

In regard to the modern employment of the article, S. W. WILLIAMS¹ writes, "It is brought from Bombay at the rate of \$15 a picul, and ranks high in the *Materia Medica* of the Chinese physician; it is exhibited in cholera, in syphilitic complaints and worms, and often forms an ingredient in the pills advertised to cure opium-smokers." It is chiefly believed, however, to assist in the digestion of meat and to correct the poison of stale meats (ptomaine poisoning), mushrooms, and herbs.² In Annam it is carried in small bags as a preventive of cholera.³

The following ancient terms for asafœtida are on record:—

(1) Persian 阿虞截 *a-yü-tsie*, **a-nü-zet* = Middle Persian **anguzad*; New Persian *angūža*, *angužad*, *anguyān*, *anguwān*, *angudān*, *angištak* (stem *angu* + *žad* = "gum"⁴); Armenian *ankužad*, *anjidan*, Old Armenian *angužat*, *angžat*; Arabic *anjudān*. GARCIA gives *anjuden* or *angeidan* as name of the tree from which *asa* is extracted.

(2) Sanskrit 興瞿 *hiñ-kü*, **hiñ-gu*; 形虞 *hiñ-yü*, **hiñ-nü*; 薰渠 *hiñ-k'ü*, **hün-gü*; corresponding to Sanskrit *hiñgu*. In my opinion, the Sanskrit word is an ancient loan from Iranian.⁵ GARCIA gives *imgo* or *imgara* as Indian name, and forms with initial *i* appear in Indian vernaculars: cf. Telugu *inguwa*; cf., further, Japanese *ingu*, Malayan *angu* (according to J. BONTIUS, who wrote in 1658, the Javanese and Malaysians have also the word *hin*).

(3) 阿魏 *a-wei*, **a-nwai*; 央匱 (in the *Nirvāṇa-sūtra*) *yañ-kwei*, **añ-kwai*, correspond to an Indian or Iranian vernacular form of the type **añkwa* or **añkwai*, that we meet in Tokharian B or Kuča *añkwa*.⁶ This form is obviously based on Iranian *angu*, *angwa*.

(4) Mongol 哈昔泥 *xa-si-ni* (thus given as a Mongol term in the *Pen ts'ao kan mu* after the *Yin šan čen yao* of the Mongol period, written in 1331), corresponds to Persian *kasnī*, *kisnī*, or *gisnī* ("asafœtida"), derived from the name of Gazni or Gazna, the capital of Zābulistan, which, according to Hūan Tsañ, was the habitat of the plant. A Mongol word of this type is not listed in the Mongol dictionaries of Kovalovski and Golstunski, but doubtless existed in the age of the Yüan,

¹ Chinese Commercial Guide, p. 80.

² STUART, Chinese *Materia Medica*, p. 174.

³ PERROT and HURRIER, *Mat. méd. et pharmacopée sino-annamites*, p. 161.

⁴ Cf. Sanskrit *jatuka* (literally, "gum, lac") = asafœtida. HÜBSCHMANN, *Armen. Gram.*, p. 98.

⁵ D'HERBELOT (*Bibliothèque orientale*, Vol. I, p. 226; Vol. II, p. 327) derived the Persian word (written by him *angiu*, *engiu*, *ingu*; Arabic *ingiu*, *ingudan*) from Indian *henk* and *hengu*, *ingu*, for the reason that in India this drug is principally used; this certainly is not correct.

⁶ Cf. *T'oung Pao*, 1915, pp. 274-275.