korn, Harvard School of Public Health, 677 Huntington Ave., Boston, Mass. 02115, U.S.A.

Joint Conference of *The 2nd World Congress of Chinese Medicine and Pharmacy* and *The 2nd International Symposium on Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, May 19-21, 1986, Taipei, Taiwan. Write: P.O. Box 8-487, Taipei, Taiwan.

Islamic science

Research Seminar on the History of Science, Medicine, and Technology in Islamic Civilisation

This is a continuing and unified series of seminars organised by Dr. G.A. RUSSELL at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in conjunction with the Department of the History and Philosophy of Science at University College, London. It has successfully been held since October 1984 throughout the academic year on a fortnight basis. The objective of the seminar is (a) to explore in a coherent and systematic fashion the factors which laid the foundation for the development of medicine, science, and technology in Islamic civilisation by taking up concrete and specific issues, and (b) to take a critical view of the established positions in the light of recent research, and not present interpretations which have come to be accepted as valid due frequently to sheer repetition.

The programme for the academic year October 1984-June 1985 approached the problem of *The Sources of Medicine, Science, and Technology in Islamic Civilisation* by inviting scholars from Britain and abroad to discuss the Greek, late Alexandrian, Iranian, Indian, and Chinese sources of these areas, and transmission through Greek, Syriac, and Pahlavi. Special emphasis has been placed on the period immediately before the rise of Islam.

The seminars succeeded in establishing an unfolding historical continuity, and in bringing together an inter-disciplinary audience, not only of historians of Islamic subjects, but scholars of Greek philosophy and science, of mediaeval and later periods to contribute to the discussions.

The present seminar series, entitled *The Formative Period*, will gradually move from the question of sources to the analysis of the nature of Islamic institutions, the extent of the continuity of the Greek and

Hellenistic ideas as well as what was original to Islamic civilisation. The Autumn programme (October-December 1985) includes the following topics:

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| Professor Montgomery Watt
Edinburgh | <i>Distinctive Features of Islam</i> |
| Dr Ian R. Netton
Dept of Arabic & Islamic Studies, Exeter | <i>From Pythagoras to Plotinus in the Thought of 'The Brethren of Purity' (Ikhwan al-Safa')</i> |
| Professor Hans Daiber
Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam | <i>The Ruler as Philosopher. A new interpretation of al-Farabi's view</i> |
| Dr Donald Hill
History of Technology, London | <i>The Banu Mūsā's Book of Ingenious Devices: its sources and its influence</i> |
| Dr G. Hawting
SOAS, London | <i>Reports about Physicians and Medicine in the literary material for early Islam</i> |

To accompany the seminar series, an exhibition entitled *Islamic Science: Crossroad of Cultures* was also organised by Dr. G.A. RUSSELL together with Dr. Nigel ALLAN, the Curator of the Oriental Collection at the Wellcome Institute, to be held from June to November 1985. It was prepared by Dr. Allan from the extensive manuscript collections of the Wellcome Institute together with a detailed descriptive catalogue.

For more information, write to Dr. G.A. Russell, The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BP.

Plant-names

Prof. Jacques André, the well-known expert of Latin botany, pharmacy and Roman cookery has just published a dictionary of Latin plant-names which should be welcomed not only by Classicists but also by all students of Asian medicine interested in cross-cultural influences:

Jacques ANDRÉ, *Les Noms de Plantes dans la Rome Antique*, Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres", 1985. ISBN 2 251 32 856 4. Price FF 350.00

A request
from the Editor
to our various Chapters

The Editor would be pleased to open columns specifically for news from each regional Chapter of IASTAM to be printed under their own heading, in the same format as this page reserved for IASTAM Europe.

Europe



The following news are reported by the Secretary of IASTAM Europe: Dr. T.E. Meindersma, Felland 50, 9755 TC Onnen, The Netherlands.

Conferences

1-4 September 1985 *International Workshop on the Study of Indian Medicine*, organized by Dr. Dominik Wujastyk at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine. Report to appear in our next issue. A general assembly of *The European Ayurvedic Society* was held during this workshop which took place in London.

25-29 August 1986 *The First International Symposium on Traditional Chinese Literature*, organized by Prof. Paul U. Unschuld in Munich. See this Newsletter in page 1.

*** South Asia, in Heidelberg ***

10-12 July 1986 *The 9th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies*, Heidelberg (W. Germany). Prof. Beatrix Pfliegerer-Lutze is organizing a panel on "The Cultural Context of Health Care in South Asia". This panel is divided into three subsections: on "Health Care, Medical Traditions and Traditional Medicine" (convened by Professor Pfliegerer), on Psychiatry (convenor Mitchell Weiss, Cambridge, Mass.), and on Childcare (convenor Joyce Pettigrew, Belfast). For more infor-

Organizations

*Ayurvedisch Pizhichal Centrum**, a department of the *Stichting Yoga-Vedanta Mandir*, Yogashram, Twijnderslaan 38, 2012 BK Haarlem, The Netherlands. Affiliated with the international organization *Universal Confluence of Yoga-Vedanta Luminary*, the *Ayurvedisch Pizhichal Centrum* applies a number of Ayurvedic treatments as used in Kerala.

*Pizhichal is a Malayalam word (better transliterated as *pijicil*, from *pijiyuka* "to squeeze out a juice"), the name of an oily massage practiced in Kerala (Editor).

An Ayurvedic course meant for German medical practitioners is offered since October 1984 by: *Heilpraktiker-Fachschule Saarbrücken*, Privat-Institut für Heilberufe/Akademie für Naturheilkunde GmbH, Berliner Promenade 19, 6600 Saarbrücken, W. Germany.

IASTAM Europe

To our members

Payment of annual dues to IASTAM can be made through the treasurer of the regional chapter. IASTAM-Europe is going to offer this facility. Members of IASTAM domiciliated in Europe can postpone their payment for 1986 till they receive a message thereon from the Secretary.



On the BBC

A nine hour documentary series on the Healing Arts will be broadcast beginning February 1986, which includes, for example, a one hour documentary on Ayurveda and Siddha centered at the Arignar Anna Hospital of Indian medicine in Madras, and one hour on Chinese medicine centered at the Chengdu Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Chengdu. For more information write to: Ted Kaptchuk, BBC Bristol Network Production Centre, BBC Broadcasting House, Whiteladies Road, Bristol BS8 2LR, U.K.

mation write to: Prof. B. Pfliegerer, Seminar für Völkerkunde, Universität Hamburg, Rothenbaumchaussee 64a, 2000 Hamburg 13, W. Germany; Dr. Mitchell Weiss, The Cambridge Hospital, Dept. of Psychiatry, 1493 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, U.S.A.; Dr. Joyce Pettigrew, Dept. of Social Anthropology, The Queen's University of Belfast, Belfast BT7 1NN, Northern Ireland.

