

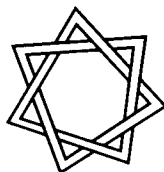
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## A SANSKRIT MANUSCRIPT ON BIRCH-BARK FROM BAIRAM-ALI. II. AVADĀNA AND JĀTAKA (PART 8)

As we have seen earlier, the text of the Bairam-Ali manuscript contains a large number of Prakrit grammatical forms. For example, in place of Skt. *satvaiḥ*, Instr. Pl., we find the form *satvehi*, which goes back to *satvebhiḥ*. We find *-ehi*, in place of *-ebhiḥ* and *-aiḥ*; which is one of the most widespread Prakrit grammatical forms, repeated almost invariably throughout the text. Especially frequent are violations of the *saṃdhi* rule, for example, *kin tayā* and *kin tena* instead of Skt. *kiṃs tayā* and *kiṃs tena*. Also, many verb forms — aorist forms, for example — are given incorrectly.

A textual comparison with *avadānas* with the same plotline shows that the text in the manuscript is abbreviated and simplified. One is tempted to conclude that the stories outlined in note form in the manuscript hark back to an earlier folkloric layer that was further developed in alter *avadānas*. The language would have been intentionally “Sanskritized” to grant it legitimacy by making it similar to the language of classical Sanskrit literature.

In two recently published articles, Prof. Seishi Karashima (Tokyo) analyzes the grammatical features of a number of Sanskrit texts recorded in the fifth — ninth centuries. He notes departures from standard Sanskrit in orthography, phonology, syntax, and morphology and identifies several forms reflected neither in *BHSD* nor in *BHSG*, but which came to be standard for the Buddhist Sanskrit of the period under discussion. Seishi Karashima concludes that the language of many Buddhist texts (e.g., the earliest extant version of the “Lotus *Sūtra*” that we find in the Lüshun fragments of the *sūtra*) was originally not Sanskrit, but Prakrit (the Indian vernacular of the medieval period), only later “Sanskritized” when they were recorded in written form. It seems that the Bairam-Ali manuscript may confirm Karashima's conclusion. But, of course, its language needs additional and thorough intensive study [1].

### FOL. 26a

#### TRANSLITERATION

1. *catur mahārājā{nā}nām<sup>1</sup> vina[ya] vistareṇa kiṃ karma śvāsaś ca mahāśvāsaś ca babhūva.*
2. *aṭīśvaraś ca cūṭīśvaraś ca garuḍa babhūvuḥ te kāśyape sammyaksambuddhe sakaśā<sup>2</sup> śikṣāpadā-*
3. *ni gr̥hī Otāhi || vivāha iti dharmadinnāyām bhikṣuṇyām vistareṇa pravrajyā vaktavya tasya*
4. *karma kāśyape sammyaksambuddh[e] pravrajitā tatra karma tayā mātāpitarā<sup>3</sup> varṣakam kṛitam*
5. *vedapatyaṃ kṛtaṃ brahmacaryaṃ cīrṇṇam || chedanam yathā mahāsamudre satvasya pañcāhi<sup>4</sup> yakṣa*

#### TRANSLATION

1. [Tell] in detail the *vinaya* of the four *mahārājās* <sup>[1]</sup>. What was [their] *karma*? The [*nāgas*] Śvāsa <sup>[2]</sup> and Mahāśvāsa <sup>[3]</sup> were
2. [flying in the air]. Aṭīśvara <sup>[4]</sup> and Cūṭīśvara <sup>[5]</sup>, [later became] Garuḍa. At the time when the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa was alive, they followed
3. moral norms of conduct. [Story] of entering marriage <sup>[6]</sup>. In detail about the *bhikṣuṇī* Dharmadinnā. Tell how [she received] *pravrajyā*. Her
4. *karma* [was thus]: in the time of the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa [she] underwent the ritual of induction. Here the *karma* [was the following]: her parents commanded that a house be built for her to *varṣa* time; [by her] the Vedas were
5. comprehended <sup>[7]</sup>. She led a pious way of life. [Tale] entitled “Division”. How in the ocean between five-hundred *yakṣas*

<sup>1</sup> Braces { } designate superfluous *akṣara*.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of *sakāśe*.

<sup>3</sup> Instead of Skt. *mātāpitarau*.

<sup>4</sup> Instead of Skt. *pañcabhiḥ*.

## Commentary

[<sup>1</sup>] The text presents a version of the tale attested in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, found among the Gilgit manuscripts, see *Gilgit Manuscripts, Mūla-Sarvāstivāda vinaya*, vol. I. p. 260, ll. 18–19.

[<sup>2</sup>] Śvāsa — the name of the *nāga* who, according to the *Vinaya*, was an earlier incarnation of the *mahārājā* Dhṛtarāṣṭra.

[<sup>3</sup>] Mahāśvāsa — the name of a *nāga*, an earlier reincarnation of the *mahārājā* Virūḍhaka.

[<sup>4</sup>] Atiśvara (cf. *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*, p. 260, line 18 — Aṭṭeśvara) — the name of a *suparṇin*, an earlier reincarnation of the *mahārājā* Virūpākṣa.

[<sup>5</sup>] Cūṭiśvara (cf. *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*, p. 260, line 18 — Cūḍeśvara) — name of Garuḍa, an earlier reincarnation of the *mahārājā* Vaiśravaṇa.

[<sup>6</sup>] In the *uddāna* on fol. 25b (2) we find the same title. A brief Sanskrit version of the *avadāna* about Dhammadinnā, for the Pāli version, see *Apadāna*, II, pp. 567–9.

[<sup>7</sup>] *vedapatyaṃ kṛtaṃ* — lit. “was achieved [knowledge of the] Vedas, which one must acquire”, where *vedapatya* means “what must be acquired in the Vedas”.

## FOL. 26b

### TRANSLITERATION

1. [śate]hi paṃcahi<sup>5</sup> kūṭāgāra<sup>6</sup> śat[e]hi paṃca varṣa śatehi ekā pasukā<sup>7</sup> chinnā evaṃ vistartavyaṃ
2. kiṃ karma bhagavataḥ kāśyapasya saṃmyaksaṃbuddhasya upāsakasya anāgāmisya<sup>8</sup> pasukā bhagnā
3. bhaṭa bhūOtena || khādyate<sup>9</sup> mahasamudre satva upapannaḥ sa tatra sthalajaiś ca jala-
4. jaiś ca na dantadataḥ<sup>9</sup> khādyate kin tena karma[m] kṛtaṃ bhagavān āha saṃmyaksaṃbuddhe kāśyape naivā-
5. siko babhūva duḥśīlo vitaritvā sāmghikaṃ dravyaṃ tena ana lyena vināśitaṃ || **nandika i-**

### TRANSLATION

1. between five-hundred families [<sup>8</sup>] one [handful] of sand [<sup>9</sup>] was five-hundred years later shared by a living being. Thus one should tell in detail.

2. What was the *karma* [of that living being]? Into the *patra* of *upāsaka*, who achieved non-return to the world, [in the time of] the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa one [handful] of sand he threw.

3. [This being then] was Bhaṭa. [Tale] entitled “It is eaten” [<sup>10</sup>]. A [certain] being was born in the ocean. There it [is by all] born on earth and in the water,

4. not defended by teeth, eaten. Thanks to what does he have [such] *karma*? The Bhagavan recounted: “In the time of the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa there was

5. a monk who lived in a monastery. Through negligence, the things that belonged to the community were destroyed by this unhappy [creature]”. [Tale] of **Nandika** [<sup>11</sup>].

## Commentary

[<sup>8</sup>] The word *kūṭāgāra* in Buddhist Sanskrit is attested in the meaning “a room on an upper floor” (see *BHSD*, p. 190). The same word occurs again in the text, see fol. 27a(5) — *kūṭāgāra mātro*. The text may contain a slip of the pen in place of *kuṭāgāra*. Based on the dictionary meanings of the components in this compound, we can surmise that it means (i) “household, family home”; (ii) “group, biological species”. These meanings match the context in both cases.

[<sup>9</sup>] The story is a version of the *avadāna Pāṃśupradāna* (“Gift in Sand”), see *Divyāvadāna*, pp. 348–82, but a number of the details are different. In the *avadāna*, the “handful of sand” — *pāṃśvañjalir* — is placed in the Bhagavan's *patra* by a boy named Jaya (p. 366) who was later reborn as the famed Aśoka (pp. 368–9). The Bhaṭa (l. 3) mentioned in the manuscript is one of the brothers of an elder merchant in Mathurā, who, according to the text of the *avadāna*, resolved the conflict of five-hundred monkeys — *pañcānāṃ markataśatānāṃ yūtha* (p. 349).

[<sup>10</sup>] In the *uddāna* on fol. 25b (2) we find a Prakritized version of the title — *Khājate*. We were unable to identify the tale.

[<sup>11</sup>] See the following folio.

<sup>5</sup> Instead of Skt. *śatebhiḥ paṃcabhiḥ*.

<sup>6</sup> Instead of *kuṭāgāra*.

<sup>7</sup> Instead of *pāṃśuka*.

<sup>8</sup> Instead of Skt. *anāgāminah*.

<sup>9</sup> Instead of *dantadattah*.

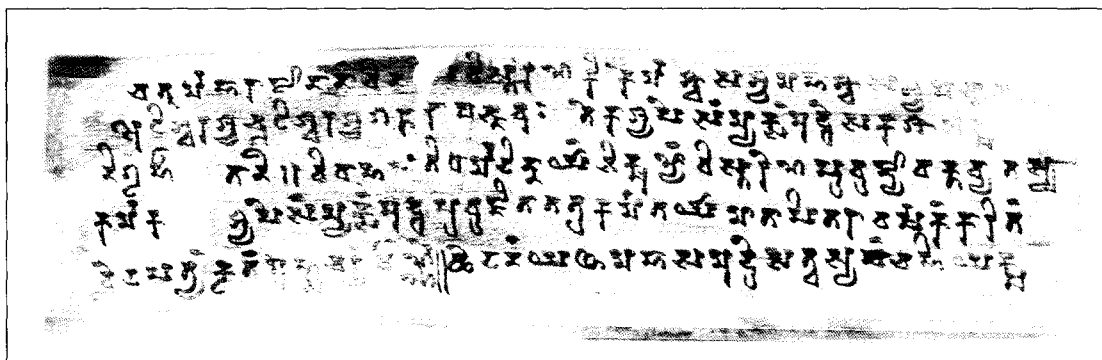


Fig. 1

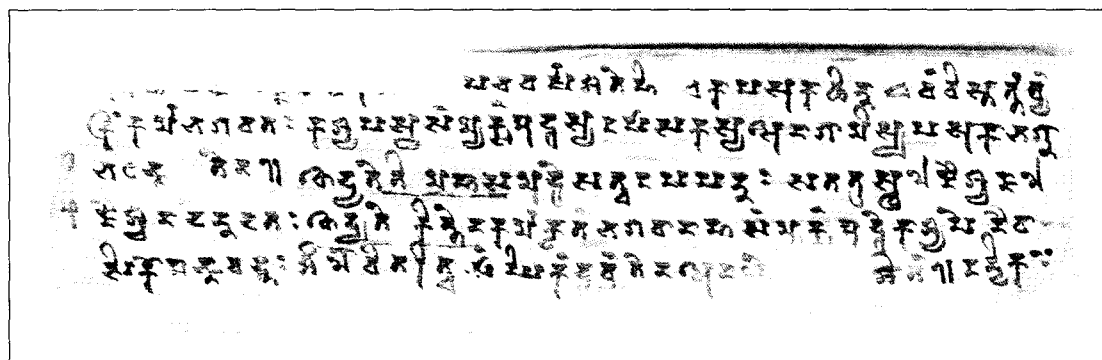


Fig. 2

FOL. [27 a]

TRANSLITERATION

1. *ti | nandiko bhikṣu rā[jagr̥he vi]harati gr̥dhrakūṭe parvate sa tatra pretīm adr̥śāsi duḥkhitā[m]*
2. *caḥṣu vivarjitām sa etaṃ prakaraṇaṃ bhagavata ārocayati kin taya<sup>10</sup> karma[m] kṛtaṃ bhaga-*
3. *vān āhaO kāśyape sammyaksambuddhe śreṣṭhidhītā pravrajitā tayā na śakitāṃ brahmacaryaṃ prati-*
4. *pāda nāyatasyā<sup>11</sup> bhikṣusamghena aprajñaptam<sup>12</sup> kṛtaṃ sā mātsaryaṃ niṣevata<sup>13</sup> bhagavacchrāvakām*
5. *dr̥ṣṭvā caḥṣu nimīlayati || piṇḍa iti mahāsamudre satvo upapannaḥ kūṭāgāra<sup>14</sup> mātro*

TRANSLATION

1. In Rājagr̥ha there lived a *bhikṣu* [by the name of] Nandika<sup>[12]</sup>. On the mountain of Gr̥dhrakūṭa, there, he saw<sup>[13]</sup> a *pretī*, unfortunate,
2. with no eyes. He told the Bhagavan about all the circumstances [and asked]: “What is her *karma*?” The Bhaga-
3. van said: “In the time of the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa [she] was the daughter of the elder of the merchants [and] underwent the ritual of induction. [Būt] she was unable to lead a righteous way of life
4. and they did not accept her in the community of *bhikṣus*. She nursed her jealousy. Śrāvakaḥ of Bhagavan
5. having seen, she would close her eyes. [Tale entitled] “Dumpling”<sup>[14]</sup>. A living thing was born in the ocean, and [a whole] family [of such beings arose].

Commentary

[12] The story presents a short version of the *avadāna Jatyandheti*, see *Avadānaśataka*, I, pp. 267—70. The *bhikṣu* in the *avadāna* is called Nandaka.

[13] The form *adr̥śāsi* is inexplicable in Sanskrit. In the *Avadānaśataka*, p. 267, we find in its place the form of the sigmatic aorist of the root *dr̥ś* — *adr̥kṣīd*. It could be a slip of the pen *adr̥ṣṭa āsīt* (cf. fol. 28b (4): *pravrajita āsīt*). It may also be that the copyist did not understand the Sanskrit form of the sigmatic aorist and used the simpler form of the aorist VII, abbreviating it: *adr̥śāsi* instead of *adr̥śasīt*, 3 Sg.

[14] In the *uddāna* on fol. 25b (3) this story is called *Piṇḍī*. In content it is similar to the story with the title “It is eaten”, cf. fol. 26b (3). We were unable to find this tale in other Buddhist sources.

[15] See fol. 26b (1), n. 1.

FOL. 27 b

TRANSLITERATION

1. *mā[m] sa piṇḍasadr̥ṣe so tatra satvehi<sup>15</sup> khādyate punar eva ca so jāyate artta svaram<sup>16</sup> kr̥ndate*
2. *kin tena<sup>17</sup> karma[m] kṛtaṃ kāśyape sammyaksambuddhe pravrajito āsi naivāsikaḥ duḥśīlo anāga-*
3. *taṃ caO sāṃghikaṃ staubikaṃ<sup>18</sup> mahādvārikaṃ paudgalikaṃ paribhogena paribhunktaḥ || brāhmaṇa*
4. *iti brāhmaṇo bhagavantam dr̥ṣṭvā pariṣvajati bhikṣavaḥ vārayamte bhagavān āha mā vāra*
5. *yatha putra snehena pariṣvajati paṃca janma śatānyeṣa mama pitā babhūva bhagavatā tasya*

TRANSLATION

1. similar to a meat dumpling. It was eaten there [by other] living beings. And it was born again the same [and] cried out for help.
2. What is its *karma*? In the time of the entirely enlightened, it was [a man who] underwent ritual of *pravrajā*. He was a bad monk and [sacrifices] that did not belong to him,

<sup>10</sup> Instead of Skt. *kiṃs tayā*.

<sup>11</sup> Instead of *netum asyā*?

<sup>12</sup> Instead of *aprajñaptim*?

<sup>13</sup> Instead of *niṣevitā*.

<sup>14</sup> Instead of *kūṭāgāra*, cf. fol. 26b (1).

<sup>15</sup> Instead of Skt. *satvaiḥ*.

<sup>16</sup> Instead of *ārta svaram*.

<sup>17</sup> Instead of *kiṃs tena*.

<sup>18</sup> Instead of *staupikaṃ*.

3. and were the community's, from the *stūpa*, the main vestibule of the temple, the personal [food of other monks], for [his own] pleasure

4. he did eat. [Tale] of the *brāhmaṇa* <sup>[16]</sup>. [A certain] *brāhmaṇa*, upon seeing the *Bhagavan*, embraced him. The monks forbid [him the embrace]. *Bhagavan*

5. said: “Do not forbid [him]! He embraced [me] like a son with love. Five-hundred incarnations ago he was my father”.

### Commentary

<sup>[16]</sup> In the *uddāna* on fol. 25b(3) this story is called *Brāhmaṇaṃ karṣakaṃ* (“[Tale] of the *Brāhmaṇa*-Farmer”). Both words are in the Acc. Sg. Is it *meter causa*? We were unable to identify the storyline.

### FOL. [28 a]

#### TRANSLITERATION

1. *dharmadeśitaḥ pravrajitaḥ arhatvaṃ prāptaṃ kiṃ karma kāśyape pravrajito 'bhūṣi[t]*<sup>19</sup> *karṣakaḥ kṣe-*
2. *traṃ kṛṣati tena āyusmān mahākāśyapo piṇḍakena pratipāditaḥ tasya kṣetre sauvarṇā yavā-*
3. *nkurāo prādurbhūtā vistareṇa avadānaṃ kāryaṃ || pitā iti bhagavāṃ rājagrhe viharati*
4. *tatraOanyataro brāhmaṇaḥ kālagataḥ sa gr̥ddhrakūṭasya nātidūre jñāpitaḥ tasya putro a-*
5. *tīva śocate sa ca brāhmaṇo deveṣu upapannaḥ tasya devabhūtasya kārūṇyaṃ jātaṃ sa taṃ putraṃ*

#### TRANSLATION

1. was converted to the path of following the *dharma*, he underwent the ritual of *pravrajya*; *arhat*-ness was attained. What is [his] *karma*? During the time of the [Buddha] *Kāśyapa* he underwent the ritual of induction. [As a] peasant

2. he tilled the field. He venerated the great *Kāśyapa* [with an offering of] dumplings. On his field did appear golden

3. shoots of barley. [Thus] one should tell the *avadāna* in detail. [Tale] entitled “Father”<sup>[17]</sup>. The *Bhagavan* lived in *Rājagṛha*.

4. A certain *brāhmaṇa* died there. His fame spread almost to the very [mountain of] *Gr̥ddhrakūṭa*. His son

5. was much aggrieved. And this *brāhmaṇa* was born among the gods. Pity [for his son] awoke in him after he had assumed the appearance of a god.

### Commentary

<sup>[17]</sup> In the *uddāna* on fol. 25b(3) the story has the same title. In the Pāli canon there are several *jātakas* that are close in storyline to this tale. They recount (i) that one should not shed tears for the deceased; (ii) how the dead help the living with counsel to follow the teaching of the Buddha. The manuscript enumerates the good deeds for which one can be reborn in heaven, an important detail in the proselytizing literature. Cf. the Buddha's sermon “The Sermon on the Four Meritorious Men”, see *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu*, pt. II, pp. 206–7.

### FOL. 28 b

#### TRANSLITERATION

1. *āha mā śoca deveṣu aham upapannaḥ na ahaṃ śocya iti putra āha kin te*<sup>20</sup> *karma[m] kṛta-*
2. *m itiO yadi deveṣu upapannaḥ sa kathayati buddho piṇḍakena pratipādita iti uposa-*
3. *taṃ caO me ekaṃ gr̥hītaṃ tenāsmi deveṣu upapannaḥ tataḥ brāhmaṇa dāraḥ utsr̥ṣṭvā*
4. *gr̥haṃ tathāgata śāsane pravrajitaḥ kin karma[m] kṛtaṃ kāśyape saṃmyaksambuddhe pravrajita āsīt*
5. *mālapadmaṃ vrataṃ kṣāntiḥ ik[ṣu]śālā ca puspitaṃ gandhaṃ śaraṇa dīpo*<sup>21</sup> *ca mārgo*<sup>22</sup> *bhavati paścimaḥ ||*

#### TRANSLATION

1. said: “Do not grieve! I have been born among the gods. You should not grieve over me!” The son asked: “What then is your *karma*,

<sup>19</sup> Instead of *abhūṣīt*.

<sup>20</sup> Instead of Skt. *kiṃs te*.

<sup>21</sup> Instead of *dīpasya* or *dīpaṃ* (?).

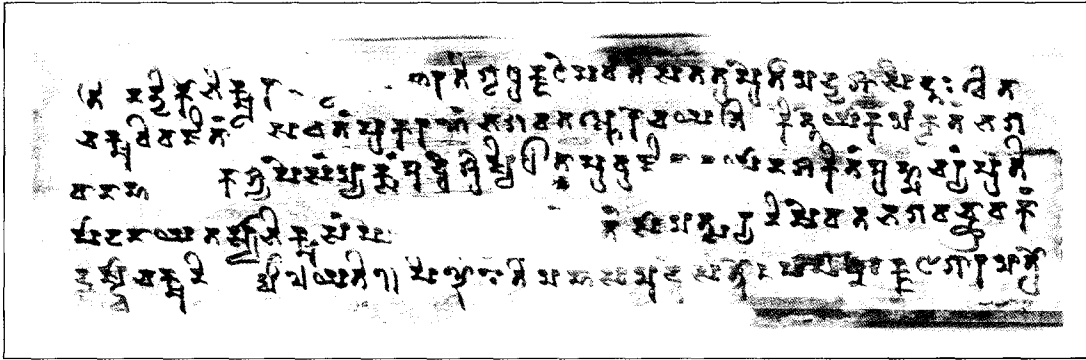


Fig. 3

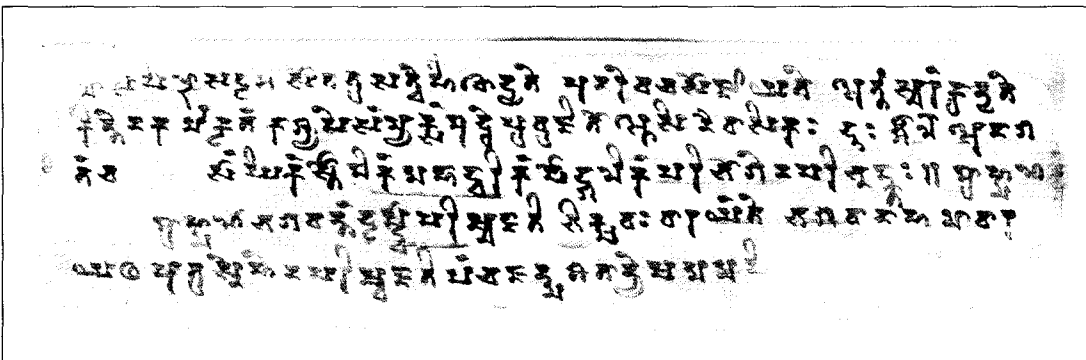


Fig. 4

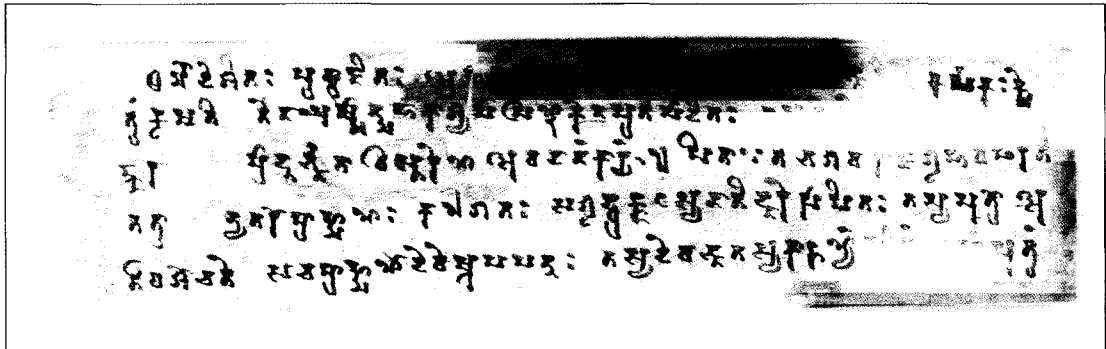


Fig. 5

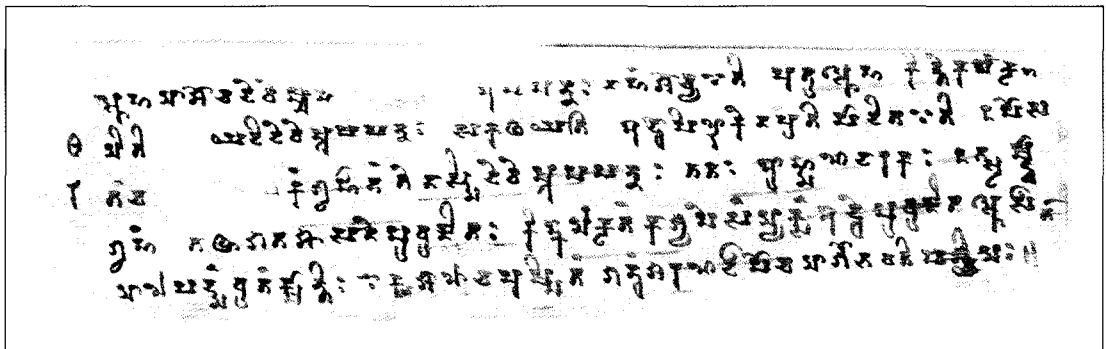


Fig. 6



2. why were you born among the gods?” [The father] recounted: “[In an earlier incarnation] I venerated the Buddha [with an offering] of dumplings
3. and alone observed [the fast of] *uposatha*, therefore I have been born among the gods”. The brāhman's son then left
4. home [and] in accordance with the instruction of a *tathāgata* underwent the ritual of induction. What is [his] *karma*? In the time of the entirely enlightened Kāśyapa he underwent the induction of *pravrajya*,
5. diligently performed service [to maintain] the flower garlands [and] lotuses [in the temple] as well as the stalks of cane sugar, and looked after the Buddha's cell <sup>[18]</sup>, adorned with flowers, and finally saw to the lanterns and the road <sup>[19]</sup> [leading to the temple].

### Commentary

<sup>[18]</sup> The word *gandha* appears to be used here in place of *gandhakuṭi* “Buddha's cell”, *puṣpita* — “covered in flowers” — is a modifier of the cell.

<sup>[19]</sup> *śaraṇa dīpo ca mārgo bhavati paścimaḥ* — lit. “final care, for the lanterns and the road”, where *dīpo* and *mārgo* are in the Nom. Sg., apparently by mistake in place of Acc. or Gen. One could also translate it as “final care — the lantern and the road”.

### Notes

1. Seishi Karashima, “Some features of the language of *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra*”, *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 44 (2001), pp. 207—30; *idem*, “Some features of the language of the *Kāśyapa-parivarta*”, in *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism at Soka University for the Academic year 2001* (Tokyo, 2002), pp. 43—66.

### 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. [26 a], 19.0×5.0 cm.
- Fig. 2. The same manuscript, fol. 26 b, 19.0×5.0 cm.
- Fig. 3. The same manuscript, fol. [27 a], 19.0×5.0 cm.
- Fig. 4. The same manuscript, fol. 27 b, 19.0×5.0 cm.
- Fig. 5. The same manuscript, fol. [28 a], 19.0×5.0 cm.
- Fig. 6. The same manuscript, fol. 28 b, 19.0×5.0 cm.