VĀKĀṬAKA INSCRIPTION IN CAVE XVI AT AJANTĀ
Hyderabad Archæological Series

No. 14

VĀKĀṬĀKA INSCRIPTION IN CAVE XVI AT AJANṬĀ

EDITED BY

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SUBJECT

Vākāṭaka Inscription in Cave XVI at Ajañṭā.

READ:—

1. D.O. No. 235, dated 17th November, 1940, from G. Yazdani, Esq., O.B.E., Director of Archaeology, Hyderabad, to Prof. V. V. Mirashi, M.A., of the Nagpur University.

2. Letter, dated 21st November, 1940, from Prof. V. V. Mirashi, M.A., to the Director of Archaeology, Hyderabad.

OBSERVATIONS:—

The inscription was first published by Dr. Bhau Daji in the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (1862), Vol. VIII, pp. 56 ff. He had noticed in it the names of the Vākāṭaka kings, Vindhyaśakti, Pravarasena and Devasena and of their ministers, Hastibhoja and Varahadeva. The inscription was next edited by Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji in the Inscriptions from the Cave Temples of Western India, Archaeological Survey of India (1881), pp. 69 ff. The Pandit noticed in it two additional names, viz., (Rudra?)sena and Harishena. The record was edited for the third time by Dr. Bühler in the Report of the Archaeological Survey of Western India (1883), Vol. IV, pp. 124 ff. He noticed in it two further names—Prithivishena and Pravarasena (II). The recent discovery in 1939, however, at Basina of a copperplate grant of the Vākāṭaka king, Vindhyaśakti II, which has thrown new light on the history of the southern branch of the Vākāṭaka dynasty, has necessitated the re-editing of the record with a faithful facsimile. Mr. G. Yazdani, O.B.E., therefore, requested Mahamahopadhyaya Prof. V. V. Mirashi, M.A., Head of the Sanskrit Department, Nagpur University, to kindly re-edit the inscription as a special monograph for the Hyderabad Archaeological Series.

The inscription measures 4' by 3' 6" and consists of 27 lines and is carved on the left side wall at the extreme end, outside the verandah of Cave XVI at Ajañṭā. Owing to the inclemencies of weather the letters have been abraded in several places and Prof. Mirashi is to be congratulated on the industry and skill exhibited by him in deciphering almost the complete text of the record.

Besides the genealogy of the Vākāṭaka king, Harishena (A.D. 475–500), the inscription refers to Hastibhoja and his son, Varahadeva, who served as ministers to Devasena and Harishena. Further, it alludes to the dedication to a Buddhist...
Sangha of a cave-dwelling, containing a Buddhist temple and a hall, beautifully decorated with pillars, picture-galleries and sculptures.

The main interest of the inscription, however, lies in the fact that it gives the Vākāṭaka genealogy from Vindhyāsakti, the founder of the dynasty, to Hariśeṇa, who was the fifth king of the line.

**ORDER:**

That the monograph be published as No. 14 of the *Hyderabad Archaeological Series* and the cordial thanks of His Exalted Highness' Government be conveyed to Prof. V. V. Mirashi for his scholarly edition of the record.

(By Order)

M. AZHAR HASAN,

*Secretary to Government, Judicial, Police, and General Departments.*

*Copy forwarded to:*

1. The Sadr-ul-Miham of Peshi to His Exalted Highness.
2. The Secretary to His Excellency the President of the Executive Council.
3. The Secretary to Government, Political Department.
4. The Secretary to Government, Financial Department.
5. The Secretary to Government, Public Works Department.
6. The Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
7. The Director, Archaeological Department.
8. The Superintendent, Government Press, for publication in the *Jarida.*
VĀKĀṬAKA INSCRIPTION IN CAVE XVI
AT AJĀNṬĀ.

By MAHĀMAHOPĀDHVĀYA PROF. V. V. MIRASHI, M.A., Nagpur.

This inscription was first brought to notice by Dr. Bhau Daji who published an eye copy of it together with a transcript of its text and a translation in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1862), Vol. VII, pp. 56 ff. Dr. Bhau Daji noticed in it the names of the kings Vindhyāšakti, Pravarasena and Devasena and of their ministers Hastibhoja and Varāhādeva. He identified the first two of these kings with the homonymous princes of the Vākāṭaka dynasty who had already become known from the Siwani plates of Pravarasena II. The inscription was next edited with an introductory note and a translation, but without a facsimile, by Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji in the *Inscriptions from the Cave-Temples of Western India* (Archaeological Survey of India) (1881), pp. 69 ff. Pandit Bhagwanlal noticed in it the names of the following Vākāṭaka kings—Vindhyāšakti, Pravarasena, (Rudra?)sena, (a name lost); Devasena; and Hariśeṇa. The transcript was prepared by the Pandit with his wonted skill and shows great improvement over that of Dr. Bhau Daji. The record was finally edited, with a translation and a lithograph, by Dr. Bühler in the *Archaeological Survey of Western India*, Vol. IV (1883), pp. 124 ff. and Plate LXVII. Dr. Bühler’s lithograph was made from a facsimile carefully prepared by Pandit Bhagwanlal. It seems, however, to have been somewhat worked up by hand. Dr. Bühler’s transcript does not differ much from Pandit Bhagwanlal’s, but he noticed two additional names, viz., Prithivīśeṇa and Pravarasena (II) after (Rudra?)sena in the genealogical portion of the record. The recent discovery of a copper-plate grant of the Vākāṭaka king Vindhyāšakti II, which has thrown a flood of light on the history of the southern branch of the Vākāṭaka dynasty, has rendered imperative a fresh edition of this important record together with a purely mechanical and absolutely trustworthy facsimile. At the request of Mr. G. Yazdani, M.A., O.B.E., Director of Archaeology, Hyderabad State, I edit the inscription here from an excellent estampage supplied by the Government Epigraphist for India. The subjoined transcript and translation will be found to differ in some important details from those of Pandit Bhagwanlal and Dr. Bühler. It will also be noticed that the new readings have considerably affected the historical information of the record.

The present inscription is incised on the left side wall at the extreme end outside the verandah of Cave XVI at Ajānṭā in H.E.H. the Nizam’s Dominions. The inscription has suffered a great deal by exposure to weather, especially in the middle of the first eight lines and on the left-hand side the whole way down. Besides, about a dozen aksharas have been completely lost in the last two lines

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1 This is under publication in the *Ep. Ind.*
at the lower left corner and one or two more in the centre of lines 25 and 26 owing
to the flaking off of the surface of the stone.

The inscription covers a space 4' broad and 3'-6" high and consists of 27
lines, beautifully written and carefully engraved. The characters are of the box-
headed variety of the south Indian alphabet as in most other inscriptions of
the Vākāṭakas. The boxes at the head of letters are scooped out hollow as in
the stone inscriptions at Eran¹ and Deotek.² The only points that call for notice
are that in initial ṛ the length is indicated by an additional upturned curve added
at the base of its vertical, see ārdhāvṛ-, l. 17; the medial ṣ is shown by a curling
curve to the left and the medial o by a loop, see udīrma and loka, both in line
2; medial au is bipartite as in ksham-udāryya, l. 16; y is still tripartite; l has,
im most cases, a long vertical stroke on the right, but in one or two cases (e.g.,
in Lāṭ-, l. 14) it has assumed a diminutive form as in the inscriptions of the
Maitrakas and Gūjaras. The language is Sanskrit and the inscription is
metrically composed throughout.³ It contains 32 verses, none of which is
numbered. As regards orthography, we may note the doubling of the consonant
after r as in nirvāpana, l. 1 and the use of the guttural nasal instead of an
anusvāra in vanśa, l. 3. The upadhmāniya occurs in lines 2 and 10 and the jihvāmūla in
l. 10.

The inscription is one of the minister Varāhadeva of the Vākāṭaka king
Harīsheṇa. The object of it is to record the dedication of a cave-dwelling
(vesma) fully decorated with pillars, picture-galleries, sculptures, etc., to a Buddhist
Sangha. It is undated, but since Harīsheṇa, as shown below, flourished from
about A.D. 475 to 500, it may be referred to the end of the fifth
century A.D.

The inscription falls into two parts. The first part comprising the first twenty
verses, gives the genealogy of the reigning king Harīsheṇa and incidentally
names and eulogizes Hastibhoja and his son (Varāhadeva) who served as
ministers the Vākāṭaka kings Devasena and Harīsheṇa. The second part
describes the cave-dwelling containing a Buddhist temple (Chaitya-mandiram)
and an excellent hall (mandapa-ratnam) excavated by Varāhadeva which he
dedicated to the Buddhist Sangha for the religious merit of his father and mother.

The main interest of the inscription lies in the first part which gives the
Vākāṭaka genealogy right from Vindhyāśakti, the founder of the family.
The present inscription describes Vindhyāśakti as a Brāhmaṇa who became
renowned on earth, having increased his power in great battles: Vindhyāśakti
is known from the Purāṇas also. His son Pravarasena I is next glorified in
verse 6 as one whose lotus-like feet were kissed by the rays of the crest-jewels
of hostile kings. This king is identical with the homonymous Emperor (Śāmīrī)
who is mentioned at the head of the genealogy in several land-grants of the
Vākāṭakas, found in northern Berar and the western districts of the Central

¹ Fleet, Gupta Inscriptions, pp. 18 ff.
² Proceedings of the Eighth All-India Oriental Conference, pp. 613 ff.
³ Verses 6-9 are composed in an uncommon metre, for which see below, p. 10, n. 11.
⁴ Pargiter—Dynasties of the Kali Age, pp. 48 and 50.
Provinces. In those grants he is said to have performed four Aśvamedhas as well as several other Vedic sacrifices such as Agnīṣṭoma, Āpṛtyāma, Ukthya, Shodāsin, Atirātra, Vājapeya, Prihaspatisava and Sādyaskra. His gotra is mentioned as Vīśṇuvrīddha 1. The Purāṇas name him as Pravīra and mention his Vājapeya sacrifices 2.

Pravarasena I's son and successor was named and described in verse 7, but owing to the unfortunate mutilation of the record in this part, the name is partially lost. Only the latter part of it, viz., -senā is clear. Pandit Bhagwanlal, who first noticed the name, thought that sena was preceded by a faintly traceable form like dra, so that the name might have been Bhadrasena, Chandrasena, Indrasena, Rudrasena, etc. 3 In his transcript of the record, he adopted the reading Rudrasena evidently because this name occurs soon after 4 that of Pravarasena I in the Siwani and Chamnak grants of Pravarasena II which had been discovered before. This reading was adopted by Dr. Bühlcr also who next edited the present inscription. It must, however, be noticed that according to the aforementioned land-grants of Pravarasena II, Rudrasena I was not the son of Pravarasena I, but was his grandson, while the present record clearly states that the successor of Pravarasena (I) was his son 5. We must, therefore, suppose that either the poet committed a mistake in describing this relationship, or the reading of the royal name adopted by Bhagwanlal and Bühlcr is incorrect. The former alternative does not appear likely, for the inscription was composed under the direction of the Vākāṭaka king Harishena's minister and is, on the whole, very correctly written. It is, however, very much abraded in the portion where this name occurs and therefore a mistake in reading is not unlikely. Both Bhagwanlal and Bühlcr also were not quite certain about this reading, but the former thought that he saw 'a faintly traceable form like dra'. If we refer to the lithograph used by both of them we find that the upper member of the ligature read as dra is quite illegible, but there appears a loop below it, which seems to have been taken as the subscript r of dra. There are several instances of the subscript r in that lithograph, but in none of them is it denoted by a loop; it is always denoted by a hook open to the left. The new estampage reproduced with this article does not clearly show even this loop. The preceding akṣara ru is, of course, completely gone as admitted by both Bhagwanlal and Bühlcr. The reading Rudrasenah in verse 7 is therefore extremely doubtful.

Let us see if we could restore this royal name. As stated before, this prince was a son of Pravarasena I. A copper-plate inscription discovered recently (in 1939) at Bāsim 6 names Sarvasena as the son and successor of the Vākāṭaka Emperor Pravarasena I who performed four Aśvamedhas and other sacrifices. It may be noted that the reading Sarvasenah would suit the metre as well as Rudra-

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1 In the recently discovered Bāsim plates, the gotra is named Vīśṇuvrīddha, but that apparently is a mistake for Vīśṇuvrīddha.
2 Pargiter—Dynasties of the Kali Age, p. 50.
3 Inscriptions in the Cave-Temples of Western India (A.S.W.I.), p. 66.
4 In these records he is stated to be the grandson of Pravarasena I.
5 The text has -senah Pravarasenasya jita-sarvasenah = suta = bhavat.
6 This is under publication in the Ep. Ind.
senah. The latter part of the verse would therefore read Sarvasenaḥ Pravara-

senasya jita-sarvasenas = suto = bhavat. The resulting yamaka would make this
reading quite plausible. The poet who composed this inscription was fond of
using yamakas based on proper names as will be seen from the following:—

L.2 abivriddha-saktih ....... dānasaktih ......... Vindhyasaktih.

7—Pravarasenas = tasya putro = bhūt = Pravar-arjgit-odāra-sāsana-

pravarah.

10—II—Hastibhojaḥ ...... dig-gandhahasti-pratimo babhūva.

14—Harisheno hari-vikkrama-pratāpah.

The description jita-sarvva-senah of this prince was evidently suggested by his name

Sarvasena. We may therefore take it as almost certain that Pravarasena I

was succeeded by his son Sarvasena.

Bhagwanlal did not notice any royal name in the next verse, but Bühl er
thought that he could read in the middle of line 7 the aksharas pra (or, pri)-

thōv which showed a name like Prithivīśeṇa. As he had adopted Bhagwanlal's
reading Rudrasena in the preceding verse, he identified this Prithivīśeṇa with
Prithivīśeṇa I, whom several land-grants mention as the son and successor of
Rudrasena I. We have seen, however, that verse 7 probably mentions the name
of Sarvasena, not of Rudrasena. Besides, the reading Prithivīśeṇa noticed
by Bühler is equally uncertain. The akshara which he read as thi has a tapering
top and is open below. It cannot therefore be read as thi, for in all cases in this
inscription, th has invariably a round top and is closed at the bottom, see, e.g.,
-prathito in line 15 and prathita-gun-opabhoga in line 21. The akshara appears
to be śrī of which the lower curve representing r is indistinct. The following
akshara is clearly vīṁ. It is followed by clear traces of dhya. Especially the
elongated curve representing the subscript y is unmistakable. The two following
aksharas are almost certainly senah. The name thus appears śrī-Vindhyasenah.

The initial word sat-putrah in that verse, which had not been noticed before,
shows that Vindlyasena was the son of the preceding king, Sarvasena. The
recently discovered Bāsim plates mention Vindhyasakti II as the son and successor
of Sarvasena. Vindhyasakti and Vindhyasena are plainly identical. The Bāsim
plates thus corroborate the reading śrī-Vindhyasenah in verse 8. The second
half of the verse which is very badly mutilated indicates that he won a victory
over the lord of Kuntala. The aforementioned Bāsim plates were issued by
him from Vatsagulma, which was probably his capital, in the 37th regnal year.
They record the grant, by Vindhyasakti II, of the village Ākāsapadda to certain
Brahmanas of the Atharvaveda. The village was situated near Tākālakkhoppaka
on the road going north from Nāndikāta. Vatsagulma, the king's capital, is
plainly Bāsim, the headquarters of a tālukd of the same name in the Akolā District
of Berar. Nāndikāta is probably Nāned, the chief town of the Nāned District

1 Otherwise there is no special point in saying that he conquered all armies. One would rather expect an
expression like jita-sarvva-lokah or jita-sarvva-rājāḥ.

2 A.S.W.I., No. 4, p. 125, n. 1.

3 They were doubtfully read as -shenah by Dr. Bühler.

4 Dr. Bühler conjecturally supplied tanyas-tasya, but there is no space for so many aksharas before parithivas-
endrasya in l. 7 and the reading does not also suit the metre.
in H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions. On the road which connects Nanded with Basim, there are two villages Takali and Asund which probably represent ancient Takalakhhoppaka and Akasapadda respectively. Vindhyasena or Vindhyaśakti II was thus ruling over southern Berar and the northern parts of H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions.

The next verse (9) was read by Bhagwanlal as Pravarasenasya putro = bhūt, etc. He therefore thought that it described another son of Pravarasena I. The correct reading Pravarasena = tasya putro = bhūt was first given by Bühler. It shows that Pravarasena (II) was the next king. Bühler identified this Pravarasena (whom he regarded as the son and successor of Prithivīśeṇa I) with Pravarasena II whose Siwani and Chammak plates had already been discovered and deciphered. This identification also cannot be upheld. As shown above, verse 8 does not mention Prithivīśeṇa, but Vindhyasena. Secondly, even if we adopt Bühler's reading Pritkmshenah in verse 8, we find that Pravarasena II was not the son of Prithivīśeṇa I, but was his grandson; for his father was Rudrasena II, the son-in-law of the famous Gupta king Chandragupta II—Vikramaditya I. Pravarasena, mentioned in verse 9 as the son and successor of Vindhyasena (or Vindhyaśakti II) must therefore be distinguished from the homonymous Vākṣṭaka prince who is known from nearly a dozen grants discovered in northern Berar and several western districts of the Central Provinces.

Verse 10 introduces another prince who evidently succeeded his father Pravarasena II mentioned in the preceding verse, but whose name cannot now be determined owing to the mutilation of the first half of that verse. He is said to have come to the throne when he was only eight years old and to have ruled his kingdom well. This prince is not known from any other record.

Verse 11 mentions Devasena as the son and successor of the prince described in verse 10. An incomplete copper-plate inscription of this king, deposited in the British Museum, has recently been edited by Dr. Randle. Unlike other Vākṣṭaka grants, this inscription does not give any genealogy of the reigning prince who granted the charter. It purports to have been issued from Vatsagulma and apparently records the grant of some village or land in the Nāṅgaraṇaṭaka, which lay on the northern road.

Verses 12–16 incidentally describe Hastibhoja, a capable minister of Devasena. These verses also have suffered much mutilation, but what remains of them is sufficient to give us a fair idea of his accomplishments. We are told that he was an abode of merits, had a broad and stout chest, was obliging, modest, loving and affable and destroyed the partisans of his enemies. He governed the people well and was accessible and dear to them like their father, mother and friend. Entrusting the cares of government to him, the king (Devasena) gave himself up to the enjoyment of pleasures. This description has been taken by the late Dr. Jayaswal to mean that Devasena abdicated in favour of his son Harisena.
But verses 12-16 convey no such idea. The description is intended to glorify Harishena to whom Devasena consigned the cares of government. Similar statements occur in other records also. The Rāmtēk stone inscription, for instance, states in line 17 that the Vādava king Rāma-chandra bestowed on his minister Rāghava, fortune which appeared lovely owing to the prosperity of his Empire and himself enjoyed the company of ladies skilled in all arts. Such statements are not to be taken literally. In any case they do not suggest any abdication of the throne.

Verse 17 proceeds with the royal genealogy and describes Harishena, the son and successor of Devasena. The following verse (18) which described his conquests is badly mutilated. The first part of it mentions the countries of Kuntala, Avanti, Kaliṅga, Kosala, Trikūṭa, Lāṭa and Andhra, evidently in connection with the conquests of Harishena. We have no independent evidence of the extension of the Vākāṭaka power in any of these countries except Andhra. The Vishnukundin king Mādhavavarman I who ruled over Andhra is known to have married a Vākāṭaka princess. She may have been Harishena’s daughter. As Mādhavavarman I was the virtual founder of the Vishnukundin power in Andhra, Harishena may be supposed to have established him or his father in Andhra after conquering that country.

Verses 19-20 eulogize a son of Hastibhoja who became a minister of Harishena. His name which must have occurred in the second half of verse 19 is now lost, but from verse 30 we can conjecture that it was Varāhadeva. He is said to have possessed the virtues of liberality, forgiveness and generosity and to have ruled the country righteously. Realizing that life, youth, wealth and happiness are transitory, he excavated a cave in honour of his father and mother for the use of the best of ascetics. Verse 24 describes the cave-dwelling (veśma) as adorned with windows, doors, beautiful picture-galleries, ledges, statues of the nymphs of Indra and supported by lovely pillars. It contained a temple of Buddha and was provided with a large reservoir of water and a shrine of the lord of Nāgas. This description exactly applies to the Cave XVI where the inscription has been put up. Verse 30 states that Varāhadeva made over the cave to the Community of Monks. The last two verses (31-32) express the hope that the cave containing the excellent māṇḍapa dedicated to the three ratnas (i.e., Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha) would last forever and that the world would be freed from

2 It may be noted in this connection that Harishena is mentioned for the first time in the next verse (16). So tatra in verse 15 refers not to him, but to the minister Hastibhoja.
4 The reference to picture-galleries in v. 24 was missed by both Bhagwanlal and Bühler as the former took su-vithī to mean ‘splendid verandahs’ and the latter, ‘beautiful terraces’. The Trikūṭaśloka (cited by Ghanavāna in his com. on the Uttararāmavārī, Act I) gives vithikā (which is the same as vithī) in the sense of ‘a row of pictures’.
5 There are, for instance, female figures standing on the heads of maharas carved on the pilasters on each side of the principal door. The shrine at the back (chālīya-mandirā) has a gigantic statue of the Buddha in the dharmachakra-mūrthi. The hall (maṇḍapa) contains some of the best pictures at Ajāṭhā such as that of the dying princess. In a chamber below the cave, is seen the figure of Nāga Rāja seated on the coils of the snake whose hoods overshadow his flat-topped mukuta or tiara. For a description of the cave, see Ferguson and Burgess—The Cave-Temples of India, pp. 303 ff.
all blemishes and enter the peaceful and noble state which is devoid of sorrow and pain.

The present inscription thus gives the following **genealogy** of this branch of the Vākāṭaka dynasty:

```
Vindhyaśakti (r)  
|  son  
Pravarasena I   
|  son  
Sarvasena       
|  son  
Vindhyaśaksa (or, Vindhyaśakti II)  
|  son  
Pravarasena II  
|  son  
(No name lost)  
|  son  
Devasena        
|  son  
Harishena       
```

Only five inscriptions of this branch of the Vākāṭaka family have been discovered so far, viz., the Basim plates of Vindhyaśakti II, a fragmentary copper-plate inscription of Devasena, and three stone inscriptions of the reign of Harishena, discovered at or near Ajaṅṭā,—one of his feudatory in Cave XVII and two of his minister Varāhadeva, viz., the present one in Cave XVI and another in the Ghaṭotkacha Cave, rr miles west of Ajaṅṭā. The provenance of these inscriptions shows that this branch held southern Berar and the northern parts of H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions. Both the known copper-plate inscriptions of this branch have been issued from Vatsagulma which seems to have been the seat of its government to the last.

This **Vatsagulma branch**, as it may be called, must be distinguished from another branch of the Vākāṭaka family which is known from some stone and copper-plate inscriptions. The two branches seem to have separated after the reign of Pravarasena I. We know from the Purāṇas that Pravarasena I had four sons, all of whom became kings. They apparently divided his extensive kingdom among themselves after his death. Gautamīputra, who was probably his eldest son, seems to have predeceased him. Therefore, Rudrasena I, the son of Gautamīputra, succeeded Pravarasena I. An inscription of this king has been discovered.

1. The epithet 'Vākāṭikānāṃ Mahārāja' which invariably precedes the names of the ruling princes of the dynasty is not prefixed to his name in any copper-plate charter.
at Deotek\(^1\) in the Chandā District of the Central Provinces, not very far from Pauni where an ancient record of a king of the Bhāra clan (the later Bhāraśivas) has been found. Rudrasena I may therefore have acquired by inheritance the territory of the Bhāraśivas also. The copper-plates of his great-grandson Pravarasena II record gifts of land in the Amraoti, Wardhā, Nāgpur, Betul, Bhandarā and Bālāghāṭ Districts\(^2\). This shows that this branch of the Vākāṭaka family held northern Berar and the western districts of the Central Provinces. The earlier capital of this branch was Nandivardhana which is mentioned as the place of issue in the Poona plates\(^3\) of Prabhavatigupta and the Belorā\(^4\) and Kothuraka\(^5\) grants of her son Pravarasena II. Later on Pravarasena II founded Pravarapura and shifted his seat of government there. The genealogy of this branch may be stated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vindhyasakti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pravarasena I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Gautamiputra)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudrasena I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prithivishaṇa I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudrasena II (married Prabhavatigupta, the daughter of Chandragupta II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pravarasena II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narendrasena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prithivishaṇa II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prithivishaṇa II is the last known member of this branch. Scholars have long been in doubt about the relation of this Prithivishaṇa with Devasena and Harishena. Owing to the incorrect readings of certain passages in the present inscription which have held the field till now, it was supposed that the Vākāṭaka

\(^{1}\) Proceedings of the Eighth All-India Oriental Conference, pp. 613 ff.
\(^{4}\) Ibid., Vol. XXIV, pp. 260 ff.
\(^{5}\) This is under publication in the Ep. Ind.
family remained undivided till the end of Pravarasena II's reign and branched forth afterwards. Dewan Bahadur S. Krishnasvami Aiyangar advocated the view that Narendrasena, the father of Prithivishena II, was a brother of the Vakāṭaka prince whose name is lost in verse 10 of the present inscription 1. The late Dr. Jayaswal, on the other hand, identified Narendrasena with the latter prince 2. The foregoing discussion must have made it plain that the two branches had separated long before, i.e., after the reign of Pravarasena I and that Devasena and Harishena belonged to a different line from that of Narendrasena and Prithivishena II.

According to the genealogy of the Vatsagulma branch fixed above, Vindhyaśakti and his son Pravarasena II were contemporaries of Prithivishena I and his son Rudrasena II of the other branch. From the grants of Prabhavatigupta, we know that Rudrasena II was the soul-in-law of Chandragupta II (A.D. 380–413). He may therefore have come to the throne in circa A.D. 400 3. This is also the approximate date of the close of Vindhyaśakti II's reign. As we have already seen, Vindhyaśakti II was the great-grandson of Vindhyaśakti I. In view of the abnormally long reigns 4 assigned in the Puranas to Vindhyaśakti I and Pravarasena I and the date, the thirty-seventh regnal year, of the Bāsim plates of Vindhyaśakti II, it would not be wrong to assign 150 years to the four reigns of Vindhyaśakti I, Pravarasena I, Sarvasena, and Vindhyaśakti II. Vindhyaśakti I, the founder of the family, seems therefore to have risen to power about A.D. 250. Vindhyaśakti II was followed by four kings whose reigns must have covered about a century. We may therefore place Harishena, the last of them, about A.D. 475–500. It is noteworthy that Messrs. Fergusson and Burgess also assigned Cave XVI to about 500 A.D. on the evidence of the style of its architecture 5.

As for the localities mentioned in this record, Kuntala generally denoted 'the country between the Bhūmā and the Vedavati', including some Kanarese districts of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies and the Mysore State. According to some writers, however, Kuntala stretched much farther to the north. Rājaśekhara seems to identify Kuntala with a part of Mahārāṣṭra including Vidarbha 6. Soḍḍhala, the author of the Udayasundarīkathā states that Pratishthāna (modern Paithānp in H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions) on the Godāvari was the capital of Kuntala 7. Avanti is Western Malwa, the capital of which was Ujjain (also called Avanti). Kālīṅga comprised the country along the eastern coast between the Mahānādi and the Godāvari. Kosala is evidently Dakṣīṇa Kosala, corresponding to modern Chhattisgarh and the adjoining parts of the Eastern States Agency. The exact location of Trīkūṭa was long uncertain. From the

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1 Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Vol. IV, p. 35.
2 History of India, 150–350 A.D., p. 76.
4 According to the Purāṇas, Vindhyaśakti I reigned about 96 years and Pravarasena I for 60 years.
5 The Cave Temples of India, p. 306.
6 Rajaśekhara, Bhāhavāmāyaṇa, Act III, verses 50–52; Act X, verses 74–75.
7 Udayasundarīkathā (Gaekwad's Oriental Series), pp. 21 and 83.
description in Kalidasa's *Raghuvaṃśa* it was of course known that the mountain Trikūta after which the country was named was situated in Aparānta (North Koṅkaṇ). The dynasty of the Traikutakas was also known to have held parts of Koṅkaṇ, southern Gujarat and northern Mahārāṣṭra. But which particular part of the Western Ghats was designated Trikūta was not known. A copper-plate inscription recently discovered at Anjaneri near Nāsik mentions Pūrva-Trikūta-Viśhaya (Eastern Trikūta District) in connection with certain taxes levied in favour of a temple situated in the Nāsik District 1. Trikūta seems therefore to have comprised the country to the west of Nāsik. Lāṭa generally signified Central and Southern Gujarat, between the Mahi and the Tāpti, but in some records it is said to have included the territory to the north of the Mahi at least as far as Kairā 3. Finally, **Andhra** is the well-known name of the Telugu-speaking country to the south of the Godāvari.

TEXT 4

L. 1. Udīruṇa-loka-traya-dosha-vahni-nirvāpa[ṇaḥ] ...śri[i] tiḥ 6 pranāmya pūrva-vāṁ pravraksāye khītīp-ānupūrvv[i][m I II I].

2. [Majhā-vimardheshvī abhiyṛddhi-śaktī kruddhas = surair = apy = anivāryya[-vīryyā]] 4 na-rāṇa-dāna-śaktī dvijaḥ = prakāśo bhuvī Vindhyāśa[ṃ]ktīḥ [I 2 I].


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1 Raguvaṃśa, canto IV, v. 59.
4 From an inked estampage supplied by the Government Epigraphist for India.
5 This word has not been noticed before. It may be noted that the inscription in Cave X VII refers to the Buddha as muni.
6 Metre of this and the next two verses: Upajāti.
7 The three aksharas are fairly clear. The word may have been hanamāṭkānāṁ.
8 This was the reading of Pandit Bhagwanial also. Bühler read sah-kārya.
9 Metre: Upajāti.
10 Metre of this verse Upendravajra or Upajāti.
11 Metre of verses 6-9 was first correctly noticed by Dr. Kielhorn. According to him the metre is a species of mātrāsamaka. Each verse contains four pādas, of which the first and the third generally contain 15 mātrās (rarely 16 and 17 respectively) and the second and the fourth also 15 mātrās each. Ep. Ind., Vol. VIII, p. 27. It may, however, be noted that the first two pādas of verse 9 contain 16 and 19 mātrās respectively. Dr. A. Venkatasingh calls the metre Gitāha. See *Journal of Oriental Research*, Madras, Vol. IX, pp. 46 ff. and 170 ff.
12 Bhagwanial and Bühler proposed to read this name as [R̥j]drasenaḥ. See the discussion in the Introduction above, pp. 3 ff.
sena[s = ta]ṣya patro bhūt = pravar-orjjet-odā[ra-sāsana-pra]varah[ṃ].
8. v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s [ṃṣ] tasy = ātmajah v-s v-s v-s m = avāpya rājyaṃ = asht-ābdako yaḥ pra[śāsā] sa[mnyak]ṃ [ṃṣ].
9. [Tasy = āṣ]ṃ[tmajo =] bhūn = naradeva v-s bhuvī Deva-
senaḥ[ṃṣ] yasy = opabhogāir īlalitair vvi v-s v-s devarājasya v-s bhūḥ [ṃṣ]. Puny-ānubhāvāt = kshitipasya
10. [samya]ṃṣ v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s guṇ-ādhivāsaḥ v-s koṣo bhuvī Hastibhojaḥ [ṃṣ] pra v-s h = prithu-pīna-vakshās = saroruh-ākṣaḥ = kshapi-
11. [t-a]ṃṣ[ri-pakṣaḥ]6[bāhur = ddi-gandhāhasti-pra-
timo babhūva]ṃṣ. Hito vinitaḥ [praṇaṇya-pradhano] manō-nukūlo-nudi-
ānti-vartti [ṃṣ] nir-ātyayaṁ
12. v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s kāṣ = cha [ṃṣ] m[aṭh = ai]ṃṣ vā lokasya hit-āśayatvāt = sukhenā samya[ṃṣ]k-praipālanena [ṃṣ] pit = eva māt = eva saṅk = eva nityā-priyō = bhigamyāṣ = cha babhūva
13. [satyam]ṃṣ [ṃṣ] v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s v-s svasthas = samāvēṣya sa tatra rājā sasanja bhogeshu yath = eshta-cheshtaḥ [ṃṣ] Atha tasya suto babhūṅ
Kosalā-Trṇkūṭa-Lāṭ-Andhra-
15. v-s v-s jān = imān [ṃṣ] v-s v-s v-s śaurya-vaśrutān = apī sva-nirṛdeśa-
guṇatī v-s [ṃṣ]. Prachito bhuvī Hastibhojaḥ-sānum = sācitvas = tasya mahī-pater = [bbabhāva i] sakalā-kshti-
16. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . [ṃṣ]. [Rāja]ṃṣ-praj-śtihā prathra-
dhira-chetās = tyaṅga-kṣam-āudāryya-guṇāir = upeta[ṃṣ] dharmmena dharm-
m̐a-pravāja = saṃśa daṃ yaf[ṃṣ]punya]-guṇ-āṁśu.

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1 This word was omitted in all previous transcripts. The reading of the first akṣara is conjectural.
2 Bühler proposed to read the name of this prince as Prativikrama. See Introduction above, p. 4.
3 Read niṣṭh = hmaṇī.
4 Metre of verses 10–12: Indraṣṭra or Upājāti.
5 Perhaps the word was Śrī-hasti-kūṭa. Hastikhā, as the name of an officer, occurs in the Godavari copper-
6 These three akṣaras are fairly clear.
7 Metre: Upājāti.
8 Metre: Uṇḍevānjāra or Upājāti.
9 Metre: Uṇḍevānjāra.
10 Metre: Upājāti.
11 Bühler and Bühler read smar-eva-kantir which is engrammatical. Bühler’s proposal to emend it as
smar-endo-kāntir is unnecessary, as the akṣara following re is clearly mdu.
12 Metre: Aśvapakṣa-khandasika.
13 Metre: Vamkṣika.
14 Metre: Aśvapakṣa-khandasika.
15 This word, omitted in previous transcripts, is fairly clear in the new facsimile.
22. —— [27 8] sur-endrā-mandirāṅgaṃ ruchiman-mandara-kanda-[ṛ-ānūr-\[pam i]] janair = yath = epśitarān[18] [27 8] Asamasya virochane girer = vika-
23. —— śram-āntakatayā nivahena —— [28 8] viśālam = iti yasya janena nāma priti-praśāda-viṅkacha-praṇayena chakre [1 8] [ej]tasya

1 Restore āsūdraḥ. Metre: Ādvaṭa-yā.  
2 Metre: Āṣvapakṣhakandaśikā.  
3 Metre: Āṣvapakṣhakandaśikā.  
4 The first quarter of this verse has been read here completely for the first time. The reading -udāhit-āgre given by Bhagwanlal and Bühler does not give any good sense.  
5 Bhagwanlal and Bühler read ārā.  
6 Bhagwanlal and Bühler read saṅgrahaḥ.  
7 Bühler doubtfully read meḍura, but the akṣaras are completely gone. Read bhūṣhitam.  
8 This last quarter, which is read here completely for the first time, clearly shows that the chaitya-manda was not structural and outside the cave as supposed by Burgess, but that it was the shrine of the gigantic statue of the Buddha at the back of the cave. Compare nivṛti-ṇitor-muni-rāja-chaityam in line 24 of the inscription in Cave XVII. Metre: Vamkastha.  
9 Bhagwanlal and Bühler read -āch-ambhi-mahā-miḍhāṇam which does not yield a good sense. The expression prahām-āmbhi-mahāmiḍhāṇam occurs in line 26 of the inscription in Cave XVII also.  
11 Metre: Prabraṭhaṭṭi.  
12 Metre: Āṣvapakṣhakandaśikā.  
13 Metre of this and the next verse: Āṣvapakṣhakandaśikā.  
14 The last two of the missing akṣaras may have been girer.  
15 Metre: Vasanālakṣāṭāḥ.  
16 Read su-śemā.  
17 Restore samyag-.  
18 Restore śarmanyaḥ.  
19 Metre: Uṣṭāṭi.  
20 Restore nīkāraī.
TRANSLATION

(Verse 1) Having bowed to the sage (Buddha) who extinguishes the rising flames of the three worlds' sins, I shall describe the ancient succession of kings.

(V. 2) There was a famous Brāhmaṇa (lit., a twice-born man) on earth (named) Vindhyasakti whose strength increased in great battles, whose valour, when he was enraged, was irresistible even by the gods, (and) who was mighty in fighting and charity.

(V. 3) He, whose majesty was like that of Indra and Upendra (Vishnu), who, by the might of his arm, conquered the whole world, became the standard of the Vākātaka race.

(V. 4) He, eclipsing in battles the sun with the masses of dust raised by the hoofs of his horses, making the enemies made them intent on salutation to him.

(V. 5) Having subdued his enemies for accomplishing the work of the gods, he made a great effort to acquire religious merit.

(V. 6) His son was Pravarasena (I), whose lotus-like feet were kissed by the rays of jewels worn on the heads of hostile kings whose eyes resembled fresh, blooming blue lotuses.

(V. 7) The rays of the sun was Pravarasena (I)'s son who defeated all armies.

(V. 8) The illustrious Vindhyasena, the noble son of the lord of kings, governed the earth righteously, having conquered the lord of Kuntala.

(V. 9) His son was Pravarasena (II) who became exalted by his excellent, powerful and liberal rule.

(V. 10) His son who, having obtained the kingdom when eight years old, ruled well.

(V. 11) His son became king (named) Devasena on earth by whose lovely enjoyments, the earth of the lord of gods.
Through the greatness of the religious merit of that king properly there was Hastibhoja, the abode of excellences, the illustrious Commander of the elephant force on earth.

He who had a broad and stout chest and lotus-like eyes (and) who destroyed the partisans of his enemies, arms resembled a scent-elephant (stationed) in a quarter.

Obliging, modest, loving, agreeable, obedient to the king's wishes faultlessly

Similarly, on account of his being a well-wisher of the world as well as by his happy and excellent rule, he was indeed always dear and accessible to the people like (their) father, mother and friend.

The king, being at ease and having entrusted the government of the kingdom to him, engaged himself in the enjoyment of pleasures, acting as he liked.

Then his son became king Harishena, who in loveliness resembled Indra, Rama, Hara, Cupid, and the moon, and who was brave and spirited like a lion.

He conquered Kuntala, Avanti, Kalinga, Kosala, Trikuta, Lata, Andhra which, though very famous for valour

The son of Hastibhoja, renowned on earth, became the minister of that king the whole earth

Beloved by the king and the subjects, he, who was of staid and firm mind, endowed with the virtues of liberality, forgiveness, and generosity and intent on the performance of religious duty, governed the country righteously, shining brightly with the rays of his fame, religious merit and virtue.

He amassed a large store of religious merit for especially, after which he, regarding the sacred law as his (only) companion, made this sacred dwelling, being extremely devoted to (the Buddha), the teacher of the world.

(Raising that) life, youth, wealth, and happiness are transitory, he, for the sake of his father and mother, got constructed this magnificent dwelling to be occupied by the best of ascetics.

On the best of mountains on which hang multitudes of water-laden clouds (and) which is inhabited by the lords of serpents in the thickets of the slopes by the lord of the goddess of heroism.

(The dwelling) which is adorned with windows, doors, beautiful picture-galleries, ledges, statues of the nymphs of Indra and the like, which is

1 Hastibhoja seems to be a technical official title as in the Godavari copper-plate grant of Prithivivamala. Dr. Fleet took it to mean an official who kept the purse and made disbursements on account of the establishment of elephants. J.B.B.R.A.S., Vol. XVI, p. 119.

2 Hari of the text should be taken to mean Indra, not Vishnu, as Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu, is separately named.

3 Kara seems to have been used here in the unusual sense of 'a place of worship'. It may be noted that kara in Pali means 'an act of worship' or 'homage'. Bühlcr translated 'He made a prison (?) all round for the teacher of the world'.

4 Su-vithi was translated as 'splendid verandahs' by Bhagwanlal and as 'beautiful terraces' by Bühlcr. It probably refers to the picture-galleries in the cave. Burgess thought that the Chaitya-mandiram must have been
ornamented with beautiful pillars and stairs and has a temple of the Buddha inside.

(V. 25) Which is situated on the top of the mountain, appears attractive ... a canopy, which is provided with a large reservoir of abundant water and (is also ornamented) with a shrine of the lord of the Nāgas \(^1\) and the like.

(V. 26) ... various pleasures ... in a fierce wind blowing all round ... warmed by the heat of the rays of the summer sun and affording enjoyment of well-known comforts in all seasons.

(V. 27) (Which resembles) the palaces of the lord of gods and is similar to a cave in the lovely Mandara mountain ... as desired by the people.

(V. 28) Which ... shines on (the slope of) this matchless mountain ... since it removes fatigue.

(V. 29) The cave on this (mountain) ... clothed in the brilliance of Indra's crown, which the people, with their love expanding through joy and gratification, have named — viśāla.\(^2\)

(V. 30) Having presented (the cave) with devotion to the Community of Monks, Varāhadeva together with the multitude of his relatives, having enjoyed royal pleasures, ruled righteously being praised by Sugata \(i.e.,\) Buddha.

(V. 31) As long as ... with the multitude of the hoods of serpents resembling crowding clouds ... as long as the sun (shines) with rays reddish like fresh red arsenic,—even so long may this spotless cave containing an excellent hall (mandapa) dedicated to the three ratnas, be enjoyed!

(V. 32) (May) this mountain, the peak of which contains various (types of) caves, which is inhabited by great people ... and may the whole world also, getting rid of its manifold sins, enter that tranquil and noble state, free from sorrow and pain!

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structural and outside; but it undoubtedly refers to the shrine containing a colossal statue of Buddha at the back of the cave.

\(^1\) This refers to the shrine of the Nāga Rāja 'in the staircase leading down from the front of the cave'.

\(^2\) The Cave XVI seems to have borne a name ending in viśālu.
Vākāṭaka Inscription in Cave No. XVI at Ajaṇṭā.