

- It is the **only surviving example of paintings of 1<sup>st</sup> Century BC and 5<sup>th</sup> century CE** (5<sup>th</sup> century paintings – outward projections)
- The reference of Ajanta caves can be found in the travel accounts of Chinese Travellers **Fa Hien and Hieun Tsang**
- Vakataka Kings patronaged Ajanta Caves
- It is situated on **river Waghora**
- **Cave 16, 17, 19 – Guptas**
- Early caves = Hinayana
- Later phase = Mahayana

**Theme: Jataka, Buddha, Avadhanas**

Cave	Patron
<b>Cave No. 16</b>	Varahadeva
<b>Cave No. 17-20</b>	Upendragupta
<b>Cave No. 26</b>	Buddhabhadra
<b>Cave No. 4</b>	Mathuradasa

- The **chaitya Cave Nos. 19 and 26** are elaborately carved. Their facade is **decorated with Buddha and Bodhisattva images**.
- **Cave No. 26** is very big and the entire interior hall is carved with a variety of Buddha images, the biggest one being the **Mahaparinibbana image**.

**Features of Ajanta Paintings**

- Only Buddhist painting
- Most designs have heroic proportions
- Centrality – attention drawn to the most important person in the painting.



Fig: Painting of Yashodara and Rahula in cave 17, Ajanta

- Paintings are spontaneous and unrestrained
- Stories illustrated are continuous and elaborate
- 5<sup>th</sup> century paintings – outward projections, lines clearly define and rhythmic. Also, body colour merged with outline.
- One of the striking features of these paintings is the absence of Blue Colour

**Caves and Features**

- Cave no. 1 – Mahajanaka Jataka, Padmapani, Vajrapani
- Cave 1 and 2 – orderly, naturalistic; half-closed, elongated eyes; Natural posture
- Cave no. 9 – limited colours
- Cave no. 10 – Chhadanta Jataka
- Cave no. 16 – Dying Princess painting
- Cave no. 17 – Buddha, Yashodara and Rahula,
- Apsara, Chhadanta removing his tusk.