

Organizational context of the 'Mongolian doctors' in Qing imperial medicine

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Imperial medicine usually brings to mind the medical care of the emperor, pharmaceutical treatises, and the physicians of the Imperial Medical Bureau. The lens of institutional history, however, points to a number of organizations and posts including imperial physicians as well as officials at the pharmacy. There were also practitioners of bonesetting in an institution that managed horses. These specialists, who also treated humans, were referred to as 'Mongolian doctors'. Taking the post of the 'Mongolian doctor' as an example, this paper examines their differing organizational contexts from multi-institutional and intra-institutional perspectives. The pluralistic organization of the medical realm then reveals the richness of practitioners, practices, and their contexts in eighteenth century Qing imperial medicine.