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INSCRIPTION IN CAVE XVII AT AJAṆṬĀ

BY

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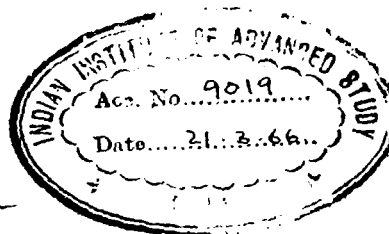
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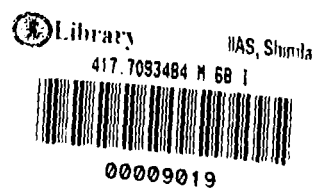
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INSCRIPTION IN CAVE XVII AT AJAṆṬĀ



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INTRODUCTION

BY

KHWAJA MUHAMMAD AHMAD

AJAṆṬĀ was for long a very important centre for the propagation of the Buddhist laws of piety, compassion, contentment, courage, wisdom and, above all, respect for humanity. The strenuous efforts of monks to perpetuate their high moral laws started somewhere about 200 B.C. and continued with unabated zeal till about the end of the 2nd century A.D. About five important Vihāras and Chaityas were excavated, sculptured and painted during this period. Some time in 2nd century A.D., however, a strong Brahmanic movement seems to have gained momentum under the leadership of Gautamīputra, with a result that this marvellous work of great spiritual, æsthetic and moral value suffered a serious setback. Whether the Buddhists at Ajaṇṭā fell victims to ruthless persecution at the hands of the oppressors we do not know, but there is no evidence at Ajaṇṭā of any rock excavations for about the next 250 years (cir. 200 A.D.—cir. 450 A.D.). About the middle of the 5th century A.D., however, there was a very strong revival of Buddhist culture, representing a new development called Mahāyāna, at Ajaṇṭā. Ajaṇṭā and Ellora possess valuable legacies of this phase, which lasted till about the end of the 7th century A.D., after which Buddhism seems to have disappeared from the country altogether leaving only precious relics for posterity to admire and preserve. Caves Nos. XVII and XIX, of which the excavation and ornamentation have been eulogised in the lithic record deciphered and interpreted by Mahāmahopādhyāya Prof. Mirashi in this monograph, represent an early period of the Mahāyāna phase. Prof. Mirashi enjoys considerable reputation as a scholar of great learning. He is an authority on this period and has deciphered and interpreted the contemporary inscription in Cave No. XVI, Ajaṇṭā, which has been published by the Hyderabad Archæological Department as series No. 14. The inscription now being published, has already been noticed, studied and published by veteran scholars like Dr. Bhau Daji, Pandit Bhagwanlal Indrajī and Dr. G. Bühler, but without a mechanically prepared facsimile. The latter scholars, however, made their valuable contribution during the later half of 19th century, but nothing of any importance has appeared about this inscription, during the last 50 years although researches in Indology have provided valuable material for a re-study of it. I am grateful to Prof. Mirashi for undertaking at my request the difficult task of preparing a monograph, to be published by the Department of Archæology, Hyderabad. He has displayed remarkable patience and scholarship of a very high order in the preparation of his manuscript. It will not be out of place here to say a few words by way of introduction regarding Caves No. XVII and XIX and to include a few photographs of these masterpieces of art in this monograph, so that their description, as given in the inscription, may be better visualised

by the mind. Cave No. XVII is one of the biggest Vihāras at Ajaṇṭā. It has an open courtyard leading to the varanda, behind which lies a spacious hall, with cells for monks, on all sides except the western. In the middle of the eastern side, there is an ante-chamber, leading to a shrine. The walls of this great monument contain examples of exquisite and marvellous work, which bear emphatic testimony to the artistic powers, æsthetic resourcefulness and achievements of their authors and will ever continue to tell posterity moving tales of selfless devotion to the service of others. The lessons which they teach have to be dinned in our ears once again ; and unless we learn them, there is no hope of salvation for our dear land. They shed considerable light on contemporary political, economic, intellectual and spiritual life in the Deccan. This monograph contains two important illustrations ; first, a picture of Buddha receiving alms at the hands of his wife and son. This is a highly moving and inspiring picture, which depicts human forms and emotions in a masterly fashion [Plate I]. The second is the delineation of the Gandharvas (the flying figures) who seem, with their musical instruments, to be making the welkin echo their spiritual melody [Plate II]. The mind which is not moved to ecstasy by these masterpieces, is to be pitied, indeed.

Through the munificence of H.E.H. the Nizam's Government, all the paintings in this cave have been mechanically copied and reproduced, some in their original colours in Ajanta, Vols. III and IV, by my distinguished predecessor Dr. Ghulam Yazdani, and those who would know more about these paintings would do well to refer to that monumental work.

It is to be noted that the water-spring referred to in verse 26 of the inscription in the following words " he caused to be dug (near it) a large cistern pleasing to eyes and filled with sweet, light, clear, cold and copious water " still exists in one of the sides of the Cave, locally known as a **tanki** and never runs dry.

Cave No. XIX, which has been described in verse 27 in the following words " in another part in the west he caused to be constructed a grand Gandhakutī," is a marvellous specimen of rock excavations and carvings and a treat for the eye and the mind. The elegant facade contains a beautiful panorama of sculptured work [Plate III]. The large-sized figures of Buddha and Dwarapalas are excellent specimens of sculptural art and reveal a keen sense for proportion and inner feeling. Though exposed to the inclemencies of nature for ages, they have retained their pristine freshness. The interior of this Chaitya Hall is as inspiring as the facade and must, in its day, have been even more attractive with two tall figures, one on each side of the Dagoba, which obviously disappeared centuries ago [Plate IV].

These and other legacies of the remote past have attracted lovers of art from all over the world to H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions and the Hyderabad Government have spared no pains to preserve these monuments in the best possible manner and to make them easily accessible to the tourist. Enormous amounts have been spent not only on the preservation of the monuments, but also on the construction of roads

and guest-houses for the sojourn of the tourist from all over the world. The old art is being revived and is influencing modern architecture.

I shall be failing in my duty if I fail to acknowledge the unstinted support which I have received from Government in bringing out this monograph. My thanks are due in particular to that well-known Educationist, Mr. Sajjad Mirza, Secretary to Government for the Department of Education and Archæology, and to the Hon'ble Mr. Mallikarjun Appa, Minister for Archæology. I am indebted to them also for the generous measure of support which they have always extended to the proposals submitted by me for the expansion and development of the Department.

INSCRIPTION IN CAVE XVII AT AJAṆṬĀ

BY

MAHAMAHOPADHYAYA PROF. V. V. MIRASHI, M.A., AMRAOTI.

THOUGH the present inscription had been copied several times before,¹ the first attempt to edit it was that of Dr. Bhau Daji. He personally copied this and other inscriptions at Ajaṇṭā in February 1863 and submitted his papers on them to the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on the 10th July, 1863.² About the method adopted for revising the transcript Dr. Bhau Daji says, 'Notwithstanding great care and diligence I found time insufficient for thorough revision, and as important facts were expected from the rock inscriptions which have never before been completely or correctly copied, I sent a young Pandit³ in my employment, who has made considerable progress in the knowledge of cave characters, to Ajaṇṭā with my draftsman in the latter part of May. The doubtful letters in my copies were carefully examined, and fresh copies sent to me, while the copyist waited at the caves to receive further remarks and suggestions from me. The copies were again revised on the spot; and after carefully deciphering them, I now submit them to the Society.'⁴ Dr. Bhau Daji published an eye-copy of the epigraph together with a transcript and a sort of English translation. He read the names of nine princes, of whom four, namely, Dhṛitarāshṭra, Harisāmba, Śaurisāmba and Ravisāmba, he thought, belonged to one dynasty and the remaining five, whose names he read as Upendragupta, Skācha, Nilapasa, Skācha and Kṛishṇadāsa,⁵ to another. In line 13 he read Anitya as the name of a minister⁶ who, he thought, probably served Ravisāmba. Dr. Bhau Daji failed to notice that Harishēṇa, mentioned in line 21, was identical with the homonymous Vākātaka king named in the inscription in the adjoining Cave XVI at Ajaṇṭā. About the general purport of the epigraph and the location of the kingdoms or capitals of these princes he offered no remarks.

The inscription was next edited, with an introductory note and a translation, but without any facsimile, by Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji in the *Inscriptions from the Cave Temples of Western India* (Archæological Survey of Western India) (1881), pp. 73 f. The Pandit deciphered the record with his usual skill and thoroughness. He, for the first time, gave correctly the names of the following ten princes, all of whom, according to him, belonged to the same royal family and ruled over Aśmaka :—

1. J.A.S.B., Vol. V, p. 554; J.B.B.R.A.S., Vol. VII, pp. 55 f.

2. J.B.B.R.A.S., Vol. VII, pp. 53 f.

3. This was evidently Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji who later on distinguished himself by his epigraphic and numismatic researches.

4. J.B.B.R.A.S., Vol. VII, p. 53.

5. The correct names Kācha (I), Niladāsa and Kācha (II) were given for the first time by Pandit Bhagwanlal.

6. As shown below (p. 15, n. 5), no minister is named here. The word *sachita* which occurs in v. 13 has misled all previous editors. For its correct meaning see below, p. 5.

Dhṛitarāshṭra, Harisāmba. Śaurisāmba, Upendragupta, Agaja or Kācha I, Bhikshudāsa, Niladāsa, Kācha II, Kṛishṇadāsa and Ravisāmba. Again, he drew attention to the name of the king Harishēṇa whom he identified with the Vākāṭaka prince of that name and to whom, he thought, this Aśmaka family might have been subordinate. Further, from the fragmentary phrases of verse 12, Bhagwanlal conjectured that the elder son of Kṛishṇadāsa, whose name is obliterated, murdered his brother Ravisāmba, but afterwards repented. The *Vihāra*, where the present inscription is incised, was constructed either by this king or his minister whose name Bhagwanlal read as *Achintya*. As regards the date of the inscription, he thought that it belonged to the same age as that in Cave XVI which was incised in characters 'current in Chhattisgarh District and the country round the Benagaṅgā about the 5th and 6th century A.D.'

The epigraph was finally edited with a lithograph and a translation by Dr. G. Bühler in the *Archæological Survey of Western India*, Vol. IV (1883), 128 f. and Pl. lvi. The lithograph was made from a facsimile prepared by Pandit Bhagwanlal Indarji and appears to have been considerably worked up by hand. Dr. Bühler's transcript does not differ much from Pandit Bhagwanlal's. He gave the same names of princes, but he corrected the Pandit's statement about the purport of verse 12. He showed that the correct meaning of the verse was that the younger brother perished suddenly by an accident or died of a disease. The next verse, according to him, mentioned the ruling king's minister Achitya who donated the *vihāra*. Dr. Bühler referred the inscription to the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century A.D.

I had to study this record recently in connection with the history of the Vākāṭakas. From an excellent estampage which Dr. N. P. Chakravarti, Government Epigraphist for India, kindly placed at my disposal some years ago, I could, with patience and perseverance, read some more *aksharas* here and there and correct the transcripts and translations of previous editors in some places. Again, my recent researches in respect of certain copper-plate grants from Khandesh have brought to light considerable information about the royal family described in the present inscription.¹ These circumstances as well as the necessity of publishing a purely mechanical facsimile of the epigraph induced me to attempt a fresh edition of it. I am obliged to the Director-General of Archæology in India for his kind permission to reproduce the excellent facsimile prepared by the Government Epigraphist. I have also to thank Mr. Khwaja Muhammad Ahmad, Director of Archæology, Hyderabad State, for including my article in the Hyderabad Archæological Series. The subjoined transcript and translation will be found to differ in some important details from those of the previous editors. My interpretation of the record will also, it is hoped, be found to throw some fresh light on the history of the royal family which caused it to be incised.²

1. See my article entitled 'An Ancient Dynasty of Khandesh' published in the *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. XXV., pp. 159 f.

2. See, e.g., my readings and translations of verses 9, 10, 12, 13, 19, 23, etc.

The present inscription is engraved on a side wall outside the verandah in Cave XVII at Ajanṭā in H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions. It has suffered much by exposure to weather. Several *aksharas* in the beginning of each line on the left have been completely destroyed by rainwater trickling over them. Besides, a few *aksharas* here and there have become illegible. The general purport of the inscription can, however, be made out without much difficulty.

The inscription covers a space 4' broad and 4' 5" high. The **characters** are of the box-headed variety current in South India, well known from the inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas. The following peculiarities may be noticed; the length of the medial *ī* is shown by a curling curve which is generally turned to the left, see *marīchi*, l. 20, *nyavivīṣat*, l. 26, etc., but in some cases, the curve is turned to the right, see, e.g., *pradīpta*, l. 6 and *vyavivṛidhat*, l. 13; the medial *au* is bipartite, see *kānta-rūpau* l. 8, *sauhārdda*, l. 11; *k* is cursive in *prakām-*, l. 26; *ch* and *v* are, in some cases, indistinguishable, see *marīchi*, l. 20 and *ravir=*, l. 29; *d* in *Bhikshudāsa*, l. 5 and *pradīpta*, l. 6 is angular. The sign for the *jihvāmūliya* occurs in lines 1, 4 and 6, and that for the *upadhmānīya* in lines 11 and 13. The **language** is Sanskrit and the whole record is metrically composed. There are twenty-nine verses in all, none of which is numbered. Each line of the inscription contains one complete verse. The completion of the first hemistich is, in some cases, marked by a horizontal stroke and that of a whole verse by two vertical strokes. As for **orthography**, we may note that the consonant following *r* is generally reduplicated, see *karmmaṇo*, l. 1; *kīrtti*, l. 5, etc.; the *visarga* is correctly omitted in *bhuva stūpa-* in l. 22 in accordance with a Vārttika on Pāṇini viii, 3,36, but the final *n* is wrongly changed to *anusvāra* in *anūchivām*, l. 18.

As shown below, the inscription was caused to be incised by a **prince** whose name is now unfortunately lost, but **who was probably ruling over Khandesh as a feudatory of the Vākāṭaka Emperor Harishena**. The **object** of it is to record the excavation, by this prince,¹ of the *Vihāra* cave XVII and the *gandhakuṭī* cave XIX at Ajanṭā.² As I have shown elsewhere, Harishena flourished in the period *circa* A.D. 475-500.³ **The present inscription may therefore be referred to the end of the fifth century A.D.** It is of the same age as the inscription in Cave XVI which also belongs to the reign of the same Vākāṭaka Emperor Harishena.

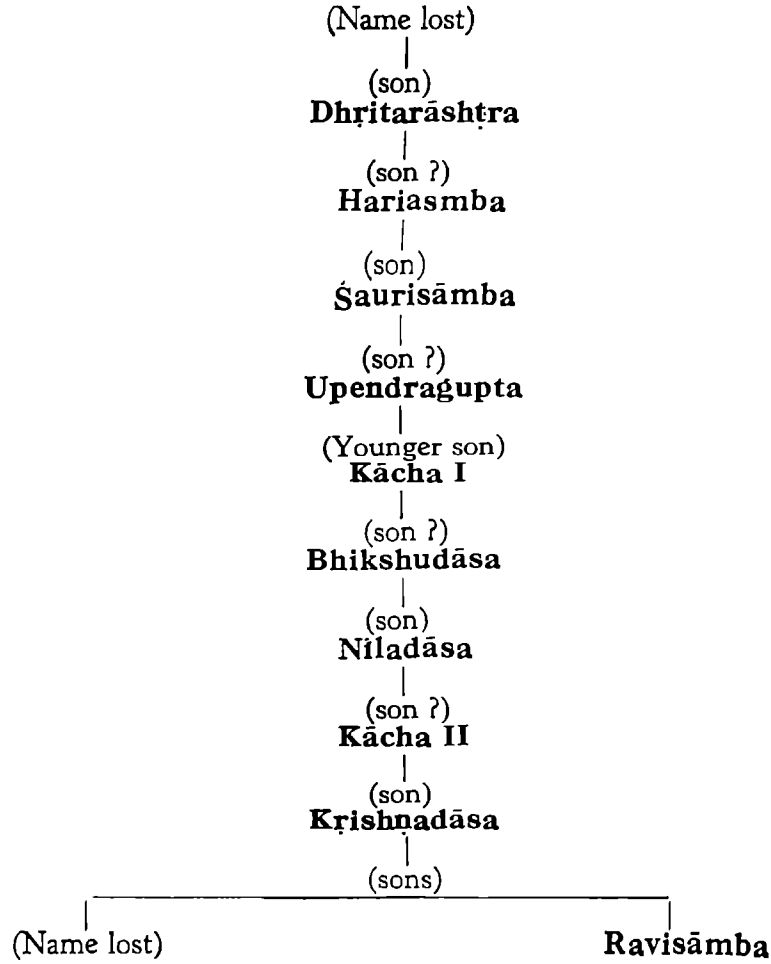
Owing to the destruction of a considerable portion on the left, the inscription does not admit of a detailed analysis. The gaps in the text are required to be filled in some places by conjecture. The record opens with an obeisance to the sage (Buddha) who is described as a thunderbolt to the tree of worldly existence. The

1. All previous editors of the present inscription, who were misled by the words *sachiva* occurring in l. 13, thought that this cave also like cave XVI was caused to be excavated by a minister. For the correct interpretation of the verse however, see below, p. 15, n. 2.

2. Pandit Bhagwanlal thought that the *gandhakuṭī* mentioned in v. 27 was the small Cave XVIII from which the image which was movable had been removed. See *Inscriptions*, etc., p. 76, n. 2. The description, however, clearly refers to the Chaitya Cave XIX which is actually situated to the west of Cave XVII.

3. *Hyderabad Archaeological Series*, No. XIV, p. 9.

poet then proceeds to give the following pedigree of the donor of the Vihāra Cave—



The name of the founder of the family is now lost, but from the tenor of the description in verse 2, it seems to have been one signifying 'Protector of men.'¹ The relation of Harisāmba, Upendraḡupta, Bhikshudāsa, and Kācha (II) to their predecessors is not specified in the preserved portion of the inscription. About Kācha I we are told that he was a younger son of his father Upendraḡupta, but why the elder son did not succeed to the throne is not stated.

Kṛishṇadāsa married a princess whose name also is unfortunately uncertain.² He had from her two sons who are said to have resembled Pradyumna and Sāmba, the well-known sons of the epic hero Kṛishṇa. The name of the elder son has not been preserved, but the younger was called **Ravisāmba**. The elder son succeeded to the throne. The two brothers conquered **Aśmaka** and other countries and lived happily together, with increasing fraternal love and fame. After some time Ravisāmba met with premature death, which, the poet says, was due to his deeds in former

1. The verse does not state that he was the son of a king as Bhagwanlal supposed. See *Inscriptions*, etc., p. 73.

2. Bhau Daji read the name of the queen as *Amachandrā*, and Bühler as *Suchandrā*, but neither of these readings is supported by the facsimile. The correct reading appears to be *Atichandrā*.

lives. The elder brother, being overwhelmed with sorrow and convinced of the transitoriness of worldly existence, began to lead a pious life.¹ He waited upon saintly persons known for their learning, charity, compassion and other virtues and imitated in his actions righteous kings. He bestowed munificent gifts on supplicants and being moved by compassion, released from bondage terrified persons by spending large amounts for the purpose. Realizing that wealth causes an obstacle in the attainment of *siddhi* by meditation on the Omniscient (Buddha), he adorned the earth with *stūpas* and *vihāras*, and delighted supplicants with liberal gifts while **Harishēṇa**, the moon among kings, was protecting the earth. He also caused the excellent monolith *maṇḍapa* containing the *chaitya* of the Buddha to be excavated in the form of the present Cave XVII, on a beautiful spur of the Sahya mountain. He provided it with a water-cistern and caused a noble *gandhakuṭi*² to be excavated to the west of it in another part of the hill. The last verse (29) expresses the hope that the *maṇḍapa* would cause the well-being of good people as long as the sun continues to dispel darkness with its rays.

The foregoing account of the inscription must have shown that the last of these kings whose name is unfortunately lost was a contemporary and probably a feudatory of the Vākātaka Emperor Harishēṇa. He must therefore have flourished in the period *circa* A.D. 475-500. He was preceded by ten other princes. The founder of the family whose name has not been preserved, may therefore, have been reigning in the period *circa* A.D. 275-300.

It will be noticed that three members of this dynasty, *viz.*, Bhikshudāsa, Nīlādāsa and Kṛishṇadāsa had names ending in *dāsa*. This circumstance suggested to Pandit Bhagwanlal that *Mahārāja Rudradāsa*, whose copper-plate grant³ was subsequently discovered at **Śirpur** in **West Khandesh** in 1884, belonged to the same royal family. This grant is fragmentary; for a small piece, about 1" broad, of the copper-plate on which it is written, has been broken off the whole way down on the left. The extant portion of the inscription shows that it registers a grant, by *Mahārāja Rudradāsa*, of a field on the western boundary of the village Vikatṭānaka. As I have shown elsewhere,⁴ Vikatṭānaka is probably identical with Viṭnerā, 20 miles south by east of Śirpur. Rudradāsa was plainly a feudatory of some Imperial power, for he describes himself in this grant as *parama-bhaṭṭāraka-pād-ānudhyāta* 'meditating on the feet of the Great Lord.' The grant bears a date at the end which Pandit Bhagwanlal read as 118, but the correct reading of which appears to be 117.⁵ Bhagwanlal was not certain about the era to which this date refers, but he conjectured that Rudradāsa was possibly Kṛishṇadāsa's elder son whose name is lost in the present inscription.

1. This is the correct meaning of the verse 13—*Anitya-samjñā-sachivas tataḥ param eva viśuddhat* = *anitya-mahā-mahīṇham*. *Anitya-samjñā* (Pali, *anicchā-saññā*) is mentioned in the *Udāna* as a subject of meditation. Vide *Udāna*, *Meghiyavagga*, Sutta 1 (edited by Rahula Sankrityayana and Ananda Kausalyayana), p. 38. There is no reference to any minister here.

2. This is the Chaitya Cave XIX, about the age of which there was much uncertainty.

3. This was edited by him in the *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XVI, pp. 98 f.

4. *A.B.O.R.I.*, Vol. XXV, p. 163 f.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

Two other copper-plate grants subsequently discovered, which have been edited by Dr. R. C. Majumdar,¹ probably belong to this very family. They were in the possession of Pandit Vamanashastri Islampurkar of Indore. One of these, made by *Mahārāja Svāmidāsa* in the year 67 of an unspecified era, registers the gift of field in the village Dakṣiṇa-Valmikatallavāṭaka which lay in the Nagarikā-pathaka. The other, which was made by *Mahārāja Bhulūṇḍa* in the year 107, records the donation of a field on the boundary of the village Ulladana. Both these grants appear to belong to the same dynasty ; for they were both issued from the same place Valkha which was probably the capital of these kings. Besides, their characters, phraseology and mode of dating are the same.² Again, both Svāmidāsa and Bhulūṇḍa bear the same title *Mahārāja* and describe themselves as *parama-bhaṭṭāraka-pād-ānudhyāta*. Finally, the signatures of both occur in the margin on the left. These similarities leave no doubt that Svāmidāsa and Bhulūṇḍa belonged to the same royal family.

This dynasty was probably identical with that to which Rudradāsa belonged ; for the grants of all the three princes have the following common features :—

(i) The names of the *Mahārājas* Svāmidāsa and Rudradāsa end in *dāsa*. Again, all the three *Mahārājas* describe themselves as *parama-bhaṭṭāraka-pād-ānudhyāta*.

(ii) The characters and phraseology of all the three grants are strikingly similar.²

(iii) The date is also similarly worded in all the three grants and the year is introduced with the same word *varsha*.³

(iv) The place of issue is not named in the Śirpur grant, but it must have been mentioned in the beginning of the first line where two or three letters have now been lost owing to the breaking off of a piece of the copper-plate on the left. The signature of *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa also which must have been incised in the margin on the left as on the plates of Svāmidāsa and Bhulūṇḍa, is now lost.

These similarities which are certainly striking leave no doubt that **the grants of the Mahārājas Svāmidāsa and Bhulūṇḍa** like that of *Mahārāja* Rudradāsa **originally belonged to Khandesh**. The places mentioned in them can also be satisfactorily located in Khandesh.⁴ Valkha which was evidently their capital is probably identical with Vāghli,⁵ about 6 miles north by east of Chalisgaon in the

1. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XV, pp. 286 f.

2. All the three grants are written in the box-headed characters. The initial and formal portions of the grants are similarly worded. See *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XV, pp. 286 f. and *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XVI, pp. 98 ff.

3. Compare the wording of the date *varshe 100 7 Phalgu ba 10 2* of the grant of Bhulūṇḍa with that of the date *varsha 100 10 Vai tri yāyā* (Vaiśākha tṛtīyāyām) of the grant of Rudradāsa.

4. They seem to have been taken to Indore by Pandit Vamanashastri Islampurkar who was engaged in the collection of Sanskrit manuscripts and copper-plates. For another set of copper-plates from his collection, recording a grant of the Vākāṭaka Pravarasena II, which must have been found somewhere in C. P. or Berar, see *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 52 f.

5. The late Rao Bahadur K. N. Dikshit suggested that Valkha may be Bāhal in East Khandesh where a large hoard of punch marked coins was recently discovered. *J.N.S.I.*, Vol. VIII, p. 3.

East Khandesh District. It is an old place as it contains some old temples and Sanskrit inscriptions. One of these inscriptions, which is in three parts, shows that Vāghli became afterwards the capital of a feudatory royal family named Maurya which originally hailed from Valabhī in Kathiawad and later on owed allegiance to the Yādavas of Khandesh. Nagarikā, mentioned as the headquarters of a territorial division (*pathaka*) in the grant of Svāmidāsa, may be identical with Nagar Devlā, about 10 miles north-east of Vāghli, which also contains an old Hemādpantī temple of Mahādeva. Tallavāṭaka may be Talvād Khurd, about 15 miles north by west of Nagar Devlā. Ulladana, mentioned in the grant of Bhulūṇḍa, may be identical with Udhli on the Tāpti, about 9 miles east of Bhusawal in East Khandesh.

We thus get the following three names of this royal family—

Mahārāja Svāmidāsa (Year 67).

Mahārāja Bhulūṇḍa (Year 107).

Mahārāja Rudradāsa (Year 117).

As these grants do not mention any royal pedigree, the relation of these prince *inter se* is not known. They evidently acknowledged the suzerainty of some other power not specified in their grants. The dates of these grants must therefore be referred to the era founded by this power. They cannot be referred to the Gupta era, for no dates of that era have yet been found in Mahārāshṭra, south of the Narmadā. In any case Gupta power did not penetrate to Khandesh as early as the fourth century A.D. Dr. Jouveau-Dubreuil has shown that Samudragupta led his arms to the south through Kosala (modern Chhattisgarh) and Mahākāntāra (Bastar State) and reached the east coast; but there he met with stiff opposition from southern kings. He therefore returned to the north without attempting to conquer western countries like Kerala, Kuntala and Mahārāshṭra.¹ The earliest record of his son Chandragupta II found in Malwa is dated in G. 82 (A.D. 401-2). He also does not appear to have crossed the Narmadā as early as G. 67 (A.D. 386-87). The dates of these grants cannot therefore be referred to the Gupta era. The only other era to which they can be referred is the so-called **Kalachuri-Chedi era**, which, as I have shown elsewhere,² was founded by the Ābhīra king Īśvarasena in A.D. 249. The Purāṇas say that the Ābhīras succeeded the Sātavāhanas and ruled for 167 years.³ Their stronghold was in Khandesh where we find that petty Ābhīra princes continued to rule till the thirteenth century A.D. The years 67, 107 and 117, mentioned in these records of Khandesh, must therefore be referred to this **Ābhīra era**. They correspond to A.D. 316-17, 356-57 and 366-67 respectively.

1. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Ancient History of the Deccan*, pp. 58 f. The identification of Korāla with Kerala or Malbar, of Erāṇḍapalli with Erāṇḍol in Khandesh and of Devarāshṭra with Mahārāshṭra, first proposed by Dr. Fleet, is now held to be untenable.

2. See my article on the Kalachuri-Chedi era, *A.B.O.R.I.*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 1 f.

3. The extant text of the Purāṇas assigns a period of only 67 years to the reign of 10 Ābhīra princes, but as I have shown elsewhere, the correct reading of the text was *sapta-shashṭī śatañ=ch=cha*, meaning 167 years.

4. The Purushottampuri plates of Rāmachandra show that Ābhīra kings were ruling at Bhambhāgiri (Bhāmer in the Pimpalner Taluka of West Khandesh) till the time of the Yādava king Siṅghana. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXV. (p. 263).

We have seen above that the dynasty mentioned in the present Ajaṇṭā inscription flourished in the period A.D. 275-500. Some of the members of this dynasty were therefore contemporaries of Svāmīdāsa, Bhulūṇḍa and Rudradāsa, but no connecting links have yet been discovered. Pandit Bhagwanlal suggested that Rudradāsa was possibly the elder son of Kṛishṇadāsa whose name is lost in the Ajaṇṭā inscription. He must have come to the throne in the (Ābhīra) year 110 (A.D. 359-60). He therefore flourished too early to be a contemporary of Harishena (circa A.D. 475-500).¹

As there are as many as three kings whose names do not find a mention in the genealogical list of the present inscription, we must suppose that they belonged to a different branch of the family and ruled over a different part of Khandesh.

From the mention of **Aśmaka** in v. 10 of the present inscription Pandit Bhagwanlal conjectured that these princes were ruling over Aśmaka.² The verse, however, plainly shows that Aśmaka was one of the countries raided by these princes; it was not their homeland. From the *Suttanipāta* we learn that the Aśmakas were settled in the vicinity of the Godāvarī and that their country bordered on that of the Mūlakas.³ The *Suttanipāta* further states that the disciples of the Brāhmaṇa Bāvāri who was living on the bank of the Godāvarī in the country of Aśmaka, proceeded to North India via Pratishthāna (modern Paṭhan), the capital of Mūlaka.⁴ Aśmaka appears therefore to have been situated to the south of the Godāvarī and probably comprised parts of the Ahmednagar and Bhir Districts. The country of Aśmaka thus lay to the south of Ajaṇṭā and was different from Khandesh which lay to the north of it.

The ancient name of Khandesh seems to have been **Ṛishika**. Varāhamihira places Ṛishika in the southern division. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* Ṛishika is grouped with Vidarbha among the countries of the south which Sugrīva asked monkeys to visit in search of Sītā.⁵ In the *Mahābhārata* also Ṛishika is coupled with Vidarbha.⁶ Elsewhere the epic mentions Ṛishika and Aśmaka among the countries conquered by Karna.⁷ In the *Daśakumāracharita* the ruler of Ṛishika is said to have been, like that of Aśmaka, a feudatory of the king of Vidarbha.⁸ The Nasik cave inscription of Puṣumāvi mentions Asika (Sanskrit, Ṛishika) together with

1. If the date 117 is referred to the Gupta era, it becomes equivalent to A.D. 436-37. In that case also Rudradāsa flourished too early to be a contemporary of Harishena.

Verse 4 of the present inscription states that Upendragupta was succeeded by a younger son. Perhaps there was a division of the kingdom at the time and the elder son founded or ruled over a different principality somewhere else in Khandesh. It is tempting to suggest that this elder son of Upendragupta was Svāmīdāsa whose copper-plate is dated in the Ābhīra year 67 (A.D. 316-17). He, however, flourished a little too early for this; for Upendragupta who was the sixth ancestor of the last prince mentioned here (circa A.D. 475-500), must have closed his reign in circa A.D. 350.

2. I.C.T.W.I., p. 73; *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XVI, p. 99.

3. *Suttanipāta*, Pārāyanavagga, vatthugāthā, 5, 2.

4. *Ibid.*, v. 36.

5. *Rāmāyaṇa* (Nirayasar ed.) Kishkindhākāṇḍa, v. 10.

6. *Mahābhārata* (Chitraśālā Press ed.), Bhishmaparvan, adhyāya 9, v. 64.

7. *Ibid.*, Karnaparvan, adhyāya 8, v. 20.

8. *Daśakumāracharita* (Bom. Sansk. Series), p. 138.

Asaka (Sanskrit, *Aśmaka*) and *Mūlaka* among the countries governed by his father Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi.¹ All these references show that *Ṛishika* was contiguous to *Aśmaka*, *Vidarbha*, and *Mūlaka*. The only country which answers to this geographical position is Khandesh; for it is bounded on the east by Berar (ancient *Vidarbha*), and on the south by the Aurangabad district (ancient *Mūlaka*). South of *Mūlaka* lay *Aśmaka* (modern Ahmednagar and Bhir districts). The district obtained its modern name Khandesh in much later times.²

The royal family described in the present inscription, which rose to power in the second half of the third century A.D., must have first owed allegiance to the *Ābhīras* who succeeded the *Sātavāhanas* as an Imperial power in the Deccan.³ After the fall of the *Ābhīras*, they seem to have transferred their allegiance to the *Vākātakas*. A fragmentary verse in the adjoining Cave XVI at Ajantā states that the *Vākātaka* Emperor Harisheṇa either raided or exacted tribute from *Trikūṭa* which comprised the territory round Nasik.⁴ Khandesh which lay between *Vidarbha* and *Trikūṭa* must have likewise submitted to the *Vākātakas*. In fact, the present inscription mentions the *Vākātaka* Emperor Harisheṇa in a manner which indicates that he was the lord paramount of this royal family. The *Daśakumāracharita* gives in the eighth *uchchhvāsa* a narrative which seems to have a historical basis. As I have shown elsewhere,⁵ it reflects the last period of *Vākātaka* rule, viz., the reign of Harisheṇa's son. The narrative mentions the ruler of *Ṛishika* (modern Khandesh where this royal family was reigning) as a feudatory of the Emperor of *Vidarbha*. This is a further indication that this royal family owned the suzerainty of the *Vākātakas*.

We have no records of any successors of *Kṛishṇadāsa*'s son who, as we have seen, was a contemporary of the *Vākātaka* Emperor Harisheṇa. The dynasty appears to have been overthrown by the *Kalachuris* of *Māhishmatī* who occupied Northern *Mahārāshṭra* after the downfall of the *Vākātakas*; for the silver coins (*rūpakas*) of *Kṛishṇarāja*, the founder of the *Kalachuri* power, have been found both in the Nasik District⁶ and Berar,⁷ which border Khandesh on the west and the east respectively.⁷

1. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 60 f.

2. The present name Khandesh is said to have been given to the district in Musalman times to suit the title of *Khan* conferred on the *Paruki* kings by Ahmed I of Gujerat. R. G. Bhandarkar, *Early History of the Deccan* (Collected Works, Vol. III, p. 138).

3. *A.B.O.R.I.*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 37.

4. *Hyderabad Archaeological Series*, No. XIV, p. 10.

5. *A.B.O.R.I.*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 20 f.

6. The coins of *Kṛishṇarāja* were discovered at Devlana near Nasik. *Bom. Gaz.*, Vol. I, part II, p. 13.

7. A hoard of 1600 coins was found at Dhamori in the Amraoti District, Berar.

TEXT.¹

L. I. ~~~~[bhava*]-drum-āsanim² praṇamya vidyā-traya-pāragam
munim [I*] vihāra-dātur=vyavadāta-karmmaṇo³ guṇ-ābhidhān-opanayaḥ karish-
yate ||[I*II].⁴

2. ˘—˘— ˘˘ [pā*]lanena⁵ labdh-ātma-bhāvasya nar-ādhipasya [I*]
 dhrit-ātapatrasya babhūva putras=sit-ātapatro **Dhṛitarāshṭra**-saṁjñāḥ [II 2 II*].⁶

3. ~ ~ — ~ ~ — ~ ~ — sya rājño **Harisāmbo**=mburuh-endu-kānta-vaktraḥ [1*]
nripates=tanayo babbhūva tasy=āpy-amala-srīḥ kshitipāla-**Śaurisāmbah** || 3 || *' 7

4. ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ [te]na⁸ pṛithu-kīrttir=dyutimān=Upendraguptaḥ[*]
 samabhūḍ=a[vara]s⁹=suto=tha tasya kshitipah **Kācha** iti prakāśanāmā || [4 ||*]

5. ————dyuti¹⁰-kīrtti-nyasanāya **Bhikshudāsah** [I*]
prathito bhuvi **Nīladāsa**-nāmā nripatis=tasya suto nar-ādhipasya || [5 II*].

6. ~~~~~[raiḥ] prathitaḥ **Kācha** iti pradīpta-kīrttiḥ [1*]
nripater=atha tasya **Krishnadāsah** kula-varṃśa-dyuti-varddhano babhūva || [6 ll*]

7. ~~~~~-s-tanayā chandra-kar-āvadāta-veshā [I*]
abhavat=paripūrṇna-chandra-vaktrā vinay-āchāra-vibhūṣaṇ=Ātichandrā¹¹ || [7 II*]

8. ————[a*]rthi-sthal¹²-o[d*]dyota-karīm=avāpa [I*]
tasyām cha tasy=āmburuh-āyat-ākshāv=uttapta-chāmikara-kānta-rūpau || [8II*]¹³

I. From an excellent inked estampage kindly supplied by the Government Epigraphist for India.

2. Both Bhagwanlal and Bühler read *m-āvanim*, but the *akshara* preceding *mā* is almost certainly *dru* and there is little doubt that the whole expression was *bhava-drum-āsanim*. The poet has used *āsani* again in *an-ityat-āsanim* in v. 12 below.

3. Bühler read —*karmanō*, but the subscript *m* of *ṛmma* is clear in the estampage.

4. Metre: *Vamśastha*.

5. Bhagwanlal read *neṣa* which would hardly suit the context. Bühler read *nena*. The preceding *akṣhara* read here for the first time is *la* which shows that the word must have been *pālanena*. The four preceding *akṣharas* may have been *nāmno jana*.

6. Metre : *Upajāti.*

7. Metre of verses 3-7: *Aupachchhandasika*.

8. Bhagwanlal read—*neśa* here, and Bühler followed him in regard to the reading of the second *akshara*, but the facsimile clearly shows it to be *na*.

9. Bhagwanlal doubtfully read $d = agajah$ and gave $d = avanam$ as a possible reading. Bühler admitted that $d-ava$ was clear. The intended word must plainly be $-d = avaras-$, though ra has now become indistinct. Perhaps the reading is $d = itaras-$.

10. Bhagwanlal and following him Bühler read *d=bhuvī*, but the second *akshara* is clearly *tī* as its curve is not closed at the bottom. The facsimile shows the preceding *akshara* to be probably *dyu*.

11. Bhagwanlal omitted the *akshara* preceding *chandrā*, while Bühler read the name as *Suchandrā*. The *akshara* before *chandrā* does not however appear like *su* and has besides a curve at the top. The repetition of *chandrā* in the verse suggests that the name of the queen ended in *chandra* and may have been *Atichandrā*.

12. These three *akṣaras* are read for the first time. The description is evidently suggested by the name *Atichandrā* of the queen.

13. Metre : *Indravajrā* (or *Upajāti*).

1. This expression has been variously read. Bhau Daji read it as *dhar-ādhipatyē pratham-ovatāram*. Bhagwanlal's reading was *ek-ādhipatyā-pratham-āvatāram* which Bühler changed into *ek-ādhipatyam prathamō babhāra*. The facsimile will show that the correct reading is as given above.
2. Bhau Daji first read the name as *Ravisāmba* and the reading has been adopted by the subsequent editors. The first *akshara* has a somewhat peculiar form, but in view of the names *Harisāmba* and *Saurisāmba* occurring in v. 3, it is not unlikely that the intended name was *Ravisāmba*.
3. Metre: *Upajāti*.
4. These four *aksharas*, read here for the first time, are almost certain.
5. The letters here are very elusive. Bhagwanlal and Bühler read *...nu tābhya n=abhibhūya*. I have elsewhere suggested the reading *deśāms=cha teshām=abhibhūya*, but that reading does not now satisfy me.
6. Metre of verses 10—13: *Vamśastha*.
7. These seven *aksharas* read here for the first time are almost certain.
8. Bhau Daji and Bhagwanlal read *viājhratoḥ* which is ungrammatical. The correct reading was first given by Bühler.
9. This word is completed here for the first time.
10. Bhau Daji read *pretya cha nityat-āśaniḥ*, while Bhagwanlal gave only *pra ... śaniḥ*. Bühler suggested *pra [syata] ... śaniḥ*. The *akshara* following *prā* is undoubtedly *khyā*. See the form of *khyā* in *dhar-ādhip-ākhyām* in l. 9 above. The following *aksharas* also are not very doubtful. *Anitya* is repeated in the next verse.
11. This expression is completely read here for the first time.
12. This expression has been read variously, viz., *Anitya-samjñā-sachiva-* (Bhau Daji); *Achintya-samjñāḥ sachiva-* (Bhagwanlal) and *Achitya-samjñāḥ sachiva-* (Bühler). The second *akshara* is undoubtedly *ni* and the fifth *jñā*, the up-turned curve of the medial *ā* being unmistakable. The correct reading is therefore the one given by Bhau Daji, though his interpretation of it was wrong. See below, p. 15 n. 2.
13. Metre of verses 14 and 15: *Upajāti*.
14. All previous editors have read *saṃyā-kshubhit=onuchakre*, but the reading is not supported by the facsimile and gives no good sense. The third *akshara* is clearly *nu* and the fourth probably *chi*. The only possible reading appears to be *sabhyān=uchito-nuchakre*.
15. Bhau Daji read *any-ārthikasy-ārthi-jana-*, but Bhagwanlal omitted the second *akshara*, while Bühler gave *arththikasy=ārththijana-* which does not, however, suit the metre. The *aksharas* are quite unmistakable here.
16. Metre: *Indravajrā* (or *Upajāti*).

1. Bhagwanlal read *putr-ābhicheshṭān* and Bühler, *putr-ādihicheshṭān*, but neither of these suits the context. Besides, the *akshara* before *shṭā* is clearly *ye*, not *che*, thus showing the correct reading to be as given above.
2. Metre: *Upajāti*.
3. Read *anūchivān*.
4. Read *nṛivad* = *dhy-āsaya*.
5. Metre: *Vaṁśastha*.
6. Bhau Daji read *saty-ābhidhānāni* and Bhagwanlal, *saty-ābhidhān-ābhivahavāt*. The context shows that this verse gives the words of the parrot, pointing out the obstacle of wealth in the attainment of the highest goal.
7. Metre: *Indravajrā* (or *Upajāti*).
8. Bhagwanlal read *mbārachayāmdhiyogah*, while Bühler was certain only about the *aksharas cha* and *yogah*. The subscript member of the first legible *akshara* is clearly *bha* and the use of *adhiyoga* suggests that the expression ended in the ablative, though the final *t* is not now legible.
9. Bhagwanlal read *yaśo-nibubhiḥ* which Bühler corrected into *yaśo-mśubhiḥ*. The facsimile before me leaves no doubt that Bühler's reading is correct. The last word in this hemistich is clearly *samañchakāra* as read by Bhagwanlal. Bühler doubtfully read *vimalāñ = chakāra*.
10. Metre: *Upendravajrā* (or *Upajāti*).
11. There is a redundant vertical stroke after *la*.
12. Metre: *Aupachchandasika*.
13. Bühler's proposed emendation *bhuvah* is unnecessary as the *visarga* is dropped by the *Varttika* on *Paṇini* viii, 3, 36.
14. The *anuvāra* on *shā* is clear in the facsimile.
15. Metre of verses 22 and 23: *Indravajrā* (or *Upajāti*).
16. Bhau Daji read *n-ākula-nādavadbhiḥ* as here. Bhagwanlal proposed to read *n-anila-nādavadbhiḥ* which does not, however, make good sense. Bühler omitted two *aksharas* before *nāda*. The facsimile clearly shows them to be *kula*.
17. The hemistich is read completely here for the first time. Both Bhagwanlal and Bühler had missed the interesting reference to the Ajantā hill as *Sahya-pāda* which occurs here.
18. Metre of verses 24-27: *Upajāti*.

25. — — — — —, — — — — —vipulām visṛijya [1]
 achīkarad=dityam¹ =a-mānakalpam² =alp-ātmabhiḥ kalpanay-āpy-aśakyam ll
 [25ll*].

26. — — — — —, — — — — —nayan-ābhirāmam [I*]
nyavivīṣat=svādu-laghu-prasanna⁸-śīta-prakām-āmbu-mahā-nidhānam || [26 II*]

27. — — — — —, — — — — n-netra-man-obhirāmam [I*]
any-āṅga-deśe=sya diśi pratichyām=achikarad=gandha-kutīm=uḍārām || [27 II*]

28. ॐ—ॐ—ॐ—ॐ—ॐ—ॐ—, [jaga*]ddhitāy-odyata-sarvva-karmmaṇa[h]⁴
[1*] mun-īndra-bhāva⁵-praṇidhāna-siddhdaye bhavantv=abhīṣṭā bhuvi sarvva-
sampadaḥ || [28 ll*]⁶

29. ~~~~sa-praṇayena maṇḍapah [1*]
karotu tāvat=kuśal-odayam satām vihanti⁷ yāvad=ravir=amśubhis=tamah || [29 ||*].

1. All previous editors read *achikarach-chaityam*, but the conjunct consonant after *ra* is clearly *dd*, not *chch* as it is open on the right. Besides, the *chaitya* inside the *mandapa* has already been referred to in verse 18 above. The description must evidently be of the whole cave and not of the *chaitya* which forms only a part of it. We have probably the word *ditya* here, which occurs in the epigraphs of the period in the sense of a gift. See e.g. l. 6 of the Pardi plates of Dahrasena, *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. X, p. 53.

2. Previous readings of this expression were *m-ihānakalpam* (Bhau Daji and Bhagwanlal) and *m-ahīnakalpam* (Bühler). The curve on the first *m* seems to have been cancelled. The second *akṣhara* which closely resembles the first must be read as *mā*. It is certainly not *hi*.

3. Bhagwanlal read *prasannam*, but the facsimile does not show any *anusvāra* on *nna*.

4. The *visarga* after *na* is rather faint, but it is there.

5. Bhau Daji's incorrect reading *munindra-nātha* has been repeated by both Bhagwanlal and Bühler. It involves tautology. With the correct reading given above, compare *Sarvajña-bhāva-pranidhāna-siddhim*, verse 19 above.

6. Metre of verses 28 and 29: *Vamśastha*.

7. Bhau Daji correctly read *vihanti*, but Bhagwanlal's mislection *nihanti* was repeated by Bühler.

TRANSLATION¹

(Verse 1). Having bowed to the sage (Buddha) who has completely mastered the three lores and who is a thunderbolt² to the tree of worldly existence....., I will set forth a description of the excellences of the donor of the Vihāra whose deeds are pure.

(V. 2). To the lord of men (named.....) who wore a parasol (*over his head*) and who made his name significant by the protection of the people, was born a son, **Dhṛitarāshṭra** by name, who had a white parasol.

(V. 3) [The son] of that king.....was **Harisāmba** whose face was lovely as a lotus and the moon. Again, the son of that king was king **Śaurisāmba**, endowed with spotless beauty.

(V. 4). The resplendent **Upendragupta** of wide-spread fame..... (was begotten) by him. Again, he had a younger son who became well known as king **Kācha (I)**.

(V. 5). [From him was descended]..... **Bhikshudāsa** in order to deposit his splendour and glory on earth. The son of that ruler was the king named **Niladāsa**, famous on earth.

(V. 6). His son of brilliant fame became well known as **Kācha (II)**. Then to that king was born **Kṛishṇadāsa** who augmented the splendour of (his) race and line.

(V. 7.) His wife was **Atichandrā**,³ the daughter (of) clad in garments as white as the rays of the moon, whose face resembled the full moon and whose ornaments were modesty and virtuous conduct.

(V. 8-9). [He] obtained (her) who brightened the land in the form of supplicants⁴ From her he had two sons resembling Pradyumna and Sāmba, who had longish, lotus-like eyes and lovely bodies like burnished gold The elder (*of them*) bore the title of a king, while the second bore the appellation **Ravisāmba**.

1. In this translation I have derived some help from Dr. Bühler's rendering though I have differed from him in the interpretation of several passages.

2. The poet is fond of using *aśani* (a thunderbolt) in the sense of an instrument of destruction. See verse 12 below.

3. Bühler restored the queen's name as *Suchandrā*. That the name ended in *chandra* is certain, but the first part of it was probably *ati*, rather than *su*. See above, p. 10. n. 11.

4. This description is probably suggested by the queen's name *Atichandrā* (one who has surpassed the moon).

(V. 10). Having subjugated prosperous countries such as Aśmaka
 [the two princes] whose prowess had become fruitful, shone like the sun and
 the moon.

(V. 11). While they, whose honour was dependent on
 and whose creeper-like affection and glory had grown very much, were living always
 in concord and happiness—

(V. 12). [Fate] whose decree is not to be evaded
 even by superhuman beings and whose dread power was produced by the deeds done
 in a previous life,¹ announced the thunderbolt of impermanence in the case of the
 younger (*brother*).

(V. 13). [Having overcome] as if with firmness, the diseases of the body and
 the mind, [the elder brother] having always the consciousness
 of transience² made the great tree of religious merit grow.

(V. 14). He served those³ who , who possessed
 great learning, liberality, compassion, contentment, friendship, forgiveness, courage
 and wisdom, and who felt pleased with

(V. 15). He, who was of very pure conduct, habitually imitated in his deeds
 honourable kings of noble conduct

(V. 16). He made The supplicants being satisfied
 (*with the gifts*) spread, in the same way, the fame of other supplicants.⁴

(V. 17). He released, by the power of the expenditure of wealth.
 whose eyes were suffused through fear, as though they were his (*own*)
 dear sons.⁵

1. Bhagwanlal took this as a description of the elder brother who, he thought, murdered the younger brother, but Bühler rightly inferred that the meaning of the verse was that the younger brother perished suddenly by an accident or died of a disease.

2. The use of the word *sachiva* in *anitya-saṃjñā-sachivaḥ* has misled all previous editors. They took *anitya* (*achintya* or *achitya*) as the name of a minister who, they thought, had donated the *Vihāra*. But why the minister should come in abruptly here has not been stated. The *Amarakośha* gives two senses of *sachiva*: (i) a minister, and (ii) an associate. Cf. *Mantrī sahāyah sachivau* (*Amarakośha*, III, 207). At the end of a compound, *sachiva* conveys the sense of 'assisted by' or 'provided with' (Monier Williams). To illustrate this sense, the St. Petersburg Dictionary cites the following passage from Śaṅkara's *Bhāṣya* on the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* (1,2) *doshavad-ghrāṇa-sachivatvād = viddhā ghrāṇa-devatā*. *Anitya-saṃjñā-sachivaḥ*, therefore, means that the elder brother was always conscious of the transitoriness of life. *Anitya-saṃjñā* (Pāli, *anichcha-sañña*) is mentioned in Buddhist literature as an object of meditation, which destroys the sense of *ahaṅkāra* (Pāli *asmi-māna*). Cf. *anichcha-sañña bhāvetabbā asmimāna-samugghātāya*, (*Udāna*, IV, 1). The verse therefore states that the elder brother, being always mindful of the impermanence of existence, engaged himself in the acquisition of religious merit. The donor of the *Vihāra* was this elder brother of Ravisāmba, and not his minister.

3. These were probably Buddhist monks.

4. The meaning of the verse seems to be that the king bestowed so much wealth on supplicants that they themselves made munificent gifts to others which made them famous.

5. This seems to refer to the release from bondage of animals as well as human beings. Compare the fifth Pillar Edict of Aśoka which interdicts the capture of animals in certain seasons of the year.

(V. 18). Even he who had been treated affectionately like a son, repeated like a knowing human being the excellent and pure thoughts in his heart.¹

(V. 19). '[Rich persons] failed to attain, because of their wealth, the *siddhi* rightly so called (*obtainable*) by devout meditation on the Omniscient (Buddha).'²

(V. 20). He adorned the whole world by the light of his fame, bright like the rays of the moon by collecting materials

(V. 21). While that moon among princes **Harishena**, whose face resembles a lotus and the moon and who does what is beneficial for (*his*) subjects
.. .. is protecting the earth—

(V. 22). He who has a very marvellous store of merit
.. .. adorned the earth with *Stūpas* and *Vihāras*, and caused the joy of supplicants by conferring gifts (*on them*).

(V. 23). On a spur of the **Sahya** (*mountain*), looking beautiful with clouds which, with the confused noise of always pass over it (as if) to provide it with a canopy.³

(V. 24). [He excavated] this monolithic excellent Hall, containing within a *Chaitya* of the king of ascetics (*i.e.*, of the Buddha) and possessing the qualities of stateliness

(V. 25). Having expended abundant [wealth], [he] caused to be constructed this donated (*Hall*) which is almost measureless and which cannot be even imagined by little-souled men

(V. 26). He caused to be dug (*near it*) a large cistern pleasing to the eyes and filled with sweet, light, clear, cold and copious water

(V. 27). delightful to the eyes and the mind. In another part of it in the west, he caused to be constructed a grand *Gandhakuṭī*.⁴

1. Bhagwanlal being probably misled by the word *vadhya*, wholly misunderstood the purport of the verse and translated it as follows: ' (The minister) who, although he knew that the king has acquired in his heart a conscience purified from murderous tendencies, did not disclose.....' Bühler thought that the text was corrupt here and took the sense to be that even learned men had to acknowledge the minister's purity of heart. Both these renderings are incorrect. The verse probably refers to a domesticated parrot kept in the palace which, like a knowing human being (*vidan-nṛīvar*), repeated the thoughts in the prince's heart.

2. These are probably the words uttered by the parrot. They point out the obstacle caused by wealth in the attainment of *siddhi*. Bühler, who did not risk a translation, thought that the general sense of the verse was that misfortunes fled (*apeyuh*) from the pious minister, being overcome by his supplications (*praṇidhāna*) addressed to Buddha (*sarvabīhāva*). This is wide of the mark.

3. Bühler has omitted this verse completely in his translation.

4. Bhagwanlal thought that the *Gandhakuṭī* was Cave XVIII from which an image of the Buddha had been removed. Bühler's rendering 'on the other side of this (Buddha's) body on the left' is obviously incorrect. The reference is undoubtedly to the *Chaitya* Cave XIX which actually lies to the west of Cave XVII.

(V. 28). May all the blessings desired for the attainment of *siddhi* caused by devout meditation on the lord of sages (*i.e.*, Buddha) attend him¹ who in all his deeds strives for the welfare of the people !

(V. 29). May this Hall, out of affection cause the attainment of well-being by good people as long as the sun dispels darkness by its rays !

1. This probably refers to the prince who caused the Cave XVII to be excavated.



BUDDHA, HIS WIFE AND SON (CAVE XVII) : *Ajanta*.

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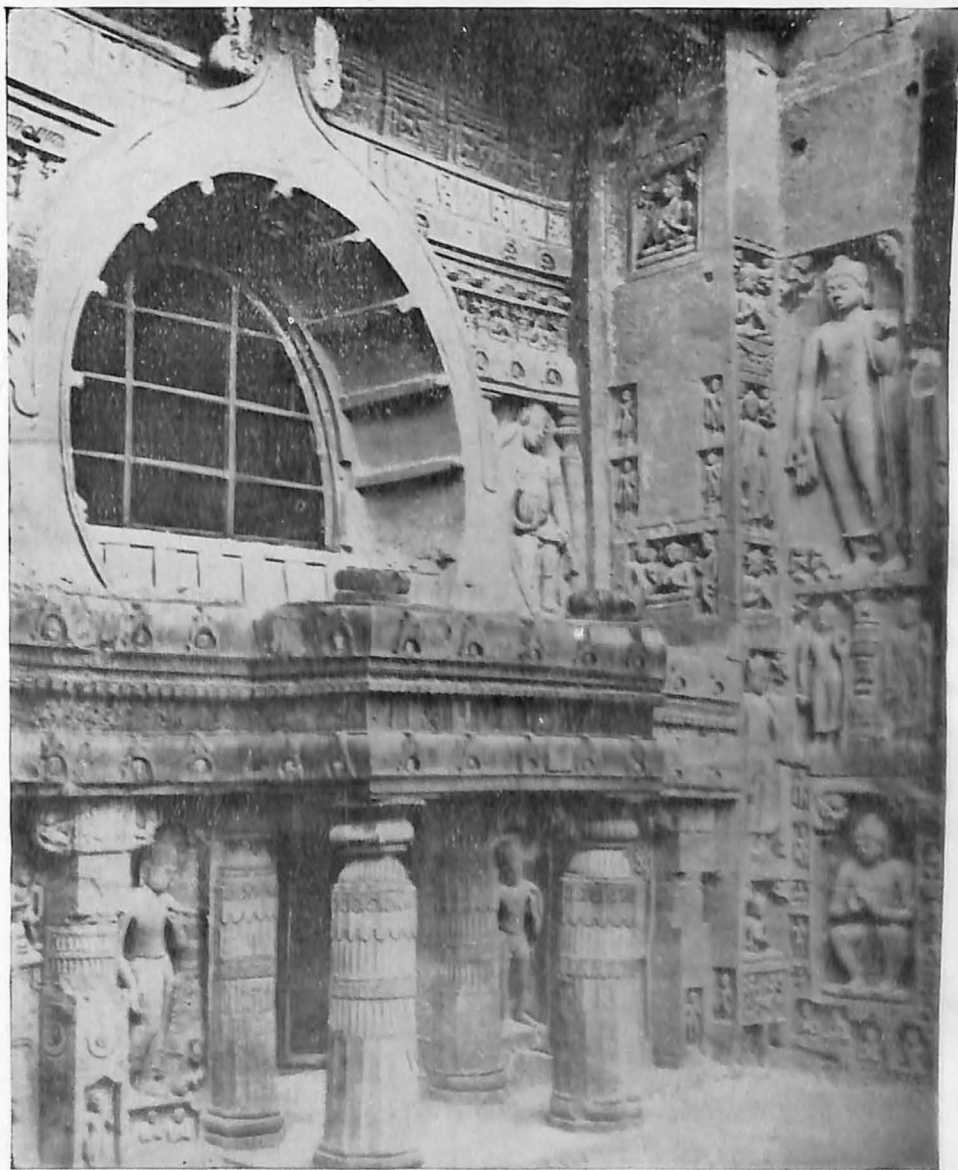
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FLYING FIGURES (CAVE XVII) : *Ajaṇṭā*.

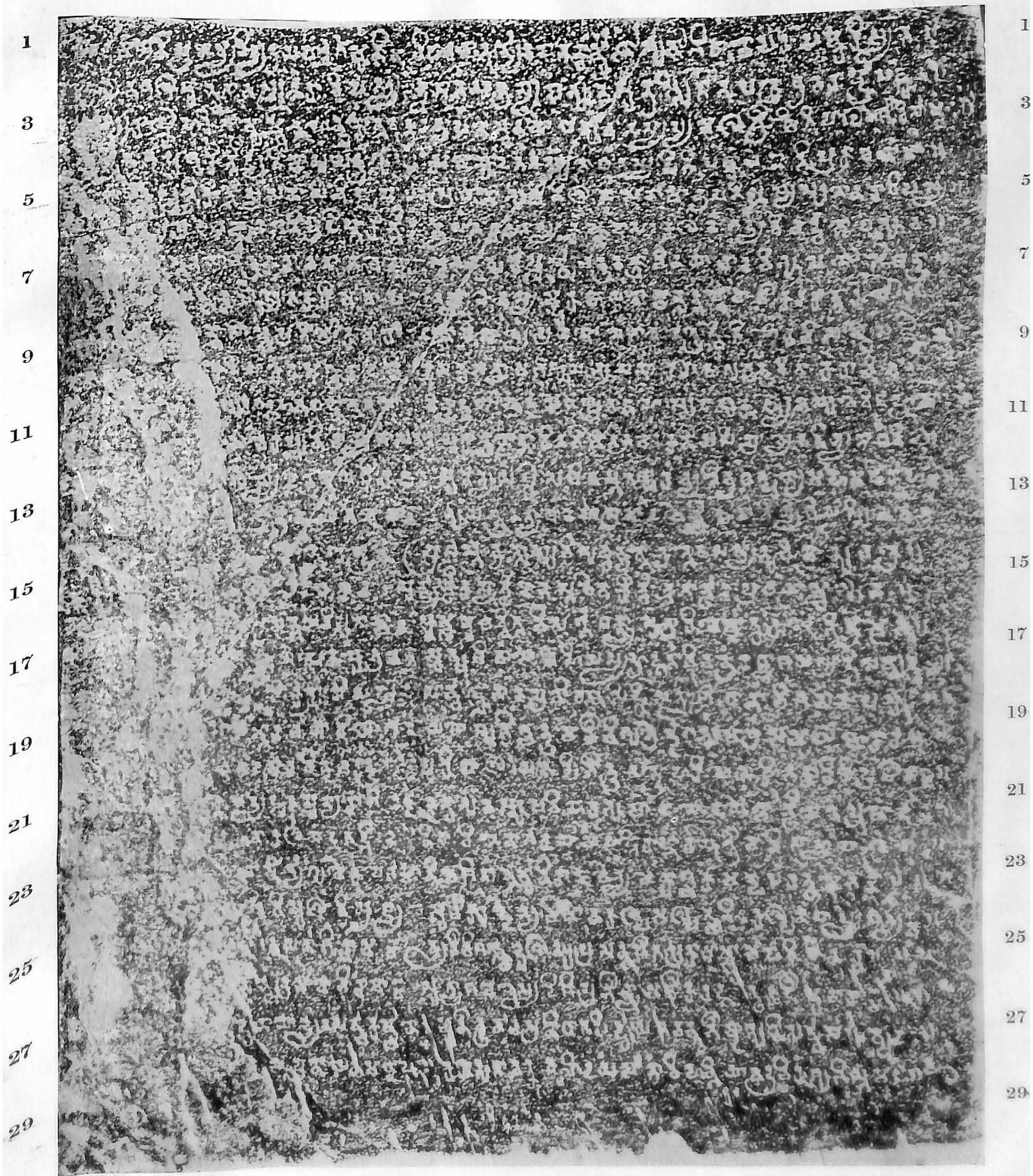


GENERAL VIEW OF CAVE XIX : *Ajantā*.



INTERIOR OF CAVE XIX : *Ajanta*.





INSCRIPTION IN CAVE XVII : Ajanta.