

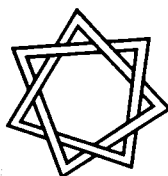
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES
ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH



Manuscripta Orientalia

International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research

Vol. 5 No. 2 June 1999



75ESA
St. Petersburg-Helsinki

PRESENTING THE MANUSCRIPT

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A MANCHU MANUSCRIPT ON ACUPUNCTURE

The Manchu collections in Europe are mostly presented by the historical and administrative documents or Manchu translations of Chinese philosophical and literary texts. However, almost all collections include also Manchu texts on medicine, though not so numerous. The collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies is no exception. Materials on medicine here, which comprise texts on smallpox, gynaecology, anatomy and acupuncture (most of them translations from Chinese) are found in the collection [1].

Manchu texts on medicine rarely draw attention of the European manchurists. We may refer only to extensive studies of the “Manchu Anatomy” compiled by the Jesuit Domenic Parrenin [2] and the single article on a Manchu document on acupuncture by Michael Weiers devoted to a short fragment from an unknown medical text [3]. The scarcity of research in this field encouraged me to present to the scholarly audience a rare manuscript on acupuncture from the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies collection. The manuscript attracted my attention not only because of Manchu explanations for acupuncture it contains. It is also interesting by its superb illustrations.

The manuscript (call number B 92mss) was first described by M. P. Volkova who gave the Manchu title of the text as *Sabsire sūiha sindara arga jen dzyu ci fan* and rendered it in Russian as *Объяснение мест [на теле] для акупунктуры* (“Description of Points [on the Body] for Acupuncture”) [4]. This Manchu title in the Catalogue compiled by M. P. Volkova was later corrected by M. Gimm as follows: “Als 4. Wort des Titels ist *ferguwecuke* einzufügen” [5]. But, in effect, the only Manchu title indicated on the first folio of the manuscript is *Sabsire sūiha sindara ferguwecuke argan* (“Wonderful Methods for Applying Moxa and Acupuncture”). We find also the Russian transcription of the Chinese title and the Russian title of the writing on the white label glued to the blue cover of the manuscript — *Чжэнь-цзю-ци-фань. Изображение фигуры человека с показанием для иглоукалывания и моксы (рукопись на маньчжурском языке)* (“*Chzhen-tsu-tsi-fan. Description of the Human Body with Acupuncture and Moxa Marks Indication (a Manchu Manuscript)*”). Though the title of the manuscript mentions both acupuncture and moxa points, the text itself deals solely with the application of moxa *sūiha*. The manuscript bears neither the name of the author nor date.

Nevertheless, it is obvious that the text represents a Manchu translation of the Chinese original, which, however, demands further identification. The manuscript comprises 52 pages (27.0×23.0 cm); 11 lines per page. The pages are glued together in such a fashion that two pages make one folio with Chinese pagination in black ink on *verso*.

The text could be divided into three parts: 1) list of diseases and points to be used for their healing (fols. 1—27); 2) illustrations annotated (fols. 28—50); 3) medicine prescriptions (fols. 51—53). The first part has also subdivisions like *Weihe nimere hacin* (“Section on tooth pain”) (fol. 1); *Fucihiyara hejere hacin* (“Section on coughing and laboured breathing”) (fol. 2); *Bethe gala nimere hacin* (“Section on ache in hands and legs”) (fol. 10); *Taran waliyara hacin* (“Section on strong sweating”) (fol. 11); *Šahūrun derbehun de bethe nimere hacin* (“Section on cold and sweaty legs”) (fol. 12). Each subdivision includes a list of points in Manchu transcription of their Chinese equivalents; it has also references to pictures in the second part of the manuscript and some short comments as well. The lists are followed by instructions on how many times moxa should be applied on a certain point when healing a certain disease.

But interesting as the manuscript is for the study of medicine literature, it deserves even more attention for its excellent illustrations. There are 23 colour depictions of male figures. All of them but one are numbered in Manchu (*ujui nirugan, jai nirugan*, etc.). The 22nd picture and the next one, with no number, to which I allot number 23 (it seems that the author considered the two to be a single one), are placed between the 3rd and 4th pictures, which is possibly the result of the latest restoration of the manuscript. The 23rd picture shows a naked body with points indicated along spine, on the head, left hand and leg.

The pictures are drawn in black Chinese ink and coloured in different water-colours. Interesting, all images appear to depict the Manchus: profiles and views from behind allow us to see a typical Manchu cord on the heads. Almost all figures are showed dressed in Manchu gown and girdled by a belt. Their footwear is also Manchu. The figures are depicted either sitting on a Chinese stool (sometimes at the table) or standing. The male images are placed in the middle of the folded folios, with vases with flowers, Chinese mushrooms, or the symbols of longevity depicted below. The points for applying moxa are indicated on

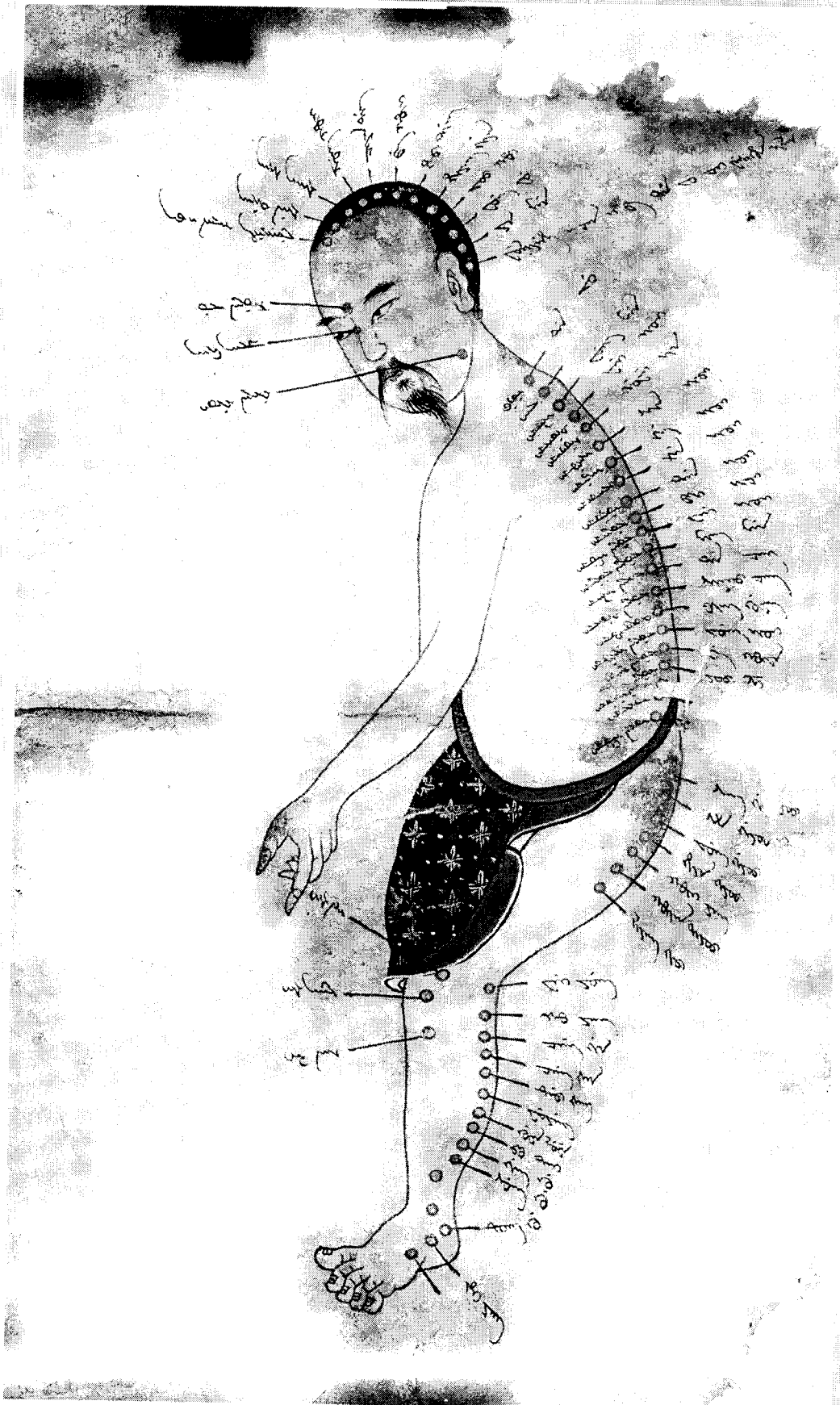


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

each figure and are accompanied by the explanation. As was mentioned above, the Chinese names of the acupuncture points are given in Manchu transcription and should be read as usual from left to right. Chinese long measures are given in Manchu transcription: *ts'cun* (Chin. *cun* — 3.3 cm) and *fon* (Chin. *fen* — 3.3 mm). Some pictures are provided with Chinese characters written on a piece of rice white paper glued next to the Manchu word. These should be read in Chinese manner, from right to left.

To give an idea of what kind of information is found in the pictures, we may refer to the first illustration — *ujui nirugan* — on fol. 28 (see back cover of the present issue). A male figure sitting at the table and dressed in a Manchu gown is shown there. Three acupuncture points are indicated on his head (*šang sing*, *šuwei gu*, *giyan gui*) and one, lacking the name, on the finger. The Manchu annotation to the first point runs: *šang sing. waitan ci wesihun duin ts'un-i ba inu* (“The point *šang sing* is four *cuns* above the eyebrow”); to the second point: *šuwei gu. buya juse elhe hahi golohojoro oci ilan sūiha sindambi. sūiha be maise-i ajige belhei gese obumbi. šan-i dergi funiyehe acan-i ba emu ts'un sunja fon-i ba inu* (“The point *šuwei gu*. If a child is suddenly frightened in his sleep, apply moxa three [times]. [Moxa powder] should be equal in size to a small grain seed. The point is one *cun* [and] three *fens* above the ear, [on the line] where the hair starts to grow”; to the third point: *giyan gui. buya juse weihe jombi. angga neirakū ojoro huhun simime muterakū ojoro oci. ilan sūiha sindambi. sūiha be maise ajige belhei gese obumbi. Šan-i fusihūn tuheke afahaci fusihūn ilan fun-i ba-i muliyan ašašara (sic.) ba inu* (“The point *giyan gui*. If a child's tooth comes through, and [the child] is not able to open [his] mouth and to suck, apply three moxa. It must be moxa powder equal in size to a small grain seed. The point is three *fens* below the ear's lobe on a moving curve of the jawbone”. The name of the acupuncture point on the right hand finger is lacking, though provided with the following explanation: *ere be. buya juse dobori songgoro oci emu sūiha sindambi. sūihabe maise-i ajige belfei gese obumbi. dulimbai simhun-i dube inu* (“This [place]. When a child is crying at night, apply one moxa. [The quantity of] moxa powder must be equal in size to a grain seed. [The point] is on the tip of the middle finger”). Explanations accompanying other pictures are similar to those described above.

In the third part of the manuscript, dealing with the prescriptions of different Chinese medicines, all components are given in Manchu transcription. Likewise, Manchu equivalents of the Chinese measures of weight are present: *jiha* for Chinese *qian* (3.7 gr) and *yan* for Chinese *lian* (37.3 gr). The prescriptions offered are invariably followed by the indication of how to use the medicine, which is a common practice in Chinese healing. We read, for example: *sain nure de ebeniyefi erin dari omimbi* (“to drink mixed with good wine every day”), fol. 51, or *okto omire ucuri halhūn jaka be baitalarakū* (“not eat hot food when taking the medicine”), fol. 52.

As was already mentioned, the manuscript under discussion is a Manchu translation of a Chinese original. The translation is not free from spelling mistakes, e.g., the word *amtan* is written instead of *emte* (“one each”) or *emken* (“one”); *ašašambi* instead of *aššambi* (“to move”), *fon/fun* for the classical Manchu *fuwen* (“a Chinese measure *fen*”), and some other. In our manuscript the word *arga* (“method”) is given as *argan/arhan*, which is probably

a “colloquial” form of *arga* like in the second part of the word *dasargan* (“a prescription”; *dasambi* — “to cure” — plus *argan* > *arga* — “a method”). The other “colloquial” form of the word is *ulunggu* instead of *ulenggu* (“navel”).

The other feature of this Manchu translation is that the Manchu numerals are given with plural suffix *-ta* indicating distributive numerals with a meaning of quantity. This form is mostly employed when the number of moxa application is mentioned in the first part of the text where symptoms and acupuncture points to be activated are discussed. This suffix is connected with indication of what quantity of moxa is to be applied on one point: *ilan bade aici sunjata aici nadata sūiha sindambi* (“apply in three places either five or seven moxa”) (fol. 13). Recommendations in this form are scattered through the text. Actually, only a certain quantity of moxa powder is applied on one point in one time. Perhaps, indication cited relates to the whole course of treatment. In this particular case, it may concern five or seven times (or days) of moxa application. Normally in these cases the words *jergi* or *mudan* (“time”) are used. The quantity of moxa is also indicated in the following form: *nadan sūiha sindambi* (“apply seven moxa”) (fol. 14) or *ilan sūiha sindambi* (“apply three moxa”) (fol. 28). In one place instead of *ilata sūiha sindambi* we read *ilan da sūiha sindambi* (“to apply three moxa”). Here *da* may have been used as a noun classifier for long objects such as cones, bunches, candles, cigarettes etc. [6]. If so *ilata* could be a written form of *ilan da* (similarly to *argan/arhan* discussed above). In one case suffix *-ta* is evidently used by mistake: *ulunggu-i fejergi emu ts'un sunjata fon-i babe* (“a point 5 *fen* [and] 1 *cun* below the navel”) (fol. 14).

It is worth noting that a variant of this text is kept at the Manuscript Department of the Oriental faculty library of St. Petersburg University (call number Мд 248) [7]. The manuscript in two fascicles (fasc. 1, 19 fols.; fasc. 2, 15 fols.; 38.3×22.0 cm; 12 lines per page) has a Manchu title — *Sabsire sūiha sindara arga* (“Methods for Applying Moxa and Acupuncture”). The blue paper cover of the manuscript bears also a Chinese title — *Fanyi zhengjiu shu*. The text is arranged as in usual Manchu book: it is written on both sides of folia (fasc. 1). The annotated illustrations are placed in the second fascicle. The pictures are roughly done in black ink, displaying no artistic skill. Judging from the images themselves, especially from the manner in which the faces are depicted, the artist is a European or maybe even Russian. The illustrations lack additional decorative elements like vases with flowers as we find in the Institute copy. On the 1st blank folio of the 1st fascicle and the 14th folio of the 2nd there is a Russian date (1820 год), which hints at a Russian owner or even the copyist of the manuscript. Sometimes explanations accompanying the pictures are more detailed, than in the Institute copy, and there are more acupuncture points indicated on the figures.

The second fascicle opens with a picture of a male figure, shown from behind, with six acupuncture points on his back and a text under the common title *Sūiha sindara ninggun ba* (“Six Points for Applying Moxa”). The Institute copy has only the title; neither text nor pictures are present. Since the University manuscript comprises some additional material in comparison with our copy, illustrations being almost identical, one can suppose that both manuscripts derived from one Manchu original. The copyist of the Institute manuscript has omitted some acupuncture points and their description, being guided by his own considerations.

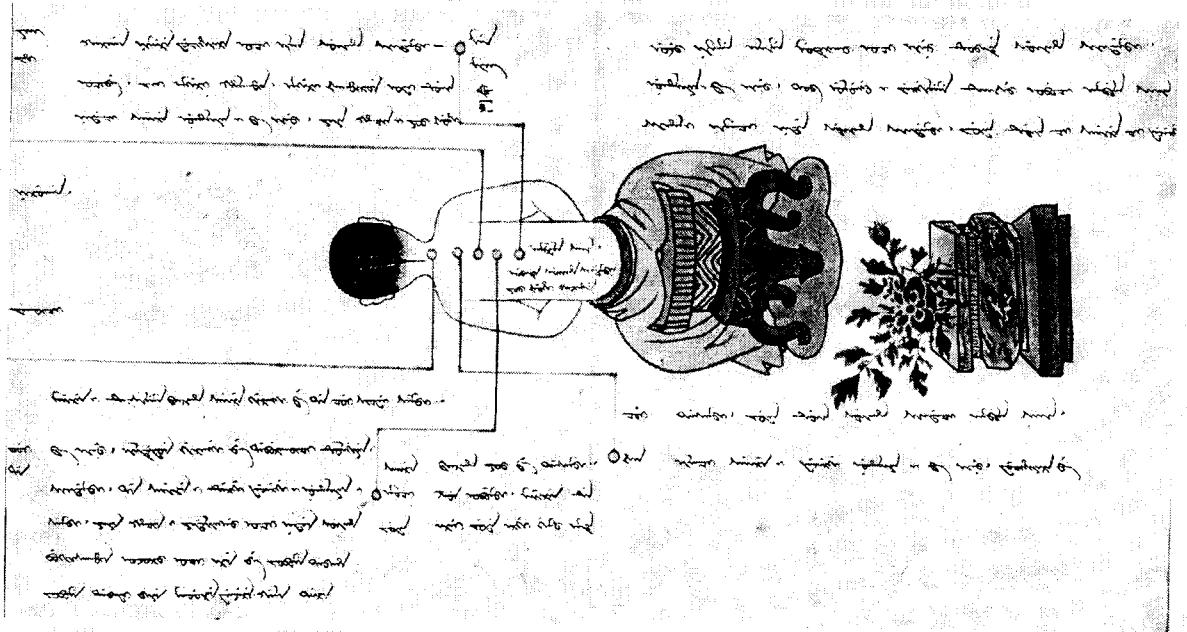


Fig. 4

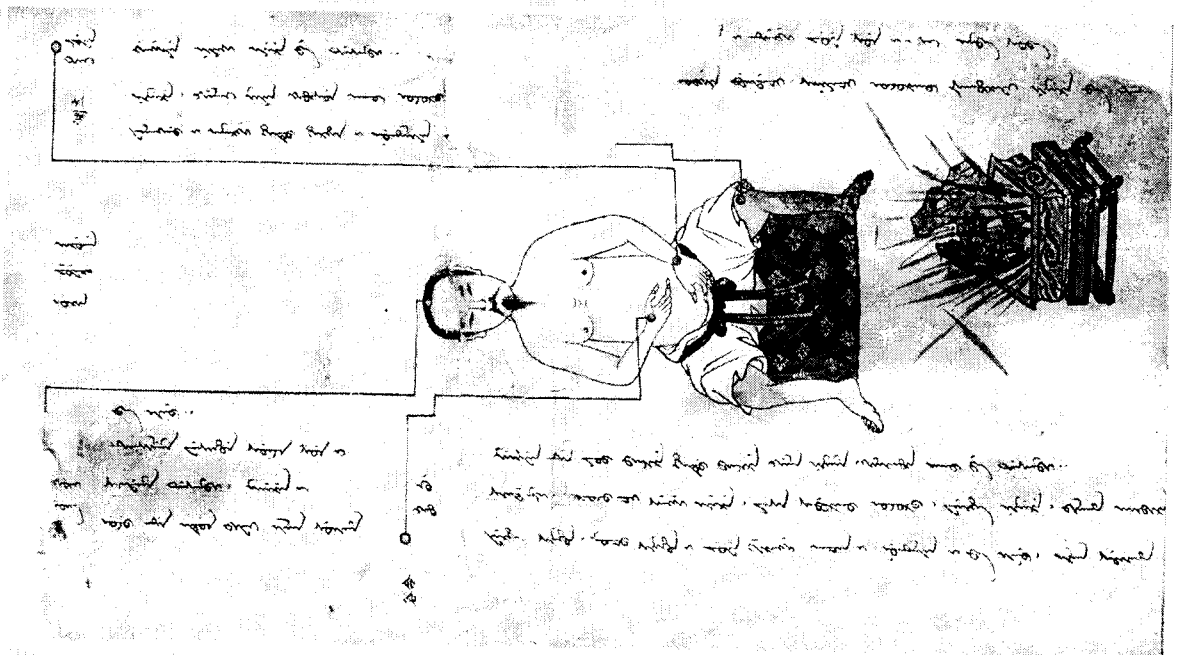


Fig. 3

The colloquial character of the text suggests its primarily practical use. Apart from its value as a medical guide, the text of the manuscript is a valuable source for the study of

spoken Manchu. But what makes the Institute copy especially interesting is its fine illustrations which represent a rare example of the Qing dynasty Manchu painting.

Notes

1. M. P. Volkova, *Opisanie man'chzhurskikh rukopisei Instituta narodov Azii AN SSSR* (Description of Manchu Manuscripts in the Institute of the Peoples of Asia, USSR Academy of Sciences) (Moscow, 1965), pp. 101–7, Nos. 199–205; also, *idem*, *Opisanie man'chzhurskikh ksilografov Instituta vostokovedeniia AN SSSR* (Description of Manchu Blockprints in the Institute of Oriental Studies, USSR Academy of Sciences), fasc. 1 (Moscow, 1988), p. 57, Nos. 108 and 109.

2. For bibliography, see the recent work by H. Walravens, "Medical knowledge of the Manchus and the Manchu Anatomy", *Acts de la 37e PIAC. Chantilly, 20–24 juin 1994*, ed. M.-D. Even (Paris, 1996), pp. 359–74. — *Études mongoles et sibériennes*, 27.

3. M. Weires, "Fragment einer Anweisung zur Moxibustion oder Akupunktur in mandschurischer Schprahe", *Heilen und Schenken. Festschrift für Günter Klinge zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds. H. Franke and W. Heissig (Wiesbaden, 1980), pp. 139–44. The fragment was kept in Marburg (signature Ms. or. fol. 1593-7) and described by W. Heissig in his *Mongolische Handschriften. Blockdrucke. Landkarten* (Wiesbaden, 1961), p. 79, No. 122.

4. See Volkova, *Opisanie man'chzhurskikh rukopisei*, p. 106, No. 213 (MS B 92).

5. M. Gimm, "Zu den mandjurischen Sammlungen der Sowjetunion. 1. Nachträge zum Handschriftenkatalog von M. P. Volkova", *T'oung Pao*, LIV/4–5 (1968), p. 307.

6. I. I. Zakharov, *Grammatika man'chzhurskogo iazyka* (Grammar of the Manchu Language) (St. Petersburg, 1879), p. 94.

7. Cf. edition cited in note 5 where this manuscript is discussed under its old call number F 8.

Illustrations

Front cover:

Fragment of the drawing demonstrating acupuncture points which should be applied when healing back pain and a half-body paralysis. *Sabsire sūiha sindara ferguwecuke argan*, manuscript B 92mss in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, illustration 13, fol. 42, 27.0×46.3 cm.

Back cover:

Drawing of a male figure with acupuncture points which should be applied when healing child's night crying and tooth-ache. The same manuscript, illustration 1, fol. 28, 27.0×46.3 cm.

Inside the text:

Fig. 1. General drawing showing acupuncture points on the head, back and left leg. The same manuscript, illustration with no number, 27.0×46.3 cm.

Fig. 2. Drawing showing a male figure with acupuncture points indicated on hand and legs for healing pain breast, *splenitis*, *diarrhea*, general weakness and lack of appetite.

Fig. 3. Drawing demonstrating health-stimulating acupuncture points and points for healing pain in knees and hands. The same manuscript, illustration 22, fol. 31, 27.0×46.3 cm.

Fig. 4. Drawing showing a male figure from behind with indicated acupuncture points for healing weakness in hands and back, as well as for healing back pain and coughing. The same manuscript, illustration 8, fol. 37, 27.0×46.3 cm.