



Palm leaf book

Date
before 1900

Primary Maker
Unknown artist, Sri Lankan

Medium
Wood and palm-leaf paper with ink

Description
Written in twined Sinhala (Sri Lankan) script. Palm leaf books such as this originated in India as early as the 9th century C.E. and

were still in production and use throughout South Asia as late as the 19th century, when the printing press took over. These books were used to record important Theravada Buddhist scripture and teachings as well as indigenous knowledge of medicine, literature, agriculture, astrology and the arts. This book contains Jataka tales, Buddhist moral fables detailing the previous lives of the Buddha as a Bodhisattva.

Dimensions
Overall: 27 1/2 × 2 1/4 × 1 1/2 in. (69.9 × 5.7 × 3.8 cm)