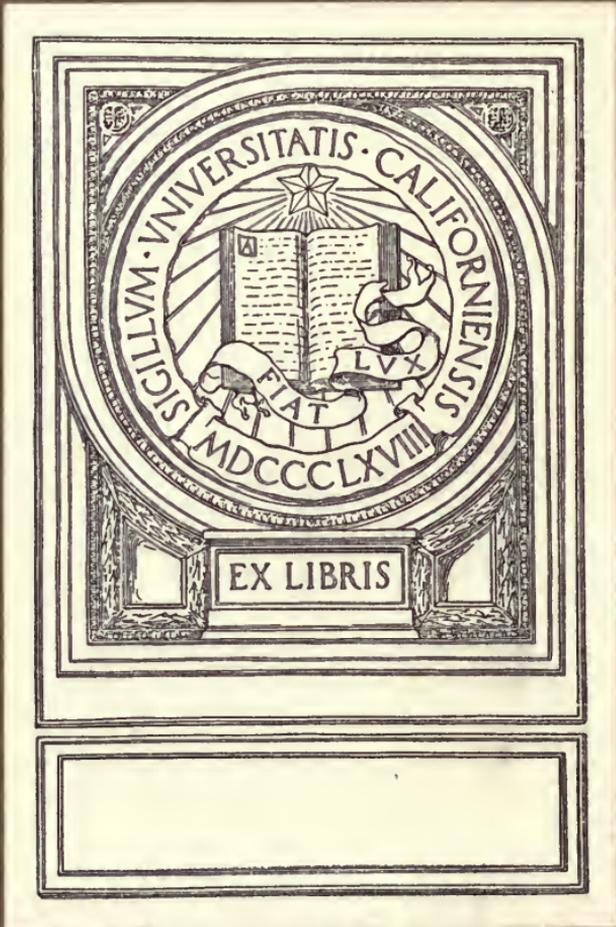


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A
SHORT GUIDE
TO
The Cave Temples of Elura.
WITH
AN INTRODUCTION,
BY

SHAMSUL ULAMA, SYED ALI BILGRAMI,
B.A., LL.B., F.G.S.

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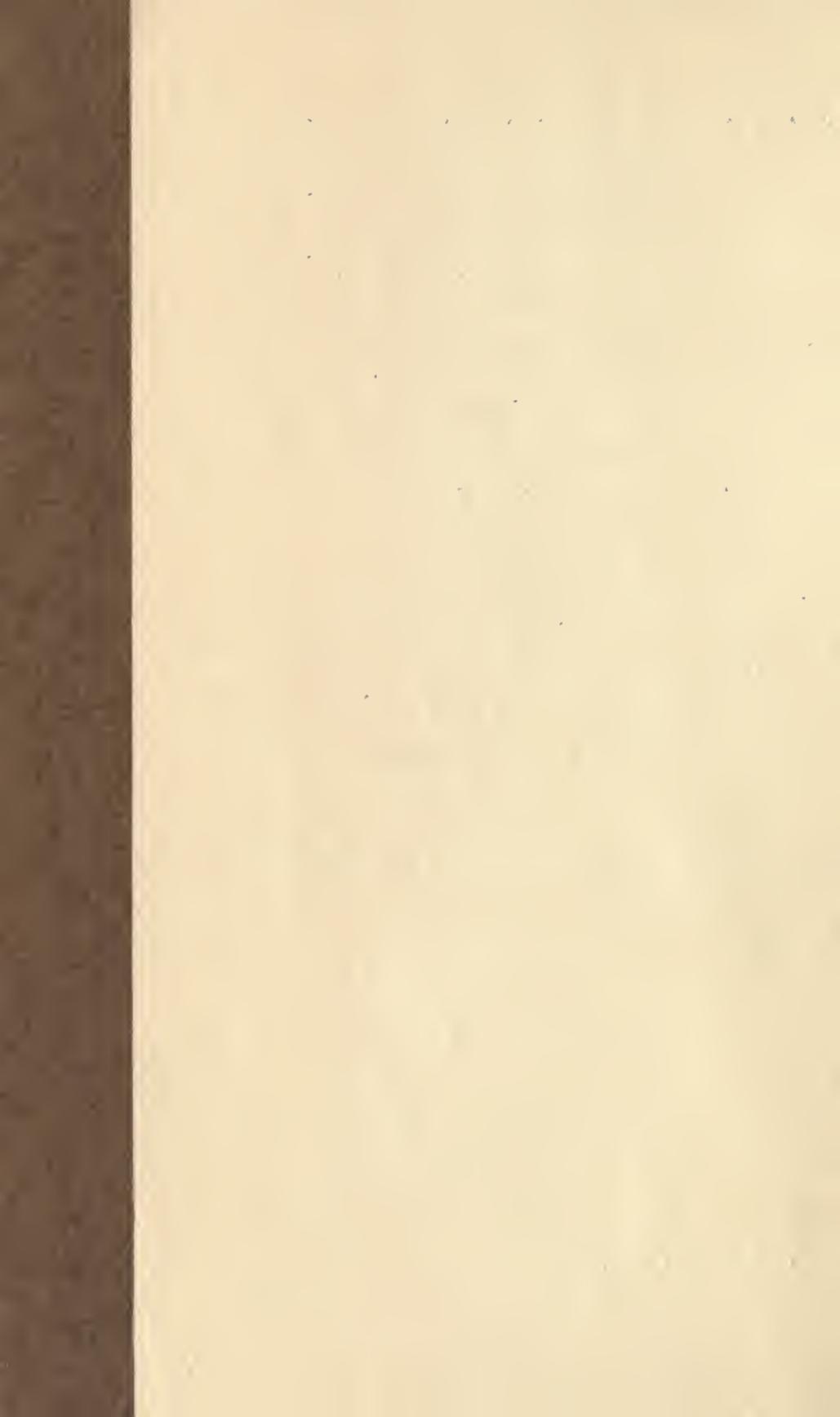
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Bilgrami, B.A., and C. Willmot.

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INTRODUCTION.

The ancient religion of the Hindus, the so called *Vedic-religion*, revealed to us in the Hymns of the Rig-veda, consisted in the worship of the grand and striking phenomena of nature as conscious beings, possessing powers beyond the control of man, but amenable to his praises and his prayers. There is no well defined pantheon of deities with differentiation of function as we find among the Greeks and Romans, but a purer and more primitive form of nature worship in which the powers and functions assigned to one divine manifestation are constantly running into those of another. In fact, the form of worship presented to us in these most ancient documents of the Aryan people is what Professor Maxmüller calls Henotheism, *viz.*, the deity invoked for the time being is regarded as supreme, is extolled above the rest and is made the recipient of the worshipper's highest praises and most fervent supplications. It is only in the last Book of the Rig Veda and in the Atharva Veda that the idea of a Supreme Deity vaguely occurs but is not fully developed until much later.

The main feature of the Vedic worship is the belief in the efficacy of prayer and of sacrificial offerings. Not only are the words of praise addressed by the worshipper accepted by the deity but even the

oblations offered by him are received by the God and give him strength to battle with the worshipper's enemies. This belief in the efficacy of prayer led to the veneration of those who had intimate knowledge of ritual and possessed a mastery of the language in which that ritual was embodied. We thus find that the word Brâhman which in the earlier hymns means an invocation, a prayer, becomes later the name and designation of the priest, the master of the ritual, the worshipper *par excellence*.

From simple religious veneration to absolute superiority was but a step. That remarkable faculty of making the most of the weaknesses of one's fellow creatures, which seems to be the common property of the priesthood of every nation ancient and modern, soon raised the Brâhman from the position of a mere religious teacher to that of leader and master in things spiritual as well as temporal. He was not only the God incarnate, but the guide, philosopher and friend of the King, the repository of all Science and Literature. The supremacy of the Brâhman, led to the rigidity of the caste system—the merest mention of which occurs in the Rig Veda—by which those placed in the lower orders were completely and eternally excluded from all social and political advantages and ground down to the very dust. Their sole consolation lay in the convenient doctrine of metempsychosis, also invented by the Brâhman, which taught the multitude to regard their present woes as the natural result of

their deeds in a former existence, from which they might escape in a future birth, by present liberality to the priests.

Traces of a revulsion of feeling against this domination of the priestly class are already visible in the formation of the ascetic orders. Men belonging to a lower caste and renouncing the orthodox creed took upon themselves the functions of mendicant teachers and were received with love and respect by the people.

This dissent culminated in Buddhism. Buddhism is the natural and most emphatic protest against the tyranny of Brâhmanic sacerdotalism. The founder Gautama, a Sâkya prince of the warrior class and learned in the lore of the Brâhmans, struck with the utter degradation of the people and dissatisfied with the selfish doctrines of a grasping priesthood, left his royal home to wander into the world practising austerities, suffering privations and preaching the gospel of charity, purity and equality. In the ever recurring cycle of new births the *Karma* of an individual, the sum total of his good and bad actions in any particular life, determines the form of his future existence and it is by the extinction of this *Karma*, that the much longed for cessation from constant new-birth is attained. But the ultimate goal, the final bliss of Nirvâna is no longer the birth-right of a privileged class, it becomes the common property of every good Buddhist who leads a life of self-conquest and practises universal charity.

A religion which recognizes so distinctly as Buddhism does the absolute equality of all men as regards the efficacy of good work and the attainment of the *summum bonum*, could not fail to be acceptable to the multitude and the rapid progress of Buddhism proves the fact. In the reign of Asoka (B.C. 263-225) that is, within two centuries from the death of Gautama Buddha (B.C. 481), Buddhism had become the state religion of India, was spreading fast into the outlying countries of Ceylon, Burmah and Tibet and had found its way even to China and Japan.

The supremacy of Buddhism in India was but short lived. The Brâhmanic revival soon drove it out of the country of its birth. The introduction of the worship of Krishna, the institution of saints' days, fairs, fasts and anniversaries with all their attendant paraphernalia of gay dresses and noisy music, attracted the masses and alienated them from the simple intellectual worship and strict discipline of Buddhism. The Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hiouen Thsang who visited India in the 7th Century, complains of the number of ruined temples and deserted monasteries and of the growing proportion of heretics. At the time of Sankarâchârya (8th Century A.D.), the embodiment of later Brâhmanism, Buddhism was fast declining and a few centuries later, it had disappeared from the Continent of India except Nepaul where it flourishes to this day. Jainism, an early offshoot of Buddhism, however, still

exists and from the wealth and position of its votaries, forms an important sect.

Although Buddhism has failed to maintain the ground it had won from the Brâhmans, it has left an indelible mark on the Hindu religion, and its humanizing influence is visible everywhere. Monastic institutions, so peculiar to Buddhism, have been adopted by the Hindus, and *Maths* or Convents exist all over the country, where bodies of clergy reside together presided over by *Mahants* or religious superiors. Sankarâchâriya himself founded several of these institutions, one of which the *Math* at Sringeri, is still famous for its rare collection of Sanskrit manuscripts. We have also Brâhmanic Cave temples excavated alongside the Buddhistic and several of these are to be seen at Elura.

The Buddhists are divided into two sects. The Hinâyâna or those of the Lesser Vehicle and the Mahâyâna or those of the Greater Vehicle. Of these the Hinâyâna is the older and purer sect, their religion consisting in the practice of morality and the observance of simple ceremonial. The ~~Lesser~~ *Greater* Vehicle was founded by Nâgârjuna, the fourteenth Patriarch who flourished about 400 or 500 years after Buddha and shortly before the reign of Kânishka. Like the later developments of every religion, the Lesser Vehicle departed considerably from the puritanic worship of early Buddhism and introduced a mythology in which female personifi-

cations of all kinds take the place of Buddha. This becomes clearly marked in the sculptures of the cave-temples of a later date than the 5th Century and affords one method, however imperfect, of arriving at some conclusion regarding the chronology of these structures.

CAVE TEMPLES.

Temples and monasteries cut out of the solid rock, are found scattered all over India and form a very important feature of the ancient architectural remains of the country. These monuments are primarily divisible into three classes according to the sects by whom or for whose use they were excavated, viz., Buddhists, Brâhmans or Jains. The earliest examples are those belonging to the Buddhists and range in time from the middle of the 3rd Century B.C., to the end of the 7th Century A.D., that is, over a period of nearly one thousand years. These Buddhist temples are divided into two groups the Hinâyâna or the earlier group, ranging from 250 B.C., to 150 A.D., and the Mahâyâna or the later group, ranging from 150 A.D., to 700 A.D. The earlier or Hinâyâna temples are of a plain grandiose design, and in the assembly halls as well as in the Chaitya caves, the only object of worship is the Dâgoba or relic shrine. The sculpture is the simplest and consists chiefly of the "rail pattern."

The Mâhayâna temples are very much fewer in number as they do not contain the cells for the monks. By the time these temples came to be excavated, the monks had ceased to live in dark caves and isolated cells. They were congregated in large and magnificent monasteries replete with every comfort and even luxuriously furnished. The Dâgoba or relic shrine, such an important feature in the older structures, disappears from all Vihâras and is replaced by images of Buddha. Even in the Chaitya caves where the Dâgoba has been retained, it has an image of Buddha attached in the front. This multiplication of the images of Buddha, Bodhisatvas, and a number of female abstractions, is the chief feature in the temples of the Mahâyâna sect. The grandiose design of the older caves is succeeded by façades and interiors crowded with pillars, elaborately carved or painted. The Buddhist monuments occur in six different forms:—

1. *Stûpas*.—Mounds or Tumuli erected over the sacred relics of Buddha or on spots consecrated by his presence. Later on when these relics became objects of worship and it became necessary to exhibit them to the congregation, a peculiar structure known as the Dâgoba, a corruption of the Sanskrit word “ Dhâtugarbha ” or receptacle for the sacred object, was constructed and placed in the centre of the temple. In its primitive form, the Dâgoba consisted of a low thick cylinder supporting a hemispherical dome surmounted by a square capital but in

course of time variations were introduced although the main form remained unaltered.

2. *Ornamental Rails*.—These form a most important feature of the earliest Buddhist architecture. They are placed round sacred trees, stûpas and pillars and sometimes round temples.

3. *Stambhas or Lâts*.—These are pillars usually erected in front of a temple and carrying one or more of the symbols of the religion to which the temple was dedicated. They occur in Buddhistic, Brâhmanic as well as Jaina Temples. The famous Buddhist Lâts of Asoka however, which were erected to carry his Edicts, are not of a religious origin.

4. *Chaityas*.—This word is derived from the Sanskrit “chita” a funeral pile, hence a monument or altar, and like Stûpa and Dâgoba is used to denote a “relic shrine.” The Chaitya Caves, *viz.*, those containing Chaityas were temples constructed for worship as distinguished from the Vihâras which were intended for the residence of the monks.

5. *Vihâras*.—These are monasteries constructed for the accommodation of Buddhist mendicant monks living together in communities. Originally a Vihâra consisted of a number of cells with a verandah or porch in front. But subsequently a square hall was added for purposes of meeting.

6. *Pondhîs*.—These are cisterns of water and are the invariable accompaniments of Vihâras.

The temples of Buddhist origin are by far the most numerous and form fully 75 per cent. of the excavations of this kind found in India.

Next in the chronological order are the temples excavated by the Brâhmans both Saiva and Vaishnava which range between the 4th and the 8th Centuries A.D. They constitute about 18 per cent. of the total number of excavations, but the majority of these are of considerable dimensions.

Lastly we have the Jaina Cave Temples. These are not only more recent but fewer in number than either of the other two classes. The earliest of them may be put down to the 5th or 6th Century and the latest to the 12th. They constitute about 4 per cent. of the total number.

As regards numbers, the Cave Temples may be classified as follows:—

Buddhist Excavations about	...	720
Brâhmanic	„ „	160
Jaina	„ „	35

If we add to these the so called Eastern Caves, the total number of the known Rock-cut Temples may be estimated at one thousand.

THE CAVE TEMPLES OF ELURA.

The Cave Temples of Elura form the largest and the most varied group of the Rock-Temples in India, containing as they do some of the finest specimens of all three classes of temples, *viz.*, Buddhist, Brâhmanic and Jaina.

The village of Verulè, Elora or Elura (Lat. $20^{\circ}2' N.$ Long. $75^{\circ}15' E$) is situated about 14 miles to the north-west of Aurungabad in the territory of His Highness the Nizam. The caves are most easily accessible from the Nandgaon station of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, the distance being 46 miles. The road as far as Pipalgaon follows the Nandgaon Aurungabad Mail Tonga road and has Travellers' Bungalows at Tharoda 13 miles and Deogaon 32 miles. From Pipalgaon the road to Elura branches off to the left, the distance to the caves being 8 miles. There is no bungalow at Elura, but close by at Roza there is a Rest House belonging to His Highness's Government which is most luxuriously furnished, and is available on giving previous notice to the Taluqdar or Deputy Commissioner of Aurungabad.

The caves are excavated in the scarp of a large plateau and run nearly north and south for a distance of a mile and a quarter. At each end, the scarp throws out a horn to the west. The oldest caves, the Buddhistic, are situated at the south end, at the point where the scarp begins to turn to the west. At the other extremity and in the north horn are the Jaina-caves; while the Brâhmanic group is situated between the two. Taking the Kailâsa as the centre, sixteen caves lie to the south of it, fourteen of which are Buddhist and nearly as many to the north of it, being Brâhmanic and Jaina. The Buddhist Caves of Elura are all of the Mahâyâna group and range in time from 350 to 550 A.D.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CAVES.

We proceed to examine the Caves from the south.

* *Cave I.*—This is the first cave at the southern extremity of the group. It is a small Vihâra, and is probably one of the oldest excavations here. It is a monastery containing cells for monks. Originally it was probably connected with the cave adjoining it.

Cave I.

Cave II.—This is a cave of considerable size, and is entered by a flight of steps which lead into a large hall evidently intended to be used as a place of worship. It is supported on pillars, the cushions of which resemble those at Elephanta. The sanctuary contains a large figure of Buddha seated on a lion-throne, with his feet down and holding the little finger of his left hand with the thumb and forefinger of his right. This is what is generally known as the teaching attitude and is repeated very frequently in the various caves of the group. His head, which is covered with short curly hair, is surrounded by the halo or nimbus with which he is usually represented; on either side of it are the attendant gandharvas (angels). On his right and left are the chauri-bearers, one of whom grasps in his left hand a lotus by the stalk. These may be considered as Buddha's personal attendants, but as we proceed we find these attendants developing into divinities and having separate attendants of their own in their turn. They

Cave II.

* The descriptions of the individual caves are slightly abridged and altered from the excellent account given in the "Historical and Descriptive Sketch of His Highness the Nizam's Dominions."

Cave II.

are, however, always represented as subordinate to Buddha. The figure holding the lotus stalk is gradually developed into a divinity known in Buddhist mythology as Padmapâni or the lotus-bearer and he is invariably represented with that flower in his hand. The chauri or emblem of servitude, also disappears, and is replaced by a rosary. The second figure is gradually transformed into Vajrapâni, or the lightning-bearer. The figure next to the attendants is a Buddha standing with the right hand down and the left grasping the folds of his robe. This is known as the attitude of Buddha when begging. In the corners of the sanctuary are several smaller figures, devotees of Buddha, supplicating him with clasped hands. The door of the sanctuary is guarded by two colossal figures in erect attitudes, the one on the right holding a lotus in his left hand and a rosary in his right; two smaller female figures stand on each side of him. The guardian on the left is decorated with ornaments, and wears the daghoba on his head-dress. Both the figures have attendant gandharvas and halfway up the wall are smaller figures wearing curled wigs and holding garlands in their hands. On each side of the sanctuary there are two cells, the right hand one having a figure of Buddha seated on a lotus-throne upheld by Nâgas. Opposite the warder bearing the lotus at the entrance of the sanctuary is a female figure in an erect attitude holding a lotus in her left hand, the right being uplifted with the palm open. She is attended by two females with lotus flowers in their hands. "It is difficult," says Mr. Burgess, "to

say whom the principal figure here may represent. Cave II.
 It may be Mâya, the mother of Buddha, or Yasodhra, his wife, or a female counterpart of Avalokitesvara or Padmapâni, the Bodhisatva of the divine Buddha Amitabha, all of whose symbols she possesses." The lateral galleries of the cave contain a large figure of Buddha in the same attitude as that in which he is represented in the sanctuary. Regarding the date of this cave Mr. Burgess says: "It is very difficult to fix an age for this cave. It may have been begun in the third or fourth Century, while the carving may have been continued down to the sixth or seventh."

Cave III.—Between this and the last cave there Cave III
 is a ruined water-cistern, such as is invariably found attached to all Vihâras. This cave, which is a Vihâra or monastery, does not appear to have been ever properly finished. A considerable portion of the front wall and verandah have disappeared. The roof is supported on twelve square columns. The sanctuary consists of a Buddha seated on a throne with the usual attendants on each side of him and the gandharvas over-head. The back of the throne upon which he is seated contains figures of the e'phant Sârdûla and Makara. To the right are a series of figures representing what is usually styled a "Buddha litany."

Cave IV.—This is in great measure destroyed, Cave IV.
 and the front or outer hall has altogether collapsed. The entrance is by means of a side door facing the south; a portion of a small chamber to which it gives

Cave IV.

access is blocked up by a large stone which has fallen from above, carrying with it an arm and a leg of a sitting Buddha from a shrine on the top of a chamber. The sanctuary contains a figure of Buddha seated in the teaching attitude, with a halo surrounding his head, from behind which the sacred Bo tree springs. The attendants are placed behind instead of at the side of the throne. At the north end of this cave is a figure of Padmapâni seated in an attitude similar to that of Buddha, with a deer's skin pending from his left shoulder and having a rosary in his right and a lotus in his left hand. His head-dress has a small image of Buddha in the front.

Cave V.

Cave V.—This is a large Vihâra cave having a spacious central hall with two side recesses, the supports of the roof consisting of twenty-four square-shafted pillars. Mr. Fergusson says that this cave “looks more like a flat-roofed Chaitya with its three aisles than an ordinary Vihâra and such it probably was intended to be.” The cave contains a number of cells for monks and the space between the pillars supporting the roof contains two long low stone benches along the floor, which were probably, Mr. Burgess thinks, “the low tables of their refectory, or it may possibly have been a sort of monastic school, and these benches the reading desks of the scholars, or it may have been that they served both purposes.” The sanctuary contains a figure of Buddha in the teaching attitude with the usual attendants. The warders are not placed in their usual positions at

the door of the sanctuary, but occupy arched recesses on either side of the entrance, each being provided with attendants. Cave V.

Cave VI.—This is connected with the last cave by a staircase. It contains a few cells on the east side of the hall, the western side of which has entirely collapsed. The antechamber of the shrine contains a number of figures, one of which, a female with a peacock by her side and below her a pundit reading—is believed to be Sarasvatî, the goddess of learning. The sanctuary contains a large seated figure of Buddha with attendants. Cave VI.

Cave VII.—This is an unfinished Vihâra, having eight cells. The roof is supported on four pillars. There are no sculptures of any description in it. Cave VII.

Cave VIII.—This is entered from the last by a passage in which is situated a shrine, supported on sculptured pillars. The shrine contains a figure of Buddha in the teaching attitude with the usual attendants, one of whom, Padmapâni, has four arms. He stands on a lotus with two devotees at his feet, behind whom is a female figure. The other attendant has also a female companion and over the heads of both of them there are gandharvas. Cave VIII.

Cave IX.—To reach this cave it is necessary to return to cave No. 7, from which there is a passage communicating with it through cave No. 6. It consists of a small balcony and portico, supported on pillars. There is a seated figure of Buddha with the usual attendants and gandharvas. Cave IX. :

Cave X.—This is known by the name of Vishvakarma, or “The Carpenter’s Cave,” and is the only Chaitya Cave at Elura. Mr. Burgess thinks that this cave “though not so magnificent in its proportions or severe in its decoration as the great cave at Kârli, is still a splendid work.” The open court in front of the cave is surrounded by a corridor, with numerous figures carved upon the frieze above the pillars. The inner temple of the cave consists of a central aisle and side passages, separated from the central portion by twenty-eight octagonal pillars. The inner end of the cave is almost blocked up by a dâghoba, fifteen and a half feet in diameter, and nearly twenty-seven feet high, which, says Mr. Fergusson, “instead of being circular, as in all the older examples, has a frontispiece attached to it larger than that in cave No. 19 at Ajunta, which makes it square in front.” On top of this frontispiece is a huge seated figure of Buddha, eleven feet in height. He has his usual attendants and above his head is [carved the Bo tree. The roof of the cave is arched, and is carved to imitate wooden ribs. According to Mr. Fergusson, the most marked characteristic of this cave “is the facade, where for the first time we miss the horse-shoe opening, which is the most marked feature in all previous examples.” In the front corridor are two cells, and a similar number of chapels. At one end of the north corridor is a staircase communicating with the gallery above. This cave is visited by large numbers of sutars or

carpenters, who frequent the place to pay their devotions to Buddha as Vishvakarman, and the walls and pillars are much disfigured by the names of the artisan visitors which have been carved and written upon them. The figure of Buddha is coloured with blue, yellow and green paint, which is applied to it upon all festive occasions. One of the pillars in the cave is inscribed with the date, Shaka 1228, which is equivalent to A. D. 1306.

Cave X.

Cave XI.—This is known as the Don Thal, or “two-story,” and sometimes as Dukbiaghar, or “house of pain.” The Brâhmans have a tradition to the effect that the great architect of the gods (Vishvakarman having finished the Tin Thal, the next cave, intended to surpass all his former work by excavating a grand cave here, but, having injured some of his fingers in the process, was compelled to give up the attempt. The date of the excavation is generally believed to be A. D. 600. This cave together with the two temples which follow it, is, according to Mr. Fergusson, “particularly interesting to the antiquarian as pointing out the successive steps by which the Buddhistical caves merged into the Brahmanical.” Within the last few years a third story below the lower floor, which was buried in the earth, has been brought to light. The ground floor consists of a long verandah with two cells, and a shrine in which is a figure of Buddha with his usual attendants. The next story contains a verandah of similar construction, the back portion of which contains five doors.

Cave XI.

Cave XI.

The second door leads to a shrine in which is a colossal figure of Buddha seated with his legs crossed so as to show the soles of his feet. At the foot of the throne is a small female figure with a jar of milk or water in one hand. To the right and left of the throne are the figures of Vajrapâni and Padmapâni, the former carrying a thunderbolt in his left hand. The head-dresses of both figures are most elaborately carved and so also is the back of the throne upon which Buddha is seated. The sanctuary contains several other figures of Buddhas, with Bo trees over their heads. The other doorways in the verandah lead into smaller shrines, which contain figures of Buddha and attendants. The walls of the upper story contain many carved figures of Buddha, Vajrapâni and female figures and attendants, but the shrines are unfinished.

XII

Cave XII.—This is known as the Tin Thal; it has an open court, on the west side of which is a large cistern. The lower story is entered by a small flight of steps from the courtyard. Two of the eight square pillars in the front row which it contains are said to be the most elaborately carved at Elura. There are two more rows, each containing eight pillars. To the left of the shrine is a compartment containing Buddha and eight other figures. Padmapâni and Vajrapâni occupy positions on the right and left, and above and below them are six figures, holding various emblems in their hands. The figure of Buddha in the shrine is in a sitting posture

and measures eleven feet from the seat to the crown of his head. Above and below are smaller Buddhas in the same posture. To the right and left are Padmapâni and Vajrapâni, with smaller figures bearing flowers and fruit. The staircase ascends to the next story from the southern end of the lower verandah. On the first landing is a recess or side chapel, containing a Buddha seated on a throne. The walls of this chapel contain numerous smaller four-armed figures of both sexes. The hall on the first floor is divided into three aisles, containing sixteen pillars. The shrine contains a figure of Buddha which is seated in the same position and is of the same height as the figure on the lower floor. At the sides of the throne there are the figures of Padmapâni and Vajrapâni and on the walls are other figures with flags, flower-buds, &c. and on the front wall are the usual male and female figures, which Mr. Burgess supposes to represent the patron of the cave and his wife. The upper floor contains forty-two plain pillars and a number of enthroned Buddhas and their attendants. One group represents Buddha seated on a throne, at the foot of which are two well-sculptured deer, which have been considerably mutilated. Mr. Burgess thinks that possibly "this may be intended as an allusion to Buddha's teaching in the deer-park at Benares, which seems to have been a favourite resort of his." In another portion of the same story Buddha is seated on a lion-throne without his usual attendants. Beside him is a

Cave XII. smaller seated figure of Buddha represented in the act of meditation; above is Buddha going to heaven to teach the gods his statutes; and thirdly, "Buddha dying or entering Nirvâna—everlasting, undisturbed, unconscious repose."

Cave XIII. *Cave XIII.*—A short distance beyond the Tin Tal the Brahmanical group of caves commences. The first of them is a large half-ruined room, which was probably used as a halting-place for travellers.

Cave XIV. *Cave XIV.*—This is called Râvan-ka-Khai, or "the ashes of Râvana." It contains a hall and corridor with sixteen pillars, all more or less carved. The wall at the south end of the hall contains a number of Siva sculptures, which Mr. Burgess classes as follows:—Mahisâsurî, or Durga, killing the buffalo demon; Siva and Pârvatî seated on a raised platform playing at chausar or chaupat, a sort of chess played with dice; Siva dancing the tândava or great dance over the destruction of the world; Râvana, the demon king of Lanka, or Ceylon; Bhairava, the destructive form of Siva, with Ganapati behind him. Close by is a group consisting of three skeletons, and Kâlî with four arms and a scorpion on her breast, Kâlî and Ganapat and the seven divine mothers. On the north wall are figures of Bhavânî, Lakshmî, the wife of Vishnu, Varâha, the boar incarnation of Vishnu and Vishnu and Lakshmî seated on a couch under an ornamental arch.

Cave XV.—This is styled the Dasâvatâra. An ascent up the rocks, in which steps are cut, leads into the court, which contains a number of shrines and a water cistern. On the west wall is a long inscription in Sanskrit, considerably mutilated. This cave contains two stories, the lower of which possess numerous figures of Siva, Vishnu, Pârvatî, Bhavânî and Ganapati. The hall above contains numerous Siva sculptures, the most striking of which is the one nearest the door, being a representation of Mahâdeva in his terrible form, which is thus described by Mr. Burgess:—"The gigantic figure lounges forward holding up his elephant hide, with a necklace of skulls depending below his loins; round him a cobra is knotted; his open mouth showing his large teeth, while with his trishûla he has transfixed one victim and holds another by the heels with one of his left hands, raising the damaru as if to rattle it in joy while he catches the blood with which to quench his demon thirst. Kâlî, gaunt and grim, stretches her skeleton length below, eager to share in the gore of the victim." The other chapels in this story contain figures of Siva and Pârvatî, and one scene represents the marriage between the two, with Brâhma officiating. The vestibule of the shrine contains a large figure of Ganapati, and others of Lakshmi, Siva and Brâhma. On the south wall are numerous figures representing the various incarnations of Vishnu.

Cave XV.

Cave XVI.—This cave is known as Kailâsa or Rangmahal and is, as Mr. Burgess says, "one of the

Cave XVI.

Cave XVI.

most remarkable of all the cave temples in India.' It is an immense monolithic temple separated from the surrounding rocks, and elaborately carved outside and inside. The court in which it stands is two hundred and seventy feet long and about a hundred and fifty feet wide. Portions of the temple in the centre have at some period been most elaborately painted and even now there are some fragments which still retain much of their original beauty. The lofty basement of the temple, says, Mr. Burgess, "is of itself a remarkable conception, with its row of huge elephants, lions and griffins in every possible attitude tearing one another or feeding. And then the great hall above with its sixteen pillars and more pilasters, all carved with different details of sculpture, its balcony porches at the sides and double pavilions before the front porch, its vestibule to the sanctuary with large sculptures on each side and its five shrines round the outside of the principal one and on the same platform, all testify to the attempt made to rival and outdo all previous temples of the kind." Just beyond the entrance passage, is a large figure of Lakshmî, seated on the leaves of a lotus upon which are some carved letters assumed to belong to the 15th Century. The pilasters on either side have mutilated inscriptions in 8th Century characters. The mandapa and temple are connected by a bridge, underneath which are figures of Siva in his incarnations as Kâla Bhairava and Mahâyogi, with numerous attendants. The north and south walls of the southern staircase contain representations of the

Râmâyana and Mahâbhârata; from behind this the basement of the temple, with its gigantic groups of elephants and lions, springs. The southern corridor, which is 118 feet in length, contains, twelve divisions, each of which has sculptures on a very large scale. The principal figures which they contain are four-armed Vishnus, the lion-incarnation of Vishnu, Siva, and his bull Nandi, the six-armed or dwarf incarnation of Vishnu, and Garuda, the man-eagle. The southern corridor, nearly two hundred feet in length has nineteen compartments in which are sculptures of Siva in six or seven different incarnations. Brâhma with his *hansa* or sacred goose, Pârvatî, the marriage ceremony between Siva and Pârvatî. The northern corridor, one hundred and twenty feet in length, contains twelve divisions of sculptures, chiefly representing Siva and Parvatî and their attendants. The shrine is reached by a staircase from the last corridor. The door is guarded by huge *dwarapâlas*, who are armed with clubs. The hall has two aisles with large square columns at each corner and is decorated with numberless sculptures of Siva, Lakshmî, Brâhma and attendants. The shrine is situated at the east end of the Hall, from the terrace behind which rises the steeple of the temple, nearly one hundred feet in height. The steeple is profusely carved from the basement to the summit. In the southern end of the courtyard is a cave-temple of small dimensions, containing sculptures of Kâlî, Ganapati, Vaishnavî, Sarasvatî, and numerous deities and attendants. On the north and

Cave XVI. west sides of the court are three more caves, one of which, Lanka or Lanakesvara, is 123 feet long and 40 wide; the roof of this cave is supported on elaborately carved pillars. It contains sculptures of Siva, Pârvatî, and Râvana. The door of the shrine is guarded by females, probably Gangâ and Yamunâ; the back wall contains a three-faced representation of Siva, in his characters as Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer. Above Kailâsa are some smaller caves and groups of cells and shrines.

Cave XVII *Cave XVII.*—This cave is a Saiva temple, supported on twelve pillars, having a shrine, the door of which is in the Dravidian style. The corridor of the temple contains sculptured compartments, in which are figures of Brâhma and Vishnu with female attendants. The only sculptures on the shrine walls are Mahisâsuri and Ganapati.

Cave XVIII., XIX., XX. *Caves XVIII., XIX. and XX.*—These are three small caves, none of which contains sculptures or shrines of any interest.

Cave XXI. *Cave XXI.*—This cave is called Râmésvara; the hall is of considerable length, and has a shrine at each end, surrounding which are numerous sculptures of Kâlî, Ganesha, Siva, and Pârvatî, with attendants and musicians. The marriage of Siva and Parvati is also represented.

Caves XXII., XXIII., XXIV., XXV. and XXVI.—The first of these caves is locally known as Nîlakantha. It contains a few sculptures of Brâhma and the Ashtamâtra or eight mothers, and Ganesha. The next two are small caves, containing a few poorly executed sculptures. The twenty-fifth is partially ruined, but the ceiling of the vestibule contains a figure “of Sûrya the sun-god, in his chariot drawn by seven steeds and a female at each side shooting with the bow.” The columns in the last of these caves resemble those of Elephanta. The cave is 120 feet long, and has a chapel at each end.

Caves
XXII.,
XXIII.,
XXIV.,
XXV.,
XXVI.

Caves XXVII and XXVIII.—The first of these is a Vaishnava temple, locally known as “The Milkmaid’s Cave.” It contains figures of Vishnu, Lakshmi, and Brâhma. The other consists of the remains of a couple of cells with shrines and dwarapâlas on either side of the door.

Caves
XXVII.,
XXVIII.

Cave XXIX.—This cave, which consists of a large hall about 150 feet square, is known as Sita’s Nani, or Dumar Lena. It contains a good number of sculptures, amongst which is one representing the marriage of Siva and Pârvatî. Between this cave and the next there are one or two others, completely blocked up with rubbish. Chota Kailâsa, which is the next cave in the group, has only been partially cleared out. It is said to be Dravidian in style, and is constructed after the plan of the hall in Kailâsa, with a large mandapa and pillars. This,

Cave
XXIX.

Cave
XXIX.

says Mr. Burgess, "is the first in order, though probably the latest in time, of the Jaina excavations." Between this and the Indra Sabhâ is an unfinished cave, almost entirely filled up with rubbish.

Jaina
Caves.

The last of the series consists of three Jaina caves styled the Indra Sabhâ. There are two double-storied caves and a smaller one, with their usual appendages. The first of them contains sculptures of Pârasvanâtha and a seven-hooded snake, and also of Mahâvîra, "the last of the Jaina Tîrthankâras, or men who by their austerities set themselves free from further transmigration." The figure of Indra is represented seated on an elephant underneath a tree in which there are parrots. The court of the cave contains a large elephant mounted on a pedestal. The smaller halls attached to the larger structure contain sculptures of Indra and Indrâyanî, and one of them has two large images of Sântinâtha, underneath one of which is an inscription in 9th or 10th Century characters. The upper story contains large figures of Indra and Indrâyanî under banian and mango trees. There are also a number of compartments containing figures of Jainas. The next temple is known as Jagannatha Sabhâ. The greater portion of the figures which it contained have been destroyed. The hall and chapel contain sculptures of Indra and Indrâyanî with attendants, and Mahâvîra and Pârasvanâtha. The verandah of the court has a few inscriptions, almost illegible, which are in the Canarese character, and belong, Mr. Burgess

thinks, to A.D. 800. The last of the caves is partially ruined. Like the rest of the series, it contains figures of Indra and Indrâyanî and a good many other sculptures, in a comparatively good state of preservation. A little distance above this cave there is a building containing a colossal figure of Pârasvanâtha surrounded by worshippers, amongst whom Siva and Bhavanî may be recognised. The seat contains an inscription which dates A.D. 1234-51. This portion of the hill contains several other small Jaina caves, all more or less in ruins, none of them containing any sculptures or figures of interest.





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