



JĀGĀTU

JĀGĀTU, an archaeological site in **Ġazni** province, Afghanistan, situated about 20 km north of Ġazni (lat 33°47'N, long 68°22'E) on the route between Ġazni and Wardak. The site includes a group of small mounds situated on either side of the caravan road that skirts the Bād-e Āsiā mountain, remains of fortifications on the slopes of the mountain, and two rock-inscriptions in Bactrian cursive script. The most detailed report on the site so far is that of Umberto Scerrato (for further references see Ball, I, p. 43, site no. 71, and p. 131, site no. 461). Nearby sites include the high mound of Dobak-sar, also referred to as Tabak-sar or Taqt-e Solţān, the remains of a fortified town (Scerrato, pp. 13-15), where fragments of jars with cursive Bactrian inscriptions are said to have been found (Ball, I, p. 94, site no. 303), and the Ghaznavid dam known as Band-e Solţān (Scerrato, p. 12; Ball, I, p. 52, site no. 103).

In 1958 Umberto Scerrato dug some trial trenches in the mounds at the foot of the Bād-e Āsiā. The excavations revealed vaulted mud brick structures on stone foundations (Scerrato, pp. 18-20). Amongst the small finds were coins of the Nēzak type (Scerrato, p. 21, and figs. 44-45; see hunnic coinage) and potsherds with stamped decoration (Scerrato, pp. 20, 22, and figs. 47-49; Verardi, Paparatti, and Inaba, p. 91).

The most important antiquities of Jaġatu are the two inscriptions, which were first noticed by Alessio Bombaci and Umberto Scerrato in 1957 (see Scerrato). One is inscribed on a rock high on the northeast side of the Bād-e Āsiā. As recognized by Olaf Hansen (apud Scerrato, p. 16 n. 7; see also Humbach, 1967,



pp. 25-26), it consists of the Buddhist *triratna* formula “Homage to the Buddha, homage to the law, homage to the community.” Although the inscription is written in Bactrian script, it is doubtful whether its language should be regarded as Bactrian, since the text is entirely made up of Indian words: *namōo* = Sanskrit *namo* “homage” (occurring three times), *bodo* = *buddha*, *dauarmo* (or perhaps *ddharmo*) = *dharma* “law,” and *saggo* = *saṅgha* “community.”

The second inscription, consisting of five short lines scratched on a boulder beside the caravan road, has not yet been plausibly read or interpreted; attempts such as those of Helmut Humbach (1966-67, I, p. 104; idem, 1967, p. 26) and Davary (p. 69) have been rendered obsolete by progress in the understanding of the Bactrian script and its historical development. A possible reading of the first three lines is *baio taiamšo p(?)oro* “Bay son of Tayamsh.” The name Bay is also known from a 7th-century Bactrian document (Sims-Williams, pp. 12-13), while Tayamsh may be understood as a compound name whose second element is the divine name Yamsh, the Bactrian counterpart of Persian *Jamšid*. The last two lines are less well preserved and no meaningful reading can be proposed at present. It should, however, be noted that Humbach’s reading of the last word as Turkish *uluġ* “great,” on the basis of which he assigned this inscription to the “Turkish period of Eastern Iranian history” (Humbach, 1967, p. 26), is impossible.

Usable photographs of both inscriptions can be found in Humbach (1966-67, II, pl. 23; idem, 1967, fig. 1-2; MacDowall and Taddei, p. 242, figs. 5.3 and 5.4 (the latter printed upside-down)).

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