Kanheri Epitaph Inscription 26

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Edition

〈1〉 th[e](r)āṇaṁ Ayyamah[ā]〈2〉(gi)riṇaṁ Araha(ṁ)〈3〉[tāṇaṁ] [1×] (va)bhiḥ

Apparatus

〈1〉 th[e](r)āṇaṁ ◇ *(theraṇaṃ)* G. — 〈1〉 Ayyamah[ā]〈2〉(gi)riṇaṁ ◇ *Ārya la vi [1+] ṇaṁ* G.

〈2〉 Araha(ṁ)〈3〉[tāṇaṁ] ◇ *Arahaṃ* G.

〈3〉 [1×] (va)bhiḥ ◇ *thu(bho)* G.

Translation

Stūpa(?) of the venerable Noble Mahāgiri, an *arhat*...

Commentary

The name of the monk, Mahāgiri, is unusual for an individual, although it is attested in IBH, Sanc 140: *mahāgirino bhichuno dānaṁ*. This name interestingly brings to mind the name of the **Mahāgirīya* (Tib. *ri chen po pa*) *nikāya*, otherwise unattested in inscriptions. In the third account of the *nikāyas* and their tenets preserved in his *Tarkajvālā*, the *Vātsīputrīyas* are subdivided into two groups, the *Saṁmitīyas* and the **Mahāgirīyas*, the latter subdivided into the Dharmottarīyas and the Bhādrāyaṇiyas. See Eckel 2008: 121, 315.9–22. Since the latter are the only *nikāyas* represented in Kanheri, the mention of a master Mahāgiri may be of some relevance for the later self-representation of the religious milieux active at the site.

The end of this inscription is most puzzling, since we don't find the usual thūbhaṁ at the end, and at the moment can't make sense of the last term. The last akṣara seems clearly to read *-bhi-*, although it could theoretically be interpreted as an attempt to modify a *-bha-* into a *-thū-*. There however remains that the previous two akṣaras do not correspond to what one would expect.

Bibliography

Primary

[G] Gokhale, Shobhana. 1991. *Kanheri inscriptions*. Pune: Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute. Page 136, item E26.