

PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE BRITISH LIBRARY OF DOCUMENTS AND MANUSCRIPTS FROM SIR AUREL STEIN'S FOURTH CENTRAL ASIAN EXPEDITION

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ON 1 September 1995, shortly before I returned to China from a visit to the British Library on a British Academy K. C. Wong Fellowship, a box containing photographs of documents and manuscripts from Sir Aurel Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition (1930-1) was rediscovered in the Oriental and India Office Collections of the British Library. Through the kindness of Frances Wood, Susan Whitfield and Graham Hutt of the British Library I was able to examine these photographs as part of our joint project on Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition. It is well known that the originals of the documents and manuscripts acquired by Stein during his fourth Central Asian expedition, mostly in Chinese, *Kharoṣṭhī* and *Brāhmī*, were confiscated in China in 1931 and have since disappeared. Needless to say, these photographs have been and will probably continue to be the only basis for the study of Stein's palaeographic finds from that ill-fated expedition. Before his final departure from China, Stein had taken pains to have these documents and manuscripts photographed and thereby preserved them from total loss. He had also done all he could before his death to publish these photographs in Europe for the benefit of Central Asian scholarship, but for various reasons most of them have not been seen to date. The opportunity to publish these photographs here will therefore benefit academics as well as fulfilling Stein's unrealized expectations. I have the honour to be entrusted with preparing introductory notes on these photographs to provide background material for further studies. My notes are offered here in a preliminary form and my detailed report will be published later.

I. THE ORIGIN OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The box discovered in the British Library on 1 September 1995 contained, among other items, the following photographs of documents and manuscripts from Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition and some related attachments:

(1) Several bundles of prints representing at least four complete sets of the photographs of documents and one manuscript printed at different stages from both original and improved negatives (numbered T.O.15-37, 39-46). A photograph of a wood carving (T.O.38) was also included. These prints might have originally been kept

in the now empty envelopes and wrapping paper contained in the same box as listed below.

(2) A case containing twelve improved glass negatives (T.O.15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 37).

(3) A letter to Stein, dated 14 October 1931, from the Superintendent of the Photo-Mechanical and Lithographic Department of the Thomason Civil Engineering College at Roorkee, U.P., concerning four photographs of Chinese documents printed from the improved negatives. Stein wrote on the envelope 'Chinese documents improved' and F. H. Andrews's note in a later date on this letter indicated that these photographs were those numbered T.O.15, 16, 26, 37 and had been sent to Stein in Beirut in January 1938.

(4) A large envelope which Stein annotated 'Photographs of Kharosthi, Chinese and Brahmi documents collected on journey of 1930-31' and 'Chinese, printed by Fleming, 1935'.

(5) A piece of wrapping paper on which Stein wrote '1/2 plate', 'Photos of documents, Brahmi, Kharosthi, Chinese collected 1930-31', etc.

(6) An envelope from R. B. Fleming & Co. in London to Stein care of F. H. Andrews. The latter wrote on the back of the envelope 'Documents' and 'Printed by Fleming, 1937'.

To explain the origin of these photographs, it is necessary first to describe the circumstances of Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition of August 1930 to July 1931. Owing to the obstacles thrown in his way by the then Central and Provincial Governments of China, and more decisively, by China's scientific and cultural bodies at the high tide of the nationalist movement, the expedition encountered numerous difficulties from start to finish.¹ In order to meet the strong objection raised by the Chinese, before entering China Stein had given a formal undertaking not to remove any archaeological finds from the country without the prior consent of the Chinese authorities. This assurance was eventually communicated to the Chinese Government through the British Legation at Peking.² From 11 November 1930 to April 1931, under the surveillance of Chinese official representatives, Stein visited the Taklamakan Desert for the last time. In the course of his journey he exerted every effort to carry out archaeological, geographical and meteorological investigations. It was during his journey from Khotan to Charkhlik that he acquired 159 packages of antiquities, including several batches of documents and manuscripts in Chinese, *Kharoṣṭhī*, *Brāhmī* and Turkic.

In view of the repeated orders from both Central and Provincial Governments of China during his journey that he take no antiquities out of China, and in accordance with his own undertaking not to remove any finds without the prior consent of the Chinese Government, Stein was faced with a problem on his return to the British Consulate at Kashgar on 25 April 1931. While he proposed to leave all the antiquities at the British Consulate pending Chinese approval of their being moved temporarily to the West for examination,³ there was a strong possibility that this permission would never be given. Accordingly, he arranged for the most important parts of documents and manuscripts to be photographed in order to guard against the failure of his efforts.



Fig. 1. Aurel Stein at Srinagar, November 1928. OIOC, Photo 392/33(6)

For the purpose of seeking the help of Ma Shaowu, *Tao-tai* (Commissioner) of Kashgar, Stein had 'prepared [a] brief inventory of objects to be shown to *Tao-tai*' during the evening of 3 May 1931.⁴ Rough and disorderly though it was, this inventory (entitled 'List of Ancient Objects Brought to, or Found on the Surface by, Sir Aurel Stein during His Journey from Khotan to Charkhlik'⁵) was the only inventory of antiquities from Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition. The documents and manuscripts described in the list are given in Table I:

TABLE I: DOCUMENTS AND MANUSCRIPTS DESCRIBED IN 'LIST OF ANCIENT OBJECTS BROUGHT TO, OR FOUND ON THE SURFACE BY, SIR AUREL STEIN DURING HIS JOURNEY FROM KHOTAN TO CHARKHLIK'

I. <i>Objects acquired by purchase</i>	
Wooden tablets inscribed in Kharosthi (Indian)	2
Manuscript fragments in Indian script, packets (paper)	3
Manuscript fragments in Indian and Tibetan scripts (paper), packet	1
Packet of small manuscript fragments (Indian) with beads and wood carving	1
II. <i>Objects recovered on or near the surface of sites</i>	
A. Niya Site: Wooden tablets inscribed in Kharosthi (Indian), including fragments	19
Wooden tablets inscribed in Kharosthi (Indian), with writing completely effaced	27
Wooden slips (fragmentary except 1) with Chinese characters	27
...	
D. Vash-shahri Site: Turki manuscript leaves, packet	1

On the next day, Stein and George Sherriff, British Consul General at Kashgar, invited Ma Shaowu to the British Consulate to inspect the antiquities. In his diary entry for 4 May 1931, Stein recorded:

Arranged 'antiques', a poor show, for *Tao-tai*'s inspection... *Tao-tai* arrived an hour later,... He inspected stuccoes & documents on wood, showing mild interest in Chinese slips and coins. Arranged with his approval that a few selected specimens of tablets & stuccoes are to be sent to Chairman, along with list, to enable him to secure Nanking's orders; C. G. to request on my behalf that permission for removal of objects for study may be granted on my written undertaking that objects will be transmitted without undue delay to any place in China if desired by Chinese authorities... Photos, all the more needed.⁶

Though an experiment had been made on 30 April, Stein and Sherriff formally started taking photographs of the documents and manuscripts on 5 May, the day after the *Tao-tai*'s inspection. The process of photographing and developing the prints, which was finished on May 16, can be outlined as follows from Stein's Diary and Account Book:

- (1) 30 April 1931: 'Pressing tasks on Dak constantly interrupted by development of negatives, photo taken in garden and experimental exposures of wooden documents.'⁷
- (2) 5 May 1931: 'Capt. Sh. [Sherriff] starts photographing of wooden documents with specimens for *Tao-tai* & succeeds on Fast Exc. films remarkably. Constant interruption.'⁸
- (3) 6 May 1931: 'Photographing of wooden documents, arranging of tablets takes up my time during intervals.'⁹

(4) 8 May 1931: 'Busy during intervals of photo & misc. work with fairing my memorandum on Nanking Foreign Minister's obstructions & National Commission's accusations... More photos taken of Brahmi (Khotanese) rolls.'¹⁰

(5) 11 May 1931: 'Photographing of MSS from Achma, etc., continued.'¹¹

(6) 12 May 1931: 'Photos taken of remaining MSS by Sheriff. Then Niya negatives developed.'¹²

(7) 15 May 1931 (Account Book): Paid 15 rupees at Kashgar for 'printing of 60 half plates & 30 1/4 plates photos'.¹³

(8) 16 May 1931: 'During afternoon final batch of MS photos printed.'¹⁴

On the same day as the photography was completed, Stein wrote to his friend F. H. Andrews to report on the work:

In accordance with the undertaking given by me last August the antiquities collected or found are being deposited at the Consulate here, pending a decision by the Chinese authorities as to their disposal. In the communications addressed to the *Tao-tai* & 'Chairman' as well as to the British Minister through the Consul General the necessity of permitting the removal, anyhow for a time, of all MSS and documents to London, in the interest of examination and study, has been strongly emphasized. I enclose a rough list of all objects as sent to *Tao-tai* and Minister. They were all shown to the former when he came here on May 5th. Let me add that thanks to the kind help of Capt. Sherriff, who is a great photographer, photos were obtained of all MSS and tablets. The Chinese 'slips' from the Niya Site may prove of special interest.¹⁵

Stein left Kashgar for India on 18 May 1931. With him he took all the photographs and glass negatives taken both on his expedition and at Kashgar but, as agreed, no archaeological finds. For lack of a larger camera, colour-sensitive orthochromatic plates, etc., the photographs of documents and manuscripts taken at Kashgar did not satisfy Stein. Not long after he had returned to Srinagar on 2 July 1931, he sent these unsatisfactory negatives, along with hundreds of other photographs taken on the journey, to the Thomason Civil Engineering College at Roorkee, Uttar Pradesh, for 'improvement'. The negatives of *Kharoṣṭhī* and Chinese documents were improved in batches. The *Kharoṣṭhī* group might be the first batch to have been improved in view of the fact that Stein sent eleven improved prints of *Kharoṣṭhī* documents to E. J. Rapson at Cambridge as early as 18 September 1931.¹⁶ The improved Chinese negatives and prints were ready in October 1931, as indicated by a letter dated 14 October 1931 from the Superintendent of the Photo-Mechanical and Lithographic Department of the Thomason College to Stein:

In continuation of my D. O. letter dated 6th October 1931, I beg to send herewith 4 proofs of the new negatives made of the so called Chinese Writings. If these are approved, any number of copies can be supplied. I wonder these would meet your approval.¹⁷

It seems that the so-called 'improvement' meant nothing but retouching the scripts with a pen-like instrument by someone undoubtedly ignorant of Chinese or *Kharoṣṭhī* so as to obtain a set of new negatives from the original ones. As a result of such improvement some strokes which were dim on the original negatives or photographs have been made

bold. It should be recognized that this kind of improvement was by no means an ideal remedy, at least in the case of the photographs of Chinese documents. The improved prints might account for the fact that even such great Sinologists as Lionel Giles and Henri Maspero felt awkward when they were engaged in decipherment of the Chinese documents.

Evidently Stein highly valued both negatives and prints of these photographs. Lists of deposits in the Bodleian Library written by Stein between 1932 and 1935 indicate the whereabouts of the negatives or prints in that period, and can be summarized as follows:

(1) According to a list of papers, photographs, diaries, etc., left in a small attaché case at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, written by Stein in September 1932, included were 'Photos of wooden and other documents collected 1931', etc.¹⁸

(2) According to Stein's list written on 28 October 1932, included in his case No. 23 in Kashmir were 'Prints of Brahmi MSS', 'Prints, defective, from MS negatives', 'Chinese docs. improved prints', 'Kharosthi & Chinese MS photos', etc.¹⁹

(3) According to Stein's list of books packed for Oxford written on 18 October 1933, 'Photos of Chinese & Khar. MSS', etc., were included in case 11.²⁰

(4) According to Stein's list of deposits in the 'British Museum wallcase on right' written on 9 November 1934, included were 'Negatives of 1931-32 and 1932-33 Journeys (P. and P. O.)', 'Negatives of Turkestan Journey, 1930-31 (T.)', 'T. Halfplate negatives of Turkestan, 1930-31', 'Duplicates, etc., 2 packets; 1 marked "Chinese, printed by Fleming, 1935"', etc.²¹

(5) According to Stein's list of packets of prints left at 22 Manor Place, Oxford, written in May 1935, included in the packets were 'Photos of documents, Brahmi, Kharosthi, Chinese, collected 1930-31', 'Duplicates, etc., 2 packets; 1 marked "Chinese, printed by Fleming, 1935, etc."' ²²

Item (4) suggests that the letter 'T' used by Stein in numbering the photographs meant 'Turkestan'. By comparing the contents mentioned in the lists of deposits with those of the newly recovered box, it is easy to see that part of the former were included in the latter. The box recovered in the British Library might be the one previously preserved in the British Museum in the charge of F. H. Andrews.²³

After Stein left Kashgar there was a series of negotiations between the British Consulate at Kashgar and the Provincial Government at Urumqi, as well as between the British Legation at Peking and China's National Government at Nanking, in regard to the question of ultimate disposal of the antiquities deposited at the British Consulate by Stein. Owing to the uncompromising stand of the Chinese side, N. Fitzmaurice, who succeeded Sherriff as Consul General, handed the antiquities in question over to Ma Shaowu on 21 November 1931. From that day on, the whereabouts of the originals have been unknown.²⁴ I have searched unsuccessfully for them in China for many years. Ironically, the need for the Chinese themselves to preserve China's cultural relics was the pretext for confiscating Stein's collection, but now that the original antiquities have been lost in China, we Chinese have to study the documents and manuscripts on the basis of photographs alone. There was no real preservation of cultural relics in old China.

TABLE II: CONTENTS OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF DOCUMENTS AND
MANUSCRIPTS FROM STEIN'S FOURTH CENTRAL ASIAN EXPEDITION

<i>Serial numbers of the photographs</i>	<i>Descriptions of the photographs</i>	<i>Site numbers on the photographs</i>
T.O.15	Chinese documents on wooden slips	N.XIV.ii.6 N.XIV.ii.9, 10 N.XIV.ii.3 N.XIV.ii.2
T.O.16	Chinese documents on wooden slips	N.XIV.ii.1 N.XIV.ii. N.XIV.ii.7 N.XIV.ii.5 N.XIV.ii.17 N.XIV.ii.14 N.XIV.11
T.O.17	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	N.R.10
T.O.18	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	N.R.39 N.VIII N.R.2
T.O.19	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	N.R. N.R.26, 27
T.O.20	Brahmi (Khotanese) documents on paper	Achma (two fragments)
T.O.21	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	N. (Char.) 1 N.R.32 N. (Char.) 2
T.O.22	Kharosthi document on wooden tablet	N.R. (special shot, cf. T.O.19)
T.O.23	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	N.R.15 N.R.16
T.O.24	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	N.R.33 N.R.9
T.O.25	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	N.R.10 N.R.40
T.O.26	Kharosthi document on wooden tablet Chinese documents on wooden slips	N.R.6 N.XIV.11.4 N.XIV.12.8
T.O.27	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	N.xxiii (two tablets)
T.O.28	Kharosthi documents on wooden tablets	No number (three tablets)
T.O.29	Brahmi (bilingual) manuscript on paper	Domoko.A.1
T.O.30	Brahmi (bilingual) manuscript on paper	Domoko.A.2
T.O.31	Brahmi (bilingual) manuscript on paper	Domoko.A.3
T.O.32	Brahmi manuscripts on paper	Achma.4 (three fragments)
T.O.33	Brahmi manuscripts on paper	Achma.4 (two fragments)
T.O.34	Brahmi (Khotanese) document on paper	Domoko.A.4
T.O.35	Brahmi manuscripts on paper	Achma.1 (two fragments)
T.O.36	Brahmi manuscripts on paper	Achma.3 (two fragments)
T.O.37	Chinese documents	N.XIV.15 N.XIV.21 N.XIV.20 N.XIV.ii.18 N.XIV.ii.13 N.XIV.ii.12 N.XIV.ii.16 N.XIV.ii.19 N.II.1 N.II.2 N.II.3 N.II.4

TABLE II (cont.)

<i>Serial numbers of the photographs</i>	<i>Descriptions of the photographs</i>	<i>Site numbers on the photographs</i>
T.O.38	(Wooden carving representing a three-headed bodhisattva)	
T.O.39	Brahmi manuscripts on paper	No number (two fragments)
T.O.40	Brahmi manuscripts on paper	Achma.6 (three fragments)
T.O.41	Brahmi (bilingual) manuscript	Domoko.B.1
T.O.42	Brahmi (bilingual) manuscript on paper	Domoko.B.2
T.O.43	Brahmi (bilingual) manuscript on paper	Domoko.B.3
T.O.44	Brahmi manuscripts on paper	Achma.5 (two fragments)
T.O.45	Brahmi (bilingual) manuscript on paper	Domoko.B.4
	Chinese-Brahmi (Chinese-Khotanese bilingual) documents on paper	Domoko.C
		Domoko.D
T.O.46	Brahmi document on wooden tablet	Domoko.E
	Brahmi (Khotanese) document on paper	Domoko.F
	Brahmi document on wooden tablet	Domoko.G

TABLE III: CLASSIFICATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

<i>Photograph groups</i>	<i>Photograph numbers</i>
I. Chinese group	T.O.15, 16, 26 (partly), 37, 45 (partly)
II. Kharosthi group	T.O.17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 (partly), 27, 28
III. Brahmi group	T.O.20, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45 (partly), 46

Photograph T.O.26 shows two Chinese slips and one Kharosthi tablet. Photograph T.O.45 shows a Brahmi manuscript and two fragments of Chinese-Brahmi (Chinese-Khotanese bilingual) documents.

II. THE CONTENTS OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

Altogether thirty-two photographs (T.O.15-46) were found in the British Library. Among them, all but one are photographs of documents and manuscripts. The only exception (T.O.38) represents a wood carving of a three-headed bodhisattva, very likely being the wood carving in the 'packet of small manuscript fragments (Indian) with beads and wood carving' as described in Stein's list of 3 May 1931. The contents of the photographs are shown in Table II.

Owing to limited space, I have to omit information as to where the documents and manuscripts listed in Table II were found, but this will be discussed in my detailed report. Their different languages and scripts naturally divide the thirty-one photographs into three groups. These are summarized in Table III.

Soon after Stein had returned from his fourth Central Asian expedition, he began to look for the most competent scholars in Europe to decipher the photographs of the Chinese, *Kharoṣṭhī* and *Brāhmī* groups respectively, just as he had previously done for the palaeographic finds from his three earlier Central Asian expeditions.

III. THE DECIPHERMENT OF THE CHINESE GROUP OF PHOTOGRAPHS

From Table III we see that three photographs show only Chinese texts (T.O.15, 16, 37) and two a mixture of Chinese and other texts (T.O.26, 45). When Stein tried to find a collaborator in Europe to decipher the Chinese documents on the photographs, the best choice should have been Henri Maspero in Paris. Maspero had succeeded Édouard Chavannes as Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at the Collège de France in 1921 and had since been engaged in the decipherment and interpretation of the Chinese documents from Stein's third Central Asian expeditions. But in view of Maspero's slow progress in this tough job, Stein at first chose Lionel Giles of the British Museum, who was then compiling the descriptive catalogue of Stein's Dunhuang manuscripts. On 18 November 1931, Stein wrote from Bombay to Giles:

I am turning to you with these lines for the friendly help with regard to a small number of Chinese documents on wood which I was able to recover last winter on my short visit to the Niya site. You are no doubt fully aware of the obstacles which stood in the way of any systematic excavations. Nevertheless we managed, by stealth as it were, to clear some structures which I knew I had not cleared completely on my previous visits. This was particularly the case at the comparatively large but badly eroded building, N.XIV, from which I had recovered in 1901 that interesting set of presentation labels published by Chavannes in my *Ancient Khotan*.²⁵

These documents and a few other fragmentary slips had to be deposited at the Kashgar Consulate pending permission from the Chinese Authorities for their examination in Europe. This was in accordance with the promise I had given through the British Minister. Being aware of the nationalist objections likely to be raised, I took care to have these documents as well as other written materials photographed at Kashgar before my return. The photographs which Captain Sherriff, the Consul General, very kindly made, have not been as clear as one would have wished. But we had no orthochromatic plates, and faded writing on wood is always difficult to reproduce. There is little hope of the original becoming accessible.

However, I have now secured from the Photo-litho Department of the Thomason [*sic*] College better prints which I enclose herewith. I eagerly wish that it may be possible for you, eventually with the help of some Chinese scholars in London, to decipher them as far as their condition may permit. I should feel most grateful for this collaboration. But in case you prefer to let some other Sinologue try his hand upon this task, I should also gratefully accept such an arrangement. It had been impossible for me to consult at Kashgar or on the way any Chinese about these writings. There would have been obvious reasons against such a course, even if the species of *literatus* under the blessings of the present regime were not on the point of extinction.²⁶

The so-called 'better prints' from the Thomason College which he enclosed might be the 'improved' photographs of the Chinese documents, most likely being those numbered T.O.15, 16, 26 and 37. They were so misleading that Giles felt it was impossible to decipher the documents on the basis of them. Sixteen months later, on 13 March 1933, Giles wrote to Stein to complain of the difficulties. Nevertheless, during this period he was able to identify some words on the Chinese wooden slips for Stein, such as the term *Jingjue* (Ching-chueh 精絕: one of the ancient Central Asian states

situated around the Niya site) which appeared in the wooden slip numbered N.II.2 on the photograph T.O.37. On 8 May 1933, Stein replied to Giles from Srinagar:

Please excuse my not having thanked you sooner for your kind letter of March 13th. It reached me just before I left Bushire for some weeks of archaeological work in Swat on the Indian North West frontier. There I was constantly on the move and unable to attend to my ever plentiful correspondence.

It was not a surprise to me to learn from your letter of the difficulties presented by the archaic [*sic*] of the writing in those Chinese tablets from the Niya site. Ever since that lamented great scholar Chavannes started thirty years ago his collaborations on the corresponding Chinese finds of my first expedition I was aware of the need of expert Chinese help for the decipherment of such records.

I believe it would not be too difficult for you to secure such help from some competent Chinese scholar of your acquaintance now in England or on the continent. I should be quite glad to meet the expenses arising from such reasonable compensation as you might think proper to offer for this assistance. Chavannes' transcriptions and translations of similar Chinese documents published in Appendices of *Ancient Khotan* and *Serindia* would probably prove helpful towards the interpretation. I therefore earnestly hope that helped by the Chinese expert you will be kindly prepared to undertake this task. I am very anxious to utilise whatever local or other data could be gathered from those documents in my future report for supplementing the information I had given before as regards ancient *Ching-chueh*. I am very glad to see that my previous Location of *Ching-chueh* at the Niya site (see *Serindia* and *Innermost Asia*) is now confirmed by documentary evidence.²⁷

In spite of Stein's instigation and encouragement, Giles failed to accomplish this task and eventually gave up. Such being the case, Stein had to turn to Maspero in Paris for help. On 12 March 1935, Stein wrote from Oxford to Maspero:

I am very glad to send you herewith three photographs of the Chinese wooden records recovered by me at the Niya site (*Ching-chueh*) on my last visit to that site in 1931. The originals unfortunately had to be left at Kashgar in Chinese hands and probably are by now destroyed. You would add another great service to the researches bearing on the early Chinese dominion in Central Asia if you could very kindly undertake the publication of these records.

Those found at the ruin N.XIV may claim a special interest as my renewed examination of that large residence has furnished various indications of the same having been occupied by the local chief of that small territory. This helps to explain the character of the documents previously discovered at that ruin (see *Serindia*, i, p. 218 sq.) and published in Chavannes' *Documents Chinois*. Your decipherment of the newly found slips would, I am sure, [be] of great interest.²⁸

The 'three photographs of the Chinese wooden records' enclosed were probably Chinese photographs T.O.15, 16 and 37. In his reply of 27 March 1935, Maspero accepted Stein's suggestion. In a letter to Maspero from Oxford, dated 2 April 1935, Stein wrote:

I wish to thank you very heartily for your welcome letter of the 27th ult. ...

I am delighted to learn that you will be able to decipher the slips of which I brought back

photographs from my fourth journey, and are hoping to include them in the publication. Those from N.XIV might prove of distinct interest.²⁹

The forthcoming 'publication' mentioned in this letter was that containing the results of Maspero's decipherment of the Chinese documents recovered by Stein during his third Central Asian expedition. On 1 April 1935, Maspero wrote to Stein to express his willingness to accept Stein's suggestion. Stein's reply to Maspero from Oxford, dated 24 April, made a further request:

Please excuse my not having thanked you sooner for your welcome letter of the 1st inst.

I am most pleased to know that you are prepared to undertake the decipherment and publication of the documents recovered in 1931 – from the photographs sent to you – and shall be very grateful for any abstract to translations or notes about their contents which you may kindly be willing to let me have.³⁰

This is the last letter we have found referring to the photographs of the Chinese documents. We have been unable to discover whether Maspero deciphered these photographs but, certainly, contrary to Stein's wish, no transcriptions of them were included in Maspero's posthumous work *Les Documents chinois de la troisième expédition de Sir Aurel Stein en Asie centrale*. Though Maspero finished this book in 1936, for various reasons it was not until 1953 that it was eventually published by the Trustees of the British Museum.³¹

It should be repeated that, according to a note by F. H. Andrews, four improved photographs of Chinese documents, T. O.15, 16, 26 and 37, were sent to Stein in Beirut in January 1938 when he was travelling in the Middle East.³² We have no idea of what use they might have been to Stein. However, we can surmise that Stein highly valued these unpublished photographs of Chinese documents.

In view of the importance of the Chinese documents acquired by Stein during his fourth Central Asian expedition, I have myself attempted a decipherment of them based on the photographs now preserved in the British Library. My conclusions are published in Vol. III (1997) of the *Journal of Dunhuang and Turfan Studies*.³³

IV. THE DECIPHERMENT OF THE *KHAROṢṬHĪ* GROUP OF PHOTOGRAPHS

As Table III illustrates, the *Kharoṣṭhī* group consists of eleven photographs (T.O. 17–19, 21–28), of which T.O.26 shows two Chinese wooden slips and one *Kharoṣṭhī* tablet. Stein's first choice of collaborator in the decipherment of the *Kharoṣṭhī* documents was, of course, Professor E. J. Rapson of Cambridge who had deciphered and published, in collaboration with E. Senart, A. M. Boyer and P. S. Noble, 764 *Kharoṣṭhī* documents mainly from Stein's three former Central Asian expeditions.³⁴ On 3 July 1931, the day following his return from his expedition, Stein wrote from Srinagar to Rapson in Cambridge and discussed the possibility of renewed collaboration. Rapson replied on July 29:

It was a great pleasure to receive your extremely kind letter of the 3rd of this month. Please accept my best thanks for all your congratulations & good wishes...

With regard to your discovery of additional Kharoshthi documents, of course I will most gladly examine the photographs & let you have a report on them. Whether I could possibly at the present time undertake to publish them will depend partly on the photographs & partly on the number of documents. I must not embark on any enterprise which will take me away from that sadly delayed Vol. II of the *History of India*. I have now by far the greater part of the volume in manuscript; but many parts of it are still chaotic; & I am making the most of the Long Vacation to attempt to introduce some sort of order.

It is no slight task to evolve a coherent & satisfactory arrangement out of all this confused mass of fragmentary materials.³⁵

On 18 September 1931, Stein wrote again to Rapson to explain the background:

Please excuse the delay in thanking you for your kind letter of July 29 which was very welcome. I had to wait all these weeks for the prints of the photographs which had been taken at Kashgar from the better preserved Kharoshthi documents, and as for the sake of decent prints the negatives had been sent, with hundreds of others taken on the journey, to the photographic establishment of the Thomason College, Roorkee, it took a long time to get the work done. In India distance encourages procrastination.

I feel sincerely grateful to you for your kind offer to examine the photographs and to let me have a report on them. I fully understand that you could not say anything as to publication until you had seen the photographs. As the enclosure shows, there are altogether 11 prints showing only 20 separate pieces. Even among these there are some too fragmentary or too much effaced to be useful. Captain Sherriff, the Consul General, who kindly did the photographing, is very good at this work, but without colour-sensitive plates such as would be used at home for such objects could get no better results.

Quite a number of documents were found by pure chance on the surface of a 'tamarisk cone' scattered about just as some 'treasure-seeker' had thrown them down perhaps a year or two before. Hence two or three dozen of these tablets (marked N.R.) had become badly splintered or effaced. Some of them if examined in the original might perhaps prove legible to a limited extent. But photographing would have yielded no useful result. You will be able to judge of this from those which could be photographed.

The rest were picked up secretly as it were at or near ruined dwellings which I revisited. The presence of two Chinese subordinates specially sent to prevent excavations made any systematic search impossible by frightening the few labourers I could take to the Niya Site. It is there that all the tablets were secured, except the oblong double-tablet, marked Char. 1 and 2, which was clandestinely sold to me at Charchen. I have little doubt that it was brought also from the Niya Site. Very poor as these materials are, I feel glad that at least photographs were secured. I felt bound by the promise given through the Minister to leave these tablets, with what Brahmi MS remains I had been able to secure by purchase, with the Consul General at Kashgar, pending official permission to take them out of China. This permission with a view to *temporary* removal to England for study was duly applied for through the Consul General in a letter addressed to the British Minister at Peking.

It was definitely stated that after examination the materials would be placed at the disposal of the Chinese Government for deposit wherever they may think fit. From a letter of Capt. Sherriff received a few days ago I learn that no reply has yet reached Kashgar as to the information which the Legation may have been able to obtain from the Nanking Government. Meanwhile the provincial governor has desired the Consul General to send the antiquities to Urumchi through the Kashgar *Tao-Yin* [Commissioner]. The C. G. has protested against this pending instructions from the Central Government, but whether he will be able to hold out is doubtful. It is easy to foresee that if the documents, etc., are sent to Urumchi their complete disappearance is most likely.³⁶

The eleven photographs enclosed must have been the improved prints, for in a letter to Sherriff, dated 4 October 1931, Stein wrote:

All the more grateful I must be to you for your kindly given expert help in securing photographic records. Those of Kharoshthi documents have gone to Prof. Rapson for study in improved prints.³⁷

On 18 October 1931, Rapson replied to Stein from Cambridge:

Your most interesting letter of 18 Sept. & the packet containing 11 photographs of Kharoshthi documents came together by the last mail but one. I was obliged to postpone my examination of the documents on account of pressure of work; but I have now been able to devote a Sunday morning to them. Some are quite distinct & can be read almost completely; others which are less clear will, I hope, yield to patient examination; others are unfortunately hopeless. On the whole the collection is so admirably photographed that it will be quite worth while to publish an account of it. In the meantime I propose to send you my transliteration with notes so soon as I can complete it to the best of my ability. It will be most interesting to compare the new documents with the old. A glance is sufficient to show that we have to do with some very familiar acquaintances.

How tantalising it is to think that the originals & hundreds of other historical documents are, in all probability, doomed to be lost. What you have contrived to rescue in such adverse circumstances is truly wonderful.³⁸

Busy as he was, Rapson had had no time to attend to this matter before January 1933, when Andrews asked Rapson on Stein's behalf about the progress of the decipherment. In consequence of this, on 22 January 1933 Rapson compiled a preliminary report on the eleven photographs for Stein's use. This report was entitled 'Photographs of Kharosthi Documents Received from Sir Aurel Stein', with numbering, description and subject of the newly recovered *Kharoṣṭhī* documents.³⁹ Underneath the title of the report Rapson noted 'The documents are numbered in continuation of those already published in *Kharosthi Inscriptions (Kh. I)*.' As the documents published in *Kharosthi Inscriptions* were numbered 1-764, Rapson gave the new documents the numbers 765-782. A collation of Rapson's numbers with Stein's site and photograph numbers is given in Table IV.

Three days later, on 25 January 1933, Rapson wrote to Stein from Cambridge:

TABLE IV: *KHAROṢṬHĪ* DOCUMENTS NUMBERED BY E. J. RAPSON IN HIS REPORT 'PHOTOGRAPHS OF KHAROSTHI DOCUMENTS RECEIVED FROM SIR AUREL STEIN'

<i>Rapson's serial numbers</i>	<i>Stein's site numbers</i>	<i>Photograph numbers</i>
765	(N.01)	T.O.28
766	(N.02)	T.O.28
767	(N.03)	T.O.22 (also T.O.19 – upper figure)
768	N.VIII	T.O.18
769	N.XXIII	T.O.27
770	N.R.2	T.O.18
771	N.R.6	T.O.26
772	N.R.9	T.O.24
773	N.R.10	T.O.17
774	N.R.15	T.O.23
775	N.R.16	T.O.23
776	N.R.19	T.O.25
777	N.R.26, 27	T.O.19
778	N.R.32	T.O.21
779	N.R.33	T.O.24
780	N.R.39	T.O.17
781	N.R.40	T.O.25
782	N. (Char.) 1, 2	T.O.21

Last week Andrews told me that you would be glad to have such information as is at present possible concerning the Kharosthi tablets from the Niya site of which you have sent me photographs. My intention is to publish them eventually – when I can find time to put them into proper shape – in continuation of those already published in *Kharosthi Inscriptions*; & I have numbered them accordingly. I shall hope to be able to send you my work in manuscript: & if you will kindly preface it with such observations as you think desirable, it will enhance its value.

But at present I am overwhelmed. We have had all sorts of difficulties & disappointments in the preparation of that long over-due Vol. II of the *Camb. Hist of India*; & I must devote all my available energies to the attempt – which sometimes seems almost hopeless – to get things right...

To look to a brighter aspect of affairs. You will be interested to learn that I have produced a very promising pupil – T. Burrow of Christ's College – who is specialising on the language of your Kharosthi Inscriptions as his thesis for the Ph.D. He has already made some very interesting discoveries; & I have great hopes of him in the future. He is a most persistent worker; & he has a flair for philological puzzles.

As you will see, seven of your photographs – my nos 765, 767, 769, 770, 771, 777, 782 – are sufficient to give one a fairly good idea of the purport of the originals. Possibly some of the others may yield in time more than I have yet been able to extract from them.⁴⁰

Enclosed in this letter was the preliminary report. Both Rapson's letter of 25 January and his report of 23 January apparently reached Stein in due time as Stein acknowledged their receipt in his letter to Rapson from Bushire on 24 February 1933:

It is very gratifying to find that you have been able to make out so much of those documents which

I could submit to you, alas, only in photographs. Your comments are amply sufficient for my report & in fact the first contribution towards it.⁴¹

But on 17 August 1934 Stein wrote to Rapson from Austria to inquire once again about the *Kharoṣṭhī* documents in the photographs. In September 1934 Rapson replied to Stein from Cambridge:

It was a great pleasure to receive your kind letter of 17 Aug...

My notes on the Kharoshti inscriptions, of which you sent me photographs, were sent to you on 25 Jan., 1933, at Andrews' request; & you acknowledged their receipt in your letter addressed from Bushire on 24 Feb...

If you cannot find my notes, no doubt I shall be able to reproduce them from my rough copies...⁴²

Apparently Rapson himself never again took up this matter, but the deciphering work initiated by him was carried on by his pupil Thomas Burrow. Rapson died at Cambridge on 3 October 1937.⁴³ Two months later, on 6 December 1937, Stein wrote from London to Burrow:

The labours which you have so successfully devoted to the study of the Kharoshthi documents recovered on my Central Asian journeys induce me to enquire whether you would be prepared to undertake the study and eventual publication of a small number of Kharoshti records on wood which I was able to collect in 1931 on a renewed short visit to the Niya site. As you are probably aware, Chinese Nationalist obstruction made any systematic excavation impossible on that occasion. However, I succeeded in recovering a dozen or so of tablets. I was obliged to leave them at the Kashgar Consulate in accordance with a promise I had given of removing any antiquities collected on that journey only with the permission of the Chinese authorities. The efforts made by Captain Sherriff, to secure this proved in vain, and these Kharosthi documents had ultimately to be handed up by me into the precarious keeping of the local Tao-tai. In all probability they have been lost during the subsequent revolutionary troubles.

I had, however, taken the precaution of having photographs prepared with the kind help of Captain Sherriff. The negatives are at present at my collection in the British Museum. Prints of them were transmitted by me in 1932 to the late Professor Rapson, but I much doubt whether he was ever able to occupy himself with them.

In case you could kindly undertake the examination and eventual publication of these documents I shall be very happy to place prints from the available negatives at your disposal.

I was very pleased to learn of your appointment to the Staff of the British Museum, and hope that before my return to the Near East I may have the pleasure of making your personal acquaintance. Mr F. H. Andrews, working in the ceramic Basement on finds from my latest Persian expedition will be ready to hand to You prints of the above documents whenever applied for.⁴⁴

It was in this same year that Burrow published his famous article 'Further Kharosthi Documents from Niya'.⁴⁵ Burrow's article was apparently based on Rapson's preliminary report and followed the numbers given by Rapson (765–782). Most likely his article had

been completed before Stein's letter reached him. At the beginning of his article Burrow declared:

The following documents were discovered by Sir Aurel Stein in his last Central Asian expedition, in 1930 [*sic*]. Since he was not allowed by local authorities to bring anything out of the country on that occasion, these texts are edited from photographs. The originals are presumably not likely to be seen again.

Although this article was not accompanied by any photographs, it can be regarded as the only previous publication of the *Kharoṣṭhī* documents from Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition.

V. THE DECIPHERMENT OF THE *BRĀHMĪ* GROUP OF PHOTOGRAPHS

We can see from Table III that seventeen photographs are included in the *Brāhmī* Group (T.O.20, 29-36, 39-46). Among them is the photograph T.O.45 showing a *Brāhmī* manuscript and two Chinese-Khotanese bilingual documents.

Not long after he returned from expedition, on 21 July 1931, Stein wrote from Mohand Marg to Professor Sten Konow of Oslo University, one of the collaborators in the decipherment of the Khotanese materials recovered from Stein's three former Central Asian expeditions:

The enclosed copy of a note I felt obliged to send to the *Times* in view of the scrappy & not always accurate news which newspaper correspondents at Peking, etc., had felt induced to supply, will tell you briefly of the difficulties caused by the tergiversations of the Nanking Government under pressure of nationalist agitation. It will also explain why I felt obliged to deposit at Kashgar what MS remains, etc., I had been able to collect.

Among them are a number of Khotani documents and fragmentary rolls. Not feeling sure what may ultimately [be] decided about them, I got photographs taken of them as well as they could be done without orthochromatic plates and large-size camera. The prints also done locally are poor. But I enclose a few specimens just to let you see what those humble materials are, and to ask whether on receiving better prints which I am endeavouring to get, you would kindly try to work on them for eventual publication. I should then be very happy to let you have as good prints as may be obtainable from the negatives brought back.⁴⁶

Enclosed were a few specimens of the *Brāhmī* group of photographs. It is evident that Sten Konow agreed to Stein's request and accordingly Stein sent him later the better prints which he promised. For some reason, however, Konow failed to decipher or publish these photographs of *Brāhmī* manuscripts. In the mid-thirties, Professor H. W. Bailey of Queens' College, Cambridge, was becoming the prominent British scholar in this field. Accordingly, on 6 December 1937, the same day as he wrote to Burrow regarding the *Kharoṣṭhī* material, Stein wrote from London to Bailey to acknowledge receipt of the latter's paper 'Hvatanica'⁴⁷ and to ask in passing for his help.

... Your kind gift encourages me to enquire whether you would be prepared to devote your skilled

attention also to a number of Khotani fragments which I was able to acquire in 1930 in the course of my last Central Asian journey. The originals had to be left at Kashgar as they were claimed by the Chinese Commissioner at the time. But foreseeing that they would probably be lost in that very precarious keeping, photographs of them were kindly taken by Captain Sherriff on my behalf. I had before my return transmitted prints from the negatives now at my collection in the British Museum to Professor Sten Konow, but I learned that he was not able to occupy himself with them at the time. It would be a very great satisfaction to me if you could examine these photographs and, if possible, make use of them for some future publications of yours.

Let me add that I should be very happy at any time to offer what information I can with regard to local names, etc., of that region with which I have become familiar in the course of my former explorations. If any enquiries are addressed to me on 'half margin' I shall do my best to answer them in good time.⁴⁸

On the next day, 7 December 1937, Bailey replied to Stein from Cambridge:

You probably refer in your letter to photographs deposited at the British Museum.

Dr Barnett over a year ago sent me prints from them and myself had two sets of prints made which I sent to Prof. Konow (Oslo) and to Dr Kaj Ban (Copenhagen). I still have them by me. Three or four are official documents but several are in a variety of Brahmi script not yet read with certainty.

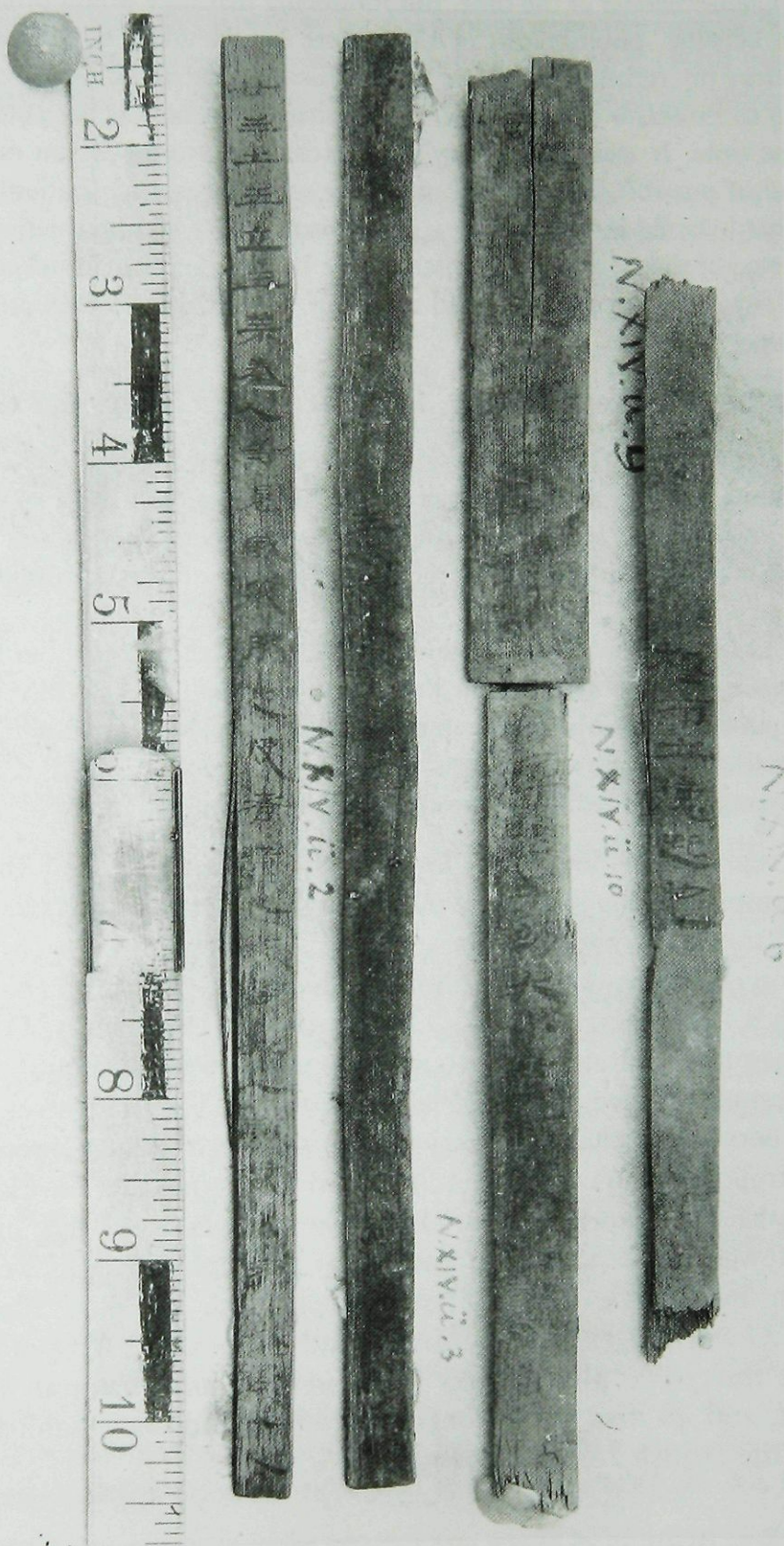
I am reading as far as I have time (in term I have little free time) all the Khotanese texts in England. This vacation I am spending in Paris to look at Pelliot's 50 MSS. in Khotanese.

It is not yet possible to publish a complete translation of Khotanese official documents. So many words remain unknown.

For the photographs you mention, do you want a brief report of them?⁴⁹

There was no reply to this letter. We know that it was after World War II that Bailey eventually accomplished his project of publishing the Khotanese texts. Among them he deciphered and translated five Khotanese official documents from Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition on the basis of four photographs, namely: T.O.20 (Bailey's 'Achma'); T.O.34 (Bailey's 'Dumaqu A'); T.O.45 (Bailey's 'Dumaqu C.D'); and T.O.46 (Bailey's 'Dumaqu F').⁵⁰ Later these four photographs were also published by Bailey in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum* (Plates, Portfolio IV).⁵¹ However, Bailey failed to give their numbers or detailed information as to their provenance, merely noting in the Preface to Portfolio IV that: 'Of the Achma and Dumaqu texts on Plates XCV-XCVI only photographs are known, the original manuscripts were left in Central Asia.' Consequently few scholars have been aware that these photographs were brought back by Stein from his fourth Central Asian expedition. In fact, Plate XCV shows photographs T.O.20 (upper), T.O.34 (lower) and Plate XCVI T.O.45 (upper), T.O.46 (lower). Of the thirty-two photographs from Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition, T.O.20, 34, 45, and 46 may be the only four which had been published before their rediscovery in the British Library in 1995.

T.O.15-46: PHOTOGRAPHS OF TEXTS FROM STEIN'S FOURTH CENTRAL ASIAN EXPEDITION



T.O.15. Chinese documents on wooden slips. N.XIV.ii.2, 3, 6, 9, 10
40



T.O.16. Chinese documents on wooden slips. N.XIV.ii.-, 1, 5, 7, 14, 17; N.XIV.ii



T.O.17. *Kharoṣṭhī* documents on wooden tablets. N.R.10, 39



T.O.18. *Kharoṣṭhī* documents on wooden tablets. N.VIII, N. R.2



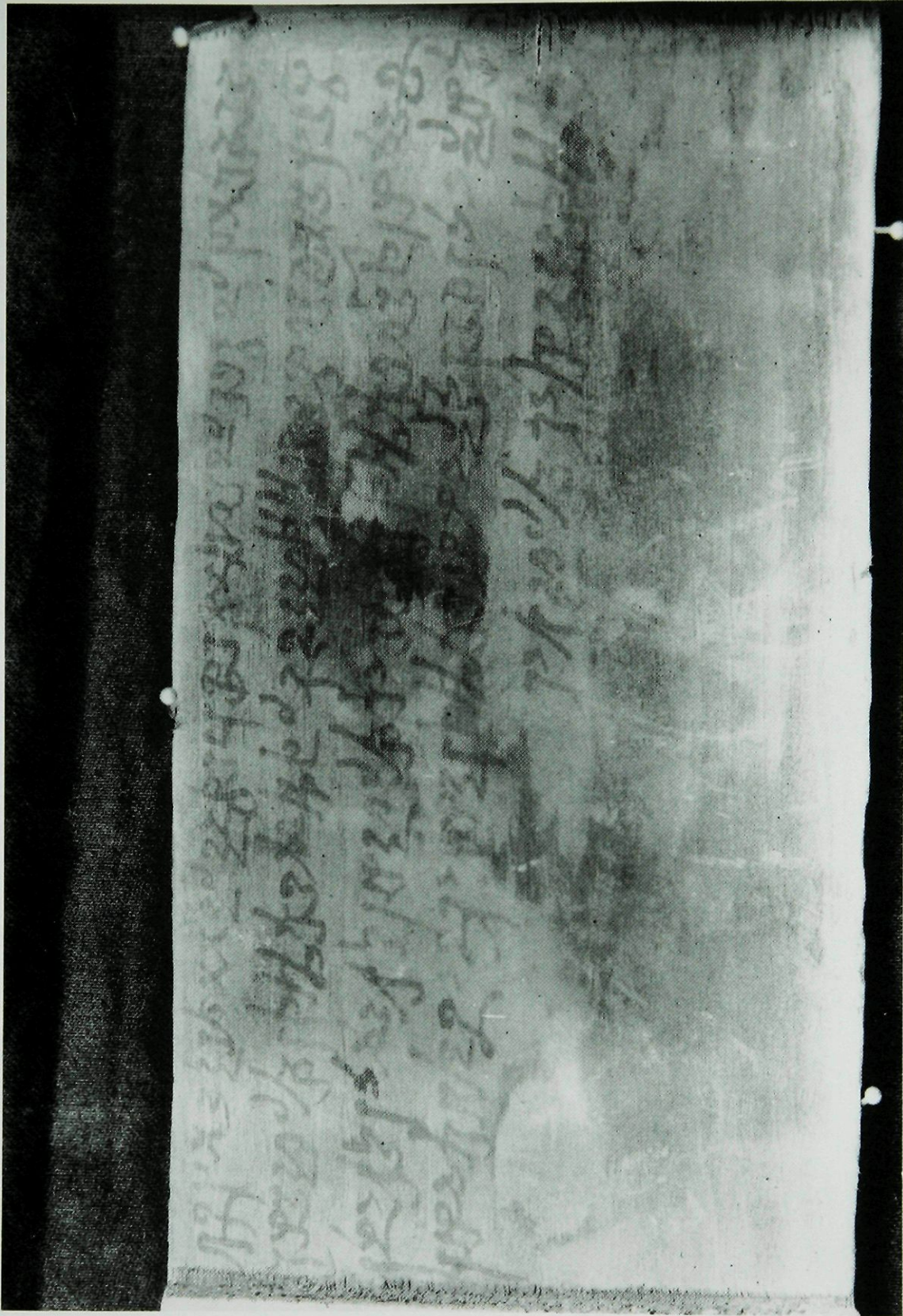
T.O.19. Kharoṣṭhī documents on wooden tablets. N.R. -, 26, 27

Handwritten text in Brāhmī script on a narrow strip of paper, oriented vertically. The script is dense and appears to be a fragment of a larger document. The text is written in black ink on aged, slightly yellowed paper. The strip is held in place by two circular fasteners on the left side. The text is arranged in approximately 12 horizontal lines across the strip.

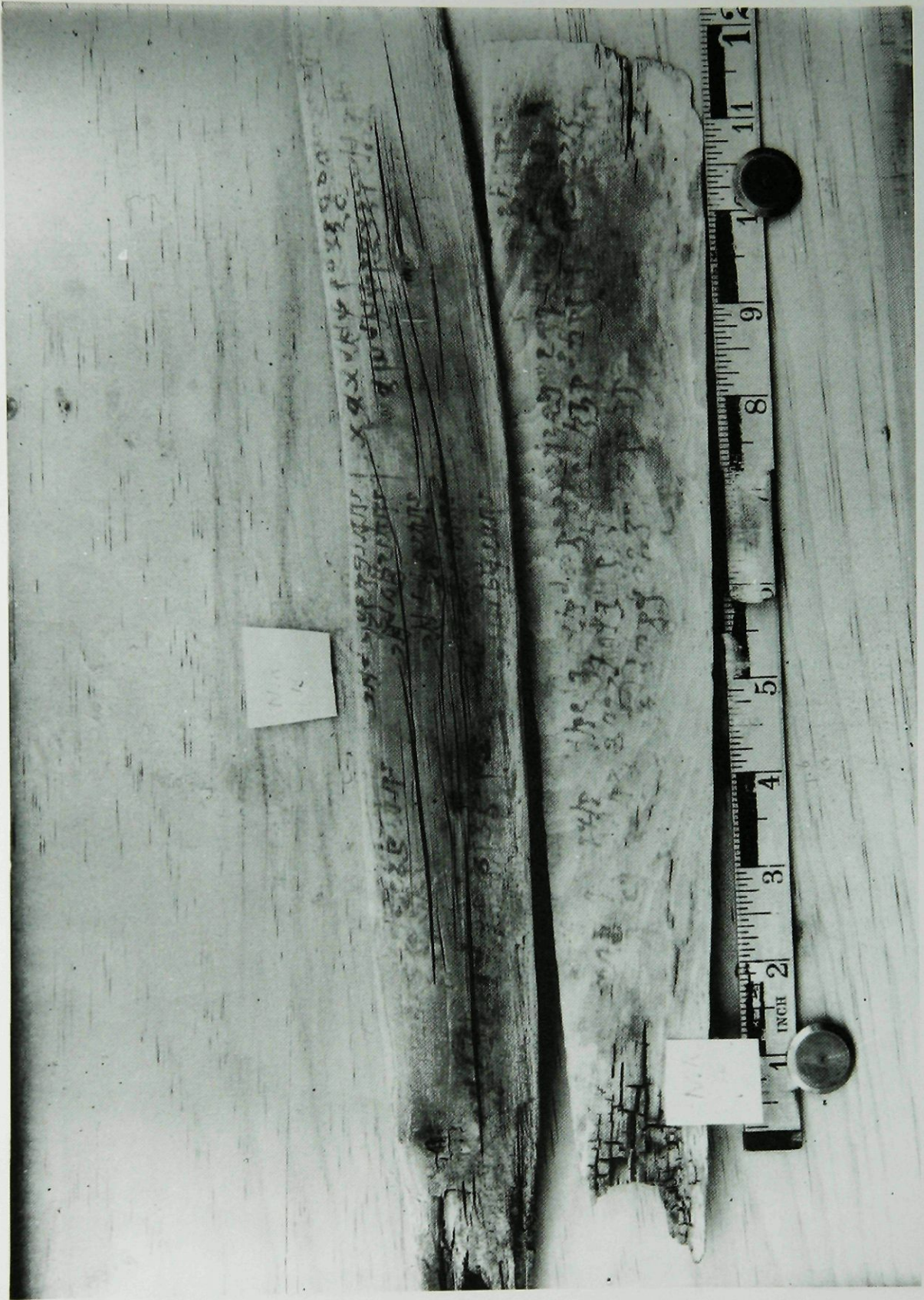
T.O.20. Brāhmī (Khotanese) documents on paper. Achma (two fragments)



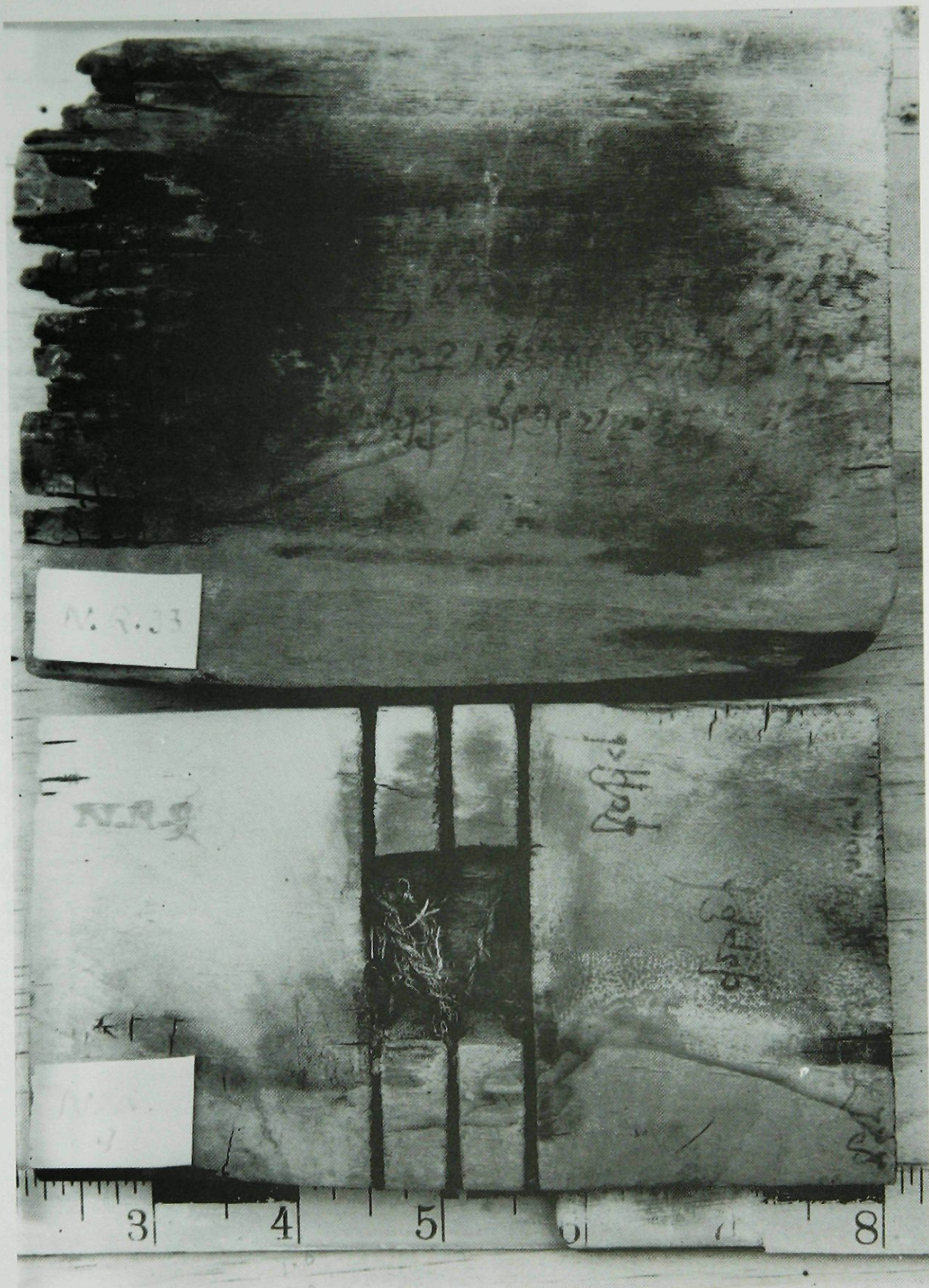
T.O.21. *Kharoṣṭhī* documents on wooden tablets. N. (Char.) 1, 2; N.R.32



T.O.22. *Kharoṣṭhī* document on wooden tablet. N.R. (special shot, cf. T.O.19)



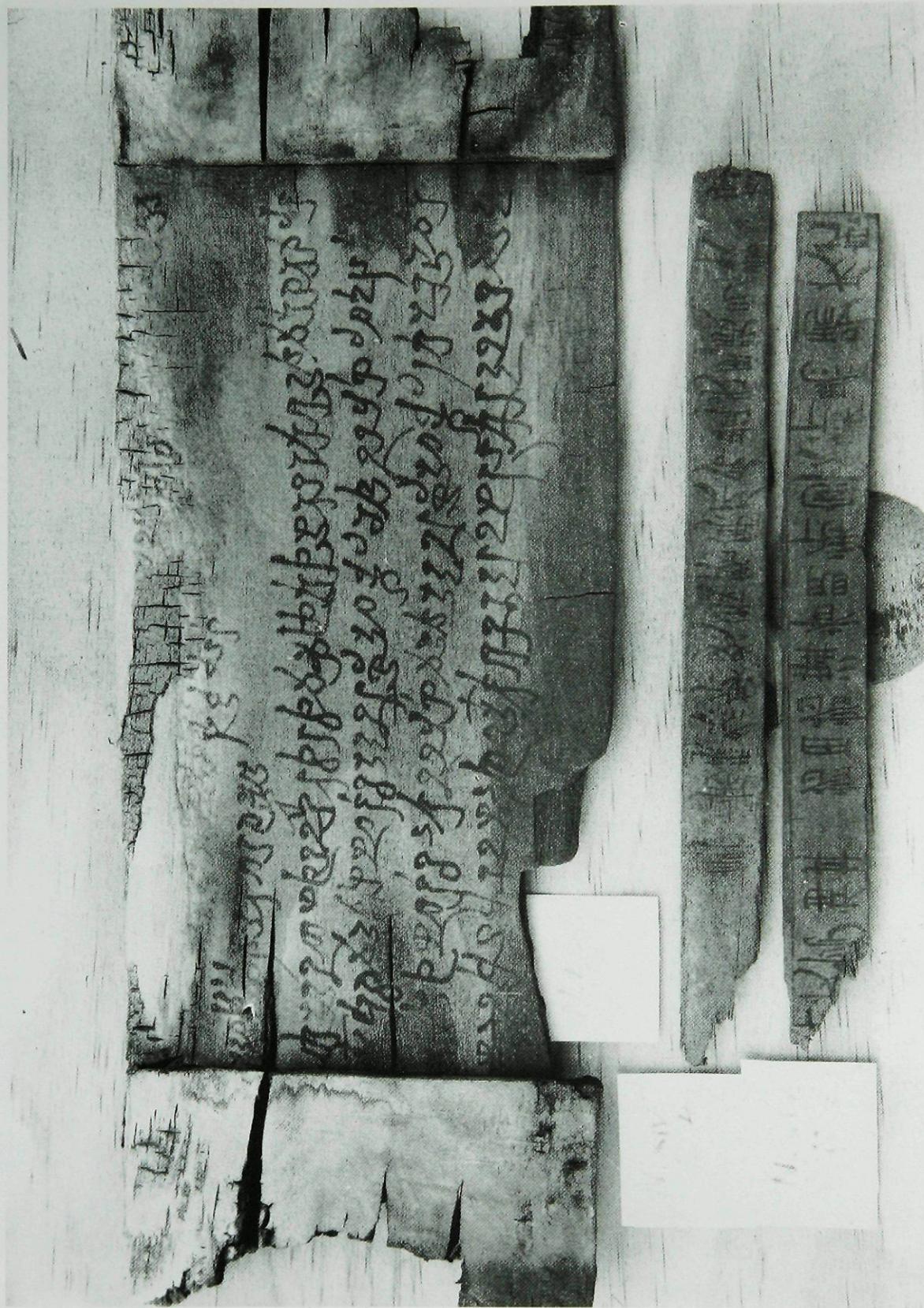
T.O.23. *Kharosthi* documents on wooden tablets. N.R.15, 16



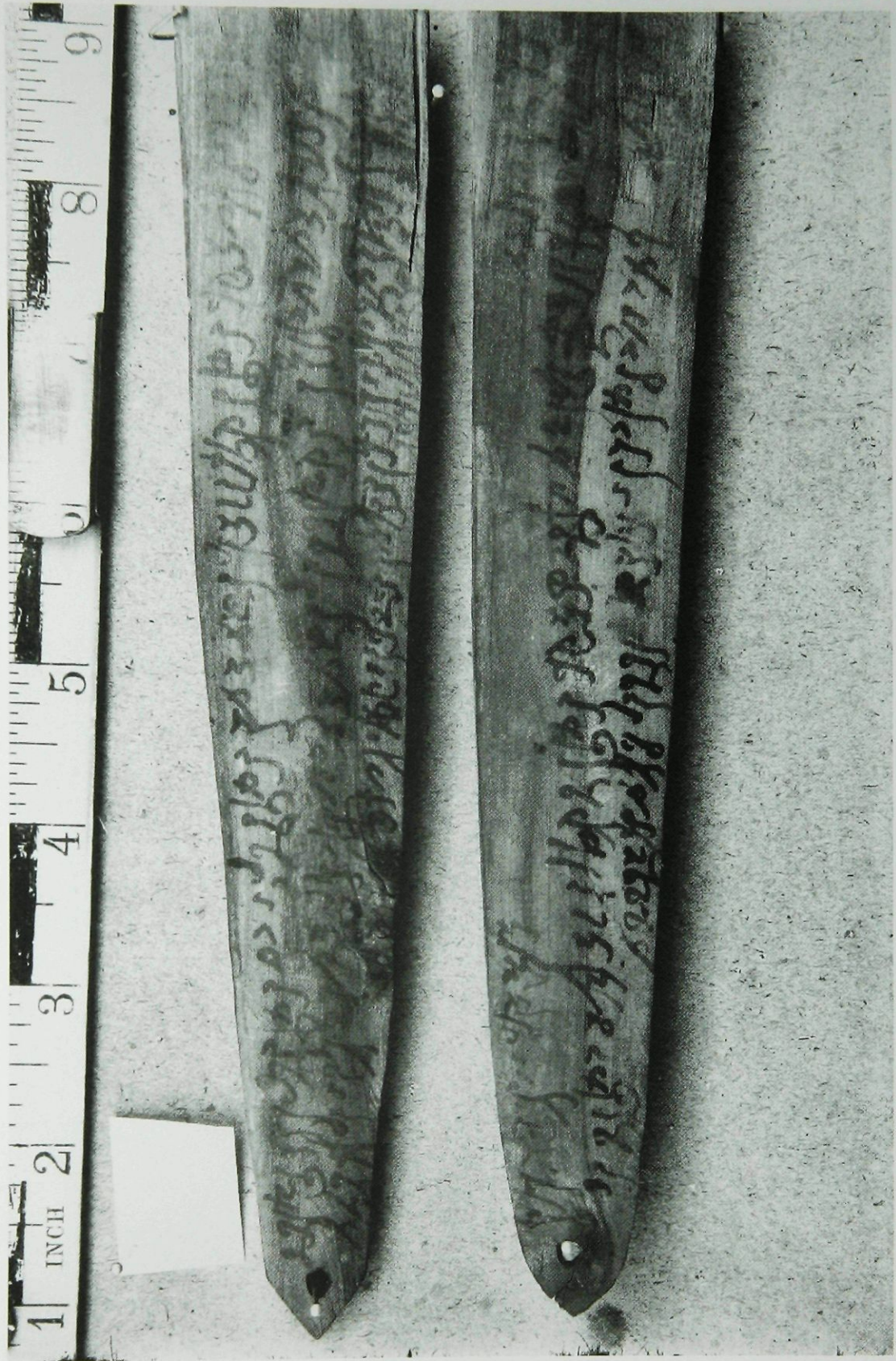
T.O.24. *Kharoṣṭhī* documents on wooden tablets. N.R.9, 33



T.O.25. *Kharoṣṭhī* documents on wooden tablets. N.R.10, 40



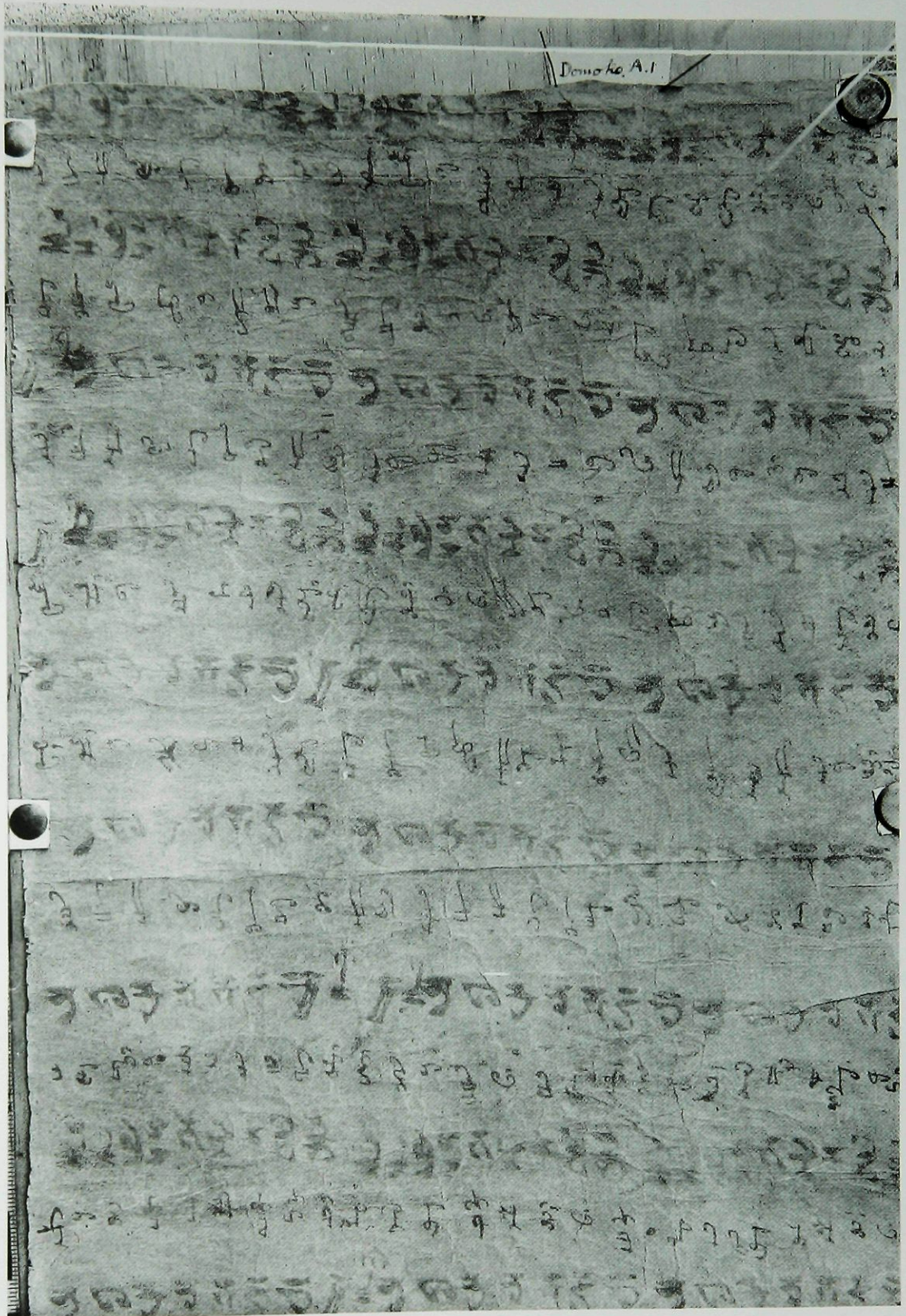
T.O.26. *Kharoṣṭhī* document on wooden tablet, N.R.6; Chinese documents on wooden slips, N.XIV.II.4, 12.8



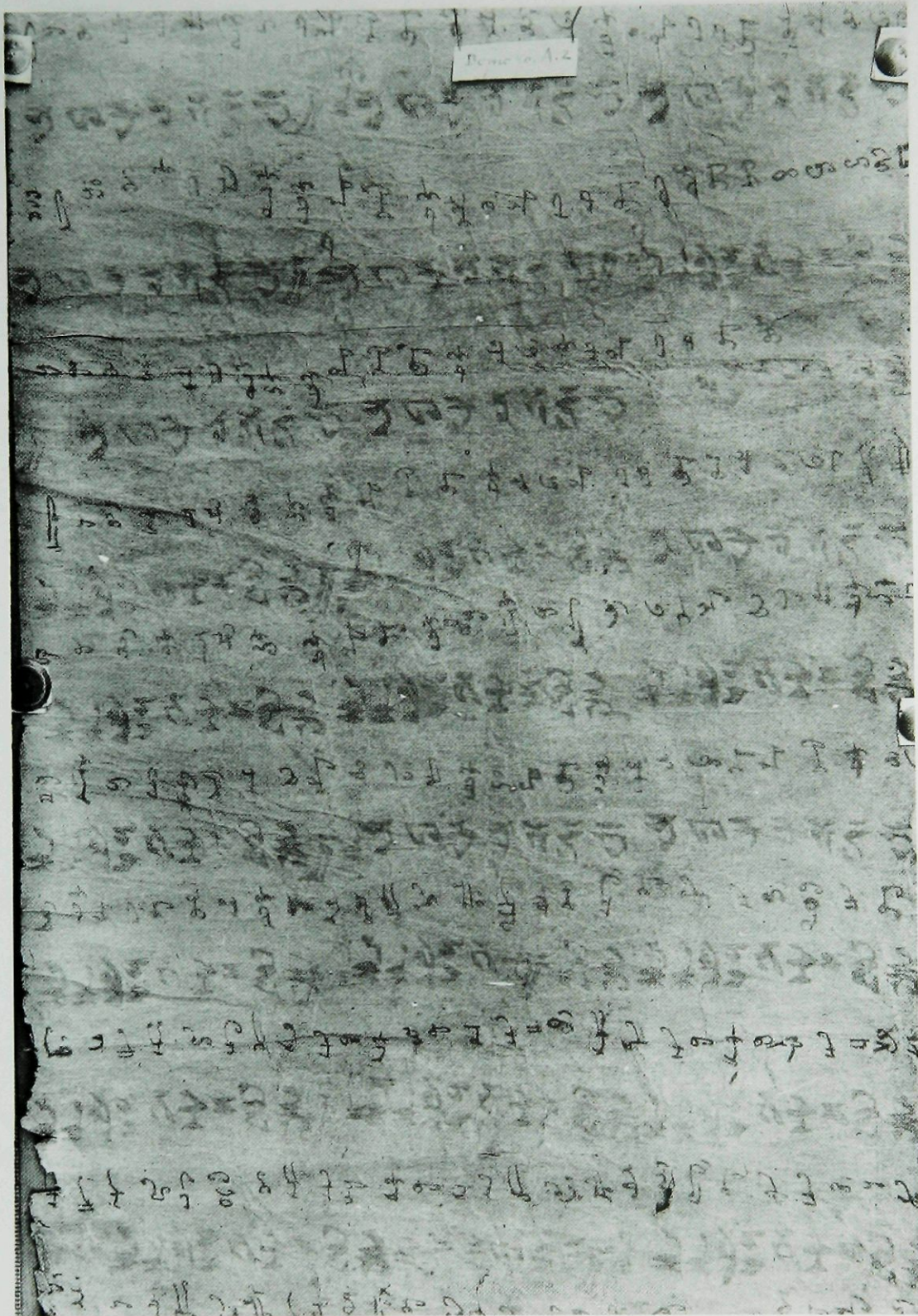
T.O.27. Kharoṣṭhī documents on wooden tablets. N.xxiii (two tablets)



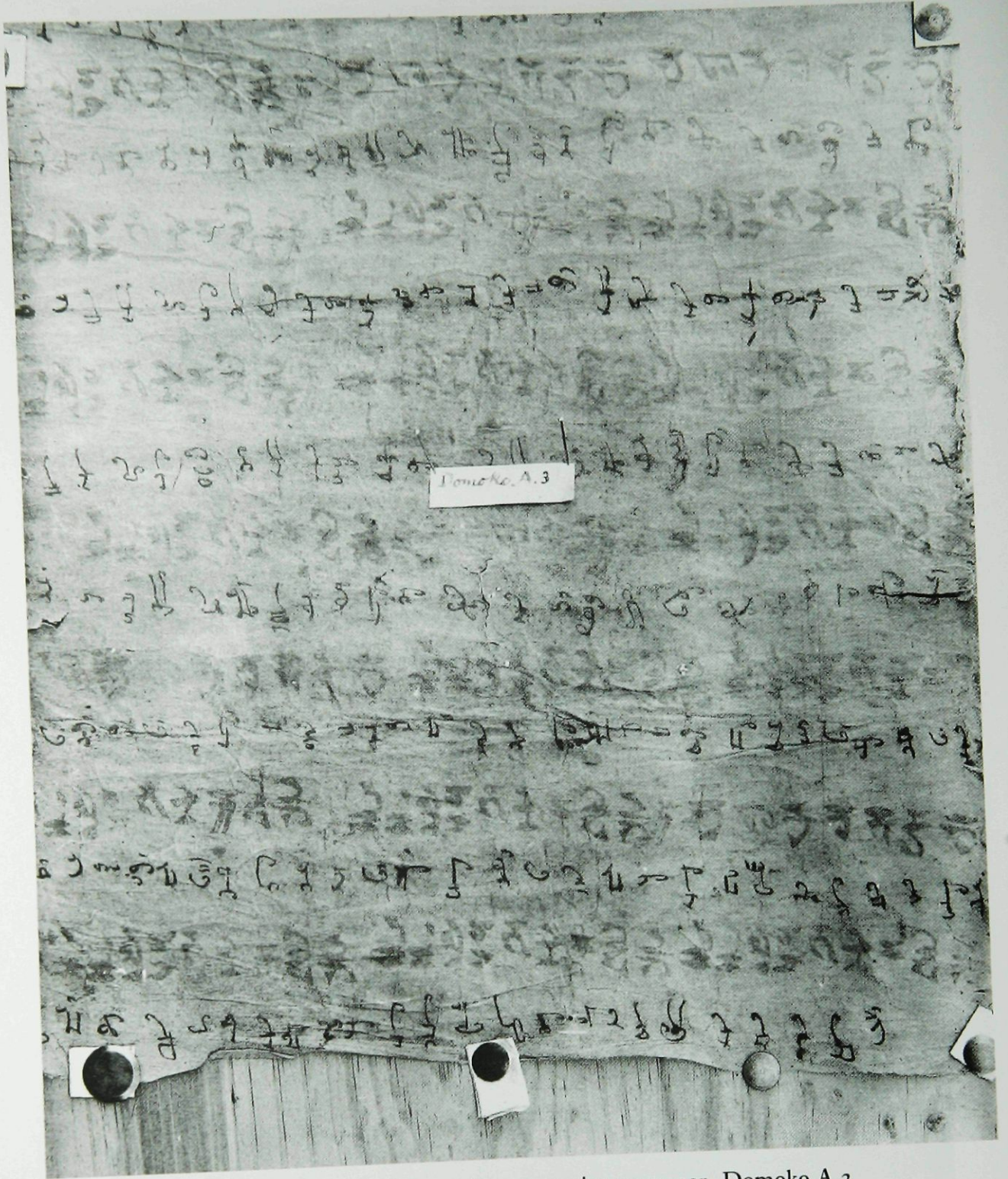
T.O.28. *Kharoṣṭhī* documents on wooden tablets. No number (three tablets)



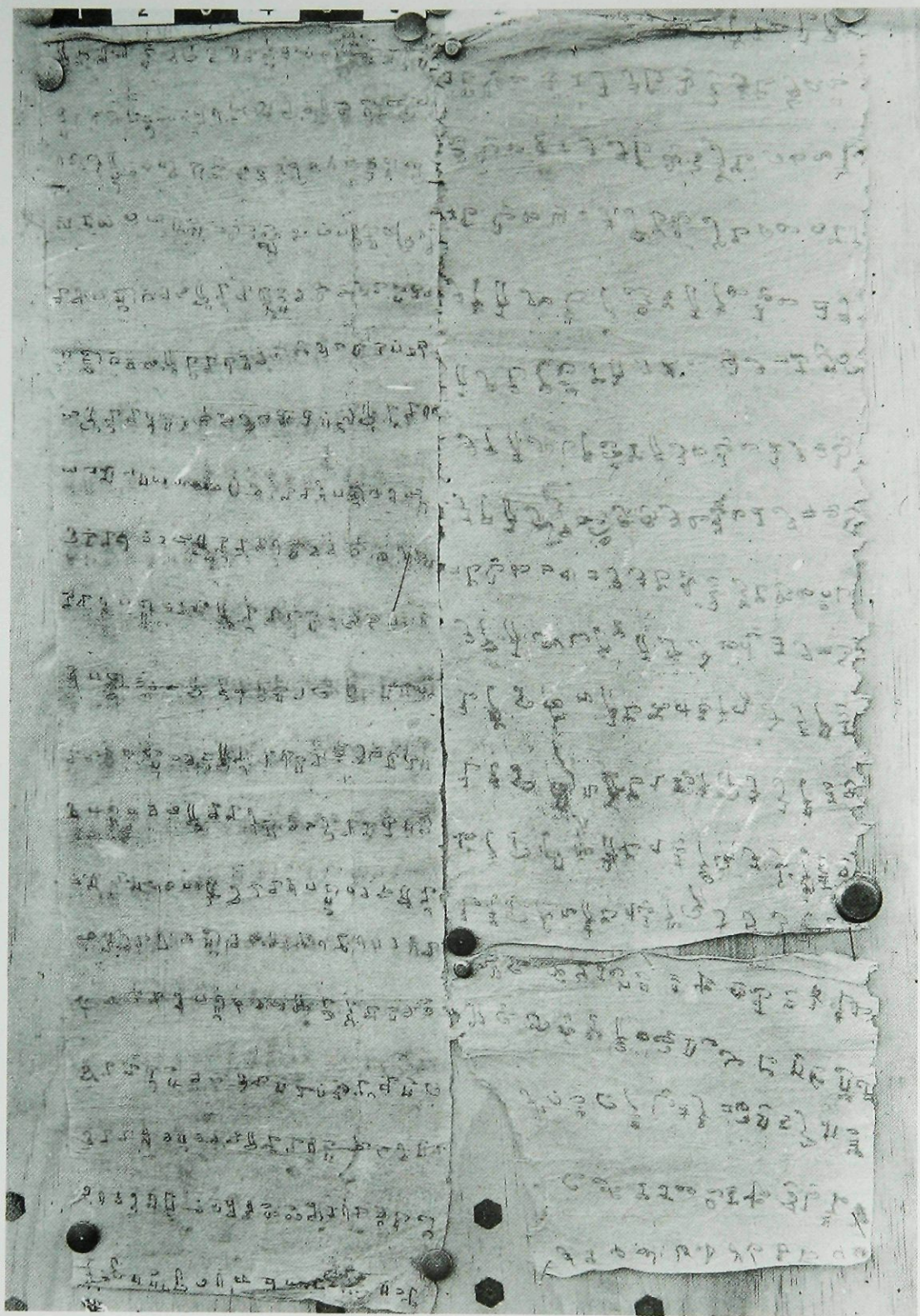
T.O.29. *Brāhmī* (bilingual) manuscript on paper. Domoko.A.1



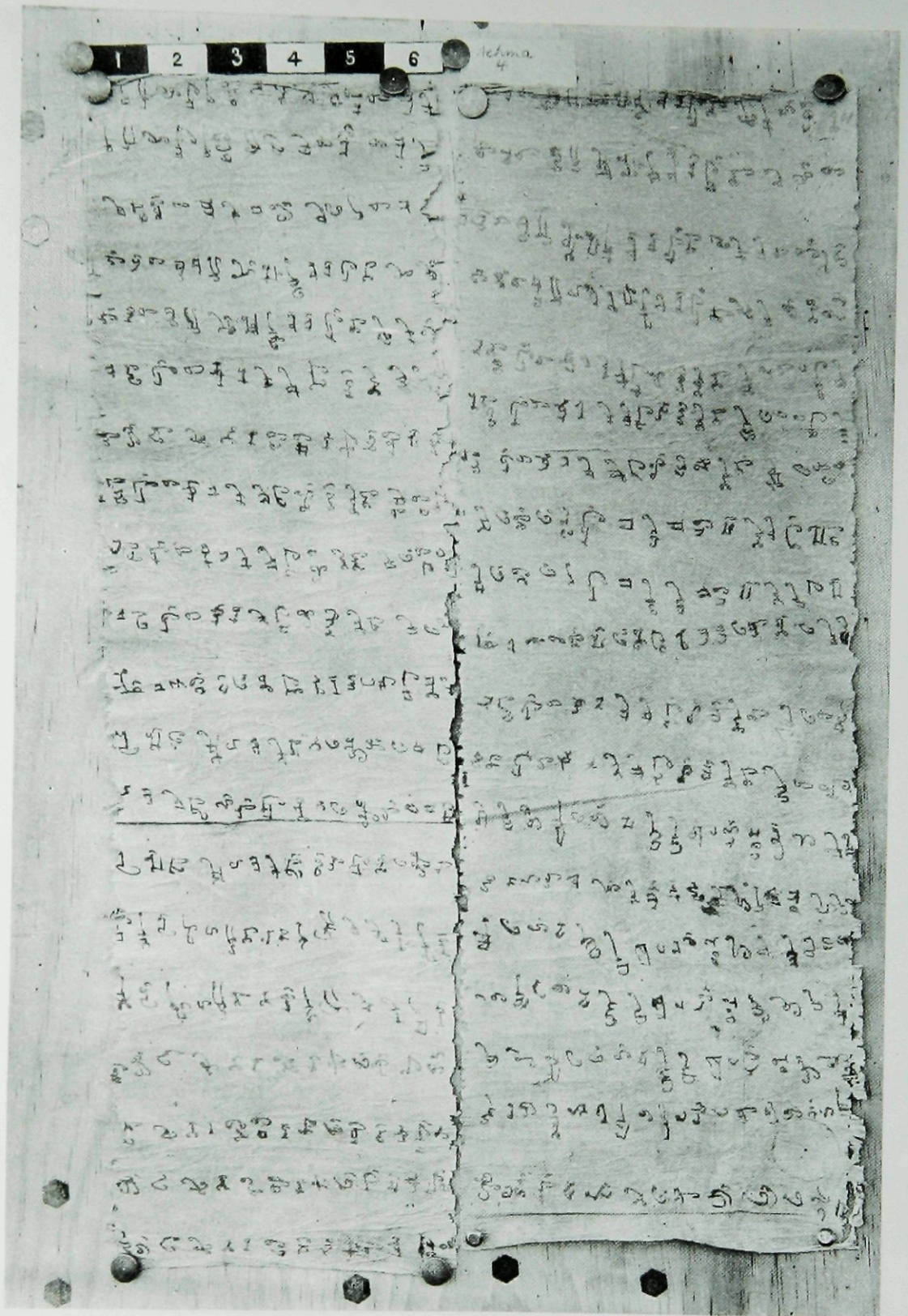
T.O.30. *Brāhmī* (bilingual) manuscript on paper. Domoko.A.2



T.O.31. *Brāhmī* (bilingual) manuscript on paper. Domoko.A.3



T.O.32. *Brāhmī* manuscripts on paper. Achma.4 (three fragments)

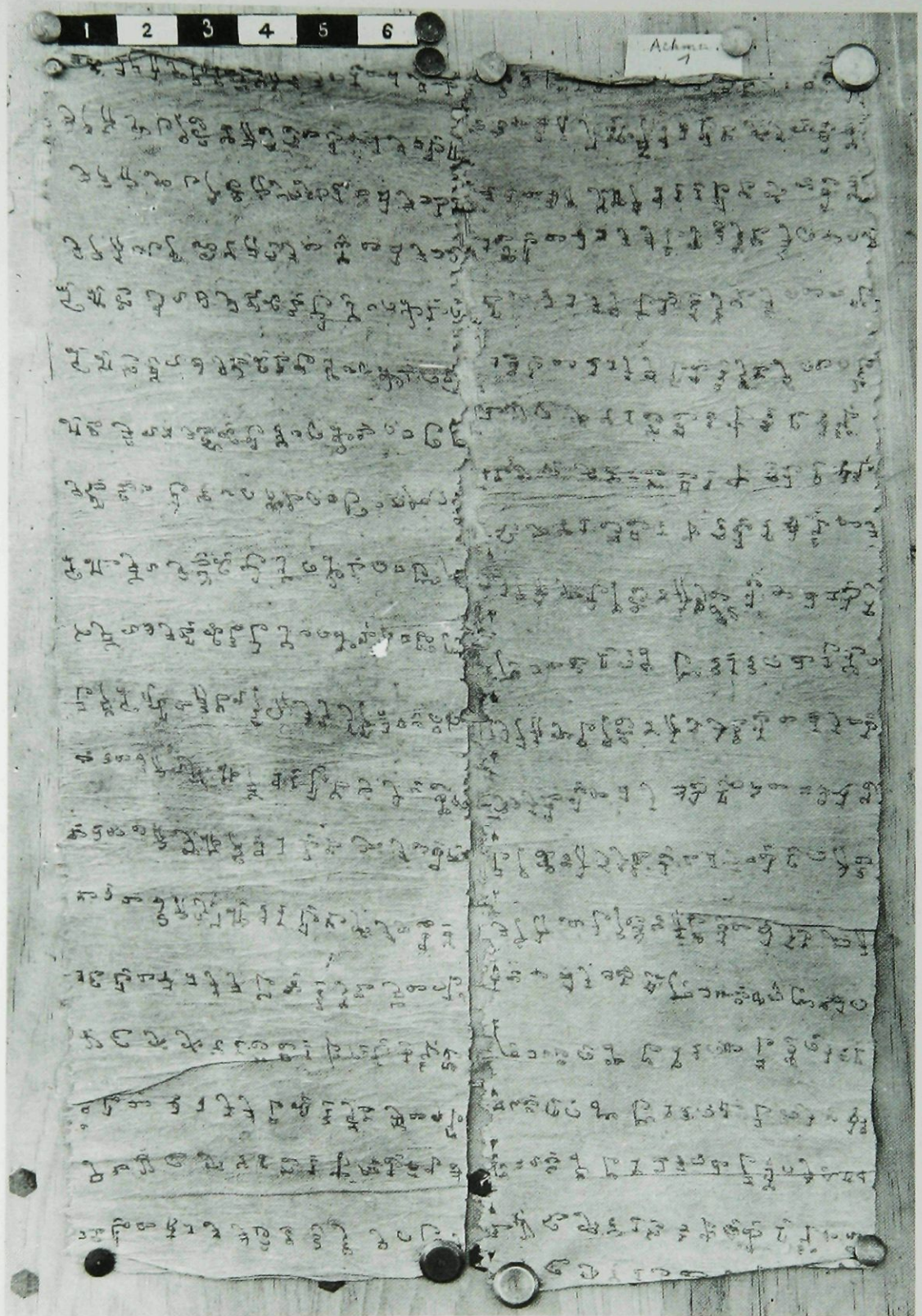


T.O.33. *Brāhmī* manuscripts on paper. Achma.4 (two fragments)

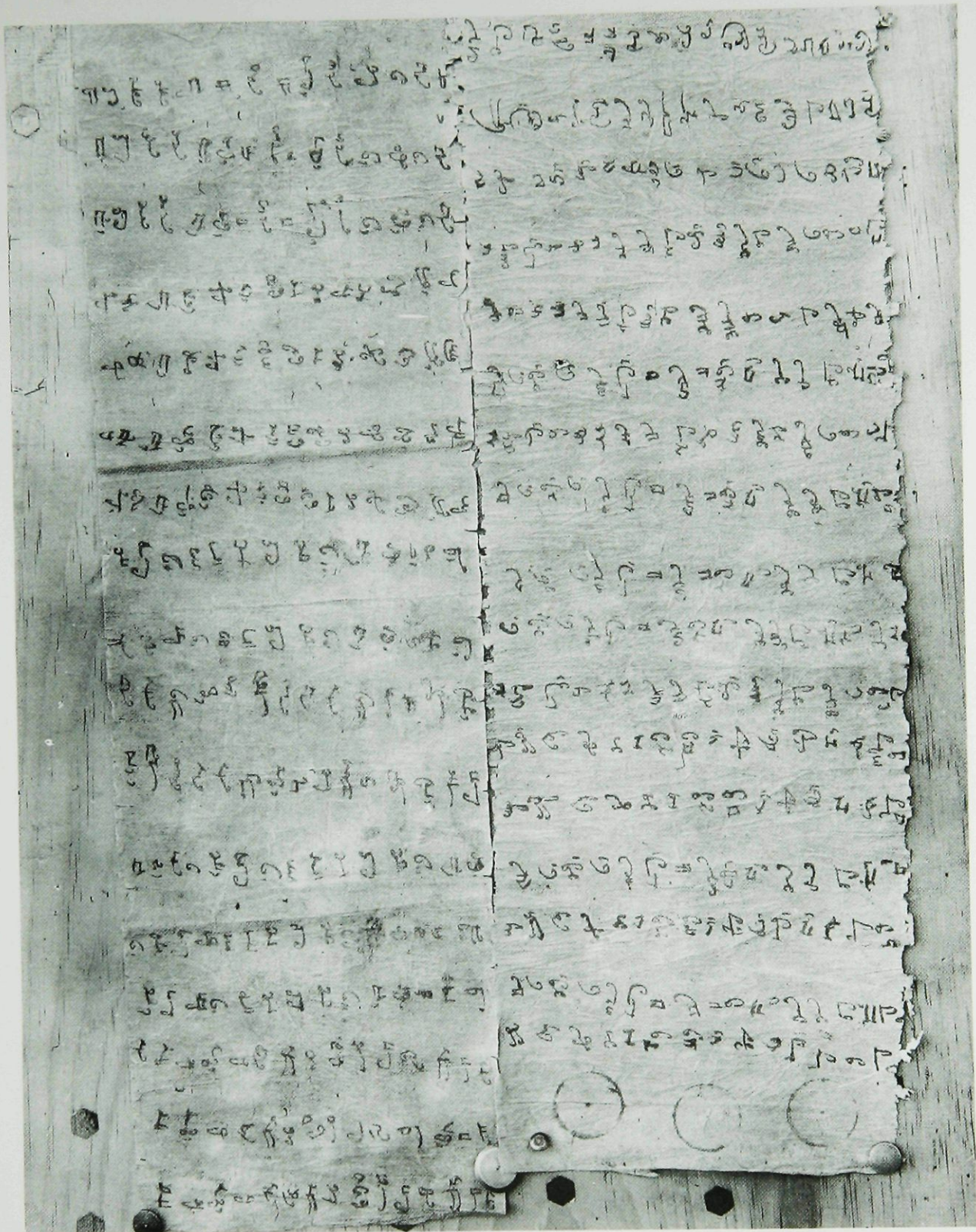
Domoko

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
 श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

T.O.34. Brāhmi (Khotanese) document on paper. Domoko.A.4



T.O.35. *Brāhmī* manuscripts on paper. Achma. I (two fragments)



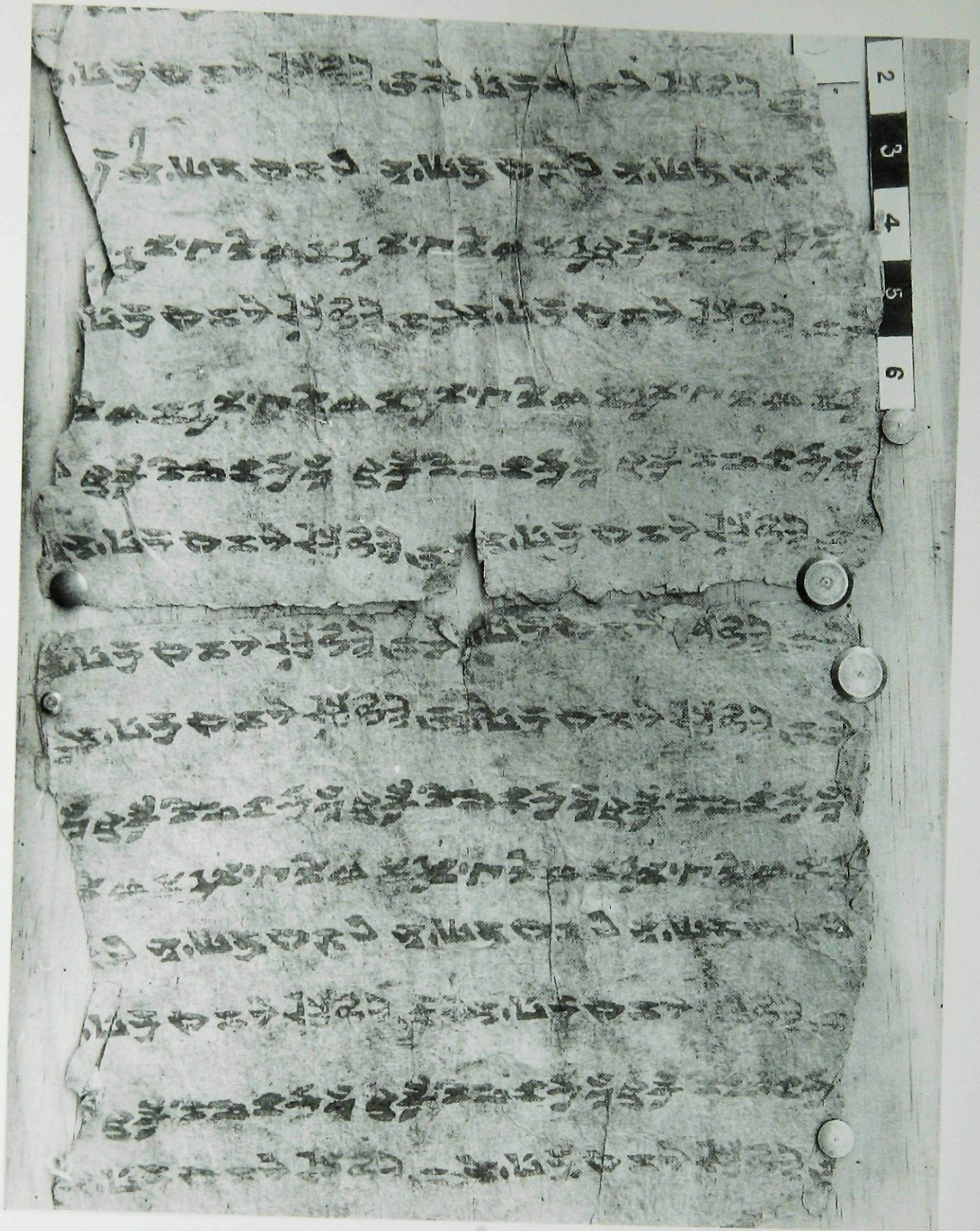
T.O.36. *Brāhmī* manuscripts on paper. Achma.3 (two fragments)



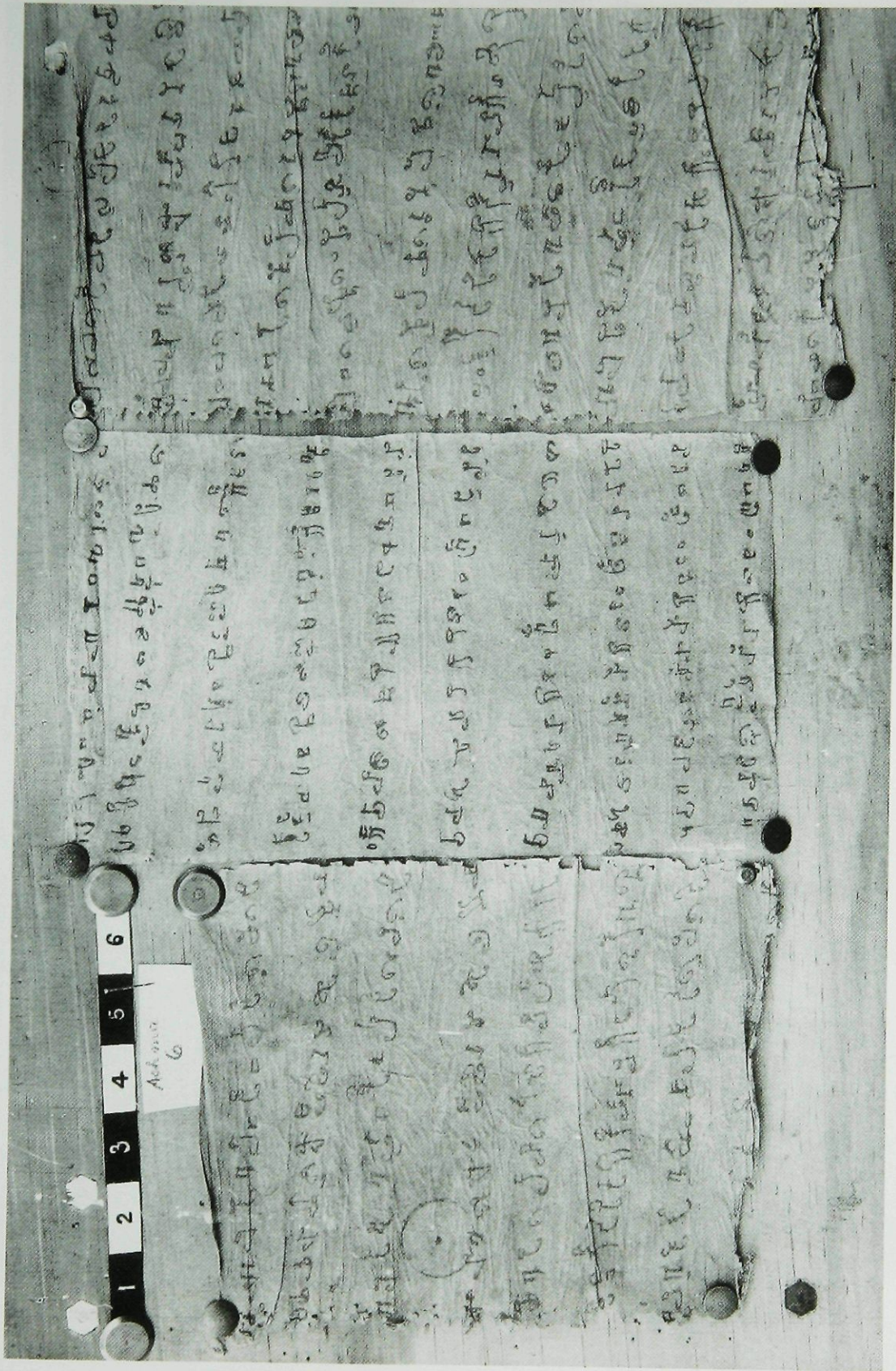
T.O.37. Chinese documents. N.XIV.15, 20, 21; N.XIV.ii.12, 13, 16, 18, 19; N.II.1, 2, 3, 4



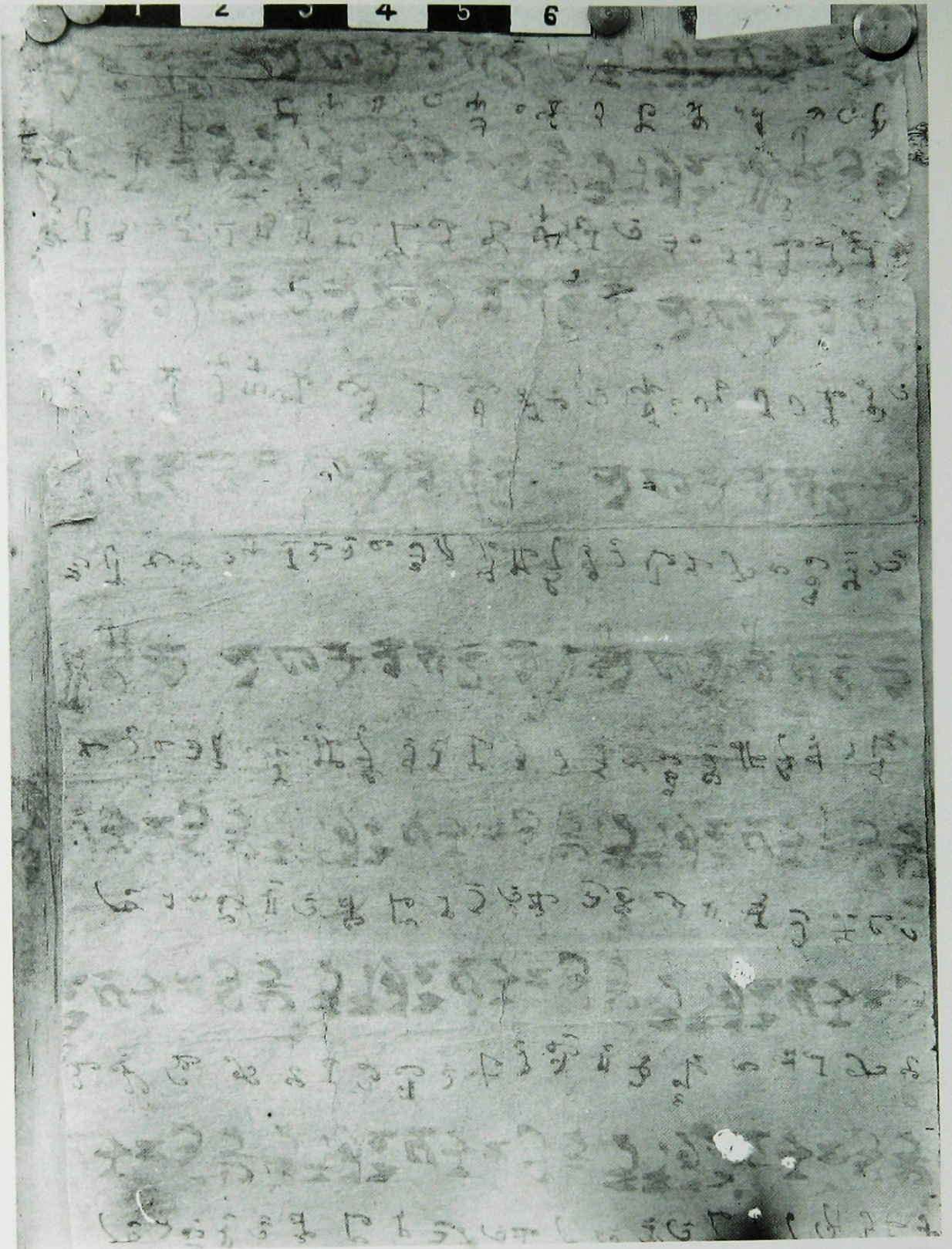
T.O.38. Wooden carving representing a three-headed bodhisattva



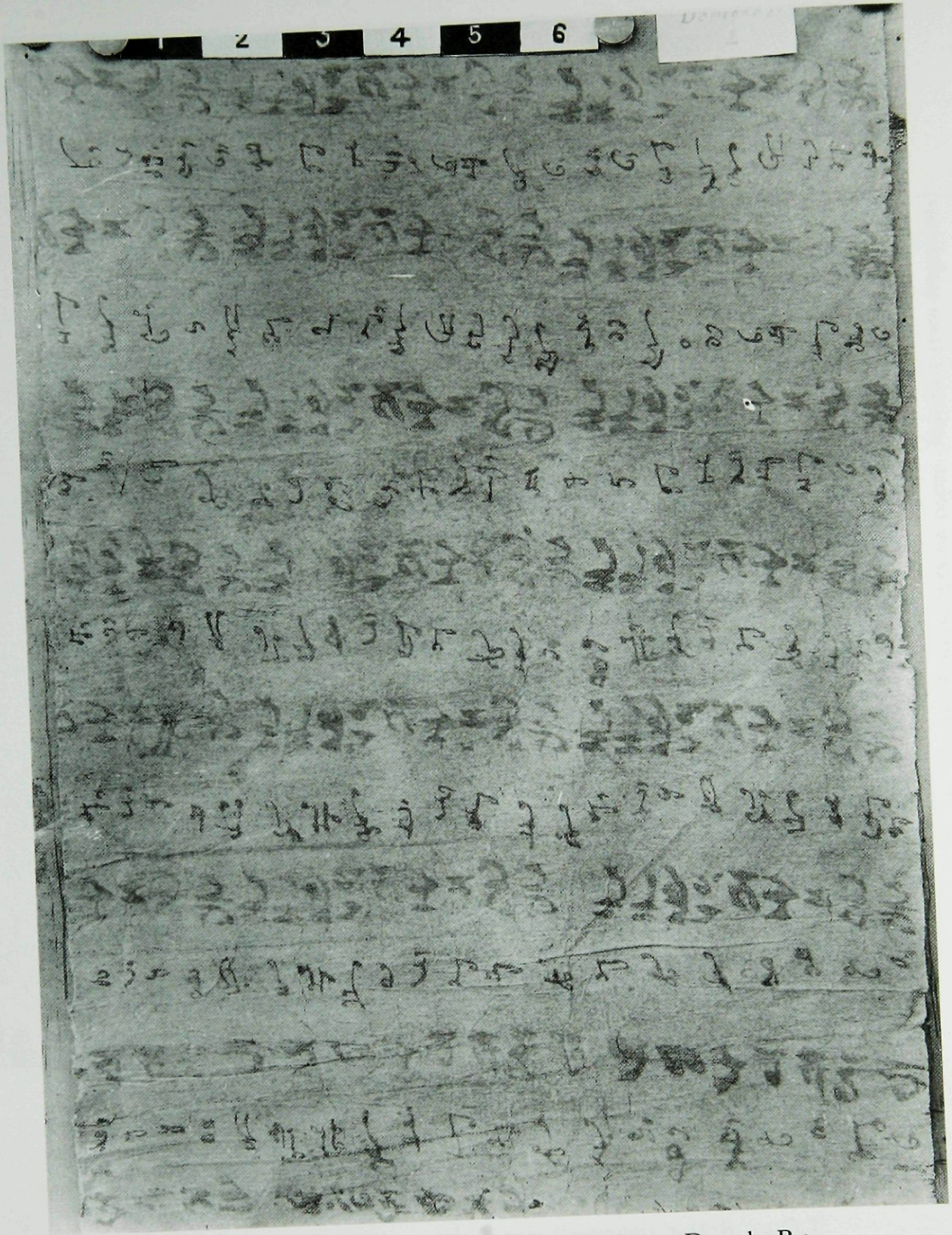
T.O.39. *Brāhmī* manuscripts on paper. No number (two fragments)



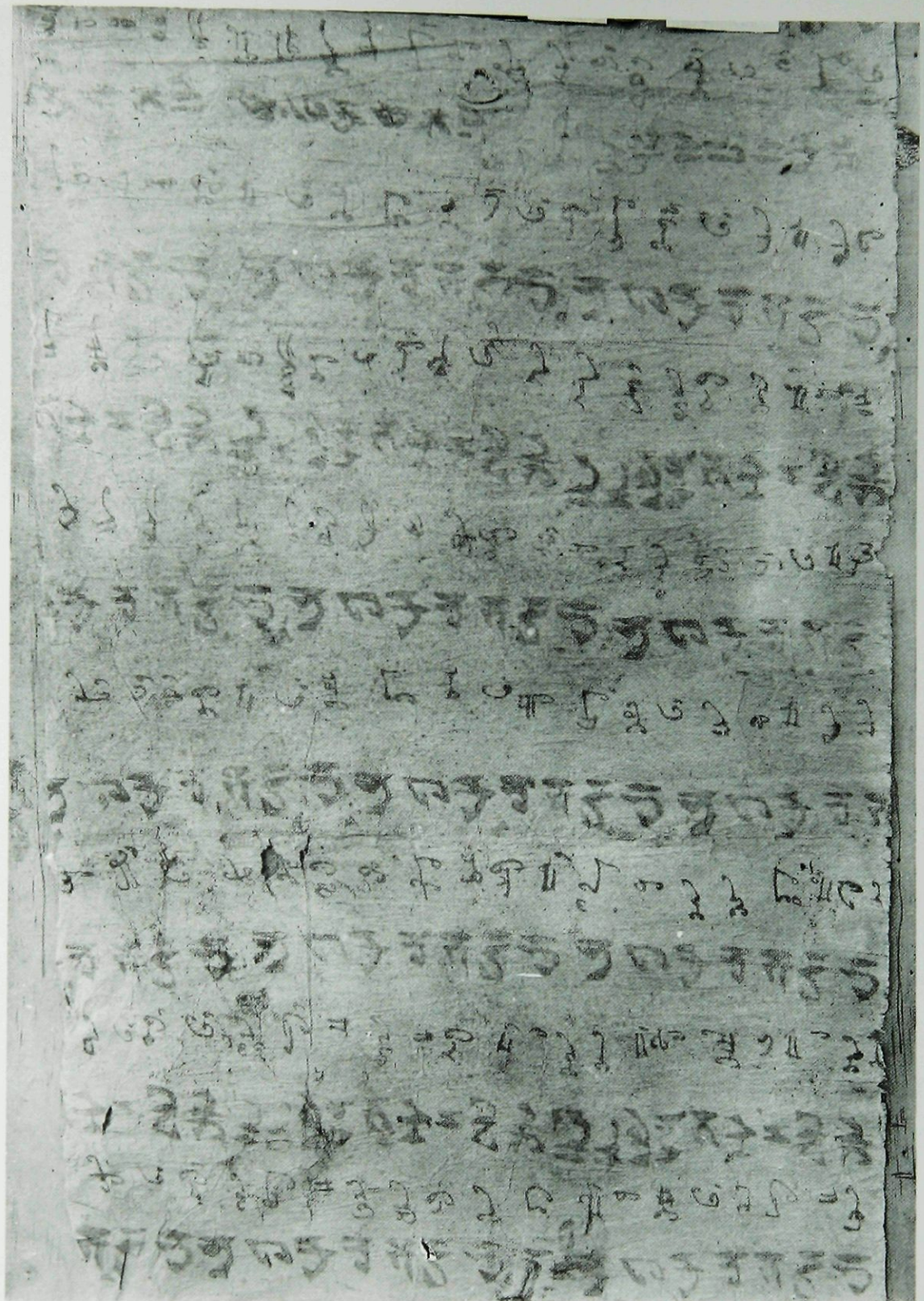
T.O.40. Brāhmī manuscripts on paper. Achma.6 (three fragments)



T.O.41. *Brāhmī* (bilingual) manuscript. Domoko.B.1



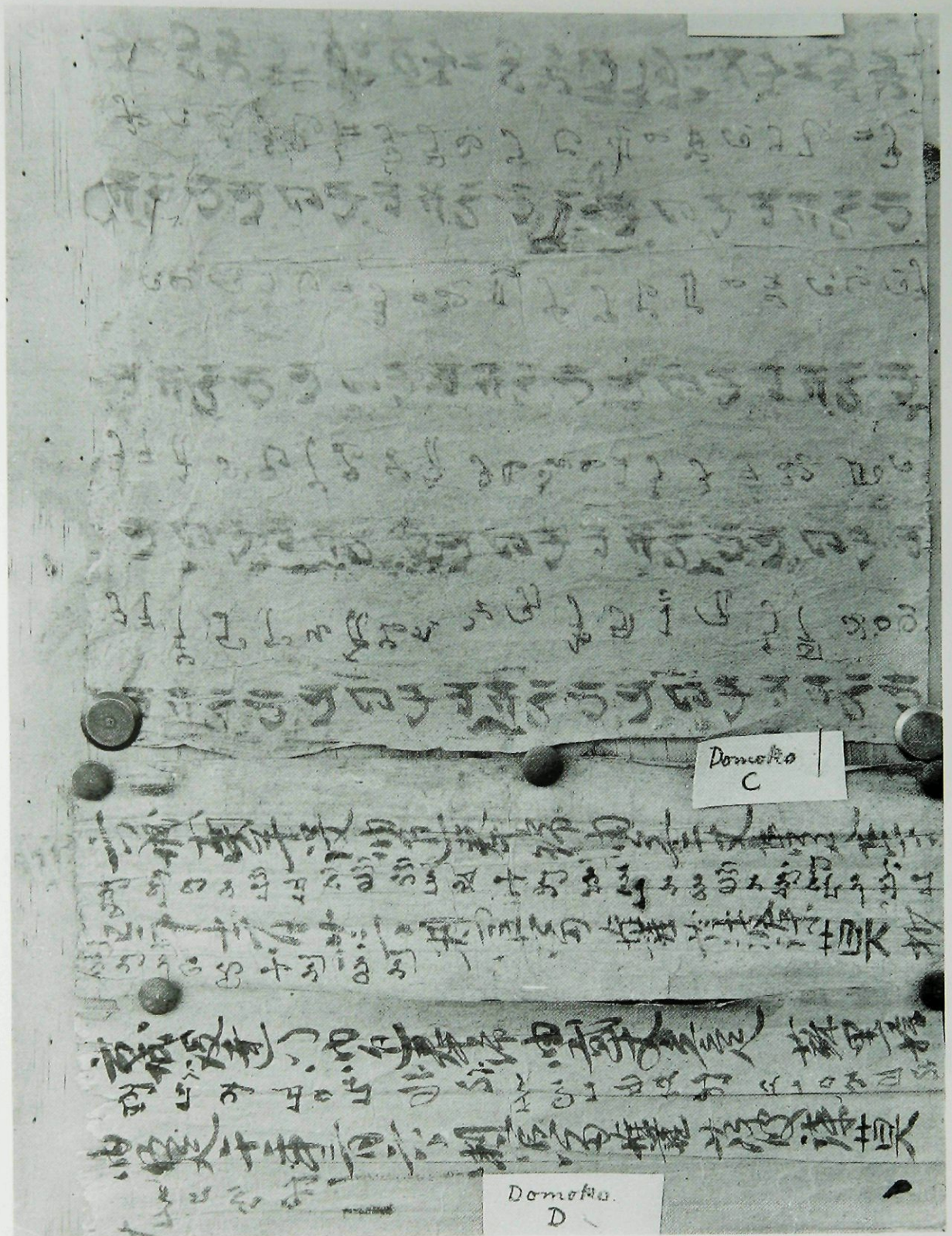
T.O.42. *Brāhmī* (bilingual) manuscript on paper. Domoko.B.2



T.O.43. *Brāhmī* (bilingual) manuscript on paper. Domoko.B.3

Handwritten text in Brāhmī script on two fragments of paper. The script is arranged in approximately 12 horizontal lines across the fragments. The paper is aged and shows signs of wear, including a prominent horizontal tear and some staining. The characters are finely etched into the paper surface.

T.O.44. Brāhmī manuscripts on paper. Achma.5 (two fragments)



T.O.45. *Brāhmī* (bilingual) manuscript on paper, Domoko.B.4; Chinese-*Brāhmī* (Chinese-Khotanese bilingual) documents on paper, Domoko.C, D



T.O.46. *Brāhmī* document on wooden tablet, Domoko.E; *Brāhmī* (Khotanese) document on paper, Domoko.F; *Brāhmī* document on wooden tablet, Domoko.G

I would like to express here my profound gratitude to Sam Fogg, whose generosity has made it possible to reproduce Stein's photographs T.O.15-46 for the first time.

- 1 Jeannette Mirsky, *Sir Aurel Stein: Archaeological Explorer* (Chicago and London, 1977), Ch. 26, pp. 461-70; Annabel Walker, *Aurel Stein: Pioneer of the Silk Road* (London, 1995), Ch. 12, pp. 263-87; Wang Jiqing 王冀青, 'Aolaier Sitanyin de disici zhongyangyaxiya kaoji' 奧萊爾·斯坦因的第四次中央亞細亞考察 (Sir Aurel Stein's Fourth Central Asian Expedition), *Dunhuangxue jikan* 敦煌學輯刊 (Journal of Dunhuang Studies), xxiii (1993.1), pp. 98-110.
- 2 Telegram R. No. 2777-S., 19 Aug. 1930, from Foreign Department of the Indian Government to F. Williamson, British Consul General at Kashgar: British Library [hereafter BL], IOL, L/PS/1011218, P/6481/1930 (copy); Despatch No. 94, 13 Jan. 1931, from E. M. B. Ingram, British Chargé d'Affaires in China, to A. Henderson, British Foreign Secretary: British Museum, Central Archives, Director's Office excavation papers, CE 32/(233 current temporary enumeration) (copy); Memorandum, 17 Jan. 1931, from E. M. B. Ingram to Foreign Ministry of the Chinese Government, BM, CA, CE 32/(233) (copy).
- 3 Stein's Diary, 1 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, p. 15.
- 4 Stein's Diary, 3 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, p. 16; the original of the inventory was dated 'May 4, 1931': Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 314, f. 22.
- 5 Stein, 'List of Ancient Objects Brought to, or Found on the Surface by, Sir Aurel Stein during His Journey from Khotan to Charkhlik', 4 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 314, ff. 22-23 (original); BL, IOL, L/PS/1011218, P.2.4100111931, Enclosure B (copy).
- 6 Stein's Diary, 4 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, pp. 16-17.
- 7 Stein's Diary, 30 Apr. 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, pp. 14-15.
- 8 Stein's Diary, 5 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, p. 17.
- 9 Stein's Diary, 6 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, p. 18.
- 10 Stein's Diary, 8 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, pp. 18-19.
- 11 Stein's Diary, 11 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, p. 21.
- 12 Stein's Diary, 12 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, p. 21.
- 13 Stein's Account Book, 15 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 366, f. 79.
- 14 Stein's Diary, 16 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 225, p. 23.
- 15 Stein to F. H. Andrews, 16 May 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 53, f. 39.
- 16 Stein to E. J. Rapson, 18 Sept. 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 103, ff. 244-245.
- 17 The Superintendent of the Photo-Mechanical and Lithographic Department, Thomason Civil Engineering College, to Stein, 14 Oct. 1931, attached to the box containing photographs of documents and manuscripts from Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition: BL, Oriental and India Office Collections [hereafter OIOC], unnumbered; a later note by F. H. Andrews on this letter hinted that the four photographs were T.O.15, 16, 26 and 37.
- 18 Stein's list of papers, photographs, diaries, etc., left in small attaché case at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, Sept. 1932: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 276, f. 62.
- 19 Stein's list of objects in case No. 23 in Kashmir, 28 Oct. 1932: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 276, f. 68.
- 20 Stein's list of books packed for Oxford, case II, 18 Oct. 1933: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 276, f. 133.
- 21 Stein's list of deposits at the British Museum, wall case on right, 9 Nov. 1934: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 276, f. 150.
- 22 Stein's list of packets of prints left at 22 Manor Place, Oxford, May 1935: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 276, f. 164.
- 23 Editor's note: After the discovery of the prints and 'improved' negatives, it was found that the original Stein negatives were held in the Library's photographic collection. The previous policy of destroying nitrate negatives meant that the collection contains copy negatives of T. O.15-60 (T.O.47-60 being scenes of Kashgar and the journey back to India). Only one nitrate original survives (T.O.25), along with eight glass originals (T.O.53-60). For this, and for the process of 'improvement' used at the Thomason College at Roorkee, see John Falconer, 'The photographs from Stein's fourth

- expedition: a footnote', *BLJ*, xxiv (1998), pp. 75-7 below.
- 24 Wang Jiqing, 'Zhongying guanyu Sitanyin disici zhongya kaoji suo huo wenwu de jiaoshe neimu' 中央關於斯坦因第四次中亞考察所獲文物的交涉內幕 (Sino-British Negotiations regarding the disposal of antiquities acquired by Sir Aurel Stein during his Fourth Central Asian Expedition), *Xiandaishi yanjiu* 現代史研究 (Studies in Modern History), iv (1994), pp. 242-57; Wang Jiqing, 'Guanyu Sitanyin disici Zhongya kaoji suo faxian de wenwu' 關於斯坦因第四次中亞考察所發現的文物 (On the antiquities acquired by Sir Aurel Stein during his Fourth Central Asian Expedition), *Jiuzhou xuekan* 九州學刊 (Chinese Culture Quarterly), vi (1995.4), pp. 131-47.
- 25 Stein apparently had a lapse of memory here. All Chinese wooden slips recovered by him from the Niya site in 1901 and published by Éd. Chavannes as 'Appendix A' of Stein's *Ancient Khotan* (Oxford, 1907) were documents of the Western Jin Dynasty (265-316) from N.XV. In fact, the presentation labels from N.XIV were recovered by Stein in 1906 and published by Éd. Chavannes in *Les Documents chinois découverts par Aurel Stein dans les sables du Turkestan oriental* (Oxford, 1913).
- 26 Stein to L. Giles, 18 Nov. 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 76, f. 43.
- 27 Stein to L. Giles, 8 May 1933: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 76, f. 44.
- 28 Stein to H. Maspero, 12 Mar. 1935: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 426, f. 78.
- 29 Stein to H. Maspero, 2 Apr. 1935: BL, OIOC, Or. 12917, 'Letters & Papers from Aurel Stein to Henri Maspero', No. 42 (original); Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 426, f. 81 (carbon copy).
- 30 Stein to H. Maspero, 2 Apr. 1935: BL, OIOC, Or. 12917, 'Letters & Papers from Aurel Stein to Henri Maspero', No. 43 (original); Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 426, f. 101 (carbon copy).
- 31 Henri Maspero, *Les Documents chinois de la troisième expédition de Sir Aurel Stein en Asie centrale* (London, 1953).
- 32 F. H. Andrews's note on the letter from the Superintendent of the Photo-Mechanical and Lithographic Department of Thomason Civil Engineering College, to Stein, 14 Oct. 1931. Attached to the box of photographs of documents and manuscripts from Stein's fourth Central Asian expedition: BL, OIOC, unnumbered.
- 33 Wang Jiqing, 'Sitanyin disici Zhongya kaocha suohuo Hanwen wenshu' 斯坦因第四次中亞考察所獲漢文文書 (Chinese documents acquired by Sir Aurel Stein during his Fourth Central Asian Expedition), *Dunhuang Tulufan yanjiu* 敦煌吐魯番研究 (Journal of Dunhuang and Turfan Studies), iii (1997), pp. 259-90.
- 34 *Kharosthi Inscriptions discovered by Sir Aurel Stein in Chinese Turkestan*, Part I: 'Text of Inscriptions discovered at the Niya Site, 1901', Nos. 1-427, transcribed and edited by A. M. Boyer, E. J. Rapson and E. Senart (Oxford, 1920); Part II: 'Text of Inscriptions Discovered at the Niya, Endere, and Lou-lan Sites, 1906-7', Nos. 428-708, transcribed and edited by A. M. Boyer, E. J. Rapson and E. Senart (Oxford, 1927); Part III: 'Text of Inscriptions discovered at the Niya and Lou-lan Sites, 1913-14', Nos. 709-764, transcribed and edited by E. J. Rapson and P. S. Noble (Oxford, 1929).
- 35 E. J. Rapson to Stein, 29 July 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 103, f. 243.
- 36 Stein to E. J. Rapson, 18 Sept. 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 103, ff. 244-245.
- 37 Stein to G. Sherriff, 4 Oct. 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 315, f. 21.
- 38 E. J. Rapson to Stein, 18 Oct. 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 103, f. 246.
- 39 E. J. Rapson, 'Photographs of Kharosthi Documents received from Sir Aurel Stein', enclosure in E. J. Rapson's letter to Stein, 25 Jan. 1933: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 103, ff. 250-256.
- 40 E. J. Rapson to Stein, 25 Jan. 1933: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 103, ff. 248-249.
- 41 E. J. Rapson, 24 Feb. 1933, quoted in Rapson's letter to Stein, 7 Sept. 1934: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 103, f. 257.
- 42 E. J. Rapson to Stein, n.d.: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 103, f. 257. Judging from its acknowledgement of Stein's letter of 17 Aug. 1934 and Stein's annotation 'Answ. 7. ix, 34', it was written in late August or early September 1934.
- 43 T. Burrow, 'Edward J. Rapson (1861-1937)', *Dictionary of National Biography, 1931-1940* (London, 1949), pp. 729-30.
- 44 Stein to T. Burrow, 6 Dec. 1937: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 67, f. 182.
- 45 T. Burrow, 'Further Kharosthi documents from Niya', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, ix/1 (1937), pp. 111-23.
- 46 Stein to Sten Konow, 21 July 1931: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 90, f. 99.

- 47 H. W. Bailey, 'Hvatanica', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, viii/4 (1937), pp. 923-36.
- 48 Stein to H. W. Bailey, 6 Dec. 1937: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 64, f. 157.
- 49 H. W. Bailey to Stein, 7 Dec. 1937: Bodleian Library, MS. Stein 64, ff. 158-159.
- 50 H. W. Bailey, *Khotanese Texts*, vol. ii (London, 1954), pp. 62-3 (Achma and Dumaqu A), 64 (Dumaqu C, D, F).
- 51 H. W. Bailey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, Plates, Portfolio IV* (London, 1967), plates XCV-XCVI.

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