

APPENDIX

AJANTA'S INSCRIPTIONS

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ABBREVIATIONS

- AJ2: John Allen. "A Note on the Inscriptions of Cave II." Appendix to G. Yazdani. *Ajanta*. vol. 2. London: Oxford University Press, 1933.
- AJ3: N. P. Chakravarti. "A Note on the Painted Inscriptions in Caves VI-XVII." Appendix to G. Yazdani. *Ajanta*. vol. 3. London: Oxford University Press, 1946.
- AJ4: N. P. Chakravarti & B. Ch. Chhabra. "Notes on the Painted and Incised Inscriptions of Caves XX-XXVI." Appendix to G. Yazdani. *Ajanta*. vol. 4. London: Oxford University Press, 1955.
- BCITI: James Burgess. *Report on the Buddhist Cave Temples and their Inscriptions*. London: Trübner & Co., 1883.
- CII: Vasudev Vishnu Mirashi. *The Inscriptions of the Vākātakas*. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, vol. V. Ocatamund: Government Epigraphist for India, 1963.
- COHEN: Richard S. Cohen. "Appendix A: Ajanta's Inscriptions." *Setting the Three Jewels: The Complex Culture of Buddhism at the Ajanta Caves*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1995.
- DAJI: Bhau Daji. "Ajanta Inscriptions," *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. 7 (1863): 53-74.
- EI33: Dinesh Chandra Sircar. "Inscription in Cave IV at Ajanṭā," *Epigraphia Indica*. 33 (1959-60): 259-62.
- EI37: A. Ghosh. "Two Early Brahmi Records from Ajanṭā," *Epigraphia Indica*. 37 (1967): 241-44.
- FAI: James Prinsep. "Facsimiles of Various Ancient Inscriptions," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. 5 (1836): 348-9, 556-561, plate ix, #4, plate xxviii, #9, #10, #11.
- GCI: Vasudev Vishnu Mirashi and P. Sreenivasachar. *The Ghatotkaca Cave Inscription*. Hyderabad: The Archaeological Department, Government of Hyderabad, 1952.
- ICTWI: James Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indraji. *Inscriptions from the Cave Temples of Western India with Descriptive Notes, &c.* Bombay: Government Central Press, 1881.
- KERN: Hendrik Kern. *The Jātakamālā: Stories of Buddha's Former Incarnations, Otherwise Entitled Bodhisattva-avadāna-mālā, by Ārya-sūra*. Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 1. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1891.
- NIA: M. K. Dhavalikar. "New Inscriptions from Ajanṭā," *Ars Orientalis*. 7 (1968): 147-53.

- NOTES: James Burgess. *Notes on the Buddha Rock-Temples of Ajanta*. Bombay: Government Central Press, 1879.
- OBM: Peter Khoroché (translator). *Once the Buddha was a Monkey: Ārya Śūra's Jātakamālā*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- STUDIES: Dieter Schlingloff. *Studies in the Ajanta Paintings: Identifications and Interpretations*. Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1988.

CONVENTIONS

- [] In the Sanskrit texts these brackets mark *aḥṣaras* that are damaged or unclear but can be determined with a reasonable degree of certainty. In the translations bracketed words are either based upon reconstructed text or supplied by the editor for proper meaning.
- () *Aḥṣaras* for which the text physically has adequate space but are now lost due to time and wear, reconstructed by present editor or at a previous editor's suggestion.
- { } Supplied by editor. For the most part, these items are whole *aḥṣaras*, medial vowels, or case endings omitted due to scribal error or dialectal variation, or are conventional punctuation not utilized in the epigraphs.
- h
c
upadhmaniya or jihvamūṭiya as appropriate.
avagraha. Never present in the inscriptions, this is always supplied by the editor.

PILLAR FACES FOR CAVES NINE AND TEN

CAVE ONE

INSCRIPTION 1

- Cave:* One
- Location:* Vihāra's right wall; on a green patch directly to the right of the third cell
- Medium:* Painted
- Type:* Second or post-second period graffiti
- Éditions:* Not previously noticed
- Copies:* None published
- Notes:* Written in yellow pigment, this record uses a script with which I am not familiar. The handwriting and medium are reminiscent of graffiti in Caves 16 and 21 (inscriptions #75, #76, and #87).

INSCRIPTION 2

- Cave:* One
- Location:* Vihāra's right wall, between cells 4 and 5; beneath the stool and feet of a seated Buddha in the *Nāgakumāra avadāna* (as identified in STUDIES: 60 2)
- Medium:* Painted
- Type:* Second or post-second period graffiti
- Éditions:* Not previously noticed
- Copies:* None published
- Notes:* The paleography and nature of this record resemble those of #1.

INSCRIPTION 3

- Cave:* One
- Location:* Shrine antechamber's left wall; beneath two of Māra's daughters, below and to the right of the seated Buddha
- Medium:* Painted
- Type:* Second or post-second period graffiti
- Éditions:* Not previously noticed
- Copies:* None published
- Notes:* It is possible that other scholars have noticed these black strokes, but judged them to be part of the narrative. The fact that they are not colored in – as leaves or insects would have been – but do present an intentional pattern suggests their epigraphic nature. Like the previous two records, this seems to be a graffiti, neither descriptive nor donative in nature.

CAVE TWO

INSCRIPTION 4

- Cave:* Two
Location: Left porch-end cell's rear wall; upon a painted cane stool
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, descriptive label
Editions: ICTWI: 81, #3; AJ2: 58, #1
Copies: ICTWI: Cave II, #5; AJ2: 58
Notes: This record identifies the figure as the bodhisattva in his incarnation as Kṣāntivādin, the Preacher of Forbearance. Here one sees Kṣāntivādin preaching to a king's wives while they listen rapt with interest. A fuller description is found in AJ2: 58-9, n. 1.

Text

L1: kṣāntivādīḥ

INSCRIPTION 5

- Cave:* Two
Location: Left porch-end cell's rear wall; on a long green band beneath the scene containing the preceding record
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, didactic verse
Editions: ICTWI: 81, #4; AJ2: 59-60, #2
Copies: ICTWI: Cave II, #3; AJ2: 59
Notes: This inscription—verses 4, 15, and 19 from the Kṣāntivāda Jātaka in Ārya Śūra's *Jātakamālā*—is now virtually unreadable. Accordingly, I have reproduced the text published in AJ2 without emendation. The translation is from OBM: 194, 196. The Text Notes reproduce Ārya Śūra's original verses, from KERN: 182, 184.

Text

- L1: yatraiva rānta sadgu . bhuṣaṇā {} tan ma nājña na {}
 4 {}¹ agalū . nūm avāpya mānuṣa pātu stachendriyai {} avakyamṛtyu
 nnaṃ karotū yaḥ śubhaṃ chā . khyaham ema daṃnyate {}15{}²
 L2: . . . yanta kusumair mahitahā . . dāguse . . nūn(ā)ghanā {} sarāsi mantabhra-
 matassaroru . . rvcāva . . . kṣā hiṇa {}19{}³

Text Notes

¹ nivasanti hi yatraiva santaḥ sadguṇabhūṣaṇaḥ {} tan maṅgalyaṃ manojñaṃ
 ca tat tīrthaṃ tat tapovanam {} 4 {}

² agarhitāṃ jātim avāpya mānuṣim anūnabhāvaṃ paṭubhis tathendriyaiḥ {}
 avāyamṛtyur na karotī yaḥ śubhaṃ pramādabhāk pratyaham eṣa vañcyate {} 15 {}

³ alaṃkriyante kusumair mahīruhās tadidguṇais toyavilambo ghanāḥ {} sarāṃsi
 mattabhramaraiḥ saroruhair guṇair viśeṣādhiḡatais tu dehinaḥ {} 19 {}

Translation

4. For, wherever a holy man of outstanding character chooses to settle, the place becomes auspicious and delightful—it becomes an object of pilgrimage, a hermitage.

15. Anyone born in the human condition—which is not to be despised—who is of sound constitution and has acute senses, who though death inevitably awaits him, is yet so feckless that he fails to do a good deed every day, must be under some misconception.

19. Trees are adorned with blossoms, low-hanging rain clouds with streaks of lightning, lakes with lotuses and their drunken bees, and human beings with virtues that have been brought to perfection.

INSCRIPTION 6

- Cave:* Two
Location: No longer extant; formerly on the left porch-end cell's rear wall
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, didactic verse
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 81, #5; AJ2: 60, #3
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI: Cave II, #4; AJ2: 60
Notes: This inscription—verse 56 from the Kṣāntivāda Jātaka in Ārya Śūra's *Jātakamālā*—is no longer extant. Accordingly, I have reproduced the text published in AJ2 without emendation. The translation is from OBM: 202. The Text Notes reproduce Ārya Śūra's original verse, from KERN: 190.

Text

L1: nātracchedity akṣataḥkṣāntīciraṃ citta tasya prakṣa {} prīti-
 samnyāna mahatāṃ nasa . . nātra nādevādhā . . {}1{}¹

Text Note

¹ gātracchede 'py akṣataḥkṣāntīdhīraṃ cittam tasya prekṣamānyasya sādhoḥ {}
 nāsīd duḥkhaṃ prītiyogān nṛpaṃ tu bhraṣṭaṃ dharmād vikṣya saṃtāpam āpa {}
 56 {}

Translation

56. Even as he silently looked on while his body was hacked to pieces, his spirit remained unbroken in its constant forbearance. And, because of his kindly disposition, he felt no sorrow. But to see the king fallen from the path of virtue caused him anguish.

INSCRIPTION 7

- Cave:* Two
Location: Left porch-end cell's right wall
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, descriptive label

Editions: ICTWI: 82, #7; AJ2: 62, #6
Copies: ICTWI: Cave II, #7; AJ2: 62
Notes: This record allows for an easy identification of the story painted on this wall, now almost completely lost: the bodhisattva in his jātaka as King Maitrībala. According to AJ2: 62-3, the scribe “clearly writes *Chai* for *Mai*.” However, a careful examination of the record *in situ* attests to the scribe’s correct use of *Mai*.

Text

L1: maitrībalorkarājāh¹

Text Note

¹ ICTWI: caitrīvalorkīrājā; AJ2: caitrībalorkarāja

Translation

King Maitrībala

INSCRIPTION 8

Cave: Two
Location: No longer extant; formerly on the left porch-end cell’s right wall
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, didactic verse
Editions: ICTWI: 82, #8; AJ2: 62, #5
Copies: ICTWI: Cave II, #8; AJ2: 62
Notes: This inscription—verse 44 from the Maitrībala Jātaka in Ārya Śūra’s *Jātakamālā*—is no longer extant. Accordingly, I have reproduced the text published in AJ2 without emendation. The translation is from OBM: 54. The Text Notes reproduce Ārya Śūra’s original verse, from KERN: 50.

Text

L1: nā {} na prasehe manasvasyātraiva duḥkhādi . hi . {}¹

Text Note

¹ hriyamāṇāvakaśaṃ tu dānaprītyā punaḥ punaḥ {} na prasehe manas tasya cchedaduḥkhaṃ vighāhitum {} 44 {}

Translation

44. The joy of giving constantly distracted his mind from dwelling on the pain of the sword cuts.

INSCRIPTION 9

Cave: Two
Location: Left porch-end cell’s right wall; on the back of a cow, which is part of the Maitrībala Jātaka
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, programmatic, descriptive label
Editions: ICTWI: 82, #6; AJ2: 61, #4.
Copies: ICTWI: Cave II, #6; AJ2: 61
Notes: Schlingloff proposes that this inscription “was probably added at a later date. [It] has no connection with the subject of the picture; it is probably the work of a scribe who wanted to show off his learning by demonstrating his knowledge of the fact that the holy name of Sarasvatī can also be applied to a cow” (STUDIES: 140). Scribal motivations aside, the hand that wrote this word on the back of a cow also wrote all of the still-extant words in this cell, including the *Jātakamālā* verses. So, unless these verses are also intrusive (unlikely, given their integration with the painted narratives), “sarasvatī” was written on the cow when the wall was first painted.

Text

L1: sarasvatī¹

Text Note

¹ ICTWI and AJ both have “sarasuti” and deem this a Prakrit inscription. However, the subjoined *v* is clearly a closed triangle, not the open-topped hook of a medial *u*.

INSCRIPTION 10

Cave: Two
Location: Left porch-end cell’s right wall; in the center near several disembodied heads
Medium: Painted
Type: Second or post-second period
Editions: Not previously noticed
Copies: None published
Notes: This seems to have been the entire record. It may have been initials or an abbreviation since it has no sense standing on its own.

Text

L1: ja nā

INSCRIPTION 11

Cave: Two
Location: Vihara’s left wall, between cells L3 and L4
Medium: Painted

Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: Not previously edited, but noticed in: AJ2: 63, #8
Copies: AJ2: 63
Notes: This record runs across the petals of the lotus-thrones for a group of ten *vajraparyāṅkāśana* Buddhas, all displaying the *dharmacakra mudrā* (albeit rather indifferently), and all having both shoulders covered by their outer robes. These ten Buddhas were painted by a different artist than the one responsible for a group of 100 Buddhas that fills most of the same wall. In AJ2, Allen despaired of finding any coherent sense from this record. A close examination of the inscription *in situ* reveals a great deal more information than is available from a photograph. For when the inscription was written, the brush left traces in painting beneath it. The contours of these impressions can often be determined through skillful manipulation of a flashlight, even when the painted letters themselves are mostly lost.

Text

L1: deya(dha)ṛmmo śākya(bhi)[kṣo] [gū]ptasya yad atra (puṇyaṃ tad bhava)tu
 (mātāpitṛṃ udisa) sarvasatvānāṃ ca ānuttarajñā(nāvāptaye)

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu . . . gupta. [Let the merit] therein [be in honor of his parents] and [for the attaining of] supreme knowledge by all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 12

Cave: Two
Location: Vihāra's rear wall, to left of ante-chamber
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: NOTES: 34; ICTWI: 80, #1; AJ2: 64, #9
Copies: ICTWI: Cave II, #1; AJ2: 64
Notes: This record runs across the petals of the lotus-throne for a Buddha in *vajraparyāṅkāśana*, his hands in *dharmacakra mudrā* with the pinky of the left hand being touched by the joined fingers of the right. The Buddha is flanked by two attendants. Both stand on lotuses, are bedecked with jewels, and have their heads encircled by halos.

Text

L1: deya(dharmmo 'yaṃ śākya(bhi)kṣo)[r bhadanta budha]guptasya yad atra pu[ṇyaṃ]
 L2: [ta] (sa)ṛrvasatvā(nāṃ) . . .

Translation

This is [the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu] reverend Budhagupta. . . . Let the merit therein . . . all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 13

Cave: Two
Location: The pedestal of the left ante-chamber pillar
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: Not previously edited, but noticed in: AJ2: 64, #10
Copies: AJ2: 64
Notes: This record is painted on the petals of a lotus-throne supported by a flowering stalk upon which a Buddha sits in *vajraparyāṅkāśana*, his hands in *dharmacakra mudrā*. The Buddha was flanked by attendants, but the one on his left is now effaced. The right attendant shoulders a chowry at his right; his left hand holds either a reliquary, book, or offering plate aloft (the object is unclear). It is worth noting that this inscription and the other records of this Cave 2 group that are sufficiently intact use *ulīsa* instead of *uddīśya* (usually found *udīśya* at Ajanta). Likewise, this record, #14, and #63 in Cave 11 have *sākya* instead of *śākya*. Damsteeg records this variation as part of a "tendency to the development *ś > s*" (*Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit*. [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978]: 45). But Damsteeg's examples show further evidence of Prakṛtization such as assimilation of the conjunct consonants and concern for morae, whereas these Ajanta inscriptions only vary from Sanskrit (in terms of phonology) in this change of sibilant.

Text

L1: (deyadha)ṛmmo ya(ṃ) sākya-upāsi[ka] . . . [saṃ]ṣṭi . . .
 L2: mātāpitṛ(ṃ u)[dīsa sarva]sa(tvānāṃ ca)

Text Note

¹ Alternatively, may be *se*, *sī*, *sī*, or *tsa*

Translation

This is [the religious donation] of the Śākyopāsika . . . saṃpaṣṭi . . . in honor of her parents [and] . . . all [living beings].

INSCRIPTION 14

Cave: Two
Location: Antechamber, rear wall, right of shrine door
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: ICTWI: 80-1, #2; AJ2: 64, #11 and AJ3: 85, n. 2
Copies: FAI: plate ix, no. 4; ICTWI Cave II, #2; AJ2: 64
Notes: This inscription, painted with bold thick strokes upon a white field, records the donation of "1000 Buddhas" adorning the four walls of the shrine antechamber. I have counted only 979 Buddhas in the group. The heads and halos of one row of Buddhas intrude upon the ample space set aside for this record, pushing it over the top edge. Perhaps this was done because the artist, realizing 1000 figures would not fit in the available space, wanted to make use of every inch. Be that as it may, because of the damage at

the beginning of the second line, we cannot be certain whether these are intended to represent the 1000 Buddhas of the present Bhadrakalpa, of which our Śākyamuni is the fourth and Maitreya will be the fifth. The Buddhas are all seated *vajraparyāṅka* upon lotuses, but there is an unsystematic diversity with respect to the *mudrās* displayed, whether a Buddha's right shoulder is bared or covered, and the color of the individual Buddhas' robes (four are used: yellow, red, white, and a dark hue, probably blue).

An interesting account of the significance and use of different color robes is found in the frame-story introducing Pāli Jātaka no. 172, in which a foolish monk, who wishes to prove his scholarship, takes up the challenge: "The 'yellow robe' which he put on was blue as a bluebell; his outer robe was pure white. Thus clad, he entered the meeting, greeted the Elders, stepped up to the Preaching Seat . . . and sat down, ready to begin his recitation" (E.B. Cowell, [ed]. *The Jātaka, or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*. [London: Pāli Text Society, 1981]: 2:46). Again, in the Cīvaravastu of the Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya we find a discussion of robe colors: "āpāro 'pi bhikṣur bhagavantam idam avocāt | icchāmy ahaṃ bhadanta sarvanīlam cīvaram dhārayitum | bhagavān āha | āgārikā hy enaṃ dhārayanti | tas-mān na bhikṣūnā sarvanīlam cīvaram dhārayitavyam | pūrṇavadyāvat sātisāro bhavati | evaṃ sarvapītam sarvalohitamavadātam na kalpayaty eva |" (N. Dutt. *Gilgit Manuscripts*. [Delhi: Sri Satguru, 1984]: vol. 3.2, 95). To paraphrase: A monk wants to wear entirely blue robes. The Buddha objects that such is householders' clothing, and stipulates that monks may not wear blue robes exclusively. A similar restriction holds for green, red, and white robes as well. At a later date, the color blue/black for a Buddhist monk's robe seems to have become associated with Tantric practitioners (See W. B. Bollée. "Buddhists and Buddhism in the Earlier Literature of the Śvetāmbara Jains." In *Buddhist Studies in Honour of I. B. Horner*. Ed. by L. Cousins, et al. [Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1974]: 33). One more citation of note on this topic comes from the *Padmapurāṇa*, verses 6.236.6-7: In order to destroy demons, Viṣṇu, in the form of Buddha, taught the false Buddhist religion, [as well as the doctrines of] the naked [Jains] and the blue-robed [Tantrikas?] (*daityānām nāśanārthāya viṣṇunā buddharūpiṇā | baud-dhaśāstram asat proktaṃ nagnanīlapaṭādikam ||* [*The Padmamahāpurāṇam*. [Delhi: Nag Publishers, 1984]: 3: 237]). The "main" image of this group is found set in the center of the antechamber's right wall. This Buddha, larger than all the others, is flanked by a pair of generic, regally bedecked attendants holding chowries. Unfortunately this group is too damaged to yield many details.

Text

L1: (de)yadharmm[o] 'ya(m) sākyo-uṣakasya ra[m] . . (yad atra puṇyam tad) [bha-vatu] (mā)t[ā]pitṛm¹ u(disa sarvvasatvānām) ca ānu{tta}ra{jñā}(nāvaptaye)
L2: . . . budhā sahasam |

Text Note

¹ ICTWI: [mā]tāpitṛmm a . . . ca

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyopāsaka Ram . . . [Let the merit therein] be [in honor of his] parents and [for the attaining of] supreme knowledge [by all living beings]. . . . One Thousand Buddhas.

INSCRIPTION 15

Cave: Two
Location: Antechamber's rear wall, to the right of the shrine entrance; on lotuses of the first two rows of Buddhas beneath the preceding inscription
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: Not edited previously, but noticed in AJ2: 64, #11
Copies: AJ2: 65
Notes: One cannot be certain whether this record also commemorates the 1000 Buddhas mentioned in the preceding inscription, or whether a zealous devotee decided to have his name painted over somebody else's donation. The same hand wrote this inscription and #14, suggesting an alliance between, or the mutual knowledge of, these two donors. In point of fact, because the donor's full name is lost in #14, #15, and #16, it is even possible that the same person was responsible for all three records. Multiple dedicatory records written by a single donor on a single donation are found in Cave 16, for instance.

Text

L1: yad atra puṇya ta[d] bhavatu mātāpit[r]m udisa sa[rvva]sa(tvānām ca)
L2: anutara[jñā](nā)vapta(yc)

Translation

. . . Let the merit therein be in honor of [his] parents and for the attaining of supreme knowledge by all [living beings].

INSCRIPTION 16

Cave: Two
Location: Antechamber's rear wall, to the right of the shrine entrance; on lotuses of the third, fourth, and fifth rows of Buddhas beneath inscription #14
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: Not edited previously, but noted in AJ2: 64, #11
Copies: AJ2: 65
Notes: As with #15, there is a question as to what this "donor" actually donated.

Text

L1: [bhimaśya ya]d atra puṇya tad bha[va]tu
L2: (mātāpitṛm u)disa [sa]rvva(sa)[t]vānām anuttara{jñā}nāva
L3: (ptaye)

Translation

. . . of ?bhima. Let the merit therein be in honor [of his parents and for the attaining] of supreme knowledge by all living beings.

CAVE FOUR

INSCRIPTION 17

Cave: Four
Location: Shrine, on the front face of the central image's throne base towards the top
Medium: Incised. The inscription was coated with a layer of lime plaster after it was cut.
Type: Second period, programmatic, donative
Éditions: EI33: 262
Copies: EI33

Text

L1: [siddham]¹ deyadharmmo 'yaṃ vihārasvāmino 'bhayanandiskandavasuputrasya māthurasya kārvaṭeyasagotrasya² yad atra puṇyaṃ
 L2: tad bhavatu mātāpitros tātāmbāyās cāgrānsatāyā STU³ s⁴ sarvasvatvānāñ cā[nu]ttarajñānāpṭayc⁵

Text Notes

¹ Shown by a symbol ² EI33: kārvaṭey[ā]sagotrasya ³ There is an orthographic symbol of uncertain meaning here, see the next note for a discussion thereof. ⁴ EI33 reads this as *cāgrānva[vā]yasu . . . s*, and suggests restoring “*suhrdāms cātmanas*” in the ellipsis. EI33 was apparently thrown off by two peculiarities of this inscription. First, °*tāyā* is separated from *s sarva*^o by a little over six inches, the span of 5 or 6 *akṣaras*. In part, this break occurs because the throne's *dharmacakra* cuts across the line of text. Although the text on the left of the *cakra* abuts it, on the *cakra*'s right 5.75 inches were left unincised before the inscription started up again *ssava*^o. This record's second peculiarity that might have thrown EI33 is the presence of character that looks like *stu*, *su*, *ssu*, *ssa*, or *sbhu*—read by EI33 as the *su* of *su[hṛdam]*—between °*tāyā* and the *cakra*'s edge. In point of fact, a similar character is found in two other inscriptions (Cave 11, #65 & Cave 16, #70). This character does not seem to have either a grammatical or syntactical function in any of these three caves. Rather, in all three instances it indicates that the inscription continues after a physical break. In Cave 4, the break is caused by the *dharmacakra*; the Cave 11 record is unsure because whatever occupied the space between this continuation sign and the inscription's commencement is effaced; the Cave 16 use could either allude to the fact that each of the four Buddha's dedicated by Dharmadatta is individually inscribed as well, or to the fact that Dharmadatta inscribed a second set of Buddhas adjacent to the first. ⁵ EI33: °*ṭpṭaye t[i]*, which he suggests restoring to *iti*. The *akṣara* read by EI33 as “*ū*” does not correspond paleographically to other *t-mātras* or medial *i-s* in this inscription. Perhaps this is an auspicious symbol or abbreviation. It is also to be found in Cave 11, inscription #65.

Translation

This is the religious donation of the vihārasvāmin Māthura, son of Abhayanandin and Skandhavasū, [a member of the] Kārvaṭeya gotra. Let the merit therein be for the attaining of supreme knowledge by [his] mother, father, and paternal grandmother - to whom belongs the principle share - as well as by all living beings.

CAVE SIX, UPPER

INSCRIPTION 18

Cave: Six, upper
Location: Vihāra, left wall to right of the second cell door
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: AJ3: 88
Copies: AJ3: Plate Ia
Notes: This records the donation of an *aṣṭamahābhaya* Avalokiteśvara. The figure that AJ3 described as a donor is actually somebody fleeing from an approaching lion or other such horror, now lost.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo 'yaṃ śākyabhi[kṣ]o guṇakīrttya¹
 L2: sya yad atra puṇ[y]aṃ (tad bhava)[t]u sar[v]vasatvānāṃ
 L3: m a[nuttarajñānā](vaptayc)

Text Note

¹ AJ3: taraṇakīrtt.

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhiṣṭu Guṇakīrtti. Let the merit therein be for the attaining of supreme knowledge by all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 19

Cave: Six, upper
Location: Vihāra, on the front face of the front right pilaster about eight feet from the floor, beneath what seems to have been a Buddha seated *pralambapadāsana* upon a lion throne.
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: Not previously noticed
Copies: None published
Notes: Spink has speculated that this record commemorates the conversion of cell R1 into a shrine, but the placement of this record beneath a typical “intrusive” image as well as the fact that six nuns are sculpted as donor figures beneath R1's main Buddha militate against Spink's view.

Text

L1: (deya)dharmo ya[m] śākyabhi[kṣ]o[r ggo]vin[d]asya yad a(tra puṇyaṃ) . . .

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhiṣṭu Govinda. Let the [merit therein] . . .

CAVE SEVEN

INSCRIPTION 20

- Cave:* Seven
Location: Rear wall of the porch, to the right of the shrine doorway, about mid-way up the wall painted upon a white background
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, or later
Editions: Not previously noticed
Copies: Too illegible to reproduce photographically
Notes: If, as is suggested in AJ3: 14-15, the scene here depicts the birth of Buddha, this record conceivably either labeled the figures or was a verse pertaining to the adjacent action.

INSCRIPTION 21

- Cave:* Seven
Location: Rear wall of the porch, to the left of the shrine doorway, beneath the preaching Buddha described in AJ3: 13-14
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period
Editions: Not previously noticed
Copies: Too illegible to reproduce photographically
Notes: Probably a donative record, it is oxidized beyond the point of intelligibility.

CAVE NINE

INSCRIPTION 22

- Cave:* Nine
Location: Front interior wall, over the right corner of the door, close to the head of a monk
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, donative, intrusive
Editions: DAJl; ICTWI: 82, #9; BCTTI: 136, #1; AJ3: 88, #1
Copies: DAJl; ICTWI: Cave IX, #9; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #1; AJ3: Plate Ib

Text

- L1: (deyadharmmo) 'yaṃ śāk(yabh)ī[kṣ]o
 L2: [s sa]ṅghappra(i)[yasya]
 L3: mātāpi
 L4: [ta](ra)[m] u[dd]i
 L5: [śya]

Translation

This is [the religious donation] of the Śākyabhikṣu Saṅghapriya in honor of [his] mother and father.

INSCRIPTION 23

- Cave:* Nine
Location: No longer extant. Rear wall, to the left of the central painted stūpa, beneath a Buddha seated *pralambapadāsana*, flanked by two richly dressed attendants in the background, and being revered by two figures in *jaṭa* head-dress and red-and-white striped robes in the foreground. See AJ3: 20-21 for a fuller description of the scene.
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: NOTES: 48
Copies: Never copied

Text

- L1: ... yadharmā ...

INSCRIPTION 24

- Cave:* Nine
Location: Rear wall, in the center of the wall, under a painted stūpa
Medium: Painted

Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 83, #12; BCTTI: 137, #4; AJ3: 89, #8
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI: Cave IX, #12; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #4; AJ3: Plate IIc

Text

L1: dc(ya)ddharm[m]o¹ [yam] bha... sya m...

Text Note

¹ ICTWI: deyaddharma; BCTTI: deyadahama

Translation

This is the religious donation of...

INSCRIPTION 25

Cave: Nine
Location: No longer extant. On the rear wall, to the right of the central painted stūpa, beneath the image of a Buddha seated in *pralambapadāsana*. See AJ3: 21 for a full description of the accompanying scene.
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: NOTES: 49
Copies: Never copied

Text

L1: ... (para)mopāsaka ...

Translation

...supreme upāsaka ...

INSCRIPTION 26

Cave: Nine
Location: No longer extant. On the rear wall, to the far right side, beneath the image of a Buddha seated in *pralambapadāsana*. See NOTES: 49 for a description of the accompanying scene.
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: NOTES: 49
Copies: Never copied

Text

L1: ... ddha ... saka ...

INSCRIPTION 27

Cave: Nine
Location: Triforium, above right aisle's ninth pillar
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: NIA: 151
Copies: NIA: figure 5
Notes: The image corresponding to this record is rather damaged. To the right, however, there is a similar scene (uninscribed) in much better repair. In this latter painting, we see a Buddha clad in red robes, right shoulder bared; seated in *pralambapadāsana* upon a grand lion throne, his feet rest on a large lotus, his hands make the *dharmacakra mudrā*. Immediately to the Buddha's right and left are two attendants, both dressed regally and holding flywhisks in their right hands, their left hands rest on the corresponding thigh. Further out from the sitting Buddha are two more Buddhas, both stand upon lotuses, both have their right hands in *varada mudrā*, both are turned so as to face towards the sitting figure, both have regally dressed attendants with chowries, albeit not as fine as the main figure's attendants. None of the attendants stands upon a lotus, is circumscribed by a halo, or bears any distinct attributes. Finally, directly above each of the three Buddhas was painted a second smaller Buddha seated *vajraparyāṅka* upon a lotus and also flanked by attendants. In the inscribed image, several donor figures can be seen surrounding the central Buddha's feet. To the proper right is a figure dressed in a fancy red robe, trimmed with gold, apparently a sybaritic instead of cenobitic monk (Raviprabha?). There also seems to be a male figure behind him, although this second is less clear. At the main Buddha's proper left kneels at least one woman, and perhaps a second figure.

Text

L1: [siddham]¹ deyadhammo 'yam ... ravi²
L2: prabhasya³ [ya]d atra (puṇyaṃ) tad [bha]
L3: vatu mātā(p)it(r)os sarvasattvā(nāṃ)
L4: ca

Text Notes

¹ NIA records a *siddham* symbol here ² NIA: 'yam [bhadanta go]pī ³ NIA: putrasya

Translation

Success! This is the religious donation of... Raviprabha. Let the [merit] therein be for [his] mother and father and all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 28

Cave: Nine
Location: Axial face of the right entrance pillar
Medium: Incised
Type: Indeterminate time, intrusive?, graffiti?
Editions: Not previously noted

Copies: None published
Notes: This “shell-character” inscription is undecipherable given the current state of epigraphical knowledge. The mirror-image inscription on the left pillar is a concrete copy courtesy of the Archaeological Survey of India.

INSCRIPTION 29

Cave: Nine
Location: Pillar L1, face A
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: DAJI; ICTWI: 83, #10; BCTTI: 136, #2; AJ3: 89, #2
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI cave IX, #10; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #2; AJ3: Plate Ic
Notes: This inscription is found under a Buddha standing upon a lotus, right hand apparently in *abhaya mudrā*, left at waist level. The Buddha’s body visibly blazes through his robes, which are revealed only by a white lacy outline. A donor figure, dressed in white robes at the Buddha’s lower proper right, holds garlands.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo (u)pāsakajasade
 L2: vasya¹

Text Note

¹ DAJI: deyadharma upāsaka casakisyā

Translation

This is the religious donation of the upāsaka Jasadeva.

INSCRIPTION 30

Cave: Nine
Location: Pillar L1, on the back of a jamb attached to face B, over a Buddha’s parasol
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: AJ3: 89, #3
Copies: AJ3: Plate IIa
Notes: The accompanying figure is lost.

Text

L1: [de]yadharm[m]o ‘yaṃ śākyabhikṣor bhadaṃṭā . . . sya

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu reverend . . .

INSCRIPTION 31

Cave: Nine
Location: Pillar L1, face D, on the petals of a lotus beneath a standing Buddha
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: AJ3: 89, #4
Copies: None published
Notes: The Buddha’s right hand is in what Herbert Härtel has called *vyāvṛtta mudrā* (similar to the *abhaya mudrā*, but here the hand is turned 3/4 outwards, not palm-to-front), symbolic of the Buddha’s addressing an audience according to Härtel. Although few of the inscribed Buddha images adopt this gesture, many of the Buddhas on the Caves 9 and 10 pillars are depicted thus. A single donor figure, a monk wearing a yellow robe, kneels at the Buddha’s proper right. Other detail are obscured or lost.

Text

L1: deyadhar(mm)o ‘yaṃ śākyabhikṣo . . .

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu . . .

INSCRIPTION 32

Cave: Nine
Location: Pillar L4, face G, above a standing bodhisattva figure
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: AJ3: 89, #5
Copies: AJ3: Plate IIb
Notes: Possibly Maitreya, the bodhisattva’s left hand, raised to his chest, holds a water bottle, cradling it in the crook of his arm; his right hand is in *varada mudrā*; an antelope skin is draped over his left shoulder; his hair is a *jatāmukuta*, over which is set a tiara with a large diadem (there is no Buddha-figure in the diadem). The bodhisattva’s head is circled by a radiant green halo. The image is lost from the belt down, so we cannot see if there were donor figures. Two similar images, both lacking inscriptions, are found on the front of the pilaster attached to the first pillar on the right aisle in this cave as well as in Cave 10 on pillar R10, face D.

Text

L1: deyaddharmo ‘yaṃ śākyabhikṣo bhadaṃṭā . . .¹
 L2: [se]nasya

Text Note

¹ AJ3: bhadaṃṭa [ācārya?] . . .

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyaabhiḥṣu reverend . . . ?sena.

INSCRIPTION 33

Cave: Nine
Location: Pillar L5, face H, at ceiling level, above a standing Buddha circumscribed by a mandorla
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: Not previously noticed
Copies: None published

Text

L1: (de)yaddharm[m]o 'yaṃ śākyaabhiḥ[ō] . . d[dha]rmmā[sya]

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyaabhiḥṣu . . dharma.

INSCRIPTION 34

Cave: Nine
Location: Pillar L8, face D, on an umbrella, probably over a standing Buddha
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: AJ3: 89, #6
Copies: AJ3: Plate IIc

Text

L1: deyadharm[m]o 'yaṃ śākya(bhiḥṣor) [ā]cārya bhadaṃta . . . [ya]d atra puṇyaṃ
 ita
 L2: (d bha)vatu m(ātā)pitro

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyaabhiḥṣu teacher reverend Let the merit therein be for . . . [his] mother and father . . .

INSCRIPTION 35

Cave: Nine
Location: Pillar L9, face H, below a Buddha standing on a lotus
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 83, #13; BCTTI: 137, #5; AJ3: 89, #7
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI: Cave IX, #13; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #5; AJ3: Plate IIc
Notes: The Buddha figure is turned 3/4 so that his right hand—in *varada mudrā*—

thrusts towards the cave's stūpa. A monk donor image is found at the Buddha's proper left. Although proper right is the customary spot for such figures, the Buddha's twisting places this donor directly beneath his boon-bestowing hand. The Buddha and monk wear robes of the same yellow color. At the Buddha's proper right (behind his back as it were) is a second kneeling figure, an unadorned layman, whose shoulders are both covered by a white robe, with his hands folded in supplication.

Text

L1: deyadharm[m]o 'yaṃ śākyaabhiḥṣo bhadaṃta bhadrāsena[sya]

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyaabhiḥṣu reverend Bhadrāsena.

INSCRIPTION 36

Cave: Nine
Location: No longer extant. Pillar L9, face H, below a Buddha standing on a lotus (also lost)
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: ICTWI: 83, #11; BCTTI: 137, #3; AJ3: 90, #12
Copies: ICTWI: Cave IX, #11; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #3

Text

L1: deyadharmo¹ 'yaṃ bhadata [dha]rmasena[sya]

Text Note

¹ BCTTI: °dharmmo

Translation

This is the religious donation of reverend Dharmasena.

INSCRIPTION 37

Cave: Nine
Location: Pillar R3, face D
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: AJ3: 90, #11
Copies: None published

Text

L1: de(ya)dharmmo 'yaṃ śākyaabh[i](kṣo) . . .

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu . . .

INSCRIPTION 38

- Cave:* Nine
Location: Pillar R10, face A, on a white field beneath a red-robed Buddha standing upon a lotus
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: Not previously noticed
Copies: None published
Notes: The Buddha's right hand in the *vyāvṛtta mudrā*, at whose proper right kneels an indistinct donor figure. The record is too fragmentary to hazard a reading.

INSCRIPTION 39

- Cave:* Nine
Location: Pillar R10, face H
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: Not previously noticed
Copies: None published
Notes: The image resembles the preceding but here the kneeling donor is clearly white clad and mustachioed. Again the record is too fragmentary.

CAVE TEN

INSCRIPTION 40

- Cave:* Ten
Location: Left arch of the facade's *kīrtimukha*
Medium: Incised
Type: First period, donative
Éditions: NOTES: 50; DAJI; ICTWI: 67, #1; BCTTI: 116, #1
Copies: DAJI; BCTTI: Plate LVI, #1
Notes: There is nothing to link the donor of this cave directly to the royal Śātavāhana family, whose Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puṣumāvi (c. 130–159 C.E.) was so prominent at Amarāvati and Nāsik. ICTWI proposes that the paleography of this record predates that of this Śātavāhana king by two centuries. *The Cave Temples of India* observes that this record's paleography is akin to those found mentioning Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puṣumāvi at Nāsik. However, this monograph's reading is so fraught with mistakes that I would hesitate to accept its dating. In *Cave Temples*, Burgess tells of a wall of enormous, regular bricks built underneath the inscribed arch. He suggests this brick-work may have been Vāsiṣṭhīputra Kaṭahādi's donation, and that the cave may have been of an earlier date. The donated object, a *gharamukha*, (literally "house-door") lends an air of credibility to Burgess's suggestion. But *gharamukha* could also be a variant of *kīrtimukha*, the architectural feature on which the inscription was incised.

Text

- L1: vāsithiputasa kaṭa
 L2: hādino gharamukha
 L3: dānaṃ¹

Text Note

¹ Vāsiṣṭhīputasa kaṭahā dīto gharamukha danam (James Fergusson and James Burgess. *The Cave Temples of Western India*. [London: W.H. Allen, 1880]: 293).

Translation

The facade is the gift of Vāsiṣṭhīputra Kaṭahādi.

INSCRIPTION 41

- Cave:* Ten
Location: Left wall, on the first horizontal cross-beam in the vault, before the first rib
Medium: Incised
Type: First period, donative
Éditions: NIA: 149; EI37: 244, B

Copies: NIA: figure 2; EI37: 245, B
Notes: One troublesome aspect of this record is the word *pasādā*. This may be read as the Sanskrit *prāsāda*, meaning “palace” or “temple,” suggesting that this donor was responsible for the majority of the work done in the cave. Or alternately, *pasādā* might be the Sanskrit *prasāda*, meaning faith or favor. NIA understands it in the latter meaning. EI37 compares this record with one at Bhājā, that has the words *Dhamabhāgasa pasādo* incised on a wooden rib in the caitya’s vault. Because it is unlikely that either this or the Bhājā record means to designate the entire cave as the donation (due to the presence of other contemporaneous donative records) and because both inscriptions are located on ribs, EI37 suggests that “*pasāda* has the restricted meaning of roof-component of a structure,” though he admits that there is no support for this definition. The fact that *pasādā* may be a plural form supports EI37’s hypothesis. Further, given that the other first period donative inscriptions (#40, #42, #66) all stipulate the object donated, NIA’s translation of *pasāda* as “faith” is improbable.

Text

L1: dhamadevasa . . . nasa¹
 L2: pasādā d[ā]naṃ pavajitasa²

Text Notes

¹ NIA: [pa]-[tha]nasa; EI37: [ma] . . . nasa ² NIA: pasādo [dā]na pavajita

Translation

The *prasāda* is the gift of Dharmadeva . . . for the renunciates.

INSCRIPTION 42

Cave: Ten
Location: Left wall, below and between the second and third ribs
Medium: Incised
Type: First period, donative
Editions: NIA: 148; EI37: 244, A
Copies: NIA: figure 1; EI37: 245, A
Notes: M.N. Deshpande equated this record’s *Bāhada* with the the present village of *Bahāl*, near in the district of Jalgaon, about 50 miles west of Ajanta (“The Rock-Cut Caves of Pitalkhora in the Deccan,” *Ancient India*. 15 [1959]: 69). Bahāl was a node at which two trade-routes divided. Heading south from Ujjain, after crossing over the Narmadā River, caravans would go west from Bahāl to Nāsik or south to Pratiṣṭhāna. South-going caravans would have climbed the Indiyadri range near Ajanta. The importance of the Bahāl-to-Ajanta road during the Vākātaka period is shown by the presence of the contemporaneous Ghaṭotkaca and Banaoti Caves marking its progress.

Text

L1: kanhakasa bāhaḍasa dānam bhiti

Translation

The wall is the gift of Kanhaka of Bāhaḍa.

INSCRIPTION 43

Cave: Ten
Location: Left wall, under the fourth rib
Medium: Painted
Type: First phase, descriptive label
Editions: NOTES: 51; ICTWI: 84, #14; BCTTI: 137, #6; AJ3: 90-91, #1; STUDIES: 5
Copies: ICTWI: Cave X, #14; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #6; AJ3: Plate III; STUDIES: 344, fig. 2

Text

L1: bhagavasa yat(i) puvad(e)va [h/l/p](a)n(a)[na]t(i) patisa yasa . . .¹

Text Note

¹ ICTWI & BCTTI: bhagavasa yatipuvade[va] . . . tayatipatisa yasa . . . ; AJ3: restored to, bhagavasa yat. puvadevasa—t.n. ti patisa yasa—; STUDIES: bhagav(aṃ) s. y. t. puv(aṃ) d(e)v(e)[h](i) t. [n]. t[ā] pa ti s. y. s.

Translations

ICTWI: Of Bhagava (Buddha) first *deva* of Yatis . . . master of Yatis.
 STUDIES: The Exalted One . . . first [received] by the gods . . .

INSCRIPTION 44

Cave: Ten
Location: Left wall, below and between the ninth and tenth ribs, on a white ground
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 84, #15; BCTTI: 137, #7; AJ3: 91, #2
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI: Cave X, #15; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #7; AJ3: Plate IVa
Notes: I have found no specific donation accompanying this record. Indeed, the remaining fragments of painted plaster both beneath and around it hold traces from Ajanta’s first phase. If, as Burgess says (ICTWI: 84, #15 & 86, #24), there were other such inscriptions on this and the opposite wall (all now lost), perhaps they severally allocated responsibility for the vault’s redecoration during the Vākātaka phase.

Text

L1: [ā]cāryya sacivasya¹
 L2: d[eyadha]rmmo yad atra punya[m] tad bhavatu sarvasa
 L3: tvānā[m] duḥkhamocā[y]ā

Text Notes

¹ DAJI: sadevasya

Translation

The religious donation of teacher . . . saciva. Let the merit therein be for liberating all living beings from suffering.

INSCRIPTION 45

Cave: Ten
Location: Right wall, under seventeenth rib upon a white background
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: DAJI; AJ3: 93, #13
Copies: DAJI; AJ3: VIa
Notes: Several heads are visible, but not enough to make any sense of the inscription's purport or the donation's subject. A similarly placed record, now wholly unreadable, may be found under the tenth rib on this side.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo 'yaṃ cākya¹bhikṣor buddhi[nā]gasya² . [su] karaṇḍ[ā]tra baśa³ . . .

Text Notes

¹ DAJI: śākya; AJ3: śvākya ² DAJI: vṛddhi (ka) sya ³ DAJI: (ā) karuṇatrapaḥ

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyaabhikṣu Buddhināga . . .

INSCRIPTION 46

Cave: Ten
Location: No longer extant; Pillar L8 is now a concrete reconstruction
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: ICTWI: 85, #19; BCTTI: 137, #10; AJ3, 94, #18
Copies: ICTWI Cave X, #19; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #10

Text

L1: bhadantasudattasya

Translation

Reverend Sudatta's.

INSCRIPTION 47

Cave: Ten
Location: No longer extant; Pillar L8 is now a concrete reconstruction
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: ICTWI: 85, #20; BCTTI: 137, #11; AJ3: 94, #19
Copies: ICTWI: Cave X, #19; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #11

Text

L1: [bhada]ntasudattasya

Translation

Reverend Sudatta's.

INSCRIPTION 48

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar L9, face G, on an umbrella over a standing Buddha
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: AJ3: 91, #3
Copies: None published

Text

L1: deya[dharmmo 'yaṃ śākya]bhikṣo(r) bhadaṃta [ācāryya śā] . . .

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyaabhikṣu reverend [teacher] Śā . . .

INSCRIPTION 49

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar L9, face A, beneath the image of a sitting Buddha
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Copies: None published
Notes: This inscription was noted in ICTWI and AJ3, but is too faded to read.

INSCRIPTION 50

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar L9, face B, on a white field beneath a throne upon which sits a Buddha in *vajraparyāṅkāśana*
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Éditions: ICTWI: 85, #18; AJ: 91, #5

Copies: ICTWI, Cave X, #18; Aj 3: Plate IVb

Notes: Apparently, this inscription records a donation to be paired with that described in #49.

Text

L1: tasyaiva

Translation

His too

INSCRIPTION 51

Cave: Ten

Location: Pillar L10, face G, on an umbrella over a Buddha's head

Medium: Painted

Type: Second period, intrusive, donative

Éditions: ICTWI: 85-6, #21; BCTTI: 137, #12; AJ3, 92, #7

Copies: ICTWI: Cave X, #21; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #12; AJ3: Plate IVc

Notes: The image is mostly lost.

Text

L1: deyadharm[m]o 'yaṃ śākyabhikṣor bhadaṃta saṃghaguptasya

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu reverend Saṃghagupta.

INSCRIPTION 52

Cave: Ten

Location: Pillar L17, face B, beneath a Buddha standing upon a lotus styled to look like a rug

Medium: Painted

Type: Second period, intrusive, donative

Éditions: ICTWI: 86, #24; AJ3: 92, #8

Copies: ICTWI: Cave X, #24

Notes: The Buddha's right hand is in varada mudrā, the left upraised. It is possible that this Buddha's *antarvāsa* (under robe) or *nivāsa* (skirt) is white, while his *saṅghāṭī* (outer cloak) or *uttarāsaṅga* (upper garment) is red. This would parallel the image of Vipasyin Buddha painted on pillar R7 (#58), who wears a distinctly two-tone outfit. If the white beneath the red is not an undergarment, it might be a donor kneeling at the Buddha's proper right.

Text

L1: guṇo yā¹ bhāsurad[ī]ptayas te

L2: yanābh..... ye kārayamṭīha jīnasya bimbaṃ

L3: [deyadha]r[m]o 'yaṃ [ś]ākyabhikṣo(r ācā)r[ya] bhada(m)ta (bu)ddhasenasya

Text Note

¹ ICTWI: . . . ndriyā

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu teacher reverend Buddhasena. For a translation of the verse on lines 1 and 2, see inscription #90.

INSCRIPTION 53

Cave: Ten

Location: Pillar L18, face A, below the figure of a yellow-robed Buddha standing upon a lotus

Medium: Painted

Type: Second period, intrusive, donative

Éditions: AJ3: 92, #9

Copies: AJ3: Plate Va

Notes: The Buddha is wholly circumscribed by a mandorla, his right hand in varada mudrā. A monk, also yellow-clad, kneels at the Buddha's proper right.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo ['yaṃ] bha(daṃta)

L2: bu[ddha]somasya

Translation

This is the religious donation of reverend Buddhasoma.

INSCRIPTION 54

Cave: Ten

Location: Pillar R2, face B, beneath a standing Buddha

Medium: Painted

Type: Second period, intrusive, donative

Éditions: AJ3: 94, #17

Copies: None published

Notes: The Buddha's right hand is in the *vyāvṛtta mudrā*. A monk holding an incense-burner in his right hand kneels at the Buddha's feet.

Text

L1: [deya]ddharm[o] 'ya[m]

L2: mātā.....

L3:

Translation

This is the religious donation . . . mother . . .

INSCRIPTION 55

Cave: Ten
Location: No longer extant. Pillar R5
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: ICTWI: 86, #22; BCTTI: 138, #13; AJ3: 94, #21
Copies: ICTWI: Cave X, #22; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #13

Text

L1: deyaddharmmo 'yaṃ bhadanta śilabhadrasya mātā
 L2: pitaram udi(śya)

Translation

This is the religious donation of reverend Śilabhadra in honor of [his] mother and father.

INSCRIPTION 56

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar R5, face B
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: AJ3: 93-4, #16
Copies: AJ3: Plate VI, D
Notes: The image belonging to this inscription is not unusual: a Buddha standing upon a lotus, surrounded by a green mandorla, his right hand in *vyaṅgita/varada mudrā*, with the figure of a monk wearing the same yellow-colored robes as the Buddha kneeling at the master's proper right. It is interesting to note, however, that during the Vākātaka period there seems to have been some administrative control over the decorative program of this cave, of which this image is a part. The general iconographic features of the axial Buddhas (faces A, B, C) were set such that there is a line of standing Buddhas wearing yellow/orange robes in a green mandorla (one per pillar); beneath each of these there is a standing Buddha wearing white robes, his head surrounded by a white halo (this halo intrudes over the background of the higher figure); and beneath these white Buddhas is a line of standing orange-mandorlaed Buddhas. The individualism of the various Buddhas across each band, the variety of donor figures, and the dedicatory inscriptions suggest that this decorative scheme was regulated within very broad restrictions, and did not mandate strict uniformity. One may contrast this patronage pattern with that indicated by the Buddha images to be found atop many of the pillars on the left side of the cave: these are quite uniform and have no inscriptions or donor figures to even hint at individuation in the source of funding. The programme of which this inscription's image is a part is found on pillars from both the right and left arcades of this stūpa's chamber. Though a pattern is clearly evident, it seems to have only been followed in the middle of these pillar groups; the pillars at the far ends of both lines do not conform to this pattern.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo 'yaṃ śā
 L2: kyabhiḥ[o] bha(da)nta dro
 L3: ṇa[va]rmmasya

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu Droṇavarman.

INSCRIPTION 57

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar R6, face H, at the feet of a Buddha standing on a lotus
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 84, #16; BCTTI: 137, #8; AJ3: 93, #15
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI: Cave X, #16; BCTTI: Plate LIX, #8; AJ3: Plate VIc
Notes: His right hand in *varada mudrā*, the Buddha wears an orange robe, as does the aged monk with a freshly shaved head kneeling in front of him. Behind the Buddha we see a second "donor" figure, clad in white, having both shoulders cloaked.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo 'yaṃ śakya
 L2: bhikṣor bhadaṃṭa drāḍha¹
 L3: dharm[m]asya

Text Note

¹ DAJI: praudha

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu reverend Drāḍhadharma.

INSCRIPTION 58

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar R7, face H, at the feet of a standing Buddha
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 85, #17; BCTTI: 137, #9; AJ3: 93, #14
Copies: DAJI; ICTWI, Cave X, #17; BCTTI: Plate LIX, # 9; AJ3: Plate VIb
Notes: Vipasvin's right hand is in *abhaya mudrā*; at chest level, the left holds his robe, which does not cover the right shoulder. Like many other Buddhas in this cave, Vipasvin is circumscribed by a green mandorla from the top of which rises a three-tiered parasol, with two garland-bearers hovering nearby. Atypically, Vipasvin does not stand on a lotus. Another interesting peculiarity of this image is that Vipasvin's undergarment—colored in bands of light and dark tan like rough-spun khadi—peeks out from beneath the

hem of his outer-robe. The inclusion of the word *cetika*, in this record has been widely read as an indication that the present donor was a member of the Cetika *nikāya*, a sub-sect of the Mahāsāṅghika. According to Vasumitra, this sect's name derives from the fact that its founder lived on Caitya-hill near Amarāvātī, and does not indicate anything about the sect's doctrinal stand (Jiryo Masudo, "Origin and Doctrines of Early Buddhist Schools: A Translation of the Hsüan-Chwang Version of Vasumitra's Treatise," *Asia Major*, 2 [1925]: 15). In fact, Vasumitra stipulates that one of the Cetika *nikāya*'s characteristic tenets is, "Even if one makes offerings to a stūpa one cannot acquire great fruits" (Masuda: 38). Assuming this inscription refers to the Cetika *nikāya*, it is worth noting that the only other *nikāya* mentioned at Ajanta, the Aparasāila of inscription #90, was also a sub-sect of the Mahāsāṅghika, also originally from the Amarāvātī region.

Text

L1: vi(pa)śv[ī]¹ samya[k]sambu[ddhah] cetika.rikasya²

Text Notes

¹ DAJI: vipaśyī; ICTWI & BCTTI: vipaśśī ² DAJI: cetikadarikasū; ICTWI & BCTTI: cetika[ya]rikasya; AJ: cetika[pa]rikasya; °vārikasya is also possible.

Translation

Vipaśvin, the Complete and Perfect Buddha. Belonging to Cetika ?rika.

INSCRIPTION 59

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar R10, face F, near the feet of seat Buddha
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: ICTWI: 86, #23; AJ3: 92, #11
Copies: ICTWI: Cave X, #23; AJ3: Plate Vd
Notes: The Buddha's hands are held in *dharmacakrapravartana mudrā*, with a wheel flanked by deer before him, suggesting his first sermon at Sārnāth. There are three figures sitting in front of the Buddha; all are clad in white. One, sitting at the Buddha's proper right, holds an incense burner; to the Buddha's left are seated a man and woman, possibly the donor's parent's, their hands folded in reverence.

Text

L1: mātāpi
 L2: taram udiśya
 L3: [sarva](satvānām ca)
 L4: [deyadha](rmmo 'yaṃ śākyabhikṣor) bhadanta keśavasya

Translation

In honor of [his] mother and father [and] all [living beings], this is the religious donation of [the Śākyabhikṣu] reverend Keśava.

INSCRIPTION 60

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar R10, face G, near the feet of a white-clad Buddha
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: AJ3: 93, #12
Copies: AJ3: Plate Vc
Notes: The Buddha is seated in *vajraparyāṅkāśana* upon a lotus, his hands in *dharmacakrapravartanamudrā*. There are three donor figures, all dressed in white. To the Buddha's proper right is a monk, to his left, two "parents."

Text

L1: d[e](ya)dharm[m]o 'yaṃ śākyabhi (mātāpitṛm udiśya

Translation

This is the religious donation [of] the Śākyabhikṣu . . . in honor of [his] mother and father.

INSCRIPTION 61

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar R12, face F, over an umbrella
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: AJ3: 92, #10
Copies: AJ3: Plate Vb
Notes: The remainder of the image is lost, but the paleography and background red color suggest that this image was made by the same artisan as that responsible for the inscribed image (#59) on pillar R10, face F. If so, this is interesting, for this image is placed in the same location on the pillar as R10's, suggesting that artisans may have been given or bought blocks of space on which to work, perhaps with an eye towards maintaining visual harmony within the cave.

Text

L1: deyadharmmo 'yaṃ śākyabhikṣ[or] buddha.ma(sya)¹
 L2: mātāpita[ram udiśya] sa[rva]satvā
 L3: nāṃ ca]

Text Note

¹ AJ suggests Buddhasomasya

Translation

This is the religious donation of the Śākyabhikṣu Buddha . . . , in honor of [his] mother and father [and] all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 62

Cave: Ten
Location: Pillar R13, face B
Medium: Scratched into the paint
Type: Intrusive graffiti
Editions: NIA: 152
Copies: NIA: figure 7

Text

L1: John Smith 28 Cavalry
 L2: 28 April 1819

CAVE ELEVEN

INSCRIPTION 63

Cave: Eleven
Location: Porch, left wall, back corner, accompanying a very faded *aṣṭamahābhaya* Avalokiteśvara scene
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: Not previously noticed
Copies: None published.

Text

L1: deya[dha]rmmo upā(saka)sya yad atra p[un̄ya]n [tad bhavatu] sarvvasa[tvas]ya . . .

Translation

This is the religious gift of an upāsaka. Let the merit therein be for . . . all living beings . . .

INSCRIPTION 64

Cave: Eleven
Location: No longer extant
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: NIA: 149
Copies: NIA: figure 3

Text

L1: ¹deyadharmmo 'yam upā
 L2: saka² mitradharmmasya
 L3: yad atra puṇyam tad bhava[tu]
 L4: mātāpitro³ sarvvasatvānān ca

Text Notes

¹ NIA sees the *siddham* symbol here ² NIA: °saka[sya] ³ NIA: °pitro[h]

Translation

Success! This is the religious donation of the upāsaka Mitradharmma. Let the merit therein belong to [his] mother and father and all living beings.

INSCRIPTION 65

Cave: Eleven
Location: Rear wall, between the cells, at the feet of a completely obliterated Buddha
Medium: Painted
Type: Second period, intrusive, donative
Editions: Note previously noticed
Copies: None published

Text

L1: (deya)ddhar[mmo] (yaṃ) . . . (mātā)[p]iṭ[pi]rvvaṅga(ma)kṛitvā (yad atra puṇyaṃ
 tad bha)va(tu) [sa]rvvasatvānā anutta[ra]jñānāvāpta[y]e STU¹ . . . [tā]py asau
 tya . . . [va]tālo . . .

Text Notes

¹ This appears to be an auspicious symbol of the sort found in Cave 4's inscription, #17; and Cave 16's #70.

² I am uncertain whether this is an *akṣara* or a text-marker of some sort. It is isomorphic with the final character of inscription #17, which EI33 read as *t[i]*. However, it does not look like *tī*. To know its significance one will have to make better sense of the *akṣaras* that follow.

Translation

This is the religious donation [Let the merit therein be for] the attaining of supreme knowledge by all living beings, having set his mother and father at the fore. . . .

CAVE TWELVE

INSCRIPTION 66

Cave: Twelve
Location: Rear wall, to the left of the rightmost cell
Medium: Incised
Type: First period, donative
Editions: DAJI; ICTWI: 68, #2; BCTTI: 116, #2
Copies: DAJI; BCTTI: Plate LVI, #2

Text

L1: thānako deyadhamaṃ
 L2: ghanāmadaḍasa¹ vaṇija²
 L3: sa uvavarako³ sa-upā⁴

Text Notes

¹ DAJI: ghanāvha^o ² DAJI & BCTTI: vaṇija[sa] ³ DAJI: sapavanvareka ⁴ ICTWI: saupā[sayo]; BCTTI: saupā[satho]

Translation

A dwelling, the religious donation of the merchant Ghanāmadaḍa, a cell (*uvavarako* = *apavaraka*) along with an *upā* . . .