

'Das Wissen vom Heilen' by Franz Reichle / Oesch Verlag Zurich

THE KNOWLEDGE OF HEALING

Tibetan Medicine

FOREWORD AND CONTENT OF THE GERMAN EDITED BOOK

'DAS WISSEN VOM HEILEN' BY OESCH VERLAG ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

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The author:

Franz Reichle is a freelance film maker who also teaches film making courses in Zurich, Switzerland. He lived for five years in Buryatia, eastern Siberia between the lake Baikal and Mongolia, where he became familiar with Tibetan medicine. Franz Reichle spent three years making the first comprehensive film dealing with Tibetan medicine, carrying the same name as this book, *The Knowledge of Healing*. Many of the chapters in this volume were derived by Franz Reichle from talks with the various authors.

FOREWORD

"Our medicine assumes that the substances that are taken as nourishment and medicine, as well as the substances of which the body is made up, are essentially of the same nature. There is a mutual dependency. The viability of the human organism depends on the quality of both environment and nourishment."

Dr. Tenzin Choedrak, Tibetan physician

During my five-year stay in Buryatia, eastern Siberia, I got to know a Tibetan doctor whose healing successes astonished me again and again. This must be some kind of magic, I thought, so I began to study the literature on Tibetan medicine. What I read astonished me no less, but turned my thoughts in another direction. I found myself confronted with a scientifically based medicine that has nothing to do with folklore, but is founded on over two thousand years of development, experience, and accumulated knowledge. The science of healing is incorporated in the philosophy of Buddhism, which defines human existence as being integrated into the whole of the cosmos. It is on the balance of this integration that spiritual well-being depends as the basis for bodily health.

Tibetan medicine was first documented in the *Gyüschi (The Knowledge of Healing)*, dating back to the twelfth century. The more I found out about it, the more fascinated I was. It approaches „health“ and „sickness“ quite differently than does Western medicine, using highly sensitive diagnosis methods, and revealing a deep insight into the complex interrelationships between spiritual and bodily energies. Its unique approach inspired me to try to build a bridge of understanding between Western and Tibetan healing philosophies. After three years of work, the result was a film called *The Knowledge of Healing* which gives some idea about the vast possibilities of Tibetan medicine. Movies appeal more to the senses than to the understanding, however, and are subject to time limitations. In this book, therefore, both scientific theory and research are explained in more detail by the personalities who took part in the film. Both the film and the book are set in three locations, none of which are in Tibet. This is for political reasons.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, practically everything to do with traditional Tibetan medicine was destroyed by the Chinese occupiers. Nearly all Tibet's physicians lost their lives in the process, but those who managed to escape brought their know-how with them, together with a good many invaluable books and documents. The location of the first discussion in this book is therefore one of the centers where these exiles have re-established themselves: Dharamsala in northern India. His Holiness the fourteenth Dalai Lama explains the Buddhist teaching of bodily and spiritual interdependence, which is the philosophical basis of Tibetan medicine. His personal physician Dr. Tenzin Choedrak – one of Tibet's last remaining medical authorities – introduces us to the concepts and special features of Tibetan medicine.

Historically speaking, Tibetan medicine first became known abroad in Mongolia. Three centuries later it had spread north to Buryatia, where it is still practiced today. At this second location in Buryatia, we pay a visit to the Tibetan doctor Chimit Dorje Dugarov and his patients. It is from Buryatia that formulas were obtained for Tibetan medications now being industrially produced in the West.

The third location is Europe and Israel, where exhaustive clinical studies are proving the effectiveness of Tibetan medications. This research work was initiated thanks to the tireless efforts of Karl Lutz, a Swiss pharmaceuticals businessman who died in 1995. And finally we see at the Vienna Institute of Nuclear Research how natural science philosophies in the Western world are now approaching the Tibetan concept of integral healing.

Zurich, April 2003, Franz Reichle

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Franz Reichle

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Edited by Franz Reichle
Originally published as Das Wissen vom Heilen
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