

## **Panel 23: Tibetan Medicine in Amdo**

**Panel description: outstanding**

**Panel organizer: to be announced**

### **Participants and abstracts**

#### **23.01 Sman pa grwa tshang in Kumbum Monastery**

By Dhondup Drotsang

In 1676, with the support of the Fifth Dalai lama, the Regent Sangye Gyatsho set up a medical and astrological school on Jakpori Hill in Lhasa. It became the origin of the later Sman pa grwa tshangs (medical schools in monasteries) in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries throughout Tibet and Mongolian areas. According to some inadequate statistics, there were around 60 Sman pa grwa tsang in history.

Sman pa grwa tshang have their own educational systems and effective teaching methods. They trained many Tibetan and Mongolian doctors and translated and compiled large amounts of medical literature. They had a far and deep influence and significance for the spread of Tibetan medicine in Tibetan and Mongolian areas, and also for the formation of the Tibetan-Mongolian medical system.

This paper will analyze the Sman pa grwa tshang in Kumbum monastery, one of the biggest Sman pa grwa tshang in Amdo: its history, construction, organization, institutionalization, system of educational levels, well-known scholars that trained in it and their medical works. I will talk about its significance for the spread of Tibetan medicine both in Tibet's Amdo area and Mongolian areas.

#### **23.02 Mural paintings in the Medical College of Labrang Monastery**

By Katharina Anna Sabernig

Since the publication of the „Atlas of Tibetan Medicine“, the art of Tibetan medical painting has become widely known all over the world. The "Atlas" presents illustrations to the "Blue Beryl" or *Vaidurya sngon-po* by Sangye Gyamtso (Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho) as kept in the History Museum of Buryatia in Ulan-Ude, Russia. In this art, some of the illustrations make use of an „unfolded tree“ (*sdong-vgrems*) in order to symbolise particular patterns of content. These metaphorical conventions employing trunk, boughs, twigs and leaves for illustration apply to the sixth chapter of the *rtsa-rgyud* or "Root-tantra" which is the first part of the well-known "Four Tantras" (*rgyud-bzhi*). In the inner courtyard of the Medical College of Labrang Monastery (*Bla-brang Bkra-shis-vkhyil*) in Gansu province, China, the visitor will find mural paintings of a similar kind showing a number of striking similarities to the trees of the "Atlas". The Labrang murals, however, illustrate the Tibetan art of healing in terms of diseases, diagnostics and therapy as metaphor for only three (out of six) chapters of the *rtsa-rgyud*. Furthermore, each of the thirty-one chapters of the *bshad-rgyud* or "Explanatory Tantra" - which forms the second part *Rgyud-bzhi* - is represented and illustrated by a tree. Leaves of different colour and shape growing from branches specify particular topics. It is obvious that these medical paintings are meant as mnemonic symbols for study and learning. As such they are still utilized in the curriculum of the Medical College in Labrang down to the present day.

#### **23. 03 Research on Akhu Pension Model in Tibetan Buddhist Monastery: In the Case of Sku vbum Monastery**

**Zhang haiyun**

**Abstract:** This paper takes *Skü vbum Monastery*, one of the six most important Tibetan buddhist monasteries, and other four Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Qinghai province of P.R.China as the research case to analyze Akhu (Tibetan Buddhist monk)'s pension model. Akhu's pension model can be called "monastery-living model", which can be further divided into two kinds, "Akhu's dorm-living model" and "Monastery's Care-home-living model". Penetrating into monastery pension culture, it is easy to see that the "Akhu's dorm-living model" is similar to modern society's community home pension. It originates in the soil of the Tibetan Buddhist culture and the Tibetan traditional culture. Only when a pension model

conforms to its ethnic group's cultural features can it be the most suitable model. One cannot copy mechanically the other cultural pattern while neglecting the local culture tradition. Simultaneously one should make good use of the traditional cultural resources, obtaining a good social effect in cultural reproduction

**Key words:** Tibetan Buddhist monastery; pension model; Sku vbum Monastery; Akhu