

CAVE FIFTEEN-A

I am informed by Dr. S. Vasant that a shell-script inscription was found on this cave's front interior wall when it was first discovered. The record was effaced before an estampage could be made.

CAVE SIXTEEN

INSCRIPTION 67

- Cave:* Sixteen
Location: Left wall, in front of porch, above eye level
Medium: Incised
Type: Second period, programmatic, donative
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 69-73, #3; BCTTI: 124-128, #3; CII: 103-111, #25.
Copies: DAJI; FAI: plate xxviii, nos. 9 & 10 (partial); BCTTI: plate LVII; CII: plate XXV
Notes: I have reedited the long, verse inscriptions in Caves Sixteen, Seventeen, and Twenty Six (#67, #77, #93) based upon a review of estampages kept at the Archaeological Survey of India's archive in Mysore, as well as *in situ* examination. I am unable to provide translations here, but may in a later volume. Tentative but serviceable translations of these inscriptions may be found in COHEN. Meters: Upajāti: 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 22, 24, 25, 30; Upendravajra 5; Mātrāsamaka (?): 6, 7, 8, 9; Aupacchandāsika 17, 19, 21, 23, 27, 28; Vamśastha 18; Praharṣiṇī 26; Vasantatilakā 29; Śārdūlavikrīḍitam 31; Mālinī 32

Text

- L1: udīrṇṇalokatradoṣavahninirvāpaṇa¹ - - - - - {}
 - - - - - (a)bhīpraṇāmya² pūrvvām pravakṣyc kṣitīpā[nu]pūrvvī(m) {} | 1 | |
 L2: mahāvīmardeṣv abhivṛddhaśaktiḥ kruddhas surair apy anivāryya³ {} | 2 | |
 - - - - - [ra]ṇadānaśaktiḥ dvijaḥ prakāśo bhuvī vindhyaśa(ktiḥ) {} | 2 | |
 L3: purandaropendrasamaprabhāvaḥ svabāhuvīryā[rjji]ta[sa](rvvalokah) {}
 - - - - - ānām⁴ babbhūva vākātakavaṇśaketuh⁵ {} | 3 | |
 L4: raṇe[ṣu] haryyuddha⁶tareṇ[ul]ālasaṅcchā⁷ditārkkas sa ca⁸ {} | 4 | |
 - - - - - narātīn kṛtvābhivādapraṇāms⁹ cakāra {} | 4 | |
 L5: [vini]rjjiitāris surarājakārye¹⁰ cakāra punyeṣu param prayatnam {}
 - - - - - {} | 5 | |
 narendra¹¹maulivinyastamaṇikiraṇa¹²līḍhakramāmbujah {} |
 L6: pravarasenas tasya putro 'bhūd vīkasannavendīvarekṣaṇah¹³ {} | 6 | |
 ravimayūkha¹⁴ {} |
 (sarvva)senah¹⁴ pravarasenasya jītasarvasenas suto 'bhavat {} | 7 | |
 L7: sa(t)p[ul]traḥ pārtthivendrasya praśāśāsa dharmmeṇa medinīm {} |
 kuntalendram¹⁵ vī[jitya] - - - - - śrīvimdhyasenaḥ¹⁶ - - - - - {} | 8 | |
 pravarasenas tasya¹⁸ putro 'bhūt pravaro 'rjjiitodāraśāsana(h)¹⁹ pravarah²⁰ {} |
 L8: - - - - - {} | 9 | |
 [ta]syātmaja[h] kāma²¹ - - - - - {} |
 - - - - - [m a]vāpya rājyam aṣṭābdako yaḥ²² praśāśāsa samya[k] {} | 10 | |
 L9: tasy[ātmajo] 'bhūn naradeva²³ - - - - - [bhu]vī devasenah {} |
 yasyopabhogair lalitair vīh[ā]rann - - - - - devarājasya²³ - - - - - bhū[t]²⁴ {} | 11 | |
 puṇyānubhāvāt kṣitīpasya²⁵
 L10: [samya](k) - - - - - {} |
 - - - - - yaguṇādhipāso²⁶ - - - - - kośo²⁷ bhuvī hastibhojah {} | 12 | |
 pra²⁸ - - - - - h pṛthupīnavakṣās saroruhākṣah kṣapi-

- L11: (tāripakṣah) {}
 - - - - - bāhur ddiggandhahastipratimo babhūva {} 13 {}
 hito vinītaḥ praṇayapra[dāno] mano 'nukūlo 'nuvidhānavartī²⁹ {}
 nīratyayam
 L12: - - - - - saṅā - - - - - bhu - - - - - ngeṇa - - - - - kaś ca³⁰ {} 14 {}
 ta(thai)va lokasya hitāśayatvāt³¹ sukheṇa samya[kpari]pālānena³² {}
 piteva māteva sakheva nityam priyo 'bhigamyaś ca babhūva
 L13: - - - - - {} 15 {}
 - - - - - {}
 svasthas samāveśya sa tatra rājā sasañja³⁴ bhogeṣu yatheṣṭaceṣṭaḥ³⁵ {} 16 {}
 atha tasya suto babhū-
 L14: (va) rājā sajalāmboru[ha] - - - - - {}
 hariṛāmamārasmarendrakāntī³⁶ hariṣeṇ(o) harivikkramapratāpaḥ {} 17 {}
 sa kuntalāvanūkālīṅgakosalatrikūṭalāṅdhra-
 L15: - - - - - jān imān {}
 - - - - - [śaurrya]viśrutān api svanirddeśa(guṇāu) - - - - - {} 18 {}
 prathīto bhuvī hastibhojasūnus sacivas tasya mahīpater bbabhūva {}
 sakalakṣīti
 L16: - - - - - ryyapra - - - - - {} 19 {}
 rājāprajeṣṭaḥ sthiradhīracetās tyāgākṣamaudāryyaguṇair upeta(h) {}
 dharmmeṇa dharmmapravaṇaś śaśāsa deśam yaśahpūṇyaguṇāṃśū³⁷
 L17: - - - - - {} 20 {}
 viśeṣataḥ - - - - - pratī puṇyopacayam paraṃ cakāra {}
 yata urddhvam adas³⁸sahāyadharmmā[nuca]r[i]to⁴⁰ lokagurau cakāra kārām⁴¹
 {} 21 {}
 āyurvayovittas[a]kh[ā]ni⁴²
 L18: - - - - - [cañca]lāni {}
 u(ddiśya) mātāpitarāv udāram nyavīviśad⁴³ veśma yatīndra(sevyam) {} 22 {}
 sajalāmbuda[vr]ndalambitāgre⁴⁴ bhujagendrādhvyuṣite⁴⁵ mahīdharendre {}
 L19: - - - - - [v]īraśripatīnā dharānikuñje⁴⁶ {} 23 {}
 gavākṣaniryūhasuvīthivedikā[su]rendrakanyāpratūmādyalañkr̥tam⁴⁷ {}
 manoharastambha⁴⁸vibhaṅga
 L20: - - - - - [ni]veśitābhyanaracaityamandiram⁵⁰ {} 24 {}
 - - - - - talasanniviṣṭam vi[tāna] - - - - - {} 51 manobhīrāmaṃ⁵² {}
 - - - - - [prakā]māmbu⁵³mahānidhānam nāgendraveśmādhīr a - - - - -
 L21: - - - - - {} 25 {}
 - - - - - hita⁵⁵samīraṇ[am]⁵⁶ [samantāt] - - - - - vivi[dha]vi[lāsa] - - - - - {} 57 {}
 gr̥ṣmārkkasya ca kiraṇopatāpataptam sarvartuprathitasukho⁵⁸pabhogayoga[m]⁵⁹
 {} 26 {}
 L22: - - - - - [su]rendramandirāṇām ruciman mandarakanda[rānurūpam]⁶⁰ {} 61
 - - - - - janair⁶² yathepsita(m)⁶³ {} 27 {}
 asamasya virocane girer vika⁶⁴
 L23: - - - - - śramā[nta]ka⁶⁵tayā⁶⁶ (nivahena) - - - - - {} 28 {}
 (śrī)[vajjayantam i]tī⁶⁷ yasya janena nāma prītūprasādavikacaprāṇa[yena] cakre
 {} 68 eta-
 L24: - - - - - {} 29 {}
 - - - - - layanam surendramauliprabhopaci⁷¹ta[maṅgalasamgrahāya]⁷²
 {} 29 {}
 nivedya⁷³ saṅghāya - - - - - pabhogyam⁷⁵ sabandhuvarggas sa varāhadveḥ⁷⁶
 {} 77
 L25: - - - - - [na]⁷⁸ śās[t]ā sugataprasastah {} 30 {}
 sāndrāmbhodabhujāṅga⁷⁹bhoga[nikarai]r yāvāt - - - - - {} 80 nūtnamanas⁸¹
 śīlālakapilair yāvāt karair bhās[k]jaraḥ⁸² {}
 tavāc che⁸³
 L26: - - - - - sevyatām antarmmaṇḍaparatanam etad amalām rat-

- natrayodbhāvita[m] {} 31 {}
 vividhalayanasānus sevyamāno mahadbhīr ggīrīr aya
 L27: - - - - - ddhyah⁸⁴ {}
 jagad⁸⁵ api ca samastam vyastadosaprahāṇa[d]⁸⁶ vi[ṣ]atu padam aśokaṃ nīr-
 varam śāntam āryam {} 32 {}

Text Notes

- ¹ ICTWI: nirvāpano; BCTTI: nirvāpanā. ² BCTTI: ti pra°; CII: (ya)tiṃ pra°. CII's suggestion violates the meter. ³ ICTWI, BCTTI, & CII: propose reading "anivārrya(vīryyah)" ⁴ ICTWI: ... [yaśom]sukānām; CII suggests restoring uddhītakamṭakānām ⁵ ICTWI, BCTTI: °vamśa° ⁶ ICTWI: haryyuthi°; BCTTI: raṇe [sva]haryyuthi°; CII: raṇe[su] haryyuddha ⁷ ICTWI, CII: °sañchā° ⁸ CII: sa ca [kamma?] ... ⁹ ICTWI: °pravaṇān° ¹⁰ ICTWI, BCTTI: kāryyaś ¹¹ BCTTI: °nā° ¹² ICTWI: nareṇdra; BCTTI, CII: (arī)narendra ¹³ ICTWI: °kṣāna, and takes the beginning of the next verse as part of this compound ¹⁴ ICTWI: [rudra?senah]; BCTTI: ... [dra]senah ¹⁵ ICTWI: kunteleṇdra ¹⁶ BCTTI: [pr]thivī[senah]; CII: śrīvimdhyasenah ¹⁷ CII proposes reading "nīro 'bhavat" here ¹⁸ ICTWI: pravaraśe-nasya ¹⁹ BCTTI ends half verse here ²⁰ ICTWI: °śāsanapravara[h] ²¹ ICTWI: kāmata; BCTTI: ... yātmaja.ma ...; CII: tasyātmajaḥ ... ²² CII: yaḥ ²³ ICTWI: vīpāvanair nṛdevarājasya ²⁴ ICTWI, BCTTI, CII: ... bhūh ²⁵ BCTTI suggests inserting "tasya" here ²⁶ CII: °vāśah ²⁷ CII reading "śrīhastikośo" ²⁸ ICTWI: hr̥ṣya ... ²⁹ ICTWI: °kūlanu° ³⁰ ICTWI: [śā]sana ... sakaś ca ³¹ BCTTI: loka suhītā° ³² ICTWI: °paripālānāya ³³ ICTWI: [nityam]; CII: (satyam) ³⁴ ICTWI: sasarjja ³⁵ ICTWI: °ce[ṣṭam?] ³⁶ ICTWI: hariṣ eṣa hara[h] smareva kāntīr; BCTTI: hari[rāma]harasmare[va]kāntīr; CII: hariṛāmaharasmarendukāntīr ³⁷ ICTWI, CII: yaśahpūṇyaguṇāṃśū; BCTTI: °guṇāśū ³⁸ CII suggests restoring "subhraḥ" here. ³⁹ CII: imān ⁴⁰ ICTWI & BCTTI: °dharmmāparito; CII: sahāyadharmā [nirato] ⁴¹ BCTTI: kārā. ⁴² CII: °sukhāni ⁴³ CII: nyavīśad ⁴⁴ ICTWI: ... rudhītāgre; CII: [sajalā]mbuda[vr]ndalambitāgre ⁴⁵ BCTTI: °gendrādv yuṣite ⁴⁶ ICTWI: śārānikuñje ⁴⁷ BCTTI: °lamkr̥tam ⁴⁸ ICTWI: °stamma° ⁴⁹ BCTTI: [meduram] ...; CII supplies "bhūṣitam". Even if these suggested readings are not correct, clearly whatever was here must have been their rough synonym. ⁵⁰ BCTTI: ... [uddhu]racaitya-mandira[m] ⁵¹ ICTWI: ma ... talasanniviṣṭam visa ... na; BCTTI: ma ... talasanniviṣṭavi ... ⁵² ICTWI suggests ending verse here. ⁵³ ICTWI: va ... nēambu°; BCTTI: ... nēamvu° ⁵⁴ ICTWI: °ādibhīr apy alaṅkr̥tam, and for ICTWI this completes a half verse; CII supplies "apy alaṅkr̥tam" ⁵⁵ CII: ... [rmma]ha[ti] ⁵⁶ ICTWI: ... samīraṇa ...; BCTTI: ... samaraṇa ...; CII: samīraṇe ⁵⁷ ICTWI suggests ending verse here. ⁵⁸ ICTWI & CII: °guṇo° ⁵⁹ ICTWI: °yogyam; BCTTI: °yoga[m]; CII: °yogyam ⁶⁰ CII: [rūpam] ⁶¹ ICTWI suggests ending verse here. ⁶² ICTWI: ... sukho; BCTTI: ... ha[m] ⁶³ ICTWI: yathepsitaḥ; BCTTI: yathepsita. Mīrashi's estampage shows another akṣara here, it could be a final m-mātra but is too unclear to make out. I see neither a viśārga nor an anusvāra however. ⁶⁴ ICTWI: asamapratirocane girau vika[ca]; BCTTI: asama[prati]rocane girer vaka ⁶⁵ ICTWI: ... śramāntakah, and suggests ending verse here; BCTTI: ... sramā . kā ., and suggests ending first half verse here ⁶⁶ BCTTI: laya ... ⁶⁷ CII: ... viśālam itī ⁶⁸ ICTWI suggests ending verse here ⁶⁹ ICTWI: cetah; CII: ctasya ⁷⁰ CII suggests "... girer" as a possibility ⁷¹ BCTTI: °cīr° ⁷² ... hāyam to end his first half-verse ⁷³ ICTWI: nivevedya ⁷⁴ CII suggest reading "suveśma" in this lacuna ⁷⁵ Read upabhogyam; ICTWI: ... thyam; CII: bhaktiyā ⁷⁶ ICTWI suggests ending verse here ⁷⁷ CII suggest reading "samyak" in this lacuna ⁷⁸ CII: suggests reading "dharmmeṇa" in this lacuna ⁷⁹ janga° ⁸⁰ ICTWI: ... tamārāma ... for this lacuna; BCTTI: ... ma ... ⁸¹ ICTWI & BCTTI: ... nmanas; CII: °manah ⁸² BCTTI: bhāsvarah, but suggests reading as above. ⁸³ ICTWI: chi ⁸⁴ ICTWI: ... bhyaḥ; BCTTI: ... ddhya ⁸⁵ BCTTI: yad ⁸⁶ ICTWI: °prahānam; BCTTI: samastavyasta°

INSCRIPTION 68

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, front wall, to the left of the door
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, descriptive labels
Editions: AJ3: 96, #6
Copies: AJ3: Plate VIIIc-c
Notes: AJ3 points out that although several narratives at Ajanta are based specifically on Ārya Śūra's *Jātakamālā*, that text was probably not the source for this painting. It adduces two reasons. First, Ārya Śūra does not name the evil Brāhman "Yujaka." Second, Ārya Śūra's hero is named "Viśvantara," not "Vaiśvantara," the latter corresponding to the Pāli "Vessantara." STUDIES, by contrast, understands this painted narrative to be part of a larger "cycle" on this wall, depicting Ārya Śūra's *Jātakamālā* in its entirety. Nevertheless, STUDIES finds only incidents common to all known literary versions of the Viśvantara story here, and nothing particular to the *Jātakamālā*'s account.

Text

L1: Vaiśvantaṛaḥ Indraḥ Yu[jaka]

INSCRIPTION 69

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, right wall between cells R3 and R4
Medium: Scratched into paint
Type: Second period, intrusive, graffiti
Editions: NIA: 152
Copies: NIA: figure 6
Notes: "Sūstradhāra" is either wrong for, or a dialectal variation of, "sūtradhāra," literally "thread-holder." This title ranges in meaning from architect to painter, broadly including any artist whose work includes the formal delineation of line and proportion. (See Shridhar Anghare. "Sūtradhāra as a Painter." In *The Art of Ajanta: New Perspectives*. vol 2. Ed. by Ratan Parimoo et al. [New Delhi: Books and Books, 1991]: 351-55.)

Text

L1: śri¹ yugadhara sūstradhāra

Text Note

¹ NIA: sri

Translation

Śrī Yugadhara, architect (or painter).

INSCRIPTION 70

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, left wall, over cell L4, below and between the first two painted Buddhas of a series of four
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: ICTWI: 87, #27; AJ3: 95, #1
Copies: ICTWI: Cave XVI, #27; AJ3: Plate VIIa
Notes: Iconographically, these four Buddha images are not particularly interesting. All wear yellow robes, and sit on lotuses under three-tiered parasols. They vary in that the first (from the left) has his right shoulder bare and holds his hands in *dharmacakrapravartana mudrā*; the second has both shoulders covered and his hands are in *dhyāna mudrā*; the third is like the first, and the fourth like the second. Such pairings of robe-style and *mudrā* are not unusual, nor is this alternation. All four Buddhas are set within a single painted frame, suggesting that they are to be viewed as a group. Groups of four Buddhas include: the Buddhas of the four directions, the four Buddhas of the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, and the four Buddhas of the *Bhadrakalpa* that have heretofore awakened: Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kāśyapa, and Sākyamuni (Paul Demieville. *Hobogirin*. Fascicule 3. [Paris: A. Maisonneuve, 1974]: 195, s.v. butsu). I would guess that the latter group is intended here. For other inscribed image groups that name or have a definite concern with previous Buddhas see Cave 10, #58 and Cave 22, # 90 and #91.

There are two more points to be made about these images and this inscription. First, these four Buddhas are centered upon the cell L4 door, even though space was available on either side. One might guess that L4 was Dharmadatta's own cell. The cell seems to have been occupied: it was plastered and the plaster is thickly coated with soot. However, the cell's walls were not finished; nor was a door or locking mechanism ever hung, though matrix was reserved. The second point of interest is that Dharmadatta was so very territorial about his Buddhas. This group of Buddhas is marked by two dedications (#70 and #71), and each one of the four Buddhas also bears a record stating that it is Dharmadatta's property (#72). Caves 2 and 10 show other instances wherein there may be multiple inscriptions on a single dedication or group of dedications by a single patron.

To put Dharmadatta's hypothesized anxieties into perspective, let me repeat a tale from Xuanzang. It takes place in Gandhāra: "Some old people said that there was formerly a poor man who sustained himself by working as a laborer. Once he earned one gold coin and wished to make a portrait of the Buddha. He came to the stupa and said to a painter, 'I wish to make a portrait of the Tathāgata's excellent features, but I have only one gold coin, which is really insufficient for remuneration. This has been my long-cherished desire, but I am poor and lacking in money.' In consideration of the poor man's sincerity, the painter did not argue about the payment and promised to accomplish the job. Another man under the same circumstances came with one gold coin to request the painter to draw a portrait of the Buddha. Thus the painter accepted the money from the two men, and he asked another skillful painter to work together with him in drawing one portrait. When the two men came on the same day to worship the Buddha, the two painters showed them the portrait, pointing at it and saying, 'This is the portrait

you ordered.' The two men looked at each other bewildered, and the painters realized the two men were doubtful about the matter and said to them, 'Why are you pondering over the matter for so long? Whatever object we undertake to produce is done without the slightest fault. If our words are not false, the portrait will show miracles.' As soon as they had uttered these words, the portrait manifested a wonder: the body split into two busts, while the shadows intermingled into one, with features shining brilliantly. The two men were happily convinced, and delightedly fostered faith" (Xuanzang, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*, trans. Li Rongxi. [Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1996]: 72-73).

A final point. The donor Dharmadatta is figured to the far left of the group, over the left corner of cell L4's door. Should this monk be identified with the Dharmadatta mentioned in Cave 26's verse inscription (#93, v. 14)? Another unanswered question.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo 'yaṃ śākyabhikṣor bhbbhadantadharmadattasya yad atra puṇyaṃ
L2: tad bhavatu mātāpitros [sa]rvasatvānāṃ cānuttarajñānāvāpta
L3: ye STU¹

Text Note

¹ AJ3: [ssuh]. See the Text Notes to inscription #17 for a discussion of this *aṣṣara*. Whether continuation is indicated because each of the individual Buddha's is inscribed with Dharmadatta name, or because he wants one to read on to the other dedicatory record is uncertain.

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu reverend Dharmadatta. Let the merit therein be for the attaining of supreme knowledge by [his] mother and father and all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 71

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, left wall, over cell L4, below and between the third and fourth Buddhas
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: DAJI; ICTWI: 87, #26; BCTTI: 138, #15; AJ3: 95, #2
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI: Cave XVI, # 26; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #15; AJ3: Plate VIIb

Text

L1: deyadharm[m]o 'yaṃ śākyabhikṣor bhbbhadantadharmmadattasya yad atra (puṇyaṃ)
L2: tad bhavatu [m]ātāpitros sarvasatvānāṃ cānuttarajñānāvāptaye

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu reverend Dharmadatta. Let the [merit] therein be for the attaining of supreme knowledge by [his] mother and father and all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 72

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, left wall, over cell L4, on the lotus throne of each of a series of four Buddhas
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: AJ3: 95
Copies: None published

Text

bhadantadharmadattasya

Translation

Reverend Dharmadatta's

INSCRIPTION 73

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, left wall, L5 and L6, below the third Buddha a series of Buddhas
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: DAJI; ICTWI: 87, #25; BCTTI: 138, #14; AJ3: 95, #3
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI, Cave XVI, #25; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #14; AJ3: VIIc
Notes: Most likely, this donation was a series of eight (seven Buddhas plus Maitreya). At present only six Buddhas are visible. Bāpuka's Buddhas are located directly above the four Buddhas painted for Dharmadatta. And like Dharmadatta, Bāpuka is concerned to make sure all of his Buddhas are duly marked as his property.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo 'yaṃ śākyabhikṣ[o]r bhbbhadanta¹ bāpukasya²
L2: yad atra [pu]ṇyaṃ tad bhavatu mātāpitro sarvasatvānāṃ cā
L3: m anu[ita]rajñānāvāptaye

Text Notes

¹ BCTTI: bhbadanta ² DAJI: buddhakasya; ICTWI & BCTTI: dāpukasya

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu reverend Bāpuka. Let the merit therein be for the attaining of supreme knowledge by [his] mother and father and all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 74

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, left wall, between cells L5 and L6, on the lotus throne of each of a Buddhas donated by Bāpuka
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: AJ3: 95, #3

Text

bāpukasya / bhadantabāpukasya¹

Text Note

¹ “bāpuka” is painted on the lotus of the 4th and 6th Buddhas in this group; “bhadantabāpuka” on the 5th.

Translation

Bāpuka’s / Reverend Bāpuka’s

INSCRIPTION 75

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, left wall, between cells L4 and L5
Medium: Yellow pigment (more like chalk than paint) over painted plaster
Type: Second or post-second period graffiti
Editions: AJ3: 95, #4
Copies: AJ3: Plate VIIIa
Notes: AJ3 writes that both this and the subsequent record belong paleographically to the “nail-headed variety,” intimating their contemporaneity with the site. This is possible. In Cave 21 we also find words in a similar script scribbled with what seems to be chalk on unfinished walls (cf. #86, #87). If these inscriptions do date from the Vākāṭaka period, it seems possible that, given their location and medium, they informed the artists which scenes to paint on the marked walls; or they may be the names of the artists themselves, who claimed these spaces for their own use. Militating against this interpretation are the graffiti in Cave 1 (#1 & #2)—these use a similar script and medium but are scribbled over already-painted scenes—as well as some writing on the ceiling of the right end porch cell in Cave 21—this was scribbled over unpainted plaster that had been blackened by soot. However, this interpretation finds possible support from a similar record written in red paint or crayon on a pillar in the main stūpa hall of Piṭhalkhora, on a plastered but unfinished area at the top of a pillar. One wonders why a pious vandal would have chosen such an out-of-the-way spot at Piṭhalkhora, given that more accessible places were available.

INSCRIPTION 76

Cave: Sixteen
Location: Vihāra, left wall, between cells L3 and L4

Medium: Yellow pigment (more like chalk than paint) over painted plaster
Type: Second or post-second period graffiti
Editions: AJ3: 95, #5
Copies: AJ3: Plate VIIIb
Notes: See the note for #75. The wall from which inscriptions #75 and #76 were taken is, in fact, covered by graffiti, some from the fifth century. This is an excellent project for somebody with broad palaeographic knowledge, time and patience.

“ra” (one can almost never be sure that a seeming anusvāra or visarga is not just a pit in the rock), I too ignore it and read “avatāra” syntactically as a nominative singular. Indeed, there should be nothing shocking in this verse’s calling these brothers “avatāras” after having said that they are the image of Pradyumna and Sāmba; although these gods are, properly speaking, *vyūhas* of Nārāyaṇa, not *avatāras*, we cannot expect such theological exactitude in a text of this sort. The fact that their father’s name is Kṛṣṇadāsa of course completes the pun. Finally, it would have been very inelegant indeed for the verse to rely upon two verbs (babhāra & dadhre) where one is sufficient. ¹⁷ ICTWI: . . . m āsmakādi; BCTTI: . . . sam āsmakādi[bhīh]; CII: [nīyocchrita] āsmakādi[kam]. ¹⁸ ICTWI: . . . nutābhyaṃ atibhūya; BCTTI: .nu tābhyaṃ abhībhūya; CII: [kr]tārtthasatvā[v]. ¹⁹ ICTWI: °yaśapra° ²⁰ ICTWI: vijāhiraṭṭh° ²¹ ICTWI: °saniḥ; BCTTI: pra[syata] . . . tāsanīḥ ²² ICTWI: . . . yād-hirājah° ²³ ICTWI: acimtyasamjñāḥ sacivas; BCTTI: acityasamjñāḥ sacivas ²⁴ BCTTI: vyavivigdhat° ²⁵ ICTWI: . . . nu[ṣātatoṣa]m; CII: . . . nujātatoṣā[n] ²⁶ ICTWI bhūyaśruta° ²⁷ Read samyak kṣubhito. ICTWI: samyak kṣubhito; CII: sabhyānucito ²⁸ ICTWI: a . . . rtthika°; tavaiva; BCTTI: arthika° ²⁹ ICTWI: kīrtikr° ³⁰ BCTTI: . . . sa . . . bhīplutākṣān° ³¹ ICTWI: putrābhiceṣṭān; BCTTI: putrādhiceṣṭān ³² ICTWI: vīdan nrvadhyaśa-yaśudhisampadam; BCTTI: vidanrvadhya°; CII: vīda[n] nrvadhya°, suggests reading nrvaddhya° ³³ ICTWI & BCTTI: sarvvajñabhāvaprañidhānasiddhiḥ; CII: sarvvajñabhāvaprañidhānasiddhiḥ ³⁴ CII: satyābhīdhānām vibhāvāḍ ³⁵ ICTWI: . . . mbāraça°; CII: °yogā(t) ³⁶ ICTWI: yaśombubhiḥ ³⁷ BCTTI: °bhraiḥ ³⁸ ICTWI: samalamcakāra; BCTTI: [vi]malañ cakāra ³⁹ BCTTI rightly suggests reading “bhuvam” ⁴⁰ ICTWI & BCTTI: °bhūṣā ⁴¹ ICTWI: . . . [nānilanādavadbhīh] ⁴² ICTWI: . . . śarayābhahadbhīḥ ⁴³ ICTWI: . . . mavi ⁴⁴ ICTWI: . . . ṣṭim vipulām; BCTTI: vipulam ⁴⁵ ICTWI: acikarac caityam ihānakalpam; BCTTI: acikarac caityam [ahī]nakalpam ⁴⁶ ICTWI: . . . śe naya° ⁴⁷ CII: sādhu ⁴⁸ ICTWI: °ṣitam ⁴⁹ ICTWI & CII: °rāmam ⁵⁰ BCTTI: °karmmaṇa, but suggests reading °karmmaṇām ⁵¹ CII: munīndranāthaprañidhānasiddhaye ⁵² CII: vihanū ⁵³ CII: amśubhastimāḥ ⁵⁴ Expressed by a symbol.

INSCRIPTION 78

Cave: Seventeen
Location: No longer extant. Porch, left wall, inside the Wheel of Existence
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, didactic verse
Éditions: Never recorded
Copies: Never copied
Notes: In FIA: 560, Mr. Ralph, one of the cave’s first Western visitors, remarks that an inscription can be seen within the Cave 17’s Wheel of Existence (which he calls the “zodiac”). The *Dīvyāvadāna* advises that a Wheel of Existence should include the following two didactic verses:
ārabhdavam niṣkrāmata yuyadhvam buddhaśāsane |
dhunīta mṛtyunah sānyam nadāgāram va kuījarah ||
yo hy asmin dharmavinaye apramattāṣ cariyati |
prahāya jātisamsāram dukkhasyāntam kariyati ||
 (E.B. Cowell and R.A. Neil [eds]. *The Dīvyāvadāna*. [Cambridge: The University Press, 1886]: 300). These verses come from the *Udānavarga*, IV, vv. 37-8, and may be translated:
 Begin, renounce, and join the Buddha’s Order!
 Death’s army clamors, like an elephant in a hut of reeds.
 A man who progresses in this doctrine and discipline, unshaken,
 Will escape the cycle of birth and make an end of misery.

INSCRIPTION 79

Cave: Seventeen
Location: Porch, left wall, in the lower left-hand corner, under the figure of a richly bejeweled green yakṣa
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive (?), descriptive label
Éditions: ICTWI: 87, #28; AJ3: 96, #1
Copies: ICTWI: Cave XVII, #28; AJ3: Plate IXa
Notes: Aside from the obvious interest this label possesses vis-à-vis Ajanta’s architectural, decorative, and apotropaic programmes, this is an important record for its paleography. This is the only inscription at Ajanta to use a “northern” form of the *m* found in some Gupta inscriptions from Mathurā (including the Gupta year 135 [= 454 C.E.] image inscription) as well as sixth century Buddhist manuscripts from Gilgit (see Lore Sander. *Paläographisches zu den Sanskrithandschriften der Berliner Turfansammlung*. [Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1968]: Tafel IV: B).

Text

L1: māñibhadraḥ

INSCRIPTION 80

Cave: Seventeen
Location: Porch, rear wall, left corner
Medium: Painted
Type: Late-sixth to eighth-century graffiti
Éditions: AJ3: 96, #4
Copies: AJ3: Plate IXd
Notes: Along with the next two records, inscription #85 from Cave 20, #86 from Cave 21, and the long inscription #97 between Cave 26 and 26 lower left, this inscription clearly dates from a time much later than that proposed by Walter Spink as the end of Ajanta’s efflorescence. The fact that none of these later records possess discernable Buddhist content supports Spink’s contention that there was no Buddhist community at Ajanta in Xuanzang’s time. Though we cannot be sure whether Xuanzang himself visited Ajanta, the paleography of this record tells us that his contemporaries did. Still, it should also be noted that inscription #99 from Ghaṭotkaca derives from a similarly late date, but is definitively Buddhist, showing that at least one Buddhist did come to this area in the seventh or eighth century.

Text

L1: śrī . . . pauka . . . (?)

INSCRIPTION 81

Cave: Seventeen
Location: Porch, rear wall, to the right of #80, just to the left of the door way
Medium: Painted
Type: Late-sixth to eighth century, graffiti
Editions: Not previously noticed
Copies: None published
Notes: This inscription may be classed with the preceding as late, intrusive, and probably non-Buddhist. It is located directly to the left of the porch's left side doorway. Spink has proposed that Cave 17's two side doors were partially filled, in order to provide additional space on which painters might work. The location of this inscription lends credence to Spink's supposition. For if this inscription was any longer than "śrī," the only place the additional *akṣaras* could have gone was over what is presently the doorway's empty space.

Text

L1: śrī . . .

INSCRIPTION 82

Cave: Seventeen
Location: Vihāra, left wall, to the left of cell L1
Medium: Painted
Type: Late-sixth to eighth century, graffiti
Editions: DAJI; AJ3: 96, #3
Copies: DAJI; AJ3: Plate IXe
Notes: See inscription #80. Although most of this record is preserved, I have been unable to make sense of it. It appears to be a name and perhaps titles. A mantra?

Text

L1: śrī bha¹[mā]ṇamāṇāvapaukagai (gau?) radeva
 L2: viduṣā caṇḍa-²

Text Notes

¹ AJ3: Ru (Bha?); ² DAJI: śrī bhamāṇamātavaloka śivadevaviduṣaraṇam

INSCRIPTION 83

Cave: Seventeen
Location: Vihāra, right wall, on both sides of cell R1
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, descriptive labels
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 87, #29; AJ3: 96, #2
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI, Cave XVII, #29; AJ3: Plate IXb-c

Notes: Painted on front aisle, right wall. Of these, I have been able to find only two "śibirājā"s.

Text

L1: śibirājā śibirājā indra śibirājā indraḥ

CAVE NINETEEN

The area over the entrance on the interior front wall appears to have been prepared for a verse record like those in Caves 16, 17, and 26. No inscriptions have been found in this cave to date.

CAVE TWENTY

INSCRIPTION 84

Cave: Twenty
Location: Porch, left pilaster
Medium: Incised
Type: Second period, programmatic, donative
Editions: DAJI (called "Cave XIX"); ICTWI: 76, #5; BCTTI: 132, #5; AJ4: 113
Copies: DAJI (called "Cave XIX"); BCTTI: Plate LVIII, #5; AJ4: 113

Text

L1: yaṃ¹ maṇḍapa
L2: pautrasva² kṣ[a]³
L3: putrasya upendra⁴
L4: sya dharmma[haga]⁵
L5: trasya jayata⁶
L6: [sya] kulapri⁷
L7: mocāsaka[sya]⁸
L8: tvāmika[syau]⁹
L9: punyan tad¹⁰
L10: gamāmānā[m] sa¹¹
L11: nāvāp¹²

Text Notes

¹ Read deyharmmo 'yaṃ² DAJI: ... trasya ka ...; ICTWI, BCTTI, AJ4: °trasya, read with this³ ICTWI: ... prapautrasya kṣ. BCTTI & AJ4: ... pautrasya [Kṣ]. ... AJ4 allows this might be read as kṣa, but kṣa (or hya) seem the only possibilities. ⁴ ICTWI: ... pautrasyaścāryendra; AJ: upendra[sya] ⁵ DAJI: °dharmmapa ...; ICTWI: dharmmahaga ... [pu]. The reading "haga" is dubious. ⁶ DAJI: jayasa; ICTWI: jayatā; BCTTI & AJ4: jayatām ⁷ DAJI: ... sya kalapri ...; ICTWI: kulapri ... [para]; BCTTI: lyakalapri ... ⁸ DAJI: mohasakasya ICTWI: mopāsakasya; AJ4: mo[pā]saka[sya]. The reading suggested in ICTWI and AJ4, "paramopāsakasya," is to be preferred for its sense, but the "cā" is clear and cannot be a "pā," albeit "cā" could be deemed a scribal error. ⁹ DAJI: nvāmikasyau; ICTWI: nvamikasyai ... [yada]. This might also read °tvāmika⁹ ¹⁰ ICTWI: [tra] punyam tad bhavatu mātāpitṛ; BCTTI: punya(m) tad bha[vatu mātāpitṛ] ¹¹ ICTWI: [pūrvam]gamānām sa[kalāsatvānā]; BCTTI: [pūrvam]gamānām sa[kalāsatvānām utta] ¹² ICTWI: m anuttarajñānāvāpta[ye]; BCTTI: [rajñā]nāv[ā]p[taye]. Read this latter part *yad atra punyan tad bhavatu mātāpitṛpūrvamgamānām sarvasatvānām anuttarajñānāvāptaye*

Translation

This pavillion is [the religious donation] of [X ... the ... of] Upendra ... the son of Kṣa ... , grandson of X [Let the] merit [therein, be for the attaining of supreme knowledge by all living beings,] beginning with [his mother and father].

INSCRIPTION 85

Cave: Twenty
Location: Vihāra, left wall
Medium: Painted in large red letters
Type: Late-sixth to eighth century, graffiti
Editions: Not previously noted
Copies: None published
Notes: Apparently somebody's name and titles like the graffiti in Cave 17. Not enough of this record remains to make transcription worthwhile.

CAVE TWENTY ONE

INSCRIPTION 86

Cave: Twenty One
Location: Porch, rear wall, right of door
Medium: Paint
Type: Second or post-second period, intrusive, graffiti
Editions: AJ4: 111
Copies: None published
Notes: Aside from the painting in large red letters, this wall, that to the left of the door, and many of the interior walls are covered by graffiti written with white chalk. See my note to #75 for further discussion of Ajanta's graffiti. The record has deteriorated since the days of AJ4. Chakravarti was apparently able to read the fourth line of this record as "[Dasa]ratha [ma*?]ṇḍaṇa," and he suggests that this and other records on the cave's walls (most of which are too faded or fragmentary to bother reproducing, though they could yield secrets to a very tenacious epigrapher having plenty of time and the ASI's permission to use a bright white-light source) provided the titles of scenes to be painted on the marked portion of the wall.

INSCRIPTION 87

Cave: Twenty One
Location: Vihāra, over cell L1
Medium: White chalk
Type: Second or post-second period, intrusive, graffiti
Editions: Not previously noted
Copies: None published
Notes: Again see my discussion at inscription #75. Paleographically, this record is akin to #75 and #76.

CAVE TWENTY TWO

INSCRIPTION 88

Cave: Twenty Two
Location: Vihāra, right wall, lower back corner
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: Not previously noticed
Copies: None published

Text

L1: deyadharmmo 'yaṃ śākyoposa(ka) .vasya mātāpitṛm uddiśya sarvvasatvānām
 (ca)

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākya-upāsaka ?va, in honor of [his] mother and father, [and] for all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 89

Cave: Twenty Two
Location: Vihārāra, rear wall, left of door, on the throne of a Buddha image
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: NIA: 151
Copies: NIA: figure 4

Text

L1: left: [siddham]¹ deyadharmmo 'yaṃ śākya
 L1: right: bhī[kṣo]r bhadanta bha . . . [sya] mātāpitro²
 L2: left: m udiśya sa[rva]sa³
 L2: right: tvānā ca bhavatu⁴

Text Notes

¹ Shown by a symbol ² NIA: mātāpitro[h] ³ NIA: -dasya ya[d atr] pu ⁴ NIA: [ṇyam tad bha]vatu cā(nuttarā)ñānā)vāptaye

Translation

[Success!] This is the religious donation of the Śākyaabhikṣu reverend Bha?. Let it be in honor of his parents and for all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 90

Cave: Twenty Two
Location: Shrine, right wall
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: DAJI (called Cave XXI); ICTWI: 88, #30; AJ4: 112
Copies: DAJI (called Cave XXI); ICTWI: Cave XXII, #30; John Griffiths. *The Paintings in the Buddhist Cave-Temples of Ajanta*. vol. 1. (London: 1896): plate 91. The first edition of Griffiths' book source provides the best evidence for the first half of the inscription; the modern reprint is too blurry. AJ4 merely reproduces Griffiths' plate as its Plate I.

Text

L1: siddham¹ deyadharmmo² 'yaṃ śākyaabhikṣo m aparāśaila³.i . . . nīyasya⁴ mātāpitṛ⁵
 . . . [u]tranya . [o] [sa]rvvasatvānām anuttara[jñā]nāvāptaye saurupya⁶saubhā-
 gyaguṇopapamnnā⁷ guṇendriye⁸ bhāsvradīptayas te⁹ bhavamnti¹⁰ te¹¹ nayanāb-
 hirāmā
 L2: ye kārayamti[ha] jī[nasya] bimbam

Text Notes

¹ Represented by a symbol, not in DAJI's or ICTWI's translations although it is on their plates. ² ICTWI: deyadharmmo ³ Read śākyaabhikṣor aparāśailasya; ICTWI's plate however shows that the next akṣara had a medial i, perhaps it read śākyaabhikṣo m aparāśailanikayasya. ICTWI: śākyaabhikṣo maśaraśaila; AJ: śākyaabhikṣo(r) ma[hā]yāna ⁴ ICTWI: nīyasya ⁵ DAJI: °pitro; AJ suggests " . . . nīyasya mātāpitṛ", but this is based upon the ICTWI plate which is clear ⁶ DAJI: rūpya; AJ suggests reading °rū^o ⁷ DAJI: °panna; ICTWI: °pannā ⁸ DAJI: °yo; ICTWI: °yair ⁹ DAJI: diptayeṣu; ICTWI: °diptayaṣṭe; ICTWI's eye-copy clearly deviates from the actual inscription here. ¹⁰ DAJI & ICTWI: bhavanti ¹¹ AJ suggests reading *ch* = *aite* here, which is fine since it adds the long syllable necessary for a proper *Upajāti pāda*, but does not alter the sense.

Translation

Success! This is the religious donation of the Śākyaabhikṣu Aparāśaila . . . for the attaining of supreme knowledge by [my] mother and father . . . [and] all living beings. . . .

Those who commission an image of the Conqueror here
 Will be endowed with beauty, good fortune, and good qualities.
 The power of their merits blazing like the sun, they will delight the eye.

INSCRIPTION 91

Cave: Twenty Two
Location: Shrine, right wall, beneath the series of Buddhas whose donation occasioned the previous record
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, descriptive labels
Editions: DAJI (called Cave XXI); ICTWI: 88, #30; AJ4: 111-112
Copies: DAJI (called Cave XXI); ICTWI, Cave XXII, #30; Griffiths (see #90)

Text

L1: vipaśvī¹ śikhī viśvabhū (krakucchandaḥ)² ka[naka]muniḥ kāśyapaḥ śākyamuni
maire{yah}

Text Notes

¹ DAJ1: vipaśyī ² This name is lost, but supplied based upon conventional lists of the seven Buddhas.

INSCRIPTION 92

Cave: Twenty Two
Location: Shrine, right wall, above the trees of the seven Buddhas
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, descriptive labels
Editions: AJ4: 112
Copies: Griffiths (see #90)

Text

L1: ... puṇḍarika ... śirīṣaḥ udum(b)a(rah) nyagro(dhaḥ)¹

Text Notes

¹ “puṇḍarika” is found above Śikhī, “śirīṣaḥ” above so-called Krakucchandaḥ, “udumbaraḥ” above Kanakamuni, and “nyagro(dha)” over Kāśyapa.

CAVE TWENTY SIX

INSCRIPTION 93

Cave: Twenty Six
Location: Porch, rear wall, over the right window
Medium: Incised. It appears that this inscription was coated with a layer of lime plaster after being incised. The inscribed verses were probably then copied in paint onto this plaster.
Type: Second period, programmatic, donative
Editions: DAJ1 (called “Cave XXV”); ICTWI: 77–79, #6; BCTTI: 132–136, #6; AJ4: 114–118, #1
Copies: DAJ1 (called “Cave XXV”); BCTTI: Plate LVIII, #6; AJ4: Plate II
Notes: Regarding the absence of a translation, see #67 above. Meters: Drutavilambita 1; Aupacchandāsika 2, 4; Upajāti 3, 10, 16; Vasantatilakā 5; Ārya 6, 7, 8; Vamśasṭha 9; Anuṣṭubh 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19; Śikharīṇī 17; Sārdūlavikrīḍitam 18

Text

- L1: siddham¹ {}
jayatī lokahitāvahitodyato ~ (a)sukhā[nta]karaḥ² paramārtthavit {} trivid-
hanirmmalasarvaguṇodayo muni[r abhi]³karuṇāmālacandrikāḥ {} 1 {}
L2: punar⁴ apī⁵ maraṇādi yena samya[g]itam⁶ ajarāmaradharmmatā ca labdhā {}
śivam abhayam anālayaṃ gato ‘pi praśamapuram agatāṃ karotī cārtham
{ 2 {}
L3: tato namaskāraguṇābhidhānaṃ bhavaty avandhyam vipulaṃ mahārttham {}
pradattam ekaṃ kusumaṃ ca yatra svarggāpavarggākhyaphalasya hetuḥ {} 3 {}
L4: ata iha viduṣā tathāgateṣu prathitaguṇādhikalokavatsaleṣu {}
kṛtam anusaratā janena kāryyā dravakarūṇāhrdayeṣv atī-
L5: va bhaktū(h) {} 4 {}
devā nirastavijayās savipattīkatvāc chāpena śambhur api kācaralocano ‘bhū(t) {}
kṛṣṇo ‘vaśo ‘pi vaśam āpatito ‘ntakasya tasmā jayaṃtī
L6: sugatā bhayavīpramuktāḥ {} 5 {}
sthavīrācalena muninā śāsanam udbhāvayaṃ kṛtajñena⁷ {}
kṛta⁸kṛtyenāpi satā śailagrhaṃ kārtam śāstuh {} 6 {}
L7: prāg eva bodhisatvair bhavasukhakāmaīs ca mokṣakāmaīs ca {}
saṃvidyamānavibhavaīḥ kathaṃ⁹ na kāryyā bhavet¹⁰ kīrtuh {} 7 {}
yāvat kīrtir lloke tāvat vargge-
L8: ṣu modatī ca dehī {}
candrārkkakālakalpā kāryyā kīrtir mahīdhreṣu {} 8 {}
anekajanmāntara¹¹baddhasauhrdaṃ sthiraṃ kṛtajñam sudhūyam vipāścitam {}
L9: surāsurācāryyamateṣu¹² kovidaṃ mahānubhāvāśmakarājamantriṇam¹³ {} 9 {}
lokajñam ekāntasamantabhadraṃ sarvavārthī¹⁴nām arthakaram suvācam {}
guṇonnatam praśraya-
L10: namramūrtūm¹⁵ khyātūṃ gataṃ saccharitaiḥ prithivyām¹⁶ {} 10 {}
daṇḍasāddhyāni¹⁷ kāryyāni vyāyāmaikarasāny apī {}
yas sādhayatī sāmaiva nripater¹⁸ mantṛpumṅgava(h)¹⁹ {} 11 {}
itthaṃ-

- L11: bhūto 'sya putro 'pi devarājo dhuraṃddharah²⁰ {}
 pīтары uparate yena padam unnāmitaṃ guṇaiḥ || {12 ||}
 taṃ bhavvirājam uddīśya mātāpitaram eva ca²¹ {}
 bhikṣuṇā buddhabhadreṇa
- L12: kāritaḥ sugatālaya(h)²² || {13 ||}
 āgamyā dharmmadattaṃ[c] ca²³ bhikṣuṃ²⁴ sacchiśyam eva ca {}
 bhadrabandhum²⁵ idaṃ veśma tābhyāṃ niṣpāditaṃ ca me || {14 ||}
 yad atra puṇyaṃ tat teṣāṃ
- L13: jagatāṃ ca bhavatv idaṃ {}
 sarvāmalaḡuṇavyāta²⁶ mahābodhiphalāptaye || {15 ||}
 yo buddhaśāsanagatiṃ samabuddhya jāto bhikṣur vyayasy²⁷ abhinave 'bhi-
 janopapanna(h) {}
- L14: bahuśrutaḥ²⁸ śīlavīsuddhacētā lokasya mokṣāya kritā[dhikā]rah || {16 ||}
 na sa(m)śārāpamṇnaṃ śubham apī [tu k]iñcic²⁹ chubhakaraṃ vipāko divyo
- L15: ~ ~ ~ ca niyamāḥ³⁰ {}
 ~ ~ lokārthāya prasṛtamana(sāṃ) puṇyamahatā(m)³¹ vipāko (dhi)rāṇāṃ bha-
 vati su(kha) ~ ~ ~³²
- L16: najagatāṃ || {17 ||}
 ~ ~ ~ va[labhi]r nn[ā]nāṇḍajavyāhrīte³³ go]lāṅgūlani³⁴ nādapūri-
 tadare prāgbhāvi³⁵ ~ ~ ~ {}
 ~ ~ ~
- L17: yogīsvarādhyāsite veśmedaṃ jana ~ ~ ~ janakaṃ³⁶ bhūtyai pratiśṭhāpitaṃ
 {} {18 ||}
 pūrvvāpi ceya[m] tenaiva dṛibddhācāryyena saugati³⁷ {}
 loka ci(nā)[m upā]dāya ~ ~ ~ ~ ~³⁸ {} {19 ||}

Text Notes

¹ Expressed by a symbol ² ICTWI: . . . hi sukhānta°; AJ4: sukhā.karah. An examination of the rock suggests this reconstructed “[nta],” but it is unclear ³ ICTWI: mu[ṣitabhīḥ ?]; BCTTI drops ICTWI’s “?”, but keeps the brackets; AJ4 reads as I have above, though he suggests reading, munir=a-bhīḥ ⁴ BCTTI: puṇar ⁵ ICTWI suggests reading “vi” ⁶ ICTWI: samyakṣivam; BCTTI: samya . . . ivam, but suggests reading samyagjitam instead of samyagjivam ⁷ ICTWI: adbhāvayak°. ICTWI, BCTTI, & AJ4 suggest reading udbhāvayat kr° ⁸ ICTWI: krita°, but suggests kṛta° as the correct reading ⁹ ICTWI: kathan ¹⁰ BCTTI: bhava ¹¹ Read °janmāntara°; ICTWI: °janmāntara°; BCTTI: °janmāntara°; AJ4: °janmāntara°, but suggests °ānta° ¹² Read °ryya°. ICTWI & BCTTI: °ryya° ¹³ ICTWI: °mamtri° ¹⁴ ICTWI: °ārdhi° ¹⁵ BCTTI: nāmra°, but suggests reading namra° ¹⁶ ICTWI & BCTTI: prth° ¹⁷ ICTWI & BCTTI: °sādhyāni ¹⁸ ICTWI & BCTTI: nrpater ¹⁹ ICTWI & AJ4 suggest reading, mantripuṅgavaḥ ²⁰ ICTWI: dhurandharaḥ; BCTTI: dhuraṃddharah ²¹ AJ4 suggests reading, mātaram pitaram tathā ²² AJ4: ā[layam], but suggests reading °alayaḥ ²³ ICTWI & BCTTI: °dattañ ca ²⁴ ICTWI: bhikṣam ²⁵ BCTTI & AJ4: bhadrabandhum ²⁶ Read °vrāta°; ICTWI: °dhyāta°; BCTTI suggests reading °vyāpta° or °vyātta°; AJ4 suggests reading °vrāta° ²⁷ Read vvasy; ICTWI, BCTTI: vvasy ²⁸ ICTWI & BCTTI: bahuvrataḥ ²⁹ ICTWI: api tu kiñcic; BCTTI: api [tu k]iñcic. AJ4: api . . . ncic ³⁰ ICTWI: . . . tya . . . ca niyamā; BCTTI: . . . ca niyamā ³¹ BCTTI: °mahato, but suggests reading, °mahatām ³² ICTWI: sukhabhogāya. BCTTI disputes ICTWI’s reading, as the “na” is distinct before “jagatām” on line 16 ³³ This akṣara not in ICTWI; BCTTI & AJ4: na ³⁴ ICTWI: °vyāhrīte ³⁵ ICTWI: °līna°; BCTTI: golāṅgū° ³⁶ ICTWI: prāgbhāvi . . . ³⁷ ICTWI: saugatiṃ; AJ4: saugati ³⁸ ICTWI & BCTTI: lokacintām upādāya . . . ; AJ4: loka ciram . . .

INSCRIPTION 94

- Cave:* Twenty Six
Location: Facade, left side, under a colossal standing Buddha
Medium: Incised
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: DAJI (called “Cave XXV”); ICTWI: 79, #7; BCTTI: 136, #7; AJ4: 118–9, #2
Copies: FAL: plate xxviii, no. 11; DAJI (called “Cave XXV”); AJ4: 119, #2

Text

- L1: siddham¹ deyadharmmo ‘yaṃ śākyabhikṣor bhadanta guṇākarasya yad atra puṇyaṃ tad bhavatu mātāpitaram pūrvvaṅgamaṃ kṛtvā
 L2: sarvasvatvebhya anutarajñāna āptaye^{2,3}

Text Notes

¹ Expressed by a symbol. Not recorded in DAJI, ICTWI or BCTTI. ² ICTWI: anutarajñāna āptaye; DAJI & BCTTI: anutarajñānāvaptaye ³ This line is followed by several auspicious symbols.

Translation

Success! This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu reverend Guṇākara. Let the merit therein be for the attaining of supreme knowledge by all living beings, beginning with [his] mother and father.

INSCRIPTION 95

- Cave:* Twenty Six
Location: Facade, right side, under a colossal standing Buddha
Medium: Incised
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: DAJI (called “Cave XXV”); ICTWI: 80, #8; BCTTI: 136, #8; AJ4: 119–120, #3
Copies: DAJI (called “Cave XXV”); BCTTI: Plate LVIII, #8; AJ: 119, #3

Text

- L1: siddham¹ deyadharmmo [‘yaṃ]
 L2: yad atra pu[nyam]
 L3: sarvasvatvānā[m a]

Text Note

¹ Expressed by a symbol. Read by ICTWI and BCTTI as om

Translation

Success! This is the religious donation . . . Let the merit therein . . . of all beings . . .

INSCRIPTION 96

Cave: Twenty Six
Location: Ambulatory, right wall, to the left of the third "niche"
Medium: Incised
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: ICTWI: 80, #9; BCTTI: 136, #9; AJ4: 120, #4
Copies: BCTTI: Plate LVIII, #9; AJ4: 120, #4
Notes: This inscription is not as unique as the accompanying image. A seated Buddha had been planned for this spot by one donor, but that first conception was replaced by a standing Buddha. Apparently, before the seated Buddha could be fully executed, its donor either 1) changed his mind about the iconography he desired, or 2) was unable to pay the artisan, and so lost his image, or 3) left the site, assured by an unscrupulous artisan, who naturally demanded up-front payment, that his image would be made to specification, or 4) you decide. Whatever the reason, we see here that while no fully realized Buddha at Ajanta was ever desecrated so, a roughed out Buddha-form had no sacral priority.

Text

L1: deyadharmo 'yaṃ śākya
 L2: bhikṣu saṃghamitrasya

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu Saṅghamitra.

INSCRIPTION 97

Cave: Twenty Six
Location: On the front wall between Caves 26 and 26 left wing
Medium: Incised, very lightly
Type: Post second period
Editions: AJ4: 121-124
Copies: AJ4: plates III, IV, V
Notes: The text given here is a reproduction of that found in AJ4. Refer to AJ4 for more on this odd record. The only other discussion I am aware of is Geri Hockfield Malandra. "The Date of the Ajanta Cave 27 Inscription," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Sudasiens*. 26 (1982): 37-46, wherein Malandra criticizes AJ4's treatment of the inscription, and proposes a date of the late seventh or early eighth century for its composition.

Text

Part A

L1: da hi ni .ā-rāya-raṭṭe puṇḍra sa ya la pa [ri] iva saṃ - ti

Part B

L2: śrī[h] Dakṣiṇāpatthe Rāṣṭrakūṭṭa-kule [sūto] Nanarājasya bhrātā [du]hi[ka]
 -- llacandrasya [ka]----
 L3: [n]ī asya Nāmnā Vajraṭṭadev-eti vikhyāto bhuvana-ttraye {} tasyeyam amka-
 pa -- [rā] {} Lalitā-

L4: valoka-sātru-prākāra-pralaya-divākara-ni[ddhā]da .ā[nu]rāga-pracaṇḍa-vidyād-
 hara-caṇḍa-Nārāyaṇa-rip[ū].e-
 L5: matta-gaja-kesari-mahimāṇaṃ Mallayeśa-kārtā[uta] - - [sra] - - - [rāja]dhi
 ara[yara] - samara-stambha- .u. i - - -
 L6: [ya]da[mṛ]a [śaurya]-saṃgrāma-gaja-paridrava[ṇa]-davagi āhava-haṇua |
 samara-Caturbhujā | | taṇḍa -[i]
 L7: taṇu atula- - - gaja-la . i u.ū [sa]cchahena caṇḍ-āṇila-vea-calia-chāru-la- yara
 L8: caṃcalaṇa Cholla iṇṇiarāya-raṭṭu-jīem āyāsa ma ṇa ja i - bha i ja saṇṇi-
 bhāṇu - ṇṇa
 L9: vihartuṃ kiṃṇṇareṇa | | ko ajar-āma[ra] e thu jage i mū jā ṇaṇṇa vidiṇa
 - ṇḍabham | caṃ tī - [saṃ tī] -[ṇṇa]ya
 L10: kāpara[rṇṇa] - raṇṇihi -[ja]hi puṇḍra-jīvia kuhaṇḍa - tī eṣa saṇṇi-bhāṇ[ū]lla
 bha i sura-jua - - ṇṇava[bhujā]
 L11: riva[kha]-bhaṃge maṇḍavo iṇṇi arāya-[ra]tṭurṇṇi[tu]- vihimillā[bhuj]-jaṇa sa
 ya la sa lāhe ṇi -ja[ta] - ma - -
 L12: [sa]para-grāha | | lla - khaṇḍe[śva]ra viṇāu cāu[ra vartta]ṇa e cācupatthe
 duṇḍaha - ṇe ----
 L13: - - bhima - ṇḍa-prāya - bhaṃ - [ga]sa ma the maham guṇa e - dā si e .e
 ku[lla]ṇa - [sa]ṇ tī -

Part C

L14: Kapaṭṭatūṅgena li(khi)tam etat

GHAṬOTKACA CAVE

INSCRIPTION 98

- Cave:* Ghaṭotkaca
Location: Porch, rear wall, at far left
Medium: Incised
Type: Second period, programmatic, donative
Editions: ICTW: 88, #12; BCTTI: 138, #13; GCI: 15–18; CII: 112–119, #26
Copies: BCTTI: Plate LX; GCI: Plate I; CII: Plate XXVI
Notes: I have reproduced the CII edition, without significant change. Meters: Upajāti 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; Āryā 13; Puṣpitāgrā 14, 15, 17; Vasantatilakā 16, 18

Text

- L1: munir munīnām amaro 'marāṇām' gurur gurūṇām pravaro varāṇām {}
 jayaty anābhogavibuddhabuddhir buddhābhīdhāno² nidhir adbhutānām
 {} 1 {}
 L2: dharmmas tato dharmmavidā praṇītas tathā (ga)[ṇa]ś cāgryatamo gaṇānām
 {} {} bhavantī ya[smi]n nihi(tāh)³ su[pā]tre kārapakā[rā]s tanayā hy udārāh⁴
 {} 2 {}
 L3: asī prakāśo diśi dakṣiṇasyāṃ vallūranāmnām dvijasattamānām {}
 ā brahmaṇas saṃbhṛtapuṇyakīrti⁵ vva[n]śo⁶ mahīyān ma[hi]to mahadbhih
 {} 3 {}
 L4: ta[sminn] a]bhūd āhitalakṣaṇānām⁷ dvijanmanām [prā]thamakalpikānām⁸ {}
 bhṛgvatrigarggāngira[sām] samāno dvijaṣabho [ya]jñā[patū]h prakāśah {} 4 {}
 L5: tadā[tma]jo deva [ivāsa] devaḥ kṛtī grhī[ti]⁹ nayavān kriyāvān {}
 sarājakaṃ rāṣṭram upetya yasmin dharmyān akriyāh¹⁰ [pā]rtha iva¹¹ pra-
 cakkre {} 5 {}
 L6: somas tataḥ soma [i]vāparo 'bhūt sa brāhmaṇa¹² kṣatriyavaṇśajāsu¹³ {}
 śrutismṛtibhyāṃ vihitā[rttha]kāri dvayīsu¹⁴ bhāryāsu mano dadhāra {} 6 {}
 L7: sa kṣatriyāyāṃ kulāśilavatīyāṃ utpādayām āsa narendracihnam¹⁵ {}
 sutam surūpaṃ ravināmadheyam kṛtādhipatyam vi[śa]ye¹⁶ samagre {} 7 {}
 L8: dvijāsu cānyāsu sūtān udārān sa (prāpa) vedeṣu¹⁷ samāptakāmān {}
 vallūranāmnā¹⁸ diśi dakṣiṇasyāṃ adyāpi yeṣā[m] va[śau][r] dvi]jānām {} 8 {}
 L9: raves¹⁹ suto 'bhūt pravaraḥbhīdhānaḥ²⁰ śrīrāmanāmātha babhūva tasmāt {}
 tasyātmajāḥ²¹ kīrti²² abhūt sukīrti²³ bbabhūva tasmād atha hasti[bhojaḥ]
 {} 9 {}
 L10: vākātaka rājati devasene guṇaiḥ prakāśo²⁴ bhuvī hastibhojaḥ {}
 adyāpi yasyābhijjanapra[dā]na²⁵ {} 10 {}
 L11: dhīreṣu dhīmatsu mahothiteṣu²⁶ kṛtya[pra]mā[ṇe]ṣu guṇānviteṣu {}
 nṛpater²⁷ yad e {} 11 {}
 L12: yasyāsanārdhām [pu]ruṣā²⁸ mātsamsadi {} {} 12 {}
 L13: atha devarājasinur²⁹ hariṣeṇo ... hastibhoja {} 13 {}
 L14: śāśikaradhavalāṃ³⁰ ni[rī]kṣya kī[rtim] {} 14 {}
 L15: atha guṇāśatasambhṛtātmabhūtaḥ³¹ priyatana(yo) {} 15 {}
 L16: tasyātmajeṣu bahuṣu {} 16 {}
 L17: phalam akhila³² {} 17 {}

- L18: samyagvibhāvita³³ ihāsti varāha(devaḥ) {} 18 {}
 L19: {} {} 19 {}
 L20: {} {} 20 {}
 L21: {} {} 21 {}
 L22: {} {} 22 {}

Text Notes

¹ CII: aroma°, a printer's error. ² BCTTI: bbuddha° ³ ICTWI: nihitā ⁴ ICTWI & BCTTI: tanayā py[ud]ārāh, but BCTTI suggests reading either °nayāḥ pyudārāh or °nayā hyudārāh ⁵ BCTTI: °puṇyakitūrttir, but suggests reading °puṇyakīrttir ⁶ ICTWI: vvaṃśo; BCTTI: vaṃśo ⁷ ICTWI & BCTTI: āhata° ⁸ ICTWI: °kalpakā° ⁹ ICTWI: grhasto; BCTTI: grhī ¹⁰ ICTWI: dharmyāḥ kriyāḥ ¹¹ BCTTI: dharmyāḥ kriyā [nā]tha iva ¹² ICTWI: sabrahmanah ¹³ BCTTI & ICTWI: °vvaṃśa° ¹⁴ ICTWI: dvayīsu ¹⁵ ICTWI: nareṃdra° ¹⁶ ICTWI & BCTTI: malaye ¹⁷ ICTWI: [soma?] vedeṣu; BCTTI: sa[ma]stavedeṣu ¹⁸ ICTWI: valūranāmnā; BCTTI: vall[ū]ranāmā, but suggests reading vallūranāmnām ¹⁹ ICTWI: raveḥ ²⁰ CII: °rāmīdhā°, a printer's error. ²¹ ICTWI: tadātmajāḥ; BCTTI: tadātmajāḥ ²² ICTWI: kīrttir ²³ ICTWI: sakīrttir ²⁴ ICTWI & BCTTI: guṇai[śikoṣo] ²⁵ BCTTI: adyāpi . tasyābhimana . . . ²⁶ BCTTI: sahot° ²⁷ ICTWI: . . . kāryam nṛp°; BCTTI: . . . [yam] nṛp° ²⁸ ICTWI: puruṣākṣa . . . ; BCTTI: surasā ²⁹ BCTTI: devarājasya . . . ³⁰ ICTWI: °dhavalāni; BCTTI: śāśikaradhavala [?] ³¹ ICTWI: °bhṛto . . . ³² ICTWI: phalamākhilamila . . . ; BCTTI: phale [makhilamila ?] ³³ BCTTI: °vibhāvī

INSCRIPTION 99

- Cave:* Ghaṭotkaca
Location: Vihāra, front left pilaster
Medium: Incised
Type: c. 8th century, intrusive, religious creed
Editions: GCI: i
Copies: GCI: Plate 12 (very sketchy, not particularly useful)

Text

- L1: 'ye dharmmā hetupra(bhavā he-)
 L2: [tuṃ teṣāṃ] tathā(gato) hy a(vadat)
 L3: ...
 L4: ...

Text Note

¹ This likely read: ye dharmmā hetuprabhavā hetuṃ teṣāṃ tathāgato hy avadat {} {} teṣāṃ ca yo nirodha evaṃvādī mahāśramaṇaḥ {} {}

Translation

The Tathāgata teaches the cause of those things that arise from a cause, and also their cessation. Such is the Great Śramaṇa's doctrine.