

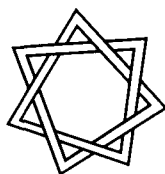
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THESA

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A SANSKRIT MANUSCRIPT ON BIRCH-BARK FROM BAIRAM-ALI. II. *AVADĀNA* AND *JĀTAKA* (PART 6)

Although there are no concrete indications, it appears that the *avadānas* and *jātakas* that make up this section of the manuscript follow the ideas expressed by the Buddha in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, focusing on the chapter in which the Buddha expresses his concern for his subjects and discusses the ways of the righteous (“Solicitudes of the Buddha”) [1]. Setting out for Rājagṛha for the season of rains, he invites his relatives and the followers of the teaching, for he has a presentiment that without him Devadatta will cause a schism in the community. This is, in fact, what happened. At that point, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana went to the Buddha and asked him to return and preach a sermon on the four meritorious men. The Buddha complied with their request, saying that a meritorious man should first erect

a *stūpa*, placing holy relics connected with the Buddha in the foundation; or he should take care of a *stūpa*, adorning it with flowers, bringing holy water, etc. Secondly, he who has grasped the Teaching of the Buddha should spread it to the four corners of the earth. Thirdly — and this would appear to be the most important precept in this group of tales — he should put an end to conflicts within the community. Finally, he should, with an open heart, with hostility toward no one, without rivalry, without causing harm, performing the ritual of *upasampada*, live in a community, abide by its rules, and follow all precepts and rituals (including timely departure for the season of rains period with all other members of the community).

FOL. [19a]

TRANSLITERATION

1. [pū]j(ā)rtha tataḥ tena janena bhagavato mahāpūjā kṛtā bhūṃjāpito ca bhagavāṃ tātā¹ tādṛśī
2. dharmadeśanā kṛtā te yaṃbhūyena² satye pratiṣṭhāpitā gopabhāryā bhagavāṃ bhūṃjāpitāḥ
3. sāOdr̥ṣtasatyā saṃvṛtā pūrvayogaṃ sarve kāśyape saṃyaksambuddhe upāsakā āsit*³ ¶
4. **vayasyā iti sambahula** vayasyā nṛtyamānā gāyamānā ca vīvidhair vādya⁴ viśeṣai-
5. rñnagarānniṣkramamti bhagavāṃś ca praviṣati te⁵ prasāda-jātā vīvidhair vādyaṃ nṛtyaṃ tā tāvadeva

TRANSLATION^[1]

1. ...for veneration. Then this man solemnly honoured the Bhagavān, Bhagavān was satisfied [with this veneration]. In this fashion
2. those [who took part in the veneration] almost entirely^[2] grasped the *dharma*. The wife of a shepherd [also] become grounded in the truth. Bhagavān was satisfied.
3. That [shepherd's wife] gained [the four noble] truths. In an earlier incarnation during the time of the completely enlightened Kāśyapa, she was *upasikā*.
4. **[Tale of] the female friends**^[3]. A crowd of female friends with dances and singing, [surrounded by] various and varied sounds^[4],

¹ Instead of *te*?

² Instead of *yadbhūyena*, see *BHSD*, p. 444.

³ * is used to show the sign of *avagraha*.

⁴ Instead of *vīvidhair vādya*.

⁵ Instead of *tā* (we find here the signs of text's correcting).

5. went out of the city, and Bhagavān [at that time] was entering [the city]. [Upon meeting the Bhagavān] they were filled with faith. [They addressed the Bhagavān] with respectful words and singing, breaking off the dance

Commentary

[1] The context indicates that this text is a continuation of the text on fol. 19b, but page 20 is missing. Moreover, this folio is paginated as 19b. There are further errors in the pagination; they will be noted as they occur.

[2] *yadbhūyena* (in the text *yambhūyana*; slip of the pen or Prakritism?) — “for the most part, in the main”, a form attested in Buddhist Sanskrit, see *BHSD*, p. 444.

[3] In the *uddāna* on fol. 17a (4), the tale is entitled *vayasya*, possibly a slip of the pen or *metr causa*. The text appears to be a summary of *avadāna* No. 30 — *Valgusvarā iti*, see *Avadānaśataka*, I, pp. 163—7. The difference is that in the *avadāna* the Bhagavān was venerated not by “female friends” (*vayasyā*), but by *sambhulāś ca goṣṭhikā* (“numerous female city-dwellers”).

[4] The word *vādyā* means both “speech, singing” and “the sounds of music”.

FOL. 19b

TRANSLITERATION

1. *lop[i]t[ā] bhagavanta[m] pr[a]daksinī karont[i] tena bhagavatā valgunā svareṇa pratyekabuddhā*
2. *vyākṛtā ¶ dhanarata iti bhikṣavo bhagavantam prcchanti paśya bhagavatā yāvad idaṃ indri-*
3. *ya[ga]Obodhyaṃgehi⁶ vaineyavarggaḥ vibhaktaḥ na bhikṣavo etarahiṃ bhūtapūrvva bhi-*
4. *kṣavo dhanaratano nāma sārthāvaho ba[bhū]va mahātmā dhārmikaḥ sa mahāsamudram āvatī-*
5. *rṇaḥ tatra nāgehi⁷ apahr̥taḥ tatra dvai nāgarājānai⁸ kalahā jātā viharaṃti te aṃnya-*

TRANSLATION

1. broke off [and] made a circle of honour around the Bhagavān. For this reason the Bhagavān foretold that they would be born [all together] as a group of *pratyekabuddhās* “Sweet-voi-

2. ced” [5]. [Tale of] **Janarate** [6]. The monks asked the Bhagavān: “Look, how the Bhagavān

3. has identified this group of those awaiting conversion by [their] possession [of the seven] factors of enlightenment and [the six] psychic abilities” [7]. [Bhagavān replied]: “No, monks, at this time in a previous incarnation, mo-

4. nks, [there] was a merchant by the name of Dhanaratana. He was great in spirit and followed the *dharma* [8]. He swam across the ocean.

5. There he was seized by the *nāgas*. [In the ocean] an argument broke out between two *nāgarājās*. With each other they

Commentary

[5] ... *valgunā svareṇa pratyekabuddhā vyākṛtā* — lit. “thanks to a pleasant voice they were foretold as *pratyekabuddhās*”.

[6] In the *uddāna* on fol. 17a (4) we find the same title. In the text, line 4, this name appears in the form Dhanaratana. The reference is to the *avadāna* about the leader of the merchants Dhanaratha, see *Saṅghabhedavastu*, II, pp. 13—4. See also Jampa Losang Panglung, *Die Erzählstoffe des Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya. Analysiert auf Grund der Tibetischen Übersetzung* (Tokyo, 1981), p. 94.

[7] *indriya-gala-bodhyaṃgehi* — lit. “thanks [to the presence] of factors of illumination and psychic abilities” — a Prakritism: it should be *bodhyaṅgaiḥ* (Instr. Plr.).

[8] *dhārmika* — lit. “dharmic, linked to the *dharma*; following the *dharma*”.

FOL. [20a]

TRANSLITERATION

1. *m annya⁹ kalahavigrahavivādamāpannā dvādaśa varṣāṇi aprasānta vairā tena teṣān dharmadeśa-*
2. *nā kṛtā mahavairanachinnaṃ tehi parituṣṭeḥi ekena nāgarājña maṇirddattaḥ kiṃ pra-*
3. *bhavaḥO paṃcāśa¹⁰ yojanā sphurittā sarvaratnāṃ varṣati dvitīena maṇirddattaḥ*

⁶ Instead of *bodhyaṅgebhiḥ*, a Prakritism.

⁷ Instead of *nāgebhiḥ*, a Prakritism.

⁸ Instead of *nāgarajñoh*.

⁹ Instead of *anya*.

¹⁰ Instead of *paṃcāśata*.

4. *sa yoOjanaśataṃ sph[u]ritvā ratnāṃ varṣati yāvanena uttīrya sarvve saṃtarppitā*¹¹ *babhū-*
5. *va ¶ ṛkṣasya avadānam kṛtvā yathā akṛtajñīyeṣu ¶ lakuṃcika iti śrāvastyā a*

TRANSLATION^[9]

1. disputed, feuded and argued, and for twenty years this hostility did not cease. Thanks to that [merchant] those [nāgarājās] came to understand the *dharma*.
2. Great hostility was ended by those [nāgarājās] who [greatly] rejoiced. One of the nāgarājās gave [to the merchant] as a gift a precious stone that was so marvellous^[10]
3. that it shone with the light of five-hundred *yojanas* and revealed all valuables [around it]. By other [nāgarāja as well] was given a precious stone.
4. Shining with the light of a hundred *yojanas*, it revealed all valuables [and] with its help all [the seas] that [the merchant] had to cross were [successfully] crossed”.
5. Tell^[11] the *avadāna* of the bear^[12] as one of the *avadānas* about the ingrates. Tale of Lakūṃcika^[13]. In Śrāvasti^[14]

Commentary

^[9] Judging by the subject, the text on the folio continues the previous *avadāna*.

^[10] *kiṃ prabhavaḥ* — lit. “what is better [than he]?”

^[11] *kṛtvā* — absolutive, lit. “after it was told; having told”.

^[12] *ṛkṣasya avadāna* — “*Avadāna* of the bear” — in the *uddāna* on fol. 17a(4) the tale has the same name. The text of the tale is absent. The reference is possibly to an *avadāna* from the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, II, pp. 104—5: “The story of a bear and a poor man (Concerning a previous incarnation of Devadatta)”.

^[13] The “[Tale] of Lakūṃcika” is also mentioned in the *uddāna* on fol. 17a(4). The text is missing. One can assume that the reference is to a certain Lakūṃcika, the son of a *brāhman* from Śrāvasti, the protagonist of *avadāna* No. 88, see *Avadānaśataka*, II, pp. 152—60.

^[14] As has been noted, the folios of the manuscript from Bairam-Ali were pasted together from two, and sometimes even three, thin layers of outer birch bark. Until recently, this folio lacked the second layer of birch bark. It was lost in the process of restoration but later found (now the folio is numbered as fol. 20b and will be published in the next issue of *Manuscripta Orientalia*). It contains, in addition to the tale of Lakūṃcika, the last of this group of stories, entitled *Eru*, and the *uddāna* for the next group of tales.

FOL. [21a]

TRANSLITERATION

1. *naḥ karṣikah p[i]tā ¶ maitrāb(a)lasya iti bhikṣavaḥ pṛcchanti paśya bhadaṃte yāva ca [a]-*
2. *nuttaram ca sthānam adhigatam iti na bhikṣavo etarahiṃ yathā rajñā brahmadattena maitrā u-*
3. *tpādītā maitrābalena ca viṣayāparitrāta vā mahato yakṣa bhayāto parimoci-*
4. *taḥ O te ca paṃca yakṣa paṃcasu śikṣāsu pratiṣṭhāpitā ¶ sārtha iti vindhyāta-*
5. *vyām paṃcanmātravañjīśatā gacchanti mahatā paṃnyena te ca tatra pauraṣādēna rākṣasena*

TRANSLATION^[15]

1. ... the ploughman father^[16]. **Tale of the Maytrābala**^[17]. The monks asked: “Look, deeply revered one, how did they
2. receive the best place [in the chain of reincarnations]?” [Bhagavān replied]: “No, monks, at this time in a previous incarnation the *rājā* Brahmadatta showed love [toward living things],
3. and by the force of [this] love was the undefended kingdom saved from a huge, terrible *yakṣa*
4. and there the five *yakṣas* received instruction in the five rules”^[18]. [Tale] entitled “**Beneficial**”^[19]. Through the forest in the hills of Vindhya
5. five hundred merchants went with a large commercial caravan. And there they [were attacked]^[20] by a *rakṣas* that devours people.

Commentary

^[15] The errors in pagination end here.

^[16] The context is missing. Other translations are possible.

¹¹ Instead of *saṃtarppitā*.

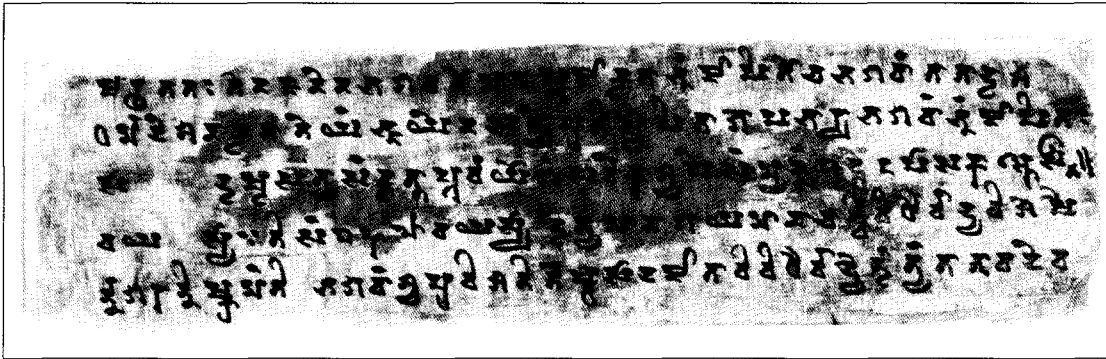


Fig. 1

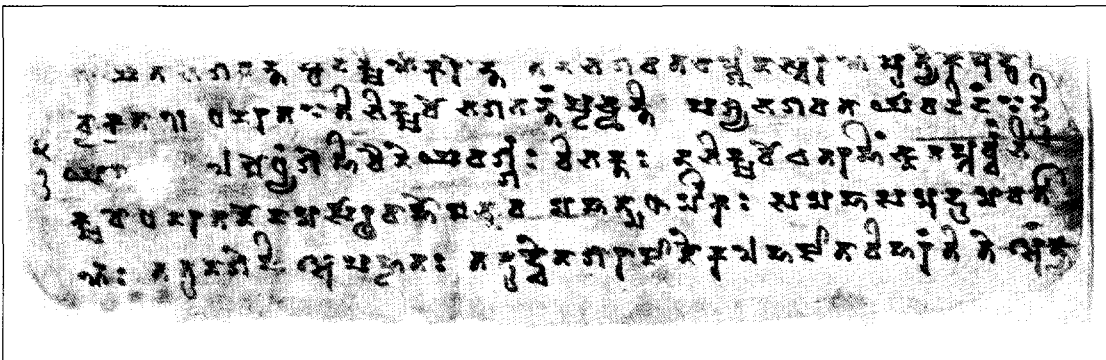


Fig. 2

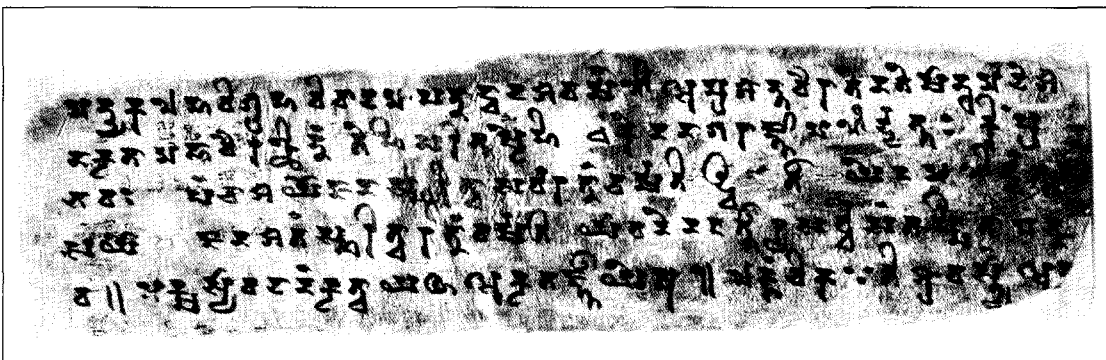


Fig. 3

[17] Maitrābala is a proper name. The tale of the conversion of the five *yakṣas* forms the basic plot of the *Maitrībala-jātaka*. See *Jātaka Māla*, No. 8, pp. 41—51.

[18] The term *śikṣa* is here used with the meaning *śikṣapāda* “moral norms”; *pañcāni śikṣapādāni* “the five norms of morality” are enumerated in *Mahāvastu*, III, 268, 10—3. An identical text is found in the Canon of the Theravadins, see *BHSD*, p. 527.

[19] A tale similar in content is well-known in the Buddhist literature. It is part of the *Mahāvastu*, I, pp. 244—6, which tells of the merchant Sthapakarṇika, who together with five hundred merchants was attacked in the open sea by a monster (*makara*) that was prepared to devour them all. On the advice of *sthavīra* Pūrṇa, Sthapakarṇika appealed to the Buddha for help and the merchants were saved. The same events are described with some variations in *Suparaga-jātaka*, see *Jātaka Māla*, No. 14. The same plot occurs in *jātaka* No. 463.

[20] The text clearly lacks the predicate which should agree with the subject *te* “those”, Nom. Plr.

FOL. 21b

TRANSLITERATION

1. mahakā[y]īkaṃ vā taṃ saṃjanayitvā vaṇijā[m] utsādayitu kāmas tatas te vaṇ[i]j[ā] bh[i]t[ā]
2. vividhāṃ O devatāṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchanti na ca kaścit paritrātā¹² atha tatra upasakaḥ sa ka-
3. thay[a]Ōti buddhaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchatheti¹³ tatas te eka svareṇa buddhaṃ śaraṇe gatā [ta]taḥ
4. sā mahatā vālā¹⁴ vilayaṃ gatā te ca vaṇijā jaṃbudvīpā gatvā pravrajātā¹⁵ arhatvaṃ prā-
5. ptaṃ karme sarvehi tehi kāśyape saṃmyaksaṃbuddhe pravrajitā babhuvuḥ ¶ kīṭika iti

TRANSLATION

1. And having appeared in the guise of that giant, [the *rakṣas*] wanted to destroy the merchants. Those merchants then took fright
2. and appealed for defence to various divinities, but no one received aid. There was there [among them] an *upasaka*. He
3. said: “Allow yourselves to be defended by the Buddha!” They then appealed to the Buddha for defence in a single voice^[21]. Then
4. the might of the *rakṣas* was destroyed by the power^[22] [granted by the Buddha] and those merchants, upon returning to Jaṃbudvīpā, received *pravrajyā* induction. They attained [the state of] *arhat*.
5. According to the *karma*, they were all inducted in the time of the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa^[23]. “[Tale] of the worms”^[24].

Commentary

[21] *buddhaṃ śaraṇe gatā* — possibly an error, in place of *buddhaśaraṇe gatā*, lit. “went under the Buddha's defence”.

[22] The word *vālā* does not fit into the context in this grammatical form. It is either fem., Nom. Sg., although there is no such word in Sanskrit, or masc., Nom. Plr., lit. “with tails”. This is most likely the Prakrit form in place of the Sanskrit *balena*, Instr. Sg. “by force”.

[23] *pravrajitā babhuvuḥ* — “received *pravrajyā* induction” — a compound verb form that consists of the participium perfectum passivi of *pravrajitā* and the 3 Plr. perfect of the root *bhū* “to be”.

[24] From the *avadāna* cycle about help given by the Bodhisattva to living things. The tortoise gives up his body to be devoured by hungry worms. See *Saṅghabhedavastu*, II, pp. 16—8: “The story of the tortoise [concerning a previous birth of Kauṇḍinya]”.

FOL. [22a]

TRANSLITERATION

1. + + + + +¹⁶ b[o][dhi]satvasya [ya]thā vistareṇa kacchapa bhūtasya aśīti kīṭikā sahasrā-
2. + + + + + ṇi jhivālagāni teṣāṃ parirakṣaṇārthaṃ ātmaparityāgaḥ kṛta iti ¶
3. kuṃjara iti bhagavataḥ adhvānapratipannasya aṭavyāṃ kuṃjaraḥ mahatīm¹⁷ vṛkṣaśākhā-

¹² Instead of *paritrāta*.

¹³ Evidently, a slip of the pen; it may be also *gacchethā* iti or *gacchata* iti.

¹⁴ Instead of *balena*?

¹⁵ Instead of *pravrajitā*.

¹⁶ In all likelihood, the left upper corner of fol. 22a was originally damaged and lacked text from the very beginning

¹⁷ Instead of *mahatīm*.

4. *muparidhārayate gacchantam ca anugacchati yāva sa kuṃjaraḥ nirvṛtaḥ sa sīnhe*
5. *na hataḥ sa ca bhagavatopasthāna cittaṃ prasāditam deveṣūpapannaḥ sa devatā bhūto*

TRANSLATION

1. Tell [in detail] how when the Boddhisattva was a tortoise, eighty thousand worms
2. attached themselves [to it] by their tongues. To save them, [the tortoise] committed an act of self-sacrifice. Tell it thus ^[25].
3. “[**Tale of the elephant**]” ^[26]. In the forest, at that time the Bhagavān had not yet found the way, a large tree branch an elephant
4. did hold above [him] and accompanied him during his walk ^[27]. That elephant attained *nirvāṇa*. He was by a lion
5. killed while he was aiding the Bhagavān ^[28]. [At that very moment] his consciousness became enlightened. [The next time he] was born among the gods. That [elephant], as a deity,

Commentary

^[25] See above, n. 24.

^[26] See *Saṅghabhedavastu*, II, pp. 189—91: “The elephant Dhanapālaka follows submissively the Buddha, dies of grief and is reborn in the heaven of the four Great Kings”.

^[27] *gacchantam ca anugacchati* — lit. “walked behind [him], going”.

^[28] *sa ca bhagavatopasthāna* — lit. “and he is the support of the Bhagavān”.

FOL. 22b

TRANSLITERATION

1. *bhagavatā upasaṃkrāntaḥ dharmadeśanā kṛtvā satyāni dṛṣṭāni karma kāśyape samyaksa[m]buddhe*
2. *pravrajito babhūva na ca anena śakitaṃ brahmācāryam upapādayittam* ¹⁸ *iti evaṃ vistanti-*
3. *vyam* ¹⁹ *O iti ¶ sinhasenāpatiḥ vistareṇa vācyaṃ yathā vinīto bhagavatā karma kā-*
4. *śyape sammyaksambuddhe upāsako babhūva āraṇyaka iti anyatarasya gṛhapatisya* ²⁰
5. *dāraka ekārāmaḥ saṃsargabhīrū yāva pravrajitaḥ arhatvaṃ prāptaṃ sa kadāci gṛhaṃ*

TRANSLATION

1. drew close to the Bhagavān and received instruction in following the *dharma* and he grasped the [four noble] truths. [His] *karma* [was thus]: during the time of the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa
2. he received induction and with no compulsion led a pious way of life — tell it thus. That is how [this] should
3. sound. One must tell in detail the tale of **Sinha-**
4. **senāpati** ^[29], how he was converted by the Bhagavān. [His] *karma* [was thus]. During the time of
5. the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa he was an *upasaka*. “[**Tale of he who lives in the forest**]” ^[30]. A certain head of a household [had]
6. a son who enjoyed solitude, he was shy among people. He underwent the ritual of induction and attained [the state of] *arhat*. One day to a house he

Commentary

^[29] Sinhasenāpati (Pāli Sihāsenāpati) — the protagonist of *jātaka* No. 246, which tells of how a certain man by the name of Sinhasenāpati turned to the Buddha for defence and then served him a meal that included meat. It is difficult to say whether the manuscript refers to this *jātaka*, as the text gives no details.

^[30] The reference is evidently to an *avadāna* close in plot to *Aputra jātika*, see *Jātaka Māla*, XVIII, pp. 105—8. The *jātaka* gives proof of the advantages of a hermit's life in the forest as compared to the life of one who heads a household.

¹⁸ Instead of *upādayittam*.

¹⁹ Instead of *vistantavyam iti*.

²⁰ We find here the signs of correcting the text: first the word *gṛhapatisya* was written, then the first *-i-* was washed off and replaced by *-r-*; it must be *gṛhapateḥ*.

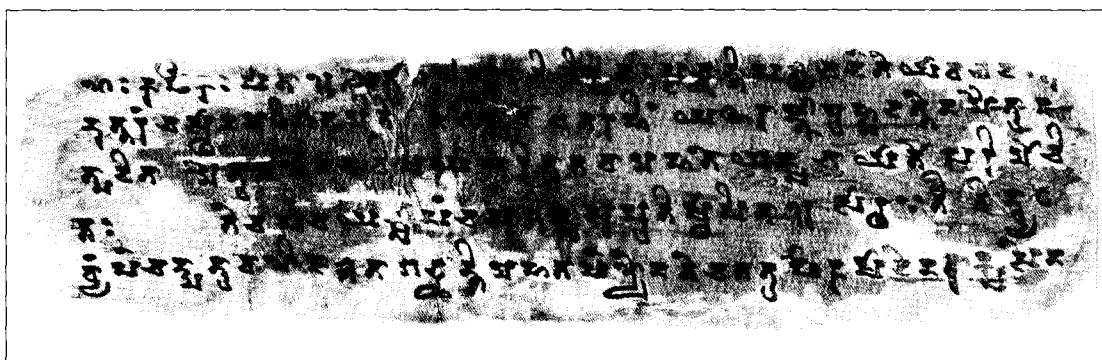


Fig. 4

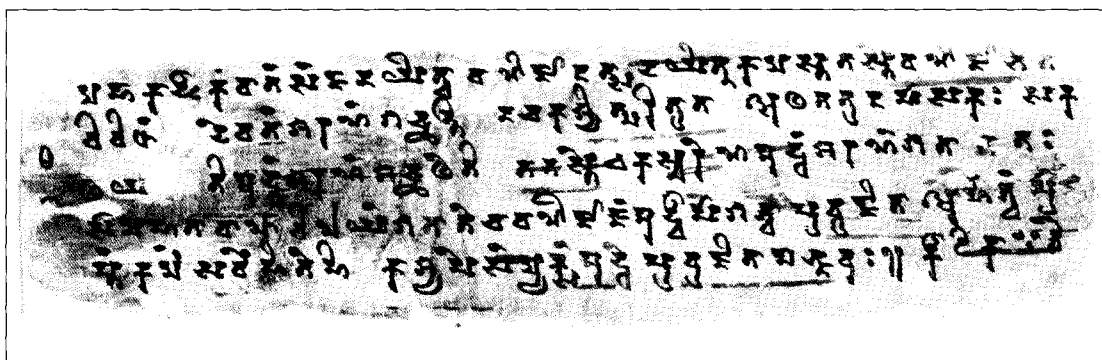


Fig. 5

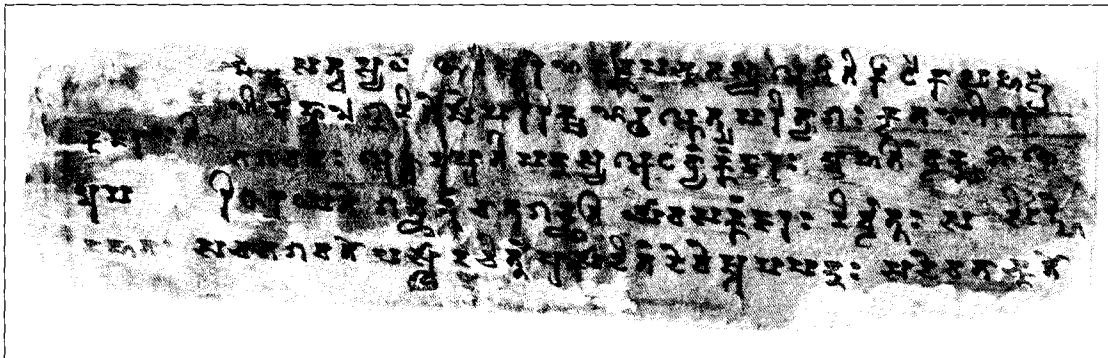


Fig. 6

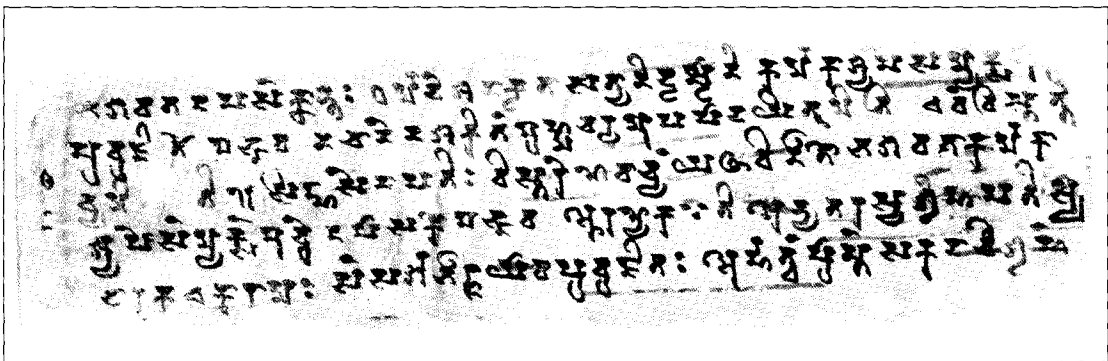


Fig. 7

Notes

1. *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu Being the 17th and Last Section of the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvastivādin*, pt. II, ed. Raniero Gnoli (Roma, 1978). — Rome Oriental Series, vol. XLIX, 2.

Illustrations

- Fig. 1.** Sanskrit manuscript SI Merv 1 on birch-bark from Bairam-Ali in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, fol. [19a], 19.0×5.0 cm.
Fig. 2. The same manuscript, fol. 19b, 19.0×5.0 cm.
Fig. 3. The same manuscript, fol. [20a], 19.0×5.0 cm.
Fig. 4. The same manuscript, fol. [21a], 19.0×5.0 cm.
Fig. 5. The same manuscript, fol. 21b, 19.0×5.0 cm.
Fig. 6. The same manuscript, fol. [22a], 19.0×5.0 cm.
Fig. 7. The same manuscript, fol. 22b, 19.0×5.0 cm.
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