

UNESCO INTERNATIONAL MEMORY OF THE WORLD REGISTER NOMINATION FORM

1.0 Title of item or collection being proposed

Keep the title short – maximum ten words is desirable.

The Four Treatises of Tibetan Medicine

2.0 Summary (max 200 words)

Give a brief description of the documentary heritage being nominated, and the argument for its world significance

Write this section last, once you have completed all the other sections. Include all the essential points you have made in the nomination, especially the key arguments you have made in the statement of significance as to why and how the nominated documentary heritage meets the criteria for the International Register.

The Four Treatises of Tibetan Medicine is divided into four parts: *tsagyu* (root Treatise), *shogyu* (explanatory Treatise), *managagyu* (treatise of oral instruction), and *chimagyu* (the subsequent Treatise). It was compiled from the 8th to the 12th centuries, and it is the most classic and influential work on traditional Tibetan medicine.

The Four Treatises fully shows the development and evolution of *Sowa Rigpa* (Tibetan medical studies), and has also played an irreplaceable role in the dissemination and development of *Sowa Rigpa* in the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau and Himalayan and Mongolian regions. It not only represents the highest level of medical care in Tibet at that time, it also reflects the study of humanities, cultural exchange, philosophy, and craftsmanship in an early period of Tibetan history. Four xylograph versions of *The Four Treatises* and one gold ink manuscript version are the proofread and revised versions of different historical phases, and are the best preserved rare and superior editions of the book. The damage and loss of the original woodblocks made this documentary heritage even rarer and unique.

3.0 Nominator contact details

3.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Mentseekhang, Traditional Tibetan Hospital (Tibetan Medical & Astro Institute) of TAR

3.2 Relationship to the nominated material

The possessor and the conservator

3.3 Address

#26 Niangre Road, Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, China

3.4 Telephone

0891-6377223

Email

mzkymb@163.com

4.0 Declaration of Authority

I certify that I have the authority to nominate the item, or items, described in this document to the Memory of the World Register.

Signature

Baima Yangzhen, Director of *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital

Date

5.0 Legal information

5.1 Name of owner (person or organisation)

Mentseekhang, Traditional Tibetan Hospital (Tibetan Medical & Astro Institute)

5.2 Address

#26 Niangre Road, Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, China

5.3 Telephone

0891-6377223

Email

mzkymb@163.com

5.4 Name and contact details of custodian IF DIFFERENT from the owner

5.5 Legal status

Provide details of legal and administrative responsibility for the preservation of the documentary heritage.

Any relevant supporting documents should be scanned and submitted with the application.

The Government of the Tibet Autonomous Region grants *Mentseekhang*, Traditional

Tibetan Hospital (Tibetan Medical & Astro Institute) the legal and administrative responsibility for the documentary heritage of *The Four Treatises of Tibetan Medicine*.

5.6 Copyright status

If the copyright status of the documentary heritage is known, it should be stated. However, the copyright status of a document or collection has no bearing on its significance, and is not taken into account when determining whether it meets the criteria for inscription.

Images supplied with the nomination must be accompanied by the signed 'Agreement Granting Non-Exclusive Rights' form available on the UNESCO Memory of the World website.

Copyright belongs to *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital (Tibetan Medical & Astro Institute).

5.7 Accessibility (note any restrictions, including cultural restrictions)

Describe how the item(s) or collection may be accessed.

If legal or cultural constraints limit access, describe the nature of these constraints.

Digitisation for access purposes is encouraged. Comment on whether this has already been done, or is planned.

The use and promotion of the documentary heritage is not restricted by any laws, regulations, social environment, or cultural factors. Four xylograph versions and one gold ink manuscript version of *The Four Treatises of Tibetan Medicine* are now preserved in *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital. Readers and researchers can not only apply for reading and research in the hospital, but also be provided with copies if they have special needs. At present, except for the *Tadan* version of *The Four Treatises*, the other versions have been photographed and published, replacing the circulation of the originals. At this stage, digital copies of the four xylograph versions and one gold ink manuscript version of *The Four Treatises* have all been put online on the “Tibetan Medical and Astro Resource Center” established by *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital. The next plan is to open it up to the public on open internet platforms for the benefit of readers all over the world.

6.0 Identity and description of the documentary Heritage

6.1 Name and identification details of the items/collection being nominated

Give the exact title of the nomination and the institution(s) nominating it.

These will appear on the inscription certificate if the nomination is successful.

The Four Treatises of Tibetan Medicine, nominated by *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital (Tibetan Medical & Astro Institute) of TAR.

6.2 Type of document

Examples could include: Books, Codices, Digital, Drawings, Manuscripts, Maps, Music/Audio/Recordings, Papers, Photographs/Images, Postcards, Reports, Videos/Films, etc.

The documentary heritage nominated in this document is the ancient Tibetan medical classic *The Four Treatises of Tibetan Medicine*, including four xylograph versions dating from the 16th to 19th centuries and one gold ink manuscript version.

6.3 Catalogue or registration details

Give the catalogue or registration details for the item or collection.

Provide a physical description of the item(s) if it is relevant to their world significance.

A nominated collection or archival fonds must be finite, with clear beginning and end dates.

If the catalogue or registration details are too unwieldy, provide a description of the contents with sample catalogue entries, accession or registration numbers.

Or you can add the catalogue/registration details as an appendix, or refer to an online inventory.

The catalog registration numbers of five documents in the Library of Ancient Books in *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital are as follows:

- (1) *Drathang* version: storage cabinet No.3-27
- (2) *Tadan* version: storage cabinet No.2-96
- (3) *GadanPhuntsok Ling* version: storage cabinet No.2-37
- (4) *Chagpori* version: storage cabinet No.2-20
- (5) Gold ink manuscript version: storage cabinet No.1-1

The four xylograph versions were engraved and printed on traditional Tibetan paper, which has been perfectly preserved. This reflects the developed level of Tibetan printing technology of that time. The paper used for the gold ink manuscript version was indigo traditional Tibetan paper "*tingshok*" made using special technology. This version was handwritten in gold ink by famous contemporary calligraphers, which fully proves the authority and importance of *The Four Treatises* in the cultural environment of that time.

These pieces of documentary heritage embody the traditional Tibetan handicraft of that period including engraving, paper making, ink making, and rubbing techniques.

6.4 Visual documentation (if available and appropriate)

Visual documentation includes photographic images or audio visual material where relevant.

Attach photos as jpg files to be submitted with the application, or supply a CD, DVD or USB key for audiovisual material.

Videos and pictures are attached.

6.5 History/provenance

Set out the history of the item or collection - its 'life story' or provenance -from the time when it was created to its place in your institution. This is critical to the item or collection's authenticity. You may not know all the details, but give as comprehensive an account of the item or collection's provenance as you can.

At the end of the 8th century, Yuthog Yonten Gonpo the Elder, the eminent *Sowa Rigpa* physician, compiled *The Four Treatises* by integrating the *Sowa Rigpa* of the past times into a greater whole and absorbing aspects of Chinese medicine, Indian Ayurveda and Persian (*Dhakzig*) medicine, etc. It was later modified, supplemented, and organized by generations of many other *Sowa Rigpa* physician-heirs, and became more detailed and complete. In particular, in the 12th century, Yuthog Yonten Gonpo the Younger, supplemented and accomplished the current form of *The Four Treatises*. It was later continuously annotated and proofread by many other physicians and became more complete and explicit.

Currently, the four xylograph versions of *The Four Treatises*, i.e. *Drathang*, *Tadan*, *Chagpori*, and *GadanPhuntsok Ling* and one gold ink manuscript version are preserved in *Mentseekhang*. The relevant histories are all attached in the postscript of each version.

1) *Drathang* version: In 1546, the eminent Tibetan medical physician Zurkhar Lodro Gyalpo engraved *The Four Treatises* onto xylograph according to the manuscript of Yuthog Yonten Gonpo the Younger and his golden annotation. This is the earliest xylograph version of *The Four Treatises*, thus, is deemed the ancestor of all the extant versions. This version was collected in *Chagpori Sowa Rigpa* School (the official medical school established by the Tibetan local government in 1696) in 1698, and was transferred to *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital after 1916. Unfortunately, its wood blocks were completely destroyed in 1966.

2) *Tadan* version: In 1640, the eminent Tibetan medical physician, Jesun Gunga Nyingbo organized a revision, and this version was later engraved onto wood blocks. This version was collected in *Chagpori Sowa Rigpa* School in 1698, and was transferred to *Mentseekhang* after 1916. Its wood blocks were completely destroyed in 1966.

3) *GadanPhuntsok Ling* version: This version was jointly revised by *Sowa Rigpa* experts from different areas of Tibet who gathered on the order of the Fifth Dalai Lama, and was engraved onto wood blocks in 1662. It was collected in the *Chagpori Sowa Rigpa* School in 1698, and was transferred to *Mentseekhang* after 1916. Its wood blocks were also completely destroyed in 1966.

4) *Chagpori* version: This version was jointly revised in the *Chagpori Sowa Rigpa* School at a gathering of famous scholars on Tibetan medicine, and was engraved onto wood blocks in 1892.

Most of the wood blocks are currently kept intact at *Mentseekhang*.

5) The gold ink manuscript version was the first time in the history of Tibetan medicine that calligraphers had been organized to write *The Four Treatises* in gold ink, and it has been kept intact in *Mentseekhang* since its completion in 1942.

6.6 Bibliography

A bibliography provides evidence that the documentary heritage has been used by scholars, and knowledge of its impact and influence is in the public domain. It is a good idea to cite the works of scholars from outside your own country, as well as local scholars, to demonstrate this influence.

- (1) དཔལ་བོ་གཞུག་ལག་ཤེང་བ། ཚོས་འབྱུང་མཁའ་པའི་དགའ་ལྗོན། བེ་ཅིང་། མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྟེན་ཁང་། ༡༩༥༥ལོར།
- (2) 包哈申、斯琴其木格，《四部医典》蒙古译文版考证研究，世界科学技术-中医药现代化，2008. 第十卷，第一期
- (3) བླ་ཉི་དཔལ་ལྷན་འཛོལ་བྱེད། བདུད་རྩིས་པོ་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱུད་པ་གསང་བ་མན་ངག་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་དོན་ཤེས་བྱ་རབ་གསལ་རྒྱས་པ། ཟུག་རྩུལ། བེ་ཅིང་། མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྟེན་ཁང་། ༢༠༡༥ལོར།
- (4) 蔡景峰，《中国藏医学》，北京：科学出版社，1996. 6.
- (5) 蔡景峰，《四部医典》在外国，中国民族报，2001年第4期
- (6) རྗེ་ཤིང་ལངས་རྒྱས་རྒྱ་མཚོ། གསེང་རིག་ལོག་འབྲེལ་དང་མོང་དཔེ་སྟེན་པའི་དགའ་ལྗོན། ལན་ལོ་ལྷ། ཀན་སྤུལ་མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྟེན་ཁང་། ༡༩༥༥ལོར།
- (7) བརྟན་ལོ་རྒྱུད་བཞི་དཔེ་བསྟར་མ། བེ་ཅིང་། གྲུང་གོ་བོད་རིག་པ་དཔེ་སྟེན་ཁང་། ༢༠༠༥ལོར།
- (8) བདུད་འདུལ་དཔལ་ལྷན་རྒྱུད་བཞིའི་ལྷ་བ་རྒྱལ་པ་ལོ་རྒྱུ་ལྷ་ཀ་བོད་སྐད་སྐོབ་གསོ་དང་ཞིབ་འཇུག་༢༠༡༥ལོའི་དུས་དེབ་དང་པོ།
- (9) 端智，从东方到西方—一个布里亚特藏医世家的医学传播史，青海民族研究，2012年第2期
- (10) གོ་འཛོད་དབང་འདུལ། འཇམ་མགོན་ཀོང་སྐུལ་ཟེན་ཉིག་དང་དེའི་ཉེར་མཐོའི་ཆ་ལག་ཕྱོགས་བསྐྱེད་པ་བཞུགས་སོ།། རྒྱུད་ཆོ། བེ་ཅིང་། གྲུང་གོ་བོད་རིག་པ་དཔེ་སྟེན་ཁང་། ༢༠༡༥ལོའི་ཟླ་བ་༢པར།
- (11) 玛莉安娜·温德（著），刘铁程（译），藏医学与古代及中世纪西方医学的比较，西北民族大学学报（哲学社会科学版），2011年第三期
- (12) 娜塔利亚·波索克耶娃（著），拉毛吉（译注），阿加-布里亚特地区的曼巴扎仓（赤塔洲），西北民族大学学报（哲学社会科学版），2011年第三期
- (13) བྱམས་པ་འཕྲིན་ལས། གངས་རྫོངས་གསོ་རིག་བརྟན་པའི་ཉེར་བྱེད་རིམ་བྱོན་གྱི་རྣམ་ཐར་ཕྱོགས་བསྐྱེད་པ། བེ་ཅིང་། མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྟེན་ཁང་། ༢༠༠༠ལོའི་ཟླ་བ་༥པར། རྒྱུ་ལོ་རྒྱུད་གཞི་གཉེས་པོ།
- (14) 强巴赤列编著，《中国的藏医药》，北京：中国藏学出版社，1996. 5
- (15) ལུང་མཁའ་རྫོགས་རྒྱལ་པོ། ལྷན་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་མི་ཤེས་སུ་མི་རུང་བའི་ཤེས་བྱ་སྤྱིའི་ལོག་འབྲེལ། ཟུག་རྩུལ། བེ་ཅིང་། མི་རིགས་དཔེ་སྟེན་ཁང་། ༢༠༠༧ལོར།
- (16) 宗喀·漾正岗布，公元前6世纪至10世纪的藏医药学纪年，中国藏学，1997年4期
- (17) གཡུ་ཐོག་ཡོན་ཏན་མགོན་པོ། དཔལ་ལྷན་རྒྱུད་བཞི། ལྷ་ས། བོད་རྫོངས་མི་དམངས་དཔེ་སྟེན་ཁང་། ༢༠༠༤ལོའི་ཟླ་བ་༥པར།
- (18) གཡུ་ཐོག་ཡོན་ཏན་མགོན་པོ། རྒྱུད་བཞི་ཤ་ཐང་པར་མ། རྗེ་དགའི་པར་མ། བོད་ཀྱི་གསོ་བ་རིག་པའི་གནའ་དཔེ་ཕྱོགས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཚོགས་པོད་༢༠༠༥། བོད་༥༢༥། བེ་

ཅིང་། མི་རིགས་དཔེ་ལྷན་ཁང་། ༢༠༠༢ལོའི་ཟླ་བ་༤པར།

(19) གཡུ་ཐོག་ཡོན་ཏན་མགོན་པོ་ ལྷ་ལྷན་ལྷན་ཅེས་ཁང་གི་རྒྱུད་བཞི་གསེར་བྲིས་མ། བྲ་ཐང་པར་མ། དགའ་ལྷན་ཡུན་རྒྱུ་ཚོགས་སྒྲིབ་པར་མ། ལྷགས་པོ་རིའི་པར་མ། གངས་རྒྱུང་ལྷན་ཅེས་རིག་མཛོད་ཆེན་མོ་ བོད་དང་པོ་ གཉིས་པ། བཞི་པ། འུགས་པ། ལེ་ཅིང་། གྲུང་གོ་བོད་རིག་པ་དཔེ་ལྷན་ཁང་། ༢༠༡༤ལོར།

(20) 宇妥·云丹贡布, 马世林等译, 《四部医典》(汉文版), 上海:上海科学技术出版社, 1987. 10

(21) དབྱངས་དགའ། དཔལ་ལྷན་རྒྱུད་བཞིའི་འབྲུང་ཁུངས་ལ་དབྱང་པ་མ་གསང་དང་གཏམ། བོད་སྐད་སློབ་གསོ་དང་ཞིབ་འཇུག་ ༢༠༡༡ལོའི་དུས་དེབ་གཉིས་པ།

(22) Beckwith, Christopher I. The Introduction of Greek Medicine into Tibet in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99 (2): 297–313. 1979.

(23) Chandra, Lokesh. Introduction. In Terry Clifford. *Tibetan Buddhist Medicine and Psychiatry: The Diamond Healing*. York Beach: Samuel Weiser. 1990.

(24) Dummer, Tom. *Tibetan Medicine and Other Holistic Health-Care Systems*. New Delhi: Paljor Publications. 1994.

(25) Elisabeth Hsu. A hybrid body technique: does the pulse diagnostic cun guan chi method have Chinese-Tibetan origins? *Gesnerus*, 2008.

(26) F Garrett. Hybrid Methodologies in the Lhasa Mentsikhang: A Summary of Resources for Teaching about Tibetan Medicine. *Tibet Journal*; Winter 2005.

(27) FNI. poynter. *Medicine and Culture*. Discussion. 1969.

(28) Kamay, G, Samten, *The Four Tibetan Medical Treatises and their Critics*. In *The Arrow Spindle: Studies in History, Myths, Rituals and Beliefs in Tibet*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Pointt. 1998.

(29) L Rapgay, JJ Loizzo, LJ Blackhall, and L Rapgay. *Tibetan Medicine*. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 2009.

(30) Vincanne Adams, Mona Schrepf, and Sienna R. Craig, eds.. *Medicine between science and religion: Explorations on Tibetan Grounds*. Berghahn Publishers, 2011.

(31) Stephan Kloos. *The History and Development of Tibetan Medicine in Exile*. *World Journal of Emergency Surgery*, 2008.

(32) Yang Ga. *The Sources for the Writing of the Rgyudbzhi, Tibetan Medical Classic*. 2010.

(33) Janet Gyatso. *Being Human in a Buddhist World: An Intellectual History of Medicine in Early Modern Tibet*. Columbia University Press, 2015.

6.7 Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organisations with expert knowledge about values and provenance of the nominated material.

Name	Qualifications	Contact details (email)
Wang Dui	Professor in University of Tibetan Medicine	(awarded “National Famous

Traditional Tibetan Medicine Physician”), #6 East Jiangu Road, Lhasa, Tibet, 1115605655@qq.com

Yang Ga, Professor in University of Tibetan Medicine (PhD from Harvard University), #10 Mid Dangre Road, Lhasa, Tibet, yanggala@hotmail.com

Ni Ma, Chief Physician at Traditional Tibetan Hospital in Qinghai Province (awarded “Master of National Physician”), #97 East Nanshan Road, Xining, Qinghai, tseta1996@126.com

Note that the names and contact details of these referees will not be disclosed on the Memory of the World Register, nor disclosed without their permission to any third party. Other authoritative referees should also be contacted to obtain a broad spectrum of opinion for assessment purposes.

7.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

7.1 Primary criteria - significance value to the world. Comment on one or more of the following significance criteria.

Not all the criteria will apply to your documentary heritage. Choose only those criteria that are relevant to your nomination.

7.1.1 Historic significance

What does the documentary heritage tell us about the history of the world? Does it deal with

- Political, economic, social or spiritual movements*
- leading personalities in world history*
- events of world-changing significance*
- specific places of significance*
- traditional customs*
- relations with other countries or communities*
- changing patterns of life and culture*
- a turning point in history, or a critical innovation*
- an example of excellence in the arts, literature, science, technology, sport, or other parts of life and culture?*

The Four Treatises is the culmination of the theory and practice of traditional Tibetan medicine from the eighth to the twelfth centuries, and it is the best preserved and influential traditional medical classics to date. Its cultural value and academic significance are not only reflected in its contribution to the world cultural exchange at that time, it is also an important work of literature of great value for research and discovery.

It is pointed out in *The Four Treatises* and its commentaries that the embryonic development process goes through a fish stage, turtle stage and pig stage, which is equivalent

to the evolutionary process from aquatic animals to reptiles and to mammals, and it describes in detail the weekly development of the fetus, which is basically consistent with biological evolution.

Metal smelting, drug processing, and craftsmanship of ceramic vessels and surgical instruments were broadly recorded in *The Four Treatises* and its commentaries. It describes in detail the methods of the medicinal uses of various grains after their fermentation or their action as mediators to promote chemical reactions between drugs; the processing and detoxification methods of various mineral, animal and plant medicinal materials; and the manufacturing specifications, materials, and mechanisms of instruments for surgery and external treatments. Therefore, *The Four Treatises* reveals that advanced scientific technology had been mastered in Tibetan medicine since the 8th to 12th centuries. Through the musk trade and the Silk Road, the influence of *The Four Treatises* gradually spread to inland East Asia, Bhutan, Nepal and India in South Asia, and the Turkic region in Central Asia.

The Four Treatises strongly advocates the methods of health care and anti-aging, recording more than 200 kinds of diet. It is a relatively complete work on nutrition and diet therapy among the traditional medical classics. The content not only precisely classifies the attributes of a variety of grains, meat, oils, cooking, vegetables, and beverages and eating specifications, but also lists the effects of compatibilities and incompatibilities between foods on health, as well as the importance of a proper diet, providing the public at that time with more comprehensive and effective health guidelines. Furthermore, *The Four Treatises* advocates the spiritual and moral consideration of putting others first at the expense of one's own interests, and the principle of the doctor-patient relationship. It states that the occurrence of physical diseases is related to psychological factors, and that positive thinking and a good psychological state can promote physical and mental health and be valuable as a means of treatment of physical and mental diseases. The dietary and behavioral standards recorded in *The Four Treatises* had a great influence on Tibetan culture and living habits.

The Four Treatises records the etiological diagnosis and treatment methods of infectious diseases and epidemics such as influenza, smallpox, and leprosy etc. It emphasizes preventative measures and the traditional customs of avoiding contact with the patient's food, bedding, clothes, feces and smell etc. Awareness of the need for quarantine of patients prevented concentrated outbreaks of disease.

During the heyday of the Tibetan Empire (from the end of the 6th century to the beginning of the 9th century), centuries of military campaigns resulted in powerful theories on trauma and anatomy in Tibetan medicine, and the medical essence of these practices was collected in *The Four Treatises*, covering about one-fifth of the book.

The Four Treatises is a medical classic shared by Tibet and the surrounding Himalayan regions. Due to its practicality and scientific character, it gradually became the medical tradition

in parts of Mongolia, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Myanmar and Russia.

In the 18th century, *The Four Treatises* was translated into Mongolian, and it became the origin of Mongolian medicine and a fundamental medical textbook in Mongolia. *The Four Treatises* and its commentaries became core teaching materials of Mongolian medicine. In the 1830s, the Hungarian scholar, Csoma de Kőrös, known as the founder of Tibetan studies in western countries, introduced *The Four Treatises* to the West for the very first time. It was later translated into English, German, Japanese, Russian and other languages, attracting the attention of overseas researchers on Tibetology.

The change from manuscript versions of *The Four Treatises* to those produced by engraved xylograph printing completely changed the limitations on the process of its spread; its distribution to neighboring regions after completion can be seen as an epoch-making historical event, causing the start of widespread teaching of *The Four Treatises*, and establishing its authority in the field of traditional Tibetan medicine. Thus it is of great historical significance to the historical spread of Tibetan medical culture and for the communication between different medical traditions. This period was also an important period in Tibetan history for the development of woodblock printing techniques.

7.1.2 Form and style

This criterion refers to the physical nature of the documentary heritage. Much documentary heritage is unremarkable in this respect, for example, manuscript or typescript paper records. However, some forms of documentary heritage display innovative qualities or high levels of artistry, and it is to these that this criterion applies.

- *Is the documentary heritage a particularly fine exemplar of its type?*
- *Does it have outstanding qualities of beauty and craftsmanship?*
- *Is it a new or unusual type of carrier?*
- *Or is it an example of a type of document that has now disappeared?*

The nominated four xylograph versions and one gold ink manuscript version of *The Four Treatises of Tibetan Medicine* are the most precious and representative versions of this text among traditional Tibetan ancient literature, and also are currently the best preserved prints of it in the world. The *Drathang* version has a high value for collection and research due to its clear and distinct lettering, intact preservation, and its hand-painted color illustrations inserted. The gold ink manuscript version is the only extant manuscript version of *The Four Treatises* written using gold ink. The importance of *The Four Treatises* in traditional Tibetan medical literature is obvious because gold ink was used as the means to record important Buddhist scriptures in Tibetan history. *The Four Treatises* is a rare piece of fine artwork demonstrating a perfect integration of paper-making, calligraphy, binding, and aesthetic features, etc.

The four xylograph versions of *The Four Treatises* demonstrate the traditional Tibetan printing skills, and the paper materials used are handmade Tibetan paper. The paper used in the gold-ink version is *tingshok* (indigo traditional Tibetan paper made using special techniques). The full text of *The Four Treatises* is presented in the form of questions and answers, most of which are written in poetic style.

7.1.3 Social, community or spiritual significance

This criterion refers to the attachment to the documentary heritage of a specific community in the present. You must show how this attachment is demonstrated, for example, a community may be strongly attached to the heritage of a beloved leader, or to the documentary evidence of a specific incident or site. Or it may revere the documentary heritage associated with a spiritual leader or a saint. Provide information on how this attachment is expressed.

The authors of *The Four Treatises*, Yuthog Yonten Gonpo the Elder (708-833) and Yuthog Yonten Gonpo the Younger (1126-1202), were both extremely influential experts on Tibetan medicine. The former was the imperial physician of Trisong Detsan, the 38th King of the Tibetan Empire, and is recognized as the originator of Tibetan medicine. In Tibetan Buddhism, Yuthog Yonten Gonpo the Younger is regarded as the reincarnation of the Medicine Buddha, and the advent of his book, *A Virtuous Hook for the History from Yuthog Heart Essence*, opened up the practices of empowerment, oral teaching, the medicine empowerment ritual etc. Thanks to the advantaged religious environment of Tibet, *The Four Treatises* have been well protected and inherited.

During the Tibetan Empire, the King of Tibet invited many famous doctors from neighboring countries to spread medical science in Tibet, leading to the continual absorbance of the essence of other medical traditions through the basis of the original theories of Tibetan medicine. This profound communication lasted for several centuries, which created the integrity and diversity of Tibetan medical theories. *The Four Treatises* still contains some words in Zhang-zhung language, Sanskrit, and Persian etc., as well as medical, cultural and regional information of ancient civilizations, which is a vivid witness of the exchanges between ancient civilizations.

The Four Treatises was born in the golden age of the history of ancient Tibet, and absorbed a great deal of the essence of the medical classics in the process of its compilation. The book records the level of contemporary local medical treatment and cultural integration, revealing the important status of Tibetan culture in Central Asian civilization during that period.

The precious spirit of venerating medicine during the Tibetan Empire has been inherited by the Tibetan people for one thousand years, and Tibetans believe in such a concept up to this day, for example, through the practices of putting medical books in a high and clean place,

avoiding walking over medical books, and through regarding doctors who do not learn *The Four Treatises* as being unorthodox inheritors of Tibetan medicine. In temples, *The Four Treatises* are even placed in the same column as the *Tripitaka* (the Buddhist Canon) for worshippers to pay homage to, indicating the same level of spiritual status as Buddhist texts. Although different schools of Tibetan Buddhism practice different classics, *The Four Treatises* is still practiced by all schools. This tradition of venerating *The Four Treatises* has been continuously passed down to the present by oral teaching, and the learning tradition of reciting *The Four Treatises* is still retained at present. The book is still regarded as the criterion of Tibetan medicine, the core content of modern education and research of Tibetan medicine, and are the classic courses in Tibetan medicine offered by many modern colleges and universities.

Some important historical figures played an important role in promoting the inheritance and development of *The Four Treatises* at various stages of Tibetan history. At the time of the Fifth Dalai Lama and Regent, Desi Sanggye Gyatso, Chakpori *Sowa Rigpa* School, which is the official medical school of the Tibetan local government, was established. Some outstanding scholars of that time were gathered to revise *The Four Treatises* based on the *Drathang* version, and it was set as major courses in the school. The Regent Desi Sanggye Gyatso himself wrote supplementary teaching materials such as commentaries on *The Four Treatises* and *The History of Tibetan Medicine*, and organized Tibetan painting masters to draw eighty pieces of *Sowa Rigpa* thangkas, which are some of the earliest medical wall charts in the world. Based on differences in the identification of medicinal materials and in the specialized treatments of diseases common to regions of different altitudes recorded in *The Four Treatises*, two major schools, the Chang School and the Zur School, emerged during the 14th to 15th centuries in the heritage of Tibetan medicine. Scholars from both schools wrote books and propounded medicinal theories and ideas, and compiled many commentaries for *The Four Treatises*, and Tibetan medicine thereby entered its heyday.

Tibetan medical experts from different periods and schools have compiled more than 200 commentaries of *The Four Treatises*. There are 91 commentaries included in *The Compendium of Traditional Tibetan Medicine* (2012) alone. The commentaries on *The Four Treatises* by ancient scholars account for a large proportion of ancient Tibetan medical books, and new commentaries of *The Four Treatises* by contemporary scholars are still being published, demonstrating the irreplaceable position and role of *The Four Treatises* in the field of traditional Tibetan medicine.

In the history of Tibet, *Sowa Rigpa* was inherited and spread mainly within medical colleges in major monasteries, and the main teaching textbook used in these institutes was *The Four Treatises*. These colleges were distributed in Tibet Autonomous Region, Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan provinces, as well as Yonghe Temple in Beijing founded in the 18th century, and Ruiying Temple Tibetan Medical College in Liaoning Province. In the middle of the 18th

century, Khoshe Mingyur Dorje translated *The Four Treatises* into Mongolian, engraved it onto wood blocks, and printed it for distribution. Thereafter, more than thirty monasteries in Mongolia founded Tibetan medical colleges to study *The Four Treatises*.

The Four Treatises advocates the cosmological viewpoint of harmony between man and environment; the health concept of balance between five elements; the self-cultivation view of both internal and external improvement; and the medical view of the practice of harmony and unity. The book emphasizes the concepts of physical and psychological balance, harmonious coexistence among human beings, and between man and nature. It attaches importance to human ethics, and advocates compassion, benefits to others, equality, kindness and a positive outlook on life. Its dissemination promoted mutual respect between communities and individuals. As a green, economical and safe medical system for the benefit of mankind, *The Four Treatises* was not only a concentration of the conservative and introverted ancient Eastern civilization, but also the embodiment of the eastern philosophy of the integration of nature and man. The precious regional culture it carries is irreplaceable.

7.2 Comparative criteria. Comment on one or more of the following comparative criteria:

7.2.1 Rarity

Is the item or collection rare? Is it one of a kind (the only one ever created), or the last survivor of a form of documentary heritage that was once widespread? Do similar items or collections exist?

The four xylograph versions are rare, surviving, and well-preserved precious documentary literature. Particularly, the gold ink manuscript version made in 1942 is the one and only version handwritten in gold ink in the world. These ancient books are either xylograph printed, or manuscript with a very high value for collection and research. They are extremely rare and basically priceless. The damage and loss of the woodblocks made this cultural heritage become even rarer and completely unique.

7.2.2 Integrity, completeness, condition

Is the documentary heritage complete, or are sections or pages missing?

Has part of the documentary heritage become lost, or are supplementary parts being preserved elsewhere? If so, give details.

What condition is it in?

In the course of its historical development, *The Four Treatises* was copied and reprinted for many times. Many versions have been lost and damaged over time, but the five versions of

the Four Treatises in the collection of *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital (Tibetan Medical & Astro Institute) are still kept intact. Under protective measures such as anti-insect, anti-theft, fire prevention, moisture-proofing, anti-rodent, etc., *The Four Treatises* have kept their original intact appearance, and have been kept in private custody.

7.3 Statement of significance

Summarise the points you have made in 7.1 and 7.2, and make the case for authenticity based on the provenance of the documentary heritage.

What has been the impact of this documentary heritage material on world history and culture?

Why is this documentary heritage important to the memory of the world?

What has been its impact on life and culture beyond the boundaries of a nation state or region?

State why the documentary heritage is important to the memory of the world, and why its loss would impoverish the heritage of humanity.

The Four Treatises is the most systematic and complete medical classics of ancient times. As a result of the advantaged religious environment in Tibet, *The Four Treatises* have been well protected and passed down. It is the standard for all diagnostic and treatment methods in Tibetan medicine, and is an indispensable document in the study of Tibetan medicine. It has been translated into English, German, Mongolian, Japanese, Russian and other languages. The book is still regarded as the criterion of Tibetan medicine, the core content of modern education and research of Tibetan medicine, and the classic courses of Tibetan medicine offered in many modern colleges and universities.

During the Tibetan Empire, the King of Tibet invited many famous doctors from neighboring countries to spread medical science in Tibet. During this period, many medical classics such as *Fearless Weapon*, *Collection on Health: A Royal Medical Treatise*, *Brown Text: Royal Medical Treatise* were compiled. These Tibetan medical classics have long been lost, but the essence was absorbed in *The Four Treatises*, representing the highest achievements of Tibetan medicine at that time, which not only creates the integrity and diversity of traditional Tibetan medicine, but also a vivid proof of the mutual exchanges between ancient civilizations. With the wide dissemination in the later period, *The Four Treatises* has gradually become a medical classic shared by Tibet and the surrounding Himalayan regions and Mongolia.

The diagnosis and treatment of some frequently occurring plateau diseases are recorded in *The Four Treatises*, including polycythemia, hepatic hydatid, etc. and some special external therapies such as blood-letting, cleaning of the channels, and medicated baths are also included. Most of the medicinal herbs recorded grow on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. With 1,002 kinds of herbs and 2,258 prescriptions recorded in the book, it is the most comprehensive and complete plateau medicinal guide among the traditional medical texts. The book puts forward a rule for compatibility formulation based on 6 tastes, 8 attributes and 17 effects. The records of special

diseases, therapies and the medicinal herbs represent the distinctive regional characteristics of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and the Himalayan regions.

The four xylograph versions and the gold ink manuscript version are the proofread and revised versions of *the Four Treatises* of different historical stages. Due to their age, the earliest printing plates and similar copies have been lost, and these are now the only surviving copies.

The embryonic development process of the fish, turtle and pig stages, and the weekly development of the fetus pointed out in *the Four Treatises* and its commentaries, has had certain influences on the understanding of biological evolution and the development of embryology. Techniques such as metal smelting, drug processing, and craftsmanship of ceramic vessels and surgical instruments is a reflection of the development of craftsmanship of Eastern civilizations. The awareness of the need for quarantine advocated in *The Four Treatises* prevented concentrated outbreaks of the plague.

The Four Treatises strongly advocates methods of health care and anti-aging, and attaches great importance to nutrition and dietary therapy. It is a relatively complete work on nutrition and dietary therapy among traditional medical classics, providing the public at that time with more comprehensive and effective health guidelines. The dietary and behavioral standards recorded in *the Four Treatises* had a great influence on Tibetan culture and living habits. *The Four Treatises* advocates the spiritual and moral consideration of putting others first at the expense of one's own interests, the principle of the doctor-patient relationship, the cosmological viewpoint of harmony between man and nature, and the practice of the medical concepts of harmony and unity, compassion and benefits for others, and equality, kindness and a positive outlook on life. *The Four Treatises* is not only the concentration of the conservative and introverted Eastern ancient civilization, but also the embodiment of the eastern philosophy of the integration of nature and man. The precious regional culture it carries is irreplaceable.

Tibetan medical experts from different periods and schools have compiled more than 200 commentaries of *The Four Treatises*, accounting for a large proportion of ancient Tibetan medical books. New commentaries of *The Four Treatises* by contemporary scholars are still being published.

Based on the integrity of theory, the continuity of inheritance and the richness of practice, Tibetan medicine stands out among traditional medicine in the world and is a medical system that is completely preserved and continuously developed. On November 28, 2018, "Lum medicinal bathing of *Sowa Rigpa*, knowledge and practices concerning life, health, and illness prevention and treatment among the Tibetan people in China" was nominated onto UNESCO's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Tibetan Medicinal Bath Method is one of 18 treatment methods recorded in *The Four Treatises*.

8.0 Consultation with stakeholders

8.1 Provide details of consultation with relevant stakeholders about this nomination

Relevant stakeholders include:

- *Owners/custodians of the documentary heritage*
- *Communities with involvement in the documentary heritage*
- *Scholars who research the documentary heritage*

Tibetan Medical University of Tibet, the Tibetan Medical College of Qinghai University, the Tibetan Hospital of Qinghai Province, the Tibetan Hospital of Shannan Prefecture, and the Tibetan Hospital of Xiahe County, Gansu Province expressed their support for the nomination.

In the nomination process, we consulted with experts such as Zhandui and Nima, Masters of National Physicians, Wang Dui, a famous traditional Tibetan medicine Professor, Dr. Yang Ga from Harvard University, Dr. Mingji Cuomu from Oxford University, Professor Natsog dorji from Atoch Manramba University in Mongolia, folk doctor Angren Nima Zhaxi and Soxue Zhaxi Qunpei etc. They all expressed that the nomination work is of great significance to the preservation of Memory of the World documentary heritage, and they all expressed their support and informed consent to this application.

9.0 Risk assessment

9.1 Detail the nature and scope of threats to the nominated material

Is the documentary heritage at risk from:

- *Climatic conditions*
- *Poor storage*
- *Economic issues*
- *Potential political interference*

If your documentary heritage is at risk, say so - UNESCO needs to know its true situation.

The four different xylograph versions and one gold ink manuscript version of *the Four Treatises* are currently kept in *Mentseekhang* using the traditional preservation methods. So far, they have not suffered serious or direct threats. Yet, because of the long period of their preservation, their paper is gradually beginning to deteriorate, therefore, further measures to strengthen their protection will play an important role in the survival of the literature.

10.0 Preservation and access management plan

10.1 Describe, or attach as a scanned document, any existing plans. If no plans exist, provide

details about proposed conservation, storage and access strategies.

The four xylograph versions of *The Four Treatises* are the highest quality documents among the ancient literature of Tibetan medicine, and are the main objects for protection among the ancient books in *Mentseekhang*. At present, they are preserved in a special wooden bookcase, with 24-hour storage monitoring system. Fire protection equipment, along with emergency measures to deal with hazardous conditions, well-trained staff, and a strict management system, are also in place, as well as professional personnel for scheduled maintenance for the purpose of guaranteeing the safe preservation and integrity of the texts. The gold ink manuscript version has been stored in a box with a solid wood base and a glass shield. Except for the *Tadan* version, prints of photographs of all the other versions have already been published, which promotes the circulation of *The Four Treatises*.

Protection, preservation and utilization plan: (1) Establish a professional library of rare books and fine works. (2) The unique plateau climate in Tibet is a favorable external condition for the preservation of documentary heritage. We will further strengthen and formulate the management of temperature and humidity in the storeroom based on the actual changes of precipitation and humidity in Tibet. (3) The *Tadan* version of *the Four Treatises* will also be photographed and published. (4) The five versions are all digitized and will be available to access by the public on relevant open network platforms for readers all over the world. (5) A display cabinet for the exhibition of the gold ink manuscript version to the public will be installed.

11.0 Any other information that may support the nomination

11.1 Note below or attach scanned documents as appropriate.

This may include statements from supporters, plans for promoting the documentary heritage if it is inscribed, or scanned news items relating to the documentary heritage.

How do you see this documentary heritage being used for education and research?

If this nomination is fortunately selected for the Memory of the World Register, we shall develop a series of communication and promotion strategies so that more people can understand and share the achievements of Memory of the World.

Archive management departments and heritage storage departments at all levels maintain a high enthusiasm for the affairs related to the documentary heritage of *The Four Treatises*, and the government departments at all levels attach great importance to this event, which can effectively promote the protection and utilization of this literary heritage.

(1) The specific communication and promotion plan is as follows:

- Actively participate in all kinds of documentary heritage exhibition activities held at home and abroad. Exhibit different versions of *The Four Treatises*, including the eighty thangka

and various commentaries of *The Four Treatises*.

- Publicize and report in real time the work related to the declaration of *The Four Treatises* into the Memory of the World Register with the help of various media, and advocate its contents such as the health care culture of *The Four Treatises*.
- Open a special column on the literary heritage of "*The Four Treatises*" on platforms such as the official website of *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital, "Tibetan Medical and Astro Resource Center", The Journal of Tibetan Medicine & Astro-Science, and the "Yuthog Forum" WeChat social media official account.
- Publish a same scale photo edition of *The Four Treatises* for easy collection and gifting.
- Digitize all the collected versions of *The Four Treatises* and make them accessible to the public on open network platforms for readers all over the world.
- In order to better spread and promote the documentary heritage of *The Four Treatises*, the next step is to apply for the addition of the eighty pieces of thangkas to Memory of the World Register.

(2) Documentary Heritage Utilization plan of *The Four Treatises*:

- Hold frequent training courses for the protection and inheritance of *The Four Treatises* based on the establishment and improvement of institutions for its dissemination and research.
- Enhance the awareness of protection and inheritance among young people. Organize experts to compile books related to *The Four Treatises* for students, and to explain the history, culture, and inheritance of *The Four Treatises* in schools.
- Organize relevant experts and scholars at home and abroad to hold academic seminars on *The Four Treatises*, and invite experts to hold academic lectures on the documentary heritage of *The Four Treatises*.
- Collect and sort out the different versions, commentaries and historical documents of *The Four Treatises*; we also plan to carry out the following research: (1) On the basis of the existing historical literature research, extensively collect data and organize relevant experts to further research the origin and history of *the Four Treatises*. (2) Historically, more than 20 different xylograph versions of *The Four Treatises* were engraved in China, Mongolia, Bhutan and other places. Other versions of *The Four Treatises* will be collected from all over the world, and experts will be organized to conduct a comparative study. (3) More than 200 commentaries for *The Four Treatises* have appeared in history. The historical evolution and the content differences of these commentaries will be studied through collecting literature and organizing experts. (4) Using the three sets of eighty thangkas for *The Four Treatises* collected by *Mentseekhang*, Traditional Tibetan Hospital as reference, a comparative study will be conducted using copies of various Tibetan medical thangkas collected at home and abroad.

12.0 CHECKLIST

Summary completed (section 2);

Nomination and contact details completed (section 3);

Declaration of Authority signed and dated (section 4);

If this is a joint nomination, section 4 is appropriately modified, and all Declarations of Authority obtained;

Legal information (section 5);

Details of custodian if different from owner (section 5);

Details of legal status completed (section 5);

Details of accessibility completed (section 5);

Copyright permission for images completed (section 5);

Catalogue and registration information (section 6);

History/provenance completed (section 6);

Bibliography completed (section 6);

Independent referees identified (section 6);

Significance – primary criteria (section 7);

Significance – comparative criteria (section 7);

Statement of significance (section 7);

Details of consultation with stakeholders completed where relevant (section 8);

Assessment of risk completed (section 9);

Summary of Preservation and Access Management Plan completed or strategy proposed (section 10);

Any other information provided – if applicable (section 11);

Additional scanned documents, including suitable reproduction quality photographs identified to illustrate the documentary heritage (300dpi, jpg format, full-colour preferred);