

low, rich and poor, could exert themselves in following *dhamma* and in order that people living beyond the king's borders could also learn about this matter.

....

Notes and References

1. The name given to this pottery type is more than a little misleading. It has been found in north India (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan), but also occurs in other parts of the country (Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh). And while the sheen of this pottery is striking, it is not the result of polishing.

2. It should be pointed out that the Harappan and Brahmi scripts are not related to each other in any way.

3. The remarkable James Prinsep came to India in 1819 as an assistant to the Assay Master of the Calcutta Mint and soon became a major figure in early-nineteenth-century Indian antiquarian studies. Prinsep was Secretary of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta between 1832 and 1838. The results of his historical, textual, inscriptional, and numismatic research appeared frequently in various volumes of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* and were published posthumously in a collection entitled *Indian Antiquities* (London, 1858). Prinsep's decipherment of Ashokan Brahmi in 1837 was the culmination of the efforts of various other scholars such as Charles Wilkins. Apart from his own prodigious scholarly output, Prinsep was a source of inspiration for many of his contemporaries. James Prinsep and Sir Alexander Cunningham shared a close association, which Cunningham speaks movingly of in the Introduction to the first volume of his *Reports*.

4. See Upinder Singh, *Ancient Delhi*, OUP, Delhi, 2006 (1999). p. 44.

5. The rock edict is close to the newly-built gigantic ISKCON temple on Raja Dhir Singh Marg, not far from Nehru Place.

6. Recently, an ugly concrete shelter has been built over the rock edict, an iron grill placed over the inscription for its protection, and the patch of land where the rocks lie enclosed by a stone wall. The fact of the matter is that this area serves both as a garbage dump and an open-air toilet for the villagers living nearby. This makes the experience of visiting the site not a very edifying one. A recent visit revealed the worst thing of all—that very little of the inscription survives beneath the iron grill. (Was this irretrievable damage inflicted during the course of the just-mentioned efforts to 'protect' and 'improve' the site?)

7. These occur at Ahraura in Uttar Pradesh; Sahasram in Bihar, Bairat in Rajasthan; Rupnath, Gujjara, and Panguraria in Madhya Pradesh; Erragudi and Rajula-Mandagiri in Andhra Pradesh; and Brahmagiri, Gavimath, Maski, Palkigundu, Siddapura, Nittur, and Udegolam in Karnataka.

A Newly Discovered Inscription of Asoka at Bahapur, Delhi

M.C. JOSHI AND B.M. PANDE

THE INSCRIPTION UNDER NOTICE IS ENGRAVED ON AN OUTCROP OF THE ARAVALLIS to the south-east of Delhi in a colony now being developed on the south of Srinivasapuri, a government residential colony on the Ring Road (South). The inscription is within the village limits of Bahapur,¹ west of the modern Kalkajee Temple.

The inscription was noticed by Shri Jang Bahadur Singh, a contractor of Delhi, who came upon the inscribed rock when it was about to be blasted away for the development of a residential colony. The present writers visited the findspot of the inscription in the company of Shri Singh on 23rd March, 1966, and were able to identify the inscription as one of the Minor Rock Edicts of Aśoka (c. 273–232 BC).

The epigraph is engraved on a slightly tilted rock-face and the area covered by the writing measures about 75 cm in maximum length and 76 cm in height. The lines are of varying length, each longer than the preceding one, till the seventh line, 75 cm in length, is reached, after which they start getting progressively shorter. The inscription, thus, presents a roughly oval outline. Most of the letters are not very carefully engraved, and the scribe has also not been able to maintain a strict horizontality in the lines. An *akṣara* is, on an average, about 5 cm in height. The spacing between the letters and the words is also not always uniform.

The inscription is badly damaged in the middle of the inscribed area and lines 6, 7, and 8 are mutilated towards the left.

The characters, which are in Aśokan Brāhmi, have a slightly elongated form and some letters have unusual shapes, e.g. *la* in *ālādhetave* (L. 7) resembling the English letter V; *ḍha* in *adḥatīyāni* (L. 1) appears like *va* with a dot in the centre of a circle. It may not be wrong to hazard the guess that these unusual

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shapes of the letters were either due to a novice scribe or the hard medium in which he could not properly work.

The inscription is a shorter version of Aśoka's Minor Rock Edicts. The language of this Edict may be classed as a *Prākṛita* dialect akin to those of the Delhi-Topra and Delhi-Meerut Pillar Edicts and the Minor Rock Edict at Bairat, perhaps reflecting to some extent the dialect of the ancient Kuru region.

Most of the dialectal peculiarities of this epigraph are already known from the other Minor Rock Edicts of Aśoka and particularly from the one at Bairat, which is somewhat nearer to this inscription in language and contents than the rest. Nevertheless, (see Text below), we may mention the total absence of *ṇa* (cf. *sāvane* in L. 7), substitution of *la* for *ra* (cf. *palakamte*, L. 2; *savachale*, L. 3; *aṃtalena*, L. 4; *ālādhētave*, L. 7; *uḍālā*, L. 8; and *cilathitike*, L. 9), forms nearer to Sanskrit in case of certain words, viz. *mānusa* (L. 5, for *mānuṣā*), *mahatvene* (L. 6, for *mahatvena eva*), *svage* (L. 7, for *svarge*). The letter *sa* is represented both as *ca* (*cake*, L. 6, for *sakyaṃ*) and *sa* (*sakā*, L. 7, for *sakyaḥ*) for the same word. In *uḍālā* (L. 8) *da* is replaced by *ḍa*, but in *khudake* (L. 6) or *khudakā* (L. 8) *da* (for Sanskrit *dra*) has been retained.

The inscription, as stated above, represents the shorter version of the Minor Rock Edicts of Aśoka² and brings the total number of this class to 14. Such a large number of Minor Rock Edicts adds greater significance to them, and it is not unlikely that these were issued in more than one series, possibly commencing with Maski, Bairat, Gavimath and Palkigundu, and the present one, all characterized by the absence of the much-disputed sentence containing the figure 256. The second series was possibly initiated at Ahraura, where, with a view to giving the exact idea of proclamation, Aśoka refers to his tour of 256 days, which has been further clarified in the following words: 'This declaration (*has been made by me while I am*) on a tour (*of pilgrimage*) for 256 nights (i.e. days) since the relics of the Buddha ascended³ (i.e. were caused to be installed by me on) the platform (*for worship*)'.⁴ Perhaps this was followed by Gujarrā. The third series seems to be represented by the Sasaram (Sahasram) and Rupnath, where there is a pointed reference to the installation of pillars for the purpose of engraving the writs connected with *Dhamma*. The remaining ones at Brahmagiri, Siddapur, Jatinga-Ramesvara, Rajula-Mandagiri, and Yerragudi were perhaps the last in the series to be issued, for, in all these versions, tenets of *Dhamma* which have come to be known as Minor rock Edict II have also been incorporated as the latter parts of the text.

Text (from estampages)

1. *Devanām piye a (a)hā sātīlekāni aḍhatiyā[ni]*
2. *vasāni yam haka upāsake na (no) ca bādham palakamte [sā]tileke*

3. *savachale aṃha maye sagham upayā [te] bādham ca me*
4. *palakamte etena aṃtalena [Jam]būdipasi [a]misā devehi*
5. *saṃta mānusa misā deve [hi] pa [la] kama na ha (hi) esa*
6. *mahatvene* *cake pāpotave khudake [na] palaka*
7. *svage sakā ālādhētave imāye a [thā] ya iyam [sā]vane*
8. *khudakāca uḍālāca palakamaṃ [tu] [aṃtā] pi ca jānaṃtu*
9. *cilathitike palakame hota (tu) e [tha] ca athe vipula pi vadhisati*
10. *diyaḍhiyampivadhisati.*

Translation

Devānaṃpiya (His Majesty) saith (thus). (It has been) more than two and a half years that I became a lay devotee, (but) I did not exert myself greatly (in the cause of *Dhamma*). It was more than a year after my joining the *saṃgha*, and I exerted myself greatly. (Consequently) I could unite with the gods the mortals (who had so far been) ununited with gods during this period in Jambudvīpa (India). (This is the outcome) of exertion. (And) it is not to be accomplished only by the men of importance, (but) even lowly-placed ones if they exert can attain heaven. For this purpose this proclamation (is being made) (so that) both the low and the high (poor and rich) may exert (in the cause of *Dhamma*) and (those living on and beyond the borders of my kingdom) may also know about this.

Let this exertion be ever-enduring and this objective will also be immensely increasing (certainly) to the extent of one-and-a-half fold.⁵

Notes and References

1. In earlier notices about the location of the inscription, the place was wrongly reported as Amarpuri on the basis of information supplied by the contractor and the local people. Cf. Survey of India sheet nos. 53 H/2 and 53 H/6, 1 inch = 1 mile (1928 and 1936).
2. The discovery of this inscription at a site almost in alignment with other ancient sites in the vicinity, stretching from Indraprastha (Purana Qila) to Tilpat—all of them situated on the banks of the Yamuna—suggests the existence of a highway in the pre-Christian era.
3. Very possibly these relics were enshrined at Sarnath, the nearest important Buddhist site from Ahraura. Aśoka's reference to the installation further suggests that the event must have become well known during the first part of his reign itself.
4. *Epigraphia Indica*, XXXVI, VI (April, 1966), 248.
5. The writers are grateful to Shri A. Ghosh, Director General of Archaeology in India, for having permitted them to edit the inscription and publish the results and also for guiding them in the preparation of the paper.

New Delhi Inscription of Asoka

D.C. SIRCAR

SOMETIME AGO, THE DISCOVERY OF A NEW INSCRIPTION OF THE MAURYA EMPEROR Aśoka¹ (c. 272–232 BC) at New Delhi was reported in the newspapers. It is described as engraved on a flat but tilted rock surface of the quartzitic outcrop of the Aravalli in the newly developing Amarpuri Colony to the south of Lajpat Nagar. The discovery resulted from clues supplied by Sardar Jang Bahadur Singh who is a building contractor of Delhi. The inscription was identified as an Aśokan epigraph by Shri M.C. Joshi and Shri B.M. Pande of the Archaeological Survey.² Dr. G.S. Gai, Chief Epigraphist, copied the record in September, 1966, and was good enough to send me two impressions for editing it in the *Epigraphia Indica*. I am thankful to him for his kindness.

The inscription under study is a version of Aśoka's Minor Rock Edict I which was so far known from copies discovered at no less than 13 places in different parts of India—(1) Sahasram in the Shahabad District of Bihar, (2) Ahraura in the Mirzapur District of Uttar Pradesh, (3–4) Rupnath in the Jabalpur District and Gujara in the Datia District of Madhya Pradesh, (5) Bairat in the Jaipur Division of Rajasthan, (6–11) Maski, Gavimath and Palkigundu in the Raichur District, and Siddapura, Jatinga-Ramesvara and Brahmagiri in the Chitaldurg (Chitradurga) District of Mysore, and (12–13) Erragudi and Rajula-Mandagiri in the Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh.

The New Delhi version is thus the fourteenth copy of the epigraphic record. Its discovery at New Delhi is interesting because, unlike the Delhi-Siwalik and Delhi-Meerut pillar inscriptions of Aśoka which were brought to Delhi from outside by Sulṭān Fīrūz Shāh (1351–88 AD) of the Tughluq dynasty, the Minor Rock Edict engraved on rock is *in situ*. This shows that there was a flourishing city in the vicinity of the inscription during Aśoka's time and that it was intended for the people of the said city. Considering the tradition about the ancient city of Indraprastha located near Delhi,³ it appears that the Aśokan inscription

under study was meant for the citizens of ancient Indraprastha. The present inscription thus indirectly proves that Indraprastha was one of the flourishing cities during the Maurya age.

In the present record, the inscribed space is marked by a deeply incised vertical line (about 3 feet in length) at the right hand side, though it is difficult to say whether it was engraved before or after the incision of the edict. The engraving of the letters of the inscription is rather shallow compared to that of the vertical line, and the lines of writing are not at right angle to the said line. The lines of the inscription are again of different length and their beginning and end are by no means uniform. Lines 1–2 and 5 end quite close to the vertical line; but such does not appear to be the case with lines 3–4, etc. The writing covers an area about 2 feet in height and between 2 feet 5 inches and 1 foot 4 inches in width.

There are altogether ten lines of writing in the inscription, the preservation of which is unsatisfactory, some *aksharas* in most of the lines being totally rubbed off. Needless to say that, like the other versions of the edict, the present epigraph is written in the early Brāhmī script and the Prakrit language. It has, however, to be noted that the *aksharas* are not of uniform size and, in some cases, the letters and signs exhibit cursive forms; e.g., *va* in *Devānāmpīye* (line 1); *ha* in *hake* (line 2; cf. *mahatveneva* in line 6); the *e-mātrā* in *te* in *etena* (line 4); *la* in *ālādheta* (line 7) and *uḍālā* (line 8); the *i-mātrā* in *ti* in *caḍhisati* (line 10); etc. The back of *d* is sometimes angular (cf. *Devānāmpīye* in line 1 and *diyadhiyam* in line 10) and sometimes roundish. There is no uniformity in the space between any two *aksharas*: cf. *khudakā cha uḍālā cha palakamāntu* (line 8) in which there is no extra space between *kā* and *cha* and between *lā* and *cha* while the space between *cha* and *u*, between *u* and *dā*, between *cha* and *pa* and between *mam* and *tu* is considerably wider than that between any other two *aksharas* in the record. This lack of uniformity puts us in some difficulty in conjecturing the number of lost *aksharas* in the damaged sections of the inscription. The orthographical and linguistic peculiarities exhibited by the inscription are also noticed in the other versions of the edict. The language of the edict is usually called the Māgadhī dialect of Prakrit speech.

As regards the draft of the inscription, it generally follows the Bairat version of the edict, but exhibits some variations. Interesting is the use of the word *hamaye* for Sanskrit *mayā*, 'by me', in line 3 in place of *mamayā* found in the Bairat version. We know that the Aśokan edicts use the words *me*, *maya*, *mama*, *mamī*, *mamiyā*, *mamiye*, *mamiyā*, *mamiyāye*, etc.; in the above sense. The word *mayā* seems to be also used in the present version in line 2. In place of *siyā* (Sanskrit *syāt*) and *hotu* (Sanskrit *bhavātu*) of the other versions, we have here *hotī* (line 9) which reminds us of *hoti* in the Siddapura version. Sanskrit *śakya* has been made *chake* in line 6 and *sakā* (*ke*) in line 7. The word *bāḍhim*

(lines 2 and 3) for Sanskrit *bāḍham* may be compared to *bāḍhi* in the Rupnath version of the edict (lines 1 and 2).

The well-known geographical name Jambu-dvīpa occurs in the inscription. In early Indian literature, this name is applied to 'the earth' as well as to the land between the sea in the south, east and west and the Himādrī in the north. In the inscriptions of Aśoka; the name Jambu-dvīpa and the word *prithivī* appear to have been used to indicate the Maurya kingdom.⁴

Text (From inked impressions)

1. Devāna[m]piye aḥā [ʃ*] Sātīlekāni [a]ḍhā⁵tiyāni ...
2. vāsāni yam hake⁶ upāsake [ʃ*] No cha bāḍhim palakate ma⁷ [ʃ*] Sātīleke
3. savachhale aṁ hamaye [saṁgha upayātā]⁸ bāḍhim cha⁹
4. palakarite [ʃ*] Etena aṁta[lena]¹⁰ bu-[dipa]si [ye a]m[i]s[a] dev[e]h[i]¹¹
5. saṁtaṁ manūs[a] mis[a] deve[hi]¹¹ [ʃ*] [Pa]¹² [esa].¹³ [ʃ*] [No cha] eṣā
6. mahatveneva cha[ke] pāpotave [ʃ*] Khudake[na] p[i] pala ... ne.¹⁴
7. svage sakā¹⁵ ālāḍhetave [ʃ*] I[mā]ya a[ṭhāya] iyaṁ sā[va]ne [ʃ*]
8. Khudakā cha uḍālā cha palakamaritu [ʃ*].¹⁶ [pi] cha [jā]naṁtu [ʃ*]
9. Chilaṭhitike palaka[me] [ho]ti [ʃ*] E.¹⁷ cha aṭhe vipulaṁ pi vaḍhisati
10. diyaḍhiyaṁ pi vaḍhisati [ʃ*]

Translation

The Beloved of the Gods says:

A little more than two years and a half have passed since I have been an *Upāsaka* (i.e., a lay follower of the Buddha).

But no vigorous exertion [in the cause of Dharma] was made by me [from the time of my initiation].

It is more than a year since I have been devoutly attached¹⁸ to the Saṁgha (i.e. the Buddhist Church), that vigorous exertion has been made [by me].

Those men, who were unmingled with the gods in Jambu-dvīpa during the past age, have been mixed with the gods.¹⁹

[This is indeed the result of my exertion]. And this [result] is not to be achieved [only] by the people of superior position.

Even a poor man, who is zealous [in the cause of Dharma], is capable of attaining the [great] heaven.

This declaration is for the [following] purpose. Let [both] the big and the small exert themselves [in the cause of Dharma].

And let even the *Antas* (people of the bordering States) know [about the good results of exertion in the cause of Dharma].

And let exertion [in the cause of dharma] be everlasting. And this matter (i.e. exertion in the cause of Dharma) among the people will increase enormously; it will increase even to one and half times.

Notes and References

1. Macron over *e* and *o* has not been used in this paper.
2. When the present paper was going through the press, an article entitled 'A Newly Discovered Inscription of Aśoka at Bahapur, Delhi', by Joshi and Pande, appeared in *JRAS*, 1967, pp. 96–8 and Plates I–II. They say that the findspot of the inscription is not in the Amarpuri Colony, but lies 'to the south-east of Delhi in a colony now being developed to the south of Srinivasapuri, the inscription is within the village limits of Bahapur'.
3. Sircar, *Stud. Geog. Ane. Med. Ind.*, pp. 21 (note 2), 92. Indraprastha is located at the site now called Purana Qila.
4. See Sircar, *Cosmography and Geography in Early Indian Literature*, p. 33.
5. *Vā* had been originally engraved and was somehow changed to *ḍhā*.
6. The upper end of the left limb of the letter is slightly curved to the left and seems to end in a dot.
7. There appear to be traces of an *akshara* after this letter. The intended reading may be *mē* or *mayā*.
8. The intended reading may be *upayāta*. There is some space between *ya* and *tā* and also after *tā*. It is difficult to say whether a letter was incised between *tā* and *bā*.
9. After this letter, there appear to be traces of two *aksharas* which may be *eta* (Sanskrit *atra* through an intermediate form like *itca*) meaning 'in this matter'. But it is difficult to say whether a word like this was really engraved.
10. The *akshara jam* must have been engraved here. The space between *na* and the expected *jam* appears to be considerable.
11. The traces of about two *aksharas* after this have probably to be ignored.
12. The damaged words are apparently *palakamasa hi*.
13. The damaged word here is *phale*.
14. The damaged word is no doubt *palakamamīnena*. This may have been followed in the original by the words *vipule pi*, though there are no clear traces of the letters.
15. The intended reading seems to be *sake*.
16. The lost *aksharas* are apparently *aṁtā*.
17. The damaged word appears to be *eta*.
18. For the meaning of *upāyata*, etc. see Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 161, ff.; also *Select Inscriptions* 1965, p. 49, note 2, and above, Vol. XXXV, pp. 287, ff.
19. Cf. *Select Inscriptions*, 1965, p. 49, note 4; also Sircar, *Maski Inscription of Aśoka*, p. 27, note 1.