‘Verità e bellezza’
Essays in Honour of Raffaele Torella

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*A Fragment of Pramāṇa from Gilgit**

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1. Introductory remarks

To the best of our knowledge, the single-folio fragment edited here has not been identified in any publication.[1] We cannot determine with certainty the actual identity of the text (although we will attempt a hypothesis). However, we can ascertain its contents: this is the beginning of a rather sophisticated epistemological *prakara-*

* This small paper on *pramāṇa* is dedicated to Raffaele Torella, who has devoted most of his astounding career to Indian philosophy. First and foremost, we would like to thank Francesco Sferra for revising this article at different stages, providing us with invaluable feedback. Our thanks also go to all the participants in the international workshop 'Monasteries and Doxography in Indian Buddhism' (jointly organized by the IKGA, Austrian Academy of Sciences, and the Vihāra Project), and especially Birgit Kellner, Horst Lasic, Taiken Kyuma, and Somadeva Vasudeva for inspiring comments and useful corrections to the edition and the English translation. Serena Saccone's work was supported in several ways by the IKGA, Austrian Academy of Sciences. Péter-Dániel Szántó's work was supported by the European Research Council (ERC) under the Horizon 2020 program (Advanced Grant agreement No 741884).

[1] The most up-to-date list of identified materials is von Hinüber 2014. On p. 105, the leaf is described as follows: 'No. 42: Unidentified Pages 3223–3224: 1 folio; folio no. extant: 1 (? on the right margin!); beginning of a text. — Ed.: –.'

ṇa. To date, this is only the second *pramāṇa* work to emerge from the Gilgit hoard, next to Dharmakīrti's *Hetubindu*.[2] The fragment is thus an important witness of philosophical-epistemological studies in greater Gilgit, an area usually not identified as a great citadel of *pramāṇa* learning.

We could not perform a personal autopsy of this single birch-bark leaf, now kept in New Delhi. Our access to the witness consists of digital reproductions of monochrome microfilm images. In the facsimile edition, the leaf is found in volume 10, page nos. 3223–3224.[3] On the so-called Rissho CD-ROMs, the images are on vol. 3, 21/07.[4] We also had access to microfilm copies once prepared for J. W. de Jong.[5] The three sets do not differ greatly in quality, although perhaps the last one is somewhat clearer to read. The folio is in nearly perfect condition, except for a triangular tear (or perhaps delamination) in the upper right corner of the *recto*. This results in the loss of two *akṣara*s from the beginning of *pāda* b of the opening verse and the loss of a single *akṣara* from the very end of the fragment. The string space is protected by interrupting two lines on the *recto* and three on the *verso*. Judging by the paleographical features (the script is what is usually referred to as Gilgit/Bamiyan type II or proto-Śāradā), the copy was made in the latter part of the scriptorium's history, ca. 7th c. CE or slightly later.[6]

Given the style and the content, this short fragment can be viewed as belonging to a '*pramāṇa*-type' treatise. Since the manuscript can be roughly dated to the late 7th c. or perhaps early 8th, the text must either precede or be from around that time. In light of the usage of some technical terms, it must be regarded as post-Dharmakīrtian. This would place it most likely after the beginning of the 7th c. It starts with a *sragdharā* verse, where, among other

[2] See Wille in Steinkellner 2016.

[3] Lokesh Chandra (1974: 8) describes the fragment as follows: '42. It is again a single folio without any number. The last line reads: सत्ताप्रसंगो बोधकं प्रमाणमिति ।। ।। अत्र तु प्रमाणप्रमेयविषयनिश्चायकप्रत्यया' The reading *bodhakaṃ* is a mistake for *bādhakaṃ*.

[4] On this collection, see von Hinüber 2014: 92–93.

[5] We thank Jonathan Silk for granting us access to this source.

[6] We thank Noriyuki Kudo and Jundo Nagashima for sharing their thoughts on this issue.

things, the author declares his intention to provide his audience with a rejection (*bhaṅga*) of the deluded views of the opponents, through a collection of good refuting arguments (*bādhakaiḥ satprayogaiḥ*), perhaps to be used in public debates.

The main theme of the fragment is a criticism of the real existence (*sattā*) of things that are uncreated, that is, causeless and permanent (*sthāvara*).

At the beginning of the treatise, the author introduces the opponents as people who depend on a transmitted tradition and ignore the power of *pramāṇa*s. As he says immediately after, they all agree on the existence of entities that are causeless and permanent, thus suggesting the presence of a general fictitious Brahmanical opponent.

The thesis of the Brahmanical opponents is spelled out as follows: 'Those [things that are] not dependent on real things (*bhāva*) that are the cause of their arising and admitted as permanent are indeed existent.'

As for what is the third sentence in our translation, we have two versions:

(i) The first one is *ante correctionem*. There is a list of entities that are conceived of as uncreated, permanent, and real by the opponents, some being common to more than one tradition, some being specific to certain Brahmanical traditions. These are: Viśveśvara that is the cause (*hetu*) [i.e., the efficient cause] with regard to bodies, faculties, and world-systems,[7] the authorless word (*apauruṣeyaśabda*), the universals (*jāti*), the Self, etc.

The authorless word is of course a hallmark of Mīmāṃsā thought. The notion of Viśveśvara as the efficient cause with regard to bodies, faculties, and world-systems presents us with a more complex situation. The compound *tanukaraṇabhuvana* (or *tanubhuvanakaraṇa*) is found mostly in Śaiva sources.[8] However, we do have two significant occurrences of this compound in

[7] For arguments against the existence of Īśvara, see Krasser 1999.

[8] Note that in the archival process, this folio was filmed immediately after the only Śaiva work in the hoard, the so-called **Devītantrasadbhāvasāra* (Sanderson 2009: 50–51). Sanderson (referring to a personal communication by Vasudeva) dates the folios of this text to the mid-6th c.

Buddhist sources. One is in Dharmakīrti's *Vādanyāya*, which assuredly predates this text. In that discussion, the compound is associated with the Vaiśeṣikas.[9] The other is in Kamalaśīla's *Tattvasaṅgrahapañjikā*, which is more likely later than this text, but could also have been almost contemporary. In this case, Kamalaśīla is quoting Aviddhakarṇa,[10] a thinker who is presented as a Naiyāyika in the *Pañjikā*, one who aims to prove the existence of Īśvara as an intelligent superior being that is the efficient cause for the material causes such as bodies, faculties, and world-systems.[11] This appears very similar to what our author seems to have in mind when employing the said compound. Accordingly, it is more likely that he has in mind the Naiyāyikas or the Vaiśeṣikas as his opponents here, rather than any Śaiva sources.

(ii) The second version is *post correctionem*. What is most likely a second hand[12] deletes the list of various entities and leaves only the notion of entities with exceptional power (*prabhāvātiśaya*) as the cause of the arising of bodies, faculties, and world-systems. This is, in the corrector's mind, most likely Īśvara. Therefore, based exclusively on this small fragment, it looks as if the second hand's intention is that of turning the treatise into an **Īśvarabhaṅga*, overlooking all the other entities. A possible explanation is that a reader (whose hand we now see preserved in the lower margin) noticed that the rest of the work refutes only Īśvara and

[9] See *yathā puruṣātiśayapūrvakāṇi tanubhuvanakaraṇādīnīti pratijñāya tanukaraṇabhuvanavyākhyāvyājena sakalavaiśeṣikaśāstrārthaghoṣaṇam* (*Vādanyāya*, p. $52_{8–9}$).

[10] Aviddhakarṇa is most likely an 'old' Naiyāyika. Very little is known about him. He might be the same person as Bhāvivikta, or there might have been two Aviddhakarṇas, a Naiyāyika and a Cārvāka. His/Their works are not preserved, except for fragments as testimonia in the works by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla (mostly in the *Pañjikā*). On this, see particularly Marks 2019.

[11] *yathoktam — tanubhuvanakaraṇopādānāni cetanāvadadhiṣṭhitāni svakāryam ārabhanta iti pratijānīmahe, rūpādimattvāt, tantvādivad iti.* (*Tattvasaṅgrahapañjikā ad* st. 49, ed. p. $54_{12–13}$). For a discussion of this quotation (also found in Abhayadevasūri's *Tattvabodhavidhāyinī*), see Marks 2019: 61, n. 182.

[12] The 'correction' added in the lower margin is in a very crude hand, unlike that of the original scribe. This does not necessarily mean that there was a second hand: the same hand may look different due to a change of stylus, etc. If the correction is not by the first hand, it could still be coeval. According to Charles DiSimone (whom we wish to thank), the script is not 'later' but more 'cursive.'

nothing else, or at least not directly. This is possible only if he had an incomplete work in front of him. Of course, it is also possible that he may not have understood the arguments completely and that is why he decided to curtail the list of objectionable items.

In our opinion, provided that the *ante correctionem* version is the original text, this was a **Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi*, a proof of the momentariness of things.

The similarity with the beginning of the Sthirabhāvaparīkṣā chapter of the *Tattvasaṅgraha* and the *Tattvasaṅgrahapañjikā* may lead to this conclusion. There, two of the same elements are found: *a)* a comprehensive list of permanent entities admitted by different Brahmanical opponents and *b)* the idea that they can all be refuted with a few arguments.[13]

If this is a **Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi*, we would be tempted to think of the *Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi* by Arcaṭa. Arcaṭa is reported by Tāranātha as having lived in Kashmir and, in spite of Tāranātha's statement that he was coeval with the emperors Dharmapāla and Khri srong lde brtsan, is regarded as slightly earlier than Śāntaraksita and Jinendrabuddhi (Funayama 1995: 195); accordingly, he perhaps lived around the beginning of the 8th c. His *Kṣaṇabhaṅgasiddhi* is not preserved and only mentioned in his *Hetubinduṭīkā* (ed. pp. 82_{14}, 87_{24}).

Given the exiguity of the extant text, however, it is fairly impossible to determine anything about the work with certainty.

[13] *atha vāsthāna evāyam āyāsaḥ kriyate yataḥ | kṣaṇabhaṅgaprasiddhyaiva prakṛtyādi nirākṛtam || uktasya vakṣyamāṇasya jātyādeś cāviśeṣataḥ | niṣedhāya tataḥ spaṣṭaṃ kṣaṇabhaṅgaḥ prasādhyate ||* (*Tattvasaṅgraha* 350–351) 'Or, [one might say that] this effort [viz. the composition of the *Tattvasaṅgraha*] is made in vain, because primordial nature and the other [entities admitted as real by the opponents,] [can] be refuted by establishing momentariness alone (st. 350). And, therefore, in order to reject [all those real entities admitted by the opponents,] such as the general properties—which have been and will be discussed—since they are not [in any way] different [inasmuch as they are ultimately impermanent], momentariness is clearly established [in the present chapter] (st. 351).' In the *Pañjikā*, Kamalaśīla paraphrases the *eva* in 350c with *ekaprahāreṇaiva*, 'in one clean swoop' (ed. p. $166_{20–24}$).

2. Formatted diplomatic transcript

The *siddham* sign is expressed by a symbol. The numeration does not seem to survive, hence the folio number is tentative. We transcribe allophones of the *visarga*, the *jihvāmūlīya* (voiceless velar fricative) as x and the *upadhmānīya* (voiceless bilabial fricative) as f. The *recto* and *verso* of the folio are marked *r* and *v* respectively.

We use the following symbols:

⊙	string space
?	illegible element
+	lost *akṣara*
–	lost metrically long syllable
<*kiṃcit*>	scribal addition

[1r_1] *siddham* nānāvādapravīṇaif paragatabahaladhvāntavidhvaṃsadakṣais saṃbuddhājñāprapannaif prakaṭitam akhilaṃ vastutattvaṃ susūkṣmam | – – [1r_2] ye viprapannāf paramatavihitāpārthanād aprapannās teṣāṃ saṃmohabhaṅgax kriyata iha mayā bādhakais satpray?gaiḥ || [1r_3] iha hi samadhigatavācyavācakasambandhagamitaśāstrārthāvadhāraṇanipuṇā api yathādhigatasamayasaṅketāsā[1r_4]ditapāratantryavṛttayo⊙napekṣitapramāṇaprabhāvaprasarās svodayanibandhanabhūtabhāvānapekṣiṇas sthāva[1r_5]rābhimatās santy eva sa⊙ttāvyavahārāliṅgitaprasarās tanukaraṇabhuvan<o>-hetuviśveśvarāpauruṣeyaśa[1r_6]bdajātyātmādisaṃjñitā [*kākapada* sign] iti tadvibhramavinivāraṇāya kiñcinmātrakam abhidhīyata iti | ye svasattāyām udayani[1r_7]bandhanabhūtabhāvānapekṣiṇo na te samāsāditasattākās tadyathā vyomotpalādayaḥ | svasattāyām udayanibandha-[lower margin] [in a second hand, no marking]-dayanibandhanabhūtāf prabhāvātiśayabhājo bhāvā

[1v_1]-nabhūtabhāvānapekṣiṇaś ca sthāvarābhimatāf paraparikalpitā bhāvā iti vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhiḥ | sattāvasāyasaṃ[1v_2]janitaprabhāvātiśayā bhāvās svodayanibandhanabhūtabhāvāpekṣābhivyāptā | tannivṛttā ca pravṛttir vyāpyasyeti svapra[1v_3]kāśā vyāpakaviruddho⊙palabdhir upadarśitaprayoga iti na pakṣadharmaviṣayaviparyāsāvasara iti nā[1v_4]nvayavibhramaḥ | ye samā⊙sāditasattākās te svasattāyām udayanibandhanabhūtabhāvāpekṣiṇo

dṛṣṭās tadya[1v_5]thā vrīhyādayaḥ | svodaya⊙nibandhanabhūtabhāvāpekṣāvidhurabhūtānāṃ sattābhyupagame vandhyāsutaviracitaci[1v_6]tragaganakusumamāloditasaurabhyabhāvanābhāvitamarakatavarṇāvabhāsāvabhāsitaśaśaviṣāṇaśobhātiśaya[1v_7]sattāprasaṃgo bādhakaṃ pramāṇam iti || || atra tu pramāṇaprameyaviṣayaniścāyakapratyayānapekṣiṇa +

3. Standardised edition with critical notes

nānāvādapravīṇaiḥ paragatabahaladhvāntavidhvaṃsadakṣaiḥ
saṃbuddhājñāprapannaiḥ prakaṭitam akhilaṃ vastutattvaṃ
[*susūkṣmam* |
tasyāṃ[14] *ye viprapannāḥ paramatavihitāpārthanād aprapannās*
teṣāṃ saṃmohabhaṅgaḥ kriyata iha mayā bādhakaiḥ satprayogaiḥ[15] ||

iha hi samadhigatavācyavācakasambandhagamitaśāstrārthāvadhāraṇanipuṇā api yathādhigatasamayasaṅketāsāditapāratantryavṛttayo 'napekṣitapramāṇaprabhāvaprasarāḥ, svodayanibandhanabhūtabhāvānapekṣiṇaḥ sthāvarābhimatāḥ santy eva, sattāvyavahārāliṅgitaprasarās *tanukaraṇabhuvanodayanibandhanabhūtāḥ prabhāvātiśayabhājo bhāvā (*ante correctionem*: tanukaraṇabhuvanahetuviśveśvarāpauruṣeyaśabdajātyātmādisaṃjñitā) iti tadvibhramavinivāraṇāya kiṃcinmātrakam abhidhīyata iti | ye svasattāyām udayanibandhanabhūtabhāvānapekṣiṇo na te samāsāditasattākās tadyathā vyomotpalādayaḥ | svasattāyām udayanibandhanabhūtabhāvānapekṣiṇaś ca sthāvarābhimatāḥ paraparikalpitā bhāvā iti vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhiḥ | sattāvasāyasaṃjanitaprabhāvātiśayā bhāvāḥ svodayanibandhanabhūtabhāvāpekṣābhivyāptāḥ[16] | tannivṛttyā[17] nivṛttā ca pravṛttir vyāpyasyeti svaprakāśā vyāpakaviruddhopalabdhir upadarśitaprayoga iti na pakṣadharmaviṣayaviparyāsāvasara iti nānvayavibhramaḥ | ye samāsāditasattākās te svasattāyām udayanibandhanabhūtabhāvāpekṣiṇo

[14] *tasyāṃ*] conj. (Isaacson), damaged Ms
[15] *satprayogaiḥ*] conj., *satpray?gaiḥ* Ms
[16] °*ābhivyāptāḥ*] em., °*ābhivyāptā* Ms
[17] *tannivṛttyā nivṛttā*] conj. (a conj. *tannivṛttinivṛttā* is also possible), *tannivṛttā* Ms (eye-skip)

dṛṣṭās tadyathā vrīhyādayaḥ | svodayanibandhanabhūtabhāvāpekṣāvidhurabhūtānāṃ sattābhyupagame vandhyāsutaviracitacitragaganakusumamāloditasaurabhyabhāvanābhāvitamarakatavarṇāvabhāsāvabhāsitaśaśaviṣāṇaśobhātiśayasattāprasaṅgo bādhakaṃ pramāṇam iti || || atra tu pramāṇaprameyaviṣayaniścāyakapratyayānapekṣiṇa ?

4. Translation

> The very subtle reality of things has been proclaimed in its entirety by those who have embraced (*prapanna*) the teaching (lit. command, *ājñā*) of the Perfectly Awakened One; [they are] well-versed in many different doctrines [and] skilled in eliminating the thick darkness [of the delusion] of the opponents.
> [However, there are those] who have opposed (*viprapanna*) that [teaching] (*tasyāṃ*)[18] [and those] who have not embraced (*aprapanna*) it due to [its] refutation (*apārthana*) done by [some] who hold other views. In this [treatise], I [shall] refute their delusion with some good refuting arguments.

Now, in this world (*iha*), even though skilled in determining the meaning of the treatises made clear through the well-known relation between designated and designator (*vācyavācakasambandha*), a multitude [of people] who ignore the power of *pramāṇa*s are engaged in the acquired/transmitted dependence on a convention according to the way the agreed-upon doctrine (*samaya*) is learnt [in different traditions].

[The convention is as follows:]

'Those [things that are] not dependent on real things (*bhāva*) that are the cause of their arising and admitted as permanent are indeed existent.

> [Version 1, *ante correctionem*] [These, which according to you Buddhists are] continua that are marked/included (*āliṅgita*)

[18] Or, less likely, *tasmin*, referring to *vastutattva*.

(?) with the predication as existent[,] are termed [—according to the various Brahmanical systems—] Viśveśvara that is the cause [i.e., the efficient cause] with regard to bodies, faculties, and world-systems, the authorless word, the universals, the Self, etc.'

[Version 2, *post correctionem*] [These, which according to you Buddhists are] continua that are marked/included (*āliṅgita*) (?) with the treatment/predication as existent, being the cause of the arising of bodies, faculties, and world-systems, are real entities (*bhāva*) possessing an exceptional power[, namely, Īśvara].'

In order to eliminate their error, just a few [arguments need to] be said.[19]

Those [entities] that, with regard to their own existence, do not depend on [other] entities that are the cause of their arising [can]not be admitted as existent (*samāsāditasattāka*), like, for example, a lotus in the sky. And the entities (*bhāva*) [that are] admitted as permanent [and] are imagined by the opponents are independent from real entities (*bhāva*) that are the cause of their arising with regard to their own existence. Thus, there is the cognition of [something] contradictory to the pervader[, i.e. the cognition of the independence from things that are the cause of their arising].

The entities that are originated through the conceptual determination of 'existence' [that is, they are conceptually constructed as existent] and have a special power (*prabhāvātiśaya*) [namely, causal efficiency] are pervaded by the dependence on real entities that are the cause of their arising.

Moreover, the presence of the pervaded is negated through the negation of that (*tannivṛttyā*) [i.e., the dependence]. Thus, the perception of [something] contradictory to the pervader [i.e. the perception of dependence] in the argument shown [above] is self-evident. Therefore, there is no room (*avasara*) for [any] error regarding the object of the property of the subject (*pakṣadharma*).

[19] Namely, by refuting the permanence of things one rejects all the real entities that are admitted by the Brahmanical opponents and are listed above.

Accordingly, there is no mistake, [viz. a] positive concomitance [of *sādhya* and *hetu* in the opponent's argument].

The [entities] that are admitted as existent are commonly observed as being dependent on real things that are the cause of the arising with reference to their own existence. This is like, for example, rice.

If one admitted the existence of entities that are devoid of the dependence on entities that are the cause of their arising, then, the refuting argument (*bādhakaṃ pramāṇam*) would be the undesired consequence of the existence of the fragrance produced from a garland of multicoloured flowers in the sky that was put together by the son of a barren woman or the superior splendour (*śobhātiśaya*) of the hare's horn (*śaśaviṣāṇa*) illumined by the splendour of the colours of an emerald visualised through meditative realisation [or: meditative realisation about the fragrance produced from a garland of multicoloured flowers in the sky that was put together by the son of a barren woman].

However, in this regard, [entities] independent from the cognition that ascertains the cognisable object of the *pramāṇa* …

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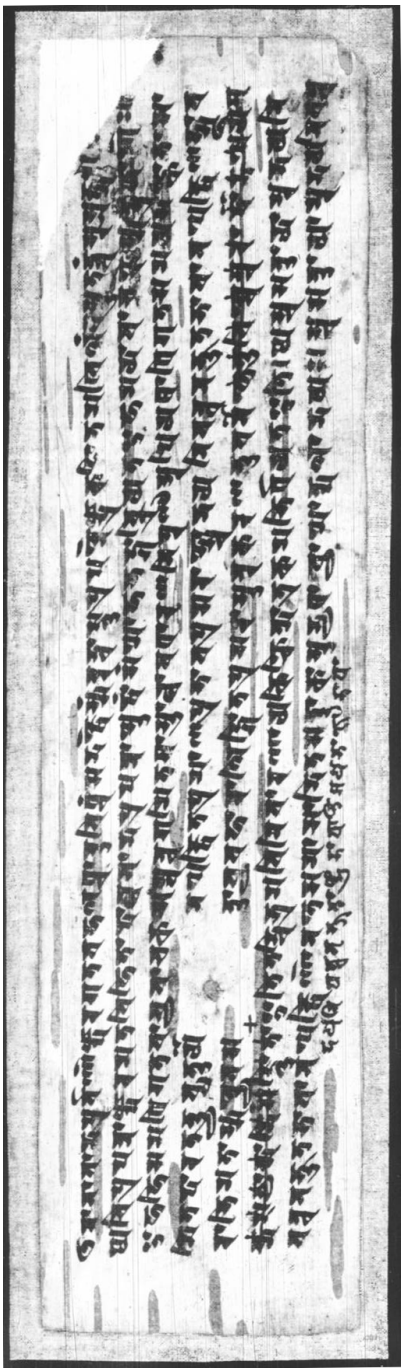
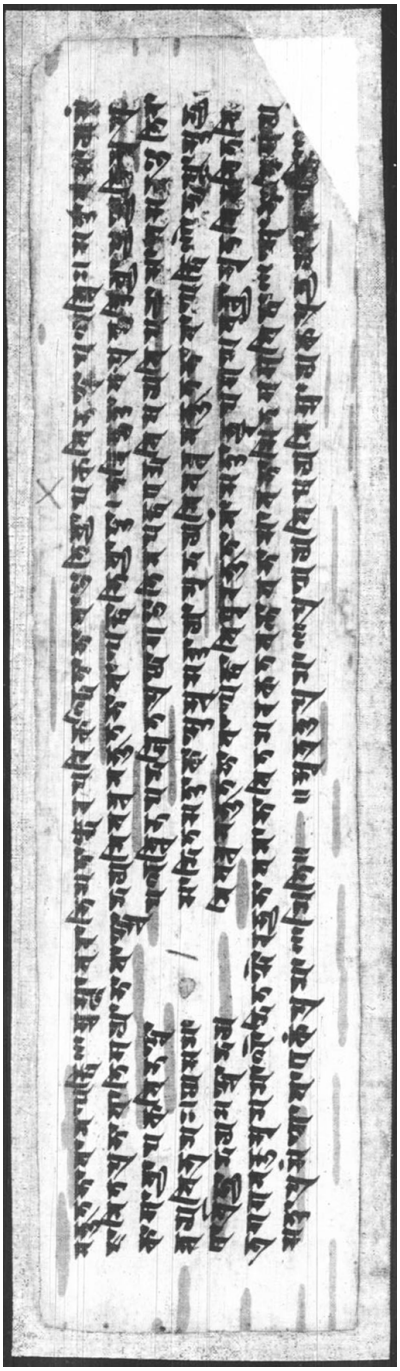


Gilgit Fragment No. 42 — fol. *1 *recto*



Gilgit Fragment No. 42 — fol. *1 *verso*