

## **Research on the Guptas and (Iranian) Huns, 2014-2021**

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The last seven years have been highly fruitful for research on the Guptas and Iranian Huns. New advances have been made in identifying new coin types and varieties, much progress has been made in properly attributing coins, and new interpretations of both the coins and the history have been put forth. In addition, there has been new information on hoard finds. In what follows we will first consider the Guptas and then the Huns. The first few pages will provide an overall summary of the most important research findings, to be followed by detailed accounts and reviews of individual publications.

### **Research on the Guptas**

Perhaps the most widely followed and discussed event in Gupta numismatics in this period was the publication of the first new catalogue of Gupta coins since 1957 (KUMAR 35). This book brought to notice many new varieties of Gupta coins. Some of its suggestions have been challenged and remain controversial (TANDON 61); nevertheless, this was an important addition to the literature. It gathered together data on a very large number of Gupta coins, surveyed the literature, and performed XRF analysis on a reasonably large sample of gold coins. TANDON (51, 61) identified new types of gold dinars of the king who has come to be called Candragupta III. A remarkable new coin type published within the last seven years was the silver drachm of the madhyadeśa type of the Gupta prince Ghaṭotkaca (SINGH 50).

In terms of proper reattributions of coins, undoubtedly the most important was the discovery that the king known as Prakāśāditya and almost uniformly thought to be a Gupta king was in fact the Hun king Toramāṇa (TANDON 56). This conclusion had been speculated by GÖBL (73) but had never been proven and had not gained wide acceptance. The question, however, can now be laid to rest. The discovery allows for the reattribution of a number of other coins to Toramāṇa (TANDON 60) and his Hun successors. We now know that the Huns issued far more Gupta style coins than we had previously thought.

BAKKER (13) made the case that the repoussé coins in the name of Mahendraditya were not issues of the Gupta king Kumāragupta I, as has become a popular belief recently (KUMAR 35) but of a Sarabhapuriya king. He also provided a fresh interpretation of the Apratigha type coin of Kumāragupta, arguing that it was issued early in his reign and depicts him with his parents as a sort of “pedigree” type. Bakker argues that Kumāragupta displaced the “rightful” heir Govindagupta and therefore needed to proclaim that he had his parents’ blessing. RAVEN (41) also argues that this type was issued early in the king’s reign.

KUMAR (35) also made some bold re attributions of coins previously thought to be issued by Candragupta II to Candragupta I. However, many scholars believe that Candragupta I never issued any gold coins, and this view was taken up strongly by TANDON (61). Indeed, this latter paper made a case to reattribute some more coins of Candragupta II to Candragupta III, making that king far more important than previously realized. In a series of papers, TANDON (51, 54, 57) fleshed out the coinage of this king and argued that his true identity is Purugupta, the only known legitimate son of Kumāragupta I.

Of course, these reattributions involve reinterpretation of the coins. In the vein of reinterpretation, KUMAR (34) argued that the so-called “standard” or “sceptre” type of Samudragupta has been labeled incorrectly. Instead, most of these coins should be called the javelin type although this conclusion can be challenged (see review below). RAVEN (41, 42, 43) published a series of papers providing further details of her “mint idiomatic” approach to the organization of Gupta coins. This approach remains difficult for most non-art historians to implement but nevertheless is the most promising idea for understanding the structure of the coinage.

SINGH (49) and BANIK (19, 20) report on a new hoard of Gupta gold coins found in Murshidabad. MAJUMDAR (36) published a remarkable piece of detective work: an attempted reconstitution of the first known hoard of Gupta coins, the Kalighat hoard, originally found in 1783 and dispersed shortly thereafter.

Finally, important new work on the details of Gupta history, particularly in their interaction with the Huns, appeared during this period. BAKKER (10, 16) brought together inscriptional and archaeological evidence to provide a detailed account of the various wars fought by the Guptas and Huns. TANDON (53, 60) attempted to incorporate numismatic evidence into this new historical account.

### **Research on the Huns**

Perhaps the most important piece of work produced on the Huns in the last seven years is the source book edited by BALOGH (18). This remarkable book, an output of the Beyond Borders research project funded by the European Research Council, has gathered together all the primary sources in all languages available to study the Huns. While the classical sources and even the Chinese sources have been relatively well known and well studied, the bringing in of material in other languages such as Armenian, Bactrian, Sogdian, and others is a game changer in this research area. Scholars will be able to draw from this remarkable source for years to come.

Several important new catalogues of Hun coins were also published during these past seven years. The catalogue by JONGEWARD and CRIBB (31) of the Kushan coins in the collection of the American Numismatic Society also included the coins of the Kidarite Huns, thereby becoming the first major catalogue of the coins of the Iranian Huns since the seminal work of Gobl. The works of PFISTERER (39) and VONDROVEC (62) were also published during this time. These catalogues not only record examples of new and newly discovered coin types but also push forward our understanding of the Hun coinages. TANDON (52) proposed a different approach to the reorganization of Hunnic coins based on the Schøyen inscription, but so far this approach has not been brought to fruition.

It is worth mentioning also the catalogue by FISHMAN and TODD (28) of the small silver coins of western India called *dammās*. Many of these coins have been thought to be Hunnic, but Fishman and Todd argue against this attribution. They think that the coins thought to be Hunnic were in fact issues of the Rai dynasty and the rulers of Chach.

The new catalogues naturally also present new surveys of Hun coins and history. Several other such surveys have been published in addition, the most notable one being the exhibition catalogue ALRAM (6). This catalogue, which is also available online in English, accompanied an

important exhibition of Hun coins held in Vienna from late 2012 to early 2014. Other surveys include ALRAM (2, 3), ALRAM et. al. (8) and REZAKHANI (46).

Coming to more detailed studies attributing coins and publishing new types, perhaps the most significant piece of research was the discovery, already mentioned in the context of the Guptas, that the supposedly Gupta king known as Prakāśāditya was in fact the Hun king Toramāṇa (TANDON 56). This discovery opened up the reattribution of other coins to Toramāṇa, such as the Archer type coin in the name of Prakāśa in the Lucknow Museum, which directly led to the reattribution of the so called Nameless coins of the Archer type to the Huns (TANDON 58). A review of some of these discoveries is in TANDON (60).

Another very significant piece of research was that of DEYELL (25, 26), who argued convincingly that the coins in the name of *Pratāpa* and thought to be Kidarite coins, were in fact issued by the well known Indian king Harṣavardhana and his father Prabhākarvardhana. The reorganization and renewed understanding of the so called Kidarite coins of Kashmir, highlighted by Deyell's work, was also pushed forward by CRIBB (22) and CRIBB and SINGH (23). One of the potential consequences of this research is the possibility that the Kidarites and Alchon may have been the same people.

A few new hoards of Hun Coins were published. These include a hoard of Kidarite style coins found in northern India published by CRIBB (22), a hoard of 145 copper coins, mostly of Kīṅgila, found in Pushkalavati and published by TANDON (59), a hoard of 17 coins of Mihirakula found in the salt range region and published by ALRAM (7), and a hoard of Hephthalite coins studied by HEIDEMANN (30). These coins were all versions of Göbl type 287 and Heidemann argues that they are all from the mint of Balkh.

Perhaps the most important research concerning the Iranian Huns from the past few years is not directly about the coins but about their history, for which coins provide some material evidence. Of these, the most compelling work is that of BAKKER (10, 16), who combines new readings and interpretations of inscriptions with coins and other material evidence to argue that the Huns waged a succession of wars in India during the late 5th and early 6th centuries. One series of wars was probably associated with the invasion of India by Toramāṇa sometime in the last decade of the 5th century. A remarkable suggestion made by Bakker (16), which this author finds very convincing, is that the capital from where he launched his invasion was in the area of the modern town of Akhnur, on the banks of the River Chenab. Starting from here, Toramāṇa moved through northern India, through Haryana and Kauśāmbī, to take possession of Mālwa and probably parts of modern Gujarat. These wars ended with a Hun defeat at the hands of Prakāśadharman in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century. The second set of wars are associated with Toramāṇa's son Mihirakula, who presumably had re-conquered parts of his father's lost kingdom but then suffered defeat at the hands of Yaśodharman. TANDON (53, 60) has elaborated on this reconstructed history, arguing on the basis of Indian sources that Toramāṇa left Mālwa to invade the Gupta heartland in eastern Uttar Pradesh, defeated the Guptas, and subsequently died there, most likely of natural causes.

BAKKER (11) also further buttresses an argument made earlier by DE LA VAISSIÈRE (70) that the place called Tālagān in the Schøyen inscription as the place where the scroll was created was not Tālaqān near Kunduz, as MELZER (77) had suggested, but Tālagang in the Salt Range. Bakker does so by identifying other places that pertain to the inscription and that are in the

vicinity of the Salt Range. Given that de la Vaissière's argument was already persuasive, Bakker's evidence renders the suggestion virtually certain.

### Detailed Critical Summaries of the Main Works

The most important works are reviewed in some detail in what follows. Works are identified by their number in the Bibliography.

1. ABELS, B. U., Two late Skandagupta drachms, *Num Dig* 42 (2018) pp. 49-56.

This paper presents two late silver drachms of the Altar type of Skandagupta and explores the question of who might have issued them. The author notes that the fire altar was a long used symbol of the Persian-influenced tribes from Central Asia, including the Kushans and the Hūnas, and that at least one of the coin portraits displays a face with distinctly Central Asian features. Nevertheless, the author rejects the theory that the coins might have been issued by Hūna kings who we know were active in the area after Skandagupta's reign; opting instead for his opinion that they were issued late in Skandagupta's reign. He does not provide a reason for his conclusion, beyond the rhetorical question: why would the Hūnas have issued coins in the name of Skandagupta whom they had supplanted and not in their own names? It is not difficult to answer such a question, however. Many kings over the centuries have found it politic to continue issuing coins in the names of the kings they supplanted. For example, the early Central Asian tribes that entered Bactria in the second century BCE continued issuing coins in the name of Eucratides and Heliocles. The first Kushan king, Kujula Kadphises, initially issued coins in the name of the Indo-Greek king Hermaios. Even the mighty British found it necessary to issue coins in the name of the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II before they felt they had consolidated their position sufficiently to issue their own coinage.

2. ALRAM, M., From the Sasanians to the Huns. New numismatic evidence from the Hindu Kush, *NC* 174 (2014) pp. 261-291.

This paper is a revised version of the address the author gave to the Royal Numismatic Society on the occasion of receiving the Society's medal. It is a wide-ranging, thorough, and highly readable survey of the numismatic evidence surrounding the political and monetary history of Bactria, Pakistan and north-west India from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. Even for an expert, it is highly informative; it would serve as a great place to start for someone wanting to learn this history from scratch. Broadly speaking, the numismatic coverage is of the coins of the Kushano-Sasanians and then the corpus encompassed within the study of the coins of the Iranian Huns by GÖBL 71.

The first part of the paper deals with the interaction between the Sasanians and the Kushans, leading to the emergence of the Kushano-Sasanian kingdom. As this period is outside the scope of the present paper, it need not concern us here, but I will note an important way in which the author differs from the views of Joe Cribb, another leading expert on the period. Alram does not believe Cribb's assertion that the Sasanians imitated the coinage of the Kushan king Vasudeva I; he would ascribe that entire coinage to Vasudeva himself. But this is a digression.

Our concern begins with the arrival of the Kidarites in Bactria around the year 370, where they issued coins in the style of the Kushano-Sasanians. They also issued coins in Uddiyana (Swat) and Gandhāra slightly later, where they issued silver and copper coins in the Sasanian style, and in Punjab shortly thereafter (“in the late fourth century” in the words of the author), where they issued gold coins of the Kushan style. The Bactrian series, whose kings all have Iranian sounding names, continued until the third quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, when the Sasanian king Peroz I was able to recover the province. The silver coins of Gandhāra are interesting because here some of the kings have distinctly Indian names, such as Buddhāmītra, Śrīvarma, and Nandaya; thus it seems the Kidarites became Indianized or the two populations started to merge. Although the author does not mention this, the Punjab series continued until Samudragupta appears to have displaced them and issued coins in his name in a similar style. Since Samudragupta is dated to c. 325-375, this creates a potential problem for the dating of the Kidarites’ arrival there in the latter part of the century.

The next phase of the history was dominated by the Alkhan Huns. In Bactria, the Sasanian victory over the Kidarites did not last long, as the Alkhan entered the scene shortly thereafter. Their initial coinage in fact used modified Sasanian dies, followed by imitations of the same dies. The first Alkhan king to place his name on the coins was Kīnigīla, who it is believed had a long reign c. 430 - 495. In Gandhāra, the Alkhan must have encountered the Kidarites, and it appears that they must have coexisted peacefully as neighbors. The Alkhan of course made a major foray into India under Toramāṇa and Mihirakula but they were eventually repulsed and by around 530 they were confined to Gandhāra (and perhaps the Punjab Hills, not mentioned by the author).

The Hephthalites seized Bactria in 474, defeating the Sasanian emperor Peroz I, and ruled there until c. 560 when they were defeated by a combination of Sasanians and Turks. In the interim, they issued a series of silver coins characterized by a bull’s head crown. Also in 474, the Nezak took control of Kabulistan; their regime lasted there until the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. At that point, the Alkhan tamgha made a reappearance on the coinage of that region, so it appears the two tribes reached an alliance of some kind. They were eventually swept away by the Turks in 661. The Turk Shahi kingdom lasted until the 10<sup>th</sup> century when the Muslims finally overcame them after a long struggle.

3. ALRAM, M., Numismatik am Hindukusch, *Geldgeschichtliche Nachrichten* 49, 275 (2014) pp. 249-250.

This short paper is a very accessible introduction to the history and coinage of the Iranian Huns. Alram presents a brief overview of the history of the Kabul Museum and then turns to the history of the Huns themselves. He divides them, as usual, into four groupings: the Kidarites, the Alkhan, the Nezak, and the Hephthalites, distinguished by the differences in their styles of coinage. He provides single examples of each group’s coins and gives a broad overview of their history.

First were the Kidarites, who came to power in Bactria soon after the year 370. They considered themselves to be the inheritors of the Kushans and their kingdom stretched from

Sogdiana to Gandhāra and Punjab. They produced gold coins on the Kushan (and Kushano-Sasanian) model and silver coins inspired by the Sasanians.

The Alkhan occupied Kabulistan around 385, and then penetrated further east into Gandhāra and Punjab, displacing the Kidarites. Under Toramāṇa and Mihirakula, they even penetrated deep into Gangetic and Central India.

The Nezak started issuing coins in Zabulistan (Ghazni area) in the last quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and in Kabulistan in the first quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Their Sasanian inspired silver coins are distinguished by the bull's-head crowns.

Finally, the Hephthalites captured Bactria from the Sasanians in 474, taking the Sasanian emperor Peroz prisoner and eventually ransoming him for 1,500 kg of silver coins. Soon after his release, Peroz attacked then again and was defeated again in 484, losing his life in the process this time. The period of Hephthalite dominance came to an end in 560, when they were defeated by an alliance of the Sasanians and the Western Turks.

5. ALRAM, M., The political and cultural impact of Sasanid Persia along the Silk Road, in V. FRICKS, J. and SCHORTA, R. (eds.), *Oriental Silks in Medieval Europe*, Riggisberger Berichte 21 (2016) pp. 34-45.

This paper takes up the question of why it is that the Sasanians had such a long-lasting administrative and cultural impact on regions quite far away from Iran and long after the Sasanian dynasty itself had been displaced. Alram's answer focuses on the luxurious lifestyle of the Sasanian kings, a lifestyle that others naturally tried to emulate. Further, whether to ensure the importation of luxury goods, or because of their understanding of the strategic importance of doing so, the Sasanians made great efforts to control the trade routes of the Silk Road. They conquered northern Mesopotamia, thereby giving them control over the Roman trade; they occupied Merv for long periods, giving them control over trade to China; and they took both coasts of the Persian Gulf, including Bahrain, and also the province of Sind, thereby giving them a dominant position in the sea trade with India. Trade routes of course were the channels for cultural influence to travel, so Iranian influence spread far and wide because of their control of the central nodes of trade in all directions.

6. Michael Alram, *Das Antlitz des Fremden*, (Vienna, 2016).

This book (in German) is the Exhibition Catalogue for an exhibition of Hunnic coins held in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna from December 2012 to March 2014. It is probably the clearest exposition of this complex coinage, covering all of the coinages included in the seminal study of the coins of the "Iranian Huns" by GÖBL (71). The website of the exhibition, where color enlargements of all of the coins on display were available, can still be found online at <http://pro.geo.univie.ac.at/projects/khm/>.

The book starts with an overview of Sasanian coins. We then move on to the Kidarites, who appear to have displaced the Sasanians and Kushano-Sasanians from Bactria in the third quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. They also took possession of Gandhāra and Uddiyana (Swat). In

Bactria, the Kidarites issued gold dinars of the scyphate type that the Kushano-Sasanians had been issuing for the past century. In Gandhāra and Uddiyana, they issued Sasanian style silver coins and also copper coins. In Taxila, they minted gold dinars on the Kushan model. In the year 467, the Sasanians under the Emperor Peroz defeated the Kidarites and regained Balkh from them. The Kidarites also lost Gandhāra and Uddiyana to the Alkhan Huns in the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century.

The Alkhan seem to have been a Hunnic tribe closely related to the Kidarites. They took Kabulistan from the Sasanians at around the same time as the Kidarites were taking Bactria. They then seem to have displaced the Kidarites from Gandhāra and Uddiyana in the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century. At this time, they seem to have been organized in a quadripartite confederacy, which is reflected in their coinage.

Towards the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the Punjab seems to have been under the rule of Toramāṇa, who may or may not have been an Alkhan prince. He and his son Mihirakula appear prominently in Indian sources and left inscriptions in various places in India. They are also mentioned in the inscriptions of others. For a period of a few decades, they made a significant campaign in India which met with some success, and issued coins inspired by the Guptas.

Although Peroz had driven the Kidarites out of Bactria in 467, he was unable to hold the province for long as he in turn was defeated by yet another Hunnic tribe, the Hephthalites. They issued Sasanian style silver coins, imitating the coins of Peroz. At the same time as the Hephthalites were taking possession of Bactria, a fourth Hunnic tribe, the Nezak, took Zabulistan. It appears the Nezak were an offshoot of the Alkhan, and indeed some coins that appear to indicate an amalgamation of the two are known.

The Hephthalites were defeated by an alliance of the Sasanians and the Western Turks in the year 560. The period of Hun dominance came to an end around the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century when the Turk Shahis took control of Zabulistan and Kabulistan. They were to remain in control until the mid-9<sup>th</sup> century.

This book is an absolute must for students of Hun coinage and history.

7. ALRAM, M., Ein Schatzfund des Hunnen-Königs Mihirakula, in MORANO, E., PROVASI, E., and ROSSI, A. (eds.), *Studia Philologica Iranica*. Gherardo Gnoli Memorial Volume, *Seria Orientale Roma, Nuova Serie* 5 (Roma, 2017) pp. 1-6.

In this brief paper, the author reports on a small hoard of 17 silver or billon drachms of the Hun king Mihirakula (Göbl type 310) apparently found somewhere in the Salt Range of Pakistan. Although the find spot is not known with certainty, the information that it was found in the Salt Range agrees with the other information, such as the inscription of Toramāṇa at Kura (Khwera), that places this branch of the Huns in that area. It also provides additional evidence supporting the identification of the place called Tālagān in the Schøyen Copper Scroll as the town of Tālagang in the area of the Salt Range, as suggested by DE LA VAISSIÈRE 70 and endorsed by BAKKER 11.

The author reviews some of the history of Mihirakula, as revealed by coins, inscriptions and textual sources and makes an interesting observation. We know that Mihirakula was probably a follower of Śaivism, as the trident and the bull are prominently featured on his coins. We also know of coins of Toramāṇa overstruck by Mihirakula dies. Since Toramāṇa was Mihirakula's father, it is unusual that the son was overstriking the father's coins. Alram suggests that this may reflect a very explicit rejection of his father's religion, which might have been Buddhism or Vaiṣṇavism.

8. ALRAM, M., SINISI, F., SCHINDEL, N., *Iranische Numismatik in vorislamischer Zeit*, in PAUL, L. (ed.), *Handbuch der Iranistik* (Wiesbaden, 2017) pp. 74-93.

This paper, as the title reveals, is a survey of all pre-Islamic coinages of Iran. Here we are concerned only with Section 7, which covers the Iranian Huns and Western Turks; other sections cover the Achaemenids, the Parthian and Sasanian empires, the Kushano-Sasanians, and so on.

The survey is quite comprehensive. The authors note that the Hun incursion into South Asia, which began c. 370, happened at around the same time as the Hun incursion into Europe. However, while the European Huns did not leave us a coinage, the South Asian Huns left a rich and diverse coinage that helps us understand their history. It is the coinage that has led to the division of the Huns into four groups:

- Kidarites, who ruled in Bactria, Uddiyana (Swat), Gandhāra and Taxila
- Alkhan, who ruled primarily in Kabulistan, but raided Gandhāra, Uddiyana, Taxila, and even into Central India
- Nezak, who ruled in Zabulistan and Kabulistan
- Hephthalites, who stayed north of the Hindu Kush, in Bactria.

The coins reflect primarily Sasanian and Kushan influence, with some also from the Guptas. The languages used on the coins include Bactrian, Pahlavi and Sanskrit (in Brāhmī script).

The authors trace the history of the groups, finishing with the ascendancy of the Western Turks and their replacement ultimately by the Hindu Shahi kingdom.

In terms of the survey of research, they point to GÖBL (71) of course as the pioneering work, and mention the updates to this work attempted by PFISTERER (39), VONDROVEC (62), and ALRAM (2, 6). This work does not, however, fully include the coinages that had been excluded by Göbl but which subsequent work has shown to be very relevant, particularly the coinage from India.

9. ALRAM, M., *The numismatic legacy of the Sasanians in the east*, in DARYAEE, T. (ed.), *Sasanian Iran in the Context of Late Antiquity. The Bahari Lecture Series at the University of Oxford* (Irvine, 2018) pp. 5-37.

This paper is a survey of the history of and the coinages that were produced in the areas that at different times constituted the easternmost parts of the Sasanian Empire. It is primarily concerned with the period starting around the year 375, when the Sasanians lost Bactria to the



Kidarites and Kabulistan to the Alkhan Huns. The ups and downs of Sasanian fortunes in the area are traced, with the brief period of Sasanian recovery in the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century and then again in the 6<sup>th</sup> century under Khusro I. Each time, however, the various Hunnic tribes were able to regain supremacy. In the late 5<sup>th</sup> century, the Hephthalites recovered Bactria and the Nezak did the same in Kabulistan. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century, it was the Alkhan-Nezak combination and the Western Turks who prevailed. Each time, coinages that owed much of their inspiration to Sasanian prototypes were produced.

The paper provides a very detailed survey of the coinages in the last period, from the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century to the emergence of the Shahi kingdom in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, a period that is beyond the scope of this survey.

10. BAKKER, H. T., *Monuments of hope, gloom, and glory, in the age of the Hunnic wars. 50 years that changed India (484–534)*. 24th J. Gonda Lecture (Amsterdam, 2017).

Although this is not a numismatic paper, it is included here because of its importance. The author brings to bear a wide array of evidence: archaeological remains, inscriptions, literary sources, and coins, to reconstruct what he calls the “Age of Hunnic Wars.” The period under review is c. 490-535. The author suggests that there were two Hunnic wars during this period and that India was left transformed during this time.

The first Hunnic war took place c. 495 or shortly thereafter, when the Hun king Toramāṇa ventured south from his original base somewhere in Punjab or Gandhāra (“the North-west”), entering the Gangetic plain and then making his way to the Betwa valley to confront the Gupta armies in the western portion of the Empire. Interestingly, the author does not mention Sanghol in this context, where excavations have revealed coins of Toramāṇa, very much supporting the idea that he passed through that area. Since coins of the Guptas were also found in Sanghol, it is likely that Toramāṇa defeated a Gupta garrison there before moving on to Mālwa. There he defeated the Gupta armies again, as revealed by the Eran inscription, establishing his “year one” there.

Within the next year or two, Toramāṇa ventured further west, presumably in order to control the trade route all the way to the Arabian Sea. The Sanjeli copper plate inscriptions testify to his success in this enterprise also.

Toramāṇa’s next expedition was to the heart of the Gupta Empire. This effort is attested by the sealing of the Ghoshitārāma Monastery overstruck by the name Toramāṇa found in Kauśāmbī and by the fact that Toramāṇa issued coins, particularly gold dinars, on the Gupta model. The first Hunnic wars come to an end, however, with a Hun defeat back in Mālwa at the hands of the Aulikara king Prakāśadharman, as attested by the Rīsthal Inscription. This is the last we hear of Toramāṇa in the paper, although some texts do report on further activities in the heart of the Gupta lands, namely the Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa and the testimony of Xuanzang.

The author turns next to Toramāṇa’s son Mihirakula. He is encountered in the year 520 by the Chinese monk Songyun on the banks of the Jhelum river. He subsequently invades Mālwa again, like his father, as attested by the Gwalior inscription, which suggests that he had some

preliminary success. However, by the 530's, he seems to have been forced to bend his head to Yaśodharman, the son of Prakāśadharman, as we are informed by the Mandasor and Sondhni inscriptions of Yaśodharman. That is the end of the second Hunnic war.

Bakker shows convincingly that, at the start of this period, Vaiṣṇavism was very much in force, as this was the preferred religion of the Guptas, and Toramāṇa also showed some affinity to it. By the end of the period, however, the Guptas were no longer on the scene and Śaivism was in ascendance. The Aulikaras and Mihirakula were all Śaivites. The author argues that the critical advantage of Śaivism was that the Guru was seen as a channel to the Divine and therefore could effect worldly success.

11. BAKKER, H. T., A Buddhist foundation in Śārdīysa: A new interpretation of the Schøyen copper scroll, *Indo-Iranian Jour* 61 (2018) pp. 1-19.

This paper takes up some of the problems with understanding the Schøyen Copper Scroll inscription, originally published by MELZER (77). The inscription is of great significance because it names four Hun kings known from their coins; mahāśāhi Khīṅgīla, devarāja Toramāṇa, mahāśāhi Mehama and maharaja Javūkha, are all listed as donors in the establishment of a Buddhist stupa at a place called Tālagān. The provenance of the copper scroll is unknown. Locating the place Tālagān, which is of prime importance in unravelling the historical importance of the inscription, must therefore depend on guesswork and speculation.

Melzer had identified Tālagān with a place called Tālaqān in northern Afghanistan (north of the Hindu Kush mountains), but DE LA VAISSIÈRE (70) argued persuasively that it was rather the town of Tālagang in Pakistan, just north of the Salt Range and well south of the Hindu Kush. Since the inscription is in Sanskrit, and inscribed in Brāhmī script, a location north of the Hindu Kush seems very unlikely. In addition, as Melzer herself noted, the previously known inscription most closely similar to the copper scroll inscription is an inscription of Toramāṇa from the town of Kura (or Khwera) in the Salt Range. Thus the location proposed by de la Vaissière seems very plausible.

In this paper, Bakker provides a new and very interesting piece of evidence in favor of this location. Bakker notes that one of the principal actors mentioned in the scroll is the daughter of Śārada-Śāhi. Melzer had noted that the name is reminiscent of the town of “Śārada, a river and holy place in Kaśmīr named after the goddess of the same name” but had discounted a connection because she had located the inscription as belonging to a place far away, north of the Hindu Kush. As Bakker points out, however, the town of Śārada is not far from the town of Tālagang in Punjab which de la Vaissière had identified, and the goddess Śārada Devi is a principal deity in Kashmir. Further, the scroll identifies the place where the stupa that is the subject of the inscription was built as Śārdīysa; Bakker notes that the village where the temple to Śārada Devi is located is called Śārdi to this day. It is located 260 km from Tālagang on a route that passes Taxila and Muzaffarabad on the way to Kashmir, at the confluence of the Kiṣangāṅgā and Madhumatī rivers.

Thus it seems quite clear that the copper scroll inscription refers to this location. The kings mentioned in the inscription must all have had their kingdoms in this general vicinity.

13. BAKKER, H. T., Observations on the history and culture of Dakṣiṇa Kosala, in BAKKER (12).

This is a revised version of a paper originally published in 1994. It concerns us only tangentially, in that the Śarabhapurīyas are the key dynasty of Dakṣiṇa Kosala and of course they are closely related to the Guptas.

Bakker considers the so-called “Goparāja argument” regarding the identity of the king Śarabha. Sircar, Shastri and others have argued that Śarabha must be the maternal grandfather of Goparāja, who is mentioned on the Eran pillar inscription of Bhanugupta. Bakker, however, quotes the argument made by Joanna Williams, namely that Goparāja was called *śarabharāja-dauhitrāh*, which is a term that would apply only if the king Śarabha did not have a son. But we know that Śarabha had a son named Narendra, known from his plate grants. Therefore, there is no need to date Śarabha in relation to Goparāja and we can therefore date him to the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century. This is the date suggested by the paleography of his inscriptions. His grandson Prasanna should therefore be dated to around 500 or so. This then makes it difficult to assign the Mahendraditya coins to the Gupta emperor Kumāragupta I, who had died in c. 447. Bakker does not agree with the attribution of those coins to Kumāragupta I, as is argued by KUMAR (35).

14. BAKKER, H. T., A theatre of broken dreams 2.0: Vidiśā in the days of Gupta hegemony, in BAKKER (12).

Although this is not a numismatic paper at heart, coins do play a role, and the general theme is one of great interest to numismatists seeking to understand the historical context of the coins. It is therefore well worth including in this survey paper.

The theme of the paper is to understand the relationship between the Guptas and the Vākātakas in the fifth century. The author argues that, while the relationship was congenial in the early period during the reign of Kumāragupta I, it turned adversarial at the end of the reign, as the Vākātakas supported the claims of Ghaṭotkaca, the younger brother of Kumāragupta, over those of his bastard son Skandagupta. Since Skandagupta was the victor in this struggle, this explains the decline in the fortunes of the Vākātakas. Regarding the struggle, we know that Kumāragupta had appointed Ghaṭotkaca as viceroy in Vidiśā. One of the key elements proving that he staked a claim to the throne upon the death of his brother is a gold coin with the name Ghaṭo on it, now in the Hermitage Museum. The author, however, ignores the fact, argued by TANDON 53, that the Ghaṭo coin, with a weight of 9.16 gm and a diameter of 23 mm, is too heavy and too large to have plausibly been issued at the time of Kumāragupta’s death.

One other numismatic note in the paper relates to the Apratigha type coin of Kumāragupta I. The author argues that it celebrates the victory of Kumāragupta over his older brother Govindagupta in their struggle to succeed their father. Bakker suggests that the two figures on either side of the king are his parents and that the coin thereby suggests their approval of his succession. In his interpretation, the father (Candragupta II) is indicating the Garuḍa banner and the mother (Dhruvadevi) is holding up a signet ring. This is indeed a plausible interpretation of an otherwise enigmatic coin type. It need not “celebrate” Kumāragupta’s victory but may simply be a “pedigree” coin to establish Kumāragupta’s right to the throne. A similar interpretation of the coin had been offered by RAVEN (41).

16. BAKKER, H. T., *The Alkhan, a Hunnic people in South Asia* (Groningen, 2020).

This monograph is an outcome of the project *Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State*, mentioned in connection with BALOGH (18). Specifically, it is a reconstruction of the history of the Alkhan Huns in India based on all the source material collected in BALOGH (18).

The basic historical reconstruction was outlined in Bakker's Gonda Lecture (BAKKER 10) and has been reviewed there. There is greater detail here in this monograph, with more in-depth discussion of the sources. I will mention two particularly interesting parts of this discussion.

Bakker considers the well-known Swat bowl at the British Museum, showing four royal Hun hunters, which provides concrete evidence of a "quadrumvirate" that ruled different parts of the sub-continent in the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century. It shows that the Alkhan and Kidarites were in an alliance. This much is already fairly well known. Bakker however points out an aspect of the bowl that is not often discussed: an inscription that was apparently punched onto the bowl after its creation. After noting various attempts to read this legend, none satisfactory, Bakker proposes to read *khingi* (perhaps denoting Khingila), followed by two numerals, perhaps reading 206, with the letter *ka* (perhaps denoting Kidara). Assuming 206 represents a date, Bakker was unable to provide a good explanation for what year this might represent. He also notes that Harry Falk proposes the *ka* to stand for *karshapana*, a silver weight, so that 206 *ka* might represent the silver weight of the bowl. However, the weight of the bowl is actually only about half of what we might expect 206 karshapanas to weigh, leading to the suggestion that 206 *ka* might stand for the total weight of a pair of bowls, of which the Swat bowl is only one. Although the discussion is inconclusive, it is nevertheless fascinating and one that all students of the period must keep in mind.

Another remarkable advance offered by Bakker is the identification of Toramāṇa's capital. Using a number of sources and leads, he argues very persuasively that Toramāṇa's capital was near the town of Akhnur, where the Chenab river flows out from the mountains towards the Indo-Gangetic plain. He identifies a very attractive site from the point of view of its strategic location and defensibility, where excavations have yielded a coin of Toramāṇa. This then would have been the launching point for Toramāṇa's campaign of conquest in the last decade of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

The monograph is a great example of what can be achieved when many different sources from different fields of specialization are brought to bear on a single question.

18. BALOGH, D. (ed), *Hunnic peoples in Central and South Asia: Sources for their origin and history* (Groningen, 2020).

This extremely useful 400-plus page volume gathers together all the primary sources of information on the Huns of Central and South Asia. It was part of the project *Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State* funded by the European Research Council and led by Michael Willis at the British Museum, although this particular effort was conceived by Hans Bakker. The book covers the period from about the year 350 to the late 6<sup>th</sup>

century and each section is written by an expert in the particular source material covered in that section.

The source material covered includes literary and epigraphic sources, along with numismatic and sigillary evidence. This information is scattered in so many places that to have it gathered all in one place is a boon for the researcher. Further, sources that are normally difficult or even impossible to access are all included. Thus the material includes Chinese, Khotanese, Pahlavi, Sogdian, Bactrian, Armenian, Syriac, Arabic (including Islamic and Christian), Greek and Latin, and Indic sources. All the references are provided in the original language along with English translation and then interpretative commentaries.

This will be an indispensable resource for all researchers in the field.

19. BANIK, S., An analytical study of recently discovered Gupta gold coins from Moorshidabad, West Bengal, *Puravritta* (2016) pp. 1- 68.

This paper reports on a hoard of gold coins discovered in May 2013 during the construction of a highway in Murshidabad district, West Bengal. Out of some 100 plus coins that were found, only 11 made it to the State Archaeological Museum in Kolkata; the rest of the coins “disappeared” either into the melting pot or the trade market. The author reports on the 11 coins that did reach the State Museum. This is the same hoard discussed also by SINGH (49), who reports on these 11 coins along with many others which he saw in the trade market.

The author provides excellent photos of all of these coins, along with their details. Two of the coins are misattributed, underlining the importance of providing photos and not just attributions. There is a *cakra* variety of Archer coin of Candragupta III, weighing 8.44g, that is assigned to Candragupta II. Further, there is a crescent variety of Archer coin of Candragupta III, weighing 8.36g, that is assigned to Skandagupta. Apart from these two coins, the paper reports on two coins of the Archer type and one coin each of the Horseman and *Chhatra* types of Candragupta II, a King and Lakshmi and an Archer type coin of Skandagupta and three Archer type coins of Narasimha Bālāditya.

The author corrected the misattributions in a subsequent paper (BANIK 20).

22. CRIBB, J., Early medieval Kashmir coinage – A new hoard and an anomaly, *Num Dig* 40 (2016) pp. 86-112.

This paper examines some of the key coins that were contained in a hoard of coins found somewhere in Kashmir or in the neighboring areas sometime around 2011. The coins carried legends naming the kings Meghama (thought to be the same as Meghavāhana), Pravarasena, Tuysīna (Tuzīna), and Toramāṇa. The coins all name the king on the obverse and also carry a legend on the reverse that reads *kidara*, so they can be seen as belonging to a Kidarite or successor dynasty.

On the basis of their style, it seems quite clear that the coins fit in well between the late Kidarite coins and the well-known Kashmir series. Also, the fact that they were all present together in the hoard, and by their stylistic similarities, it seems clear that they were issued in a relatively short span of time. By comparing the names of the kings to the king lists in the

historical chronicle of Kashmir, the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, the author concludes that the coins can be dated to the period between the early 6<sup>th</sup> to the early 7<sup>th</sup> century. He also argues that the choice of names and the stylistic elements in the coins demonstrate that these kings were probably descendants of the Hun kings who ruled large parts of north-west India and Pakistan from the mid-4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Finally, the author takes up the anomaly that there are two series of post-Kidarite base gold dinars that are quite dissimilar in style but are both said to come from Kashmir. Since the new coins have strong ties to the Kashmir series, the author argues that the other so-called Kashmir series should be reassigned to areas further south, perhaps to Punjab or even Kanauj. This is an issue examined in greater detail by DEYELL (25, 26), who shows that, indeed, this other series does not belong to Kashmir. Rather, it can be divided into two separate series, one belonging to the Punjab Hills and the other to the Gangetic plain.

23. CRIBB, J. and SINGH, K., Two curious ‘Kidarite’ coin types from 5<sup>th</sup> century Kashmir, *JONS* 230 (2017) pp. 7-12.

This important paper discusses eight copper coins apparently belonging to the Kidarite series; six of the coins recently appeared in the Indian coin market, while two are respectively in the collections of the British and Ashmolean Museums. The eight coins are of two types, with different examples showing different parts of the design so that a fairly complete composite picture of the two types emerges.

Five of the coins depict a front-facing seated king with a hybrid legend, reading *devaputra* in Brāhmī letters and *kidara* in cursive Bactrian. The reverse of the coin features a front-facing seated goddess (one coin showing that the seat is a lion) holding a cornucopia; at right there is a Brāhmī letter *me*. The goddess calls to mind the depictions of Ardochsho on Kushan coins and of Lakṣmī on Gupta coins.

The remaining three coins show a standing king facing front with the Brāhmī legend *devaputra* (at left) *meha* (at right) on the obverse, and a seated goddess with cornucopia on the reverse.

The authors discuss the parallels of the various design elements with Kushan, Hun and Gupta prototypes, but ultimately show that they are most closely related to copper coins of Jara and Mihirakula from Kashmir. They point to Jara coins that show a seated king and others that depict a standing king. Coins of Mihirakula show a standing king; all the Jara and Mihirakula coins feature a front-facing goddess with cornucopia on the reverse. The close parallels between these coins with the subject coins strongly suggest that the subject coins are also from Kashmir. The legend *me* and *meha* could well relate the coins to the known Hun ruler Mehama. It is useful to recall here the argument by BAKKER 11 that Mehama must have ruled in or very close to Kashmir. The authors then make the argument that these coins add to the growing evidence that the Kidarites and the Alchon Huns may have been one and the same people.

25. DEYELL, J. S., Harsha’s coinage: Hidden in plain sight?, *Num Dig* 40 (2016) pp. 113-124.

In a preview of his more comprehensive work (DEYELL 26), this paper looks at the so-called “Kidarite” coinage naming *śrī pratāpa* and presents a convincing argument that this is the

“missing” coinage of the great Puṣpabhūti kings *Prabhākaravardhana* and *Harṣavardhana*. By carefully collecting hoard data from published sources and interviews with local dealers, Deyell was able to show that the *śrī pratāpa* coins are all found separately from the other so-called “Kidarite” coins with which they have traditionally been lumped and that their find spots are all in the Gangetic valley. He then shows why they must therefore be the issues of *Prabhākaravardhana* (who was known by the epithet *Pratāpaśīla*) and his son, the illustrious *Harṣavardhana*, dispensing with their traditional attribution to Muktapīda Lalitāditya and the other possible candidates: Toramāṇa and Mihirakula.

26. DEYELL, J. S., *Treasure, trade and tradition: Post-Kidarite coins of the Gangetic plains and the Punjab foothills, 590-820 CE*. (New Delhi, 2017).

This important book considers a coinage traditionally assigned to Kashmir, following that attribution by Alexander Cunningham. The series is identified as such, for example, by MITCHENER (78), types 3636-3660. Cunningham had based his attribution on the fact that some, although not all, of the kings’ names seen on these coins are also seen on the king lists in the great Kashmir history, the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*. The Kashmir source for these coins is puzzling, as they are quite dissimilar from another coin series known to be from Kashmir. This is the “anomaly” referred to by CRIBB (22).

The author resolves the anomaly by a careful consideration of stylistic elements and, above all, by a thorough examination of find spots from published sources as well as from extensive interviews with dealers and others on the ground familiar with the matter. He reaches four major conclusions:

- (1) Except for one hoard, found at a pilgrimage site in the Kashmir valley, where they could easily have been brought by a pilgrim, the coins under consideration are not found in Kashmir.
- (2) Coins of the series actually belong to two distinct groups, despite superficial similarities in their style. The coins naming *śrī pratāpa* are found separately from the others at sites in the Gangetic valley, while the others are found in the Punjab foothills.
- (3) The presence of the names of Kashmiri kings on the Punjab coins indicates that the area periodically came under Kashmiri rule, but was otherwise independent.
- (4) The coins in the name of *śrī pratāpa* must have been issued by the *Puṣpabhūti* king *Prabhākaravardhana* (who was known by the epithet *Pratāpaśīla*) and his son, the great king *Harṣavardhana*.

Thus the book solves a number of mysteries. Finding the “missing” coinage of *Harṣavardhana* is a major breakthrough, and resolving the question of the correct attribution of these “post-Kidarite” coins helps to clarify the history of the period.

27. DE LA VAISSIÈRE, E., The steppe world and the rise of the Huns, in MAAS, M. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Attila* (Cambridge, 2014) pp. 175-192.

This remarkable and important paper seeks to resolve some particularly knotty questions regarding the origin of the various tribes or groupings we call the Huns, including the Chionites, the Kidarites, the Alkhan, the Hephthalites and the European Huns associated with the most famous Hun of all, Attila. The author shows convincingly, using various textual sources, that all of these tribes belonged to one ethnic people, whom we may call the Huns, and whom the

Chinese called the Xiongnu. He argues, again convincingly, that there were not successive waves of invasions of these different groups into Central Asia (and further south) but rather just one large migration that took place c. 350-370. After that, the “successive waves” were really just different phases of which tribal group gained ascendancy among them all.

The author shows that this migration started from the region of the Altai mountains and the Minusinsk Basin, in the area where today the countries of China, Mongolia, Russia and Kazakhstan meet. Further, he cites paleoclimatological evidence that, around the year 350, there was a marked reduction in the production of pollen in the region, indicating a dramatic decrease in vegetation. Glaciers were also advancing in the area during this period. This sharp reduction in available food, both for humans and for their livestock, could well have been the primary cause for the migration to occur.

28. FISHMAN, A.M. and TODD, I.J., *The Silver Dammas* (Nasik, 2018).

This book is the first detailed study of the small silver coins (dammas) produced in large numbers in the area of what is now western India and south-eastern Pakistan, particularly the provinces of Sind and Punjab. The time period of issue for these coins has never been entirely clear, but some have been thought to date from the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century and to be of Hunnic origin. This is why the book concerns us here.

However, Fishman and Todd do not regard these coins to be Hunnic. While acknowledging the clear Hunnic influences visible in the coins, they assign some to the Rai dynasty and others to the Chach dynasty of Sind. When analyzing whether the coins are Hunnic, the authors seem to focus on the Alchon Huns as the tribe to which they would need to belong. But it is not clear that Toramāṇa, who we know ruled in Gujarat in the late 5<sup>th</sup> and early 6<sup>th</sup> century, was Alchon at all, despite the practice to assign him to that dynasty by most writers. They seem to follow the lead of GÖBL (71), who classified the king as Alchon in his seminal work on the coins of the Iranian Huns. Whether this classification was justified could be debated. Toramāṇa generally did not use the Alchon tamgha on his coins. The only exceptions are his rare Sasanian style drachms from Gandhāra; all his other coin types had their own distinctive features. It is entirely possible that he belonged to a lineage that owed its origin to the Kidarites; on many of his coins, he actually named Kidara. So the rejection of a Hunnic origin of the Yaśāditya series still needs to be discussed and debated.

29. RYOSUKE, F., *Ājīvika, Maṇibhadra and early history of Eastern Bengal: A new copperplate inscription of Vainyagupta and its implications*, *JRAS* 26 (2016) pp. 657-681.

This paper reports on a copperplate grant of Vainyagupta, previously unpublished, held in a private collection in Bangladesh. The grant, dated in the year 184 G.E. (= 504 CE), concerns the donation of a large tract of land (of the order of 2,000 acres or so) for the maintenance of a temple to the Ājīvika deity, Maṇibhadra. The main purpose of the paper is to analyze what this grant tells us about the prevalence of the Ājīvika tradition in what is now Bangladesh, and these do not concern us. However, there are a couple of other aspects of the inscription that are of potentially great significance for understanding Gupta history and the economy.



In listing the lands to be included in the grant, the plate reproduces the grants that brought each of those tracts of land into the possession of the present owner. Those grants date from the year 91 G.E. Many of those grants list a price paid for the land, which, in almost all cases, was 1 *dināra* for 10 *droṇavāpas*, although a few plots were more expensive. The author estimates that 1 *droṇavāpa* was equivalent to about 4.5 to 6 *bighas*. Taking a *bigha* to be approximately 14,400 square feet tells us that 1 *droṇavāpa* was equivalent to between 1.5 to 2 acres. Thus the grant tells us that a standard price for land at the time was approximately 1 *dināra* for 15-20 acres. The inscription also mentions a currency unit, the *māṣa*, which may be inferred to be one-sixteenth of a *dinara*. What is not clear is which coins constituted this denomination.

A second interesting revelation in the inscription is that it seems to indicate that, in the year 504, Vainyagupta was a subordinate ruler, although it does not tell us who his overlord was. Furui assumes it must have been a Gupta king, because of the use of the Gupta era for dating. By the time of the Gunaighar plate of Vainyagupta, inscribed in the same place as the present grant and dated to the year 188 G.E. (508 CE), Vainyagupta appears to have assumed the imperial title. What happened in the intervening 4 years is left unexplained and seems to be an interesting question for research. In particular, TANDON (60) has argued that, around this time, Toramāṇa may have defeated the Guptas in their heartland. So a natural question to ask is: might Vainyagupta's overlord have been Toramāṇa?

30. HEIDEMANN, S., The Hephthalite drachms minted in Balk, a hoard, a sequence, and a new reading, *NC* 175 (2015) pp. 330–344.

This paper reports on a parcel of 27 coins seen by the author in 1992. The coins could be a hoard or part of a hoard or they could be a gathering of coins from different sources. The coins consist of

- 22 Hephthalite imitations of drachms of Peroz (H 287)
- 4 drachms of Peroz (457-84)
- 1 drachm of Khusro (531-79)

Judging by their appearance, the author seems to believe that the 22 Hephthalite imitations all belonged to the same hoard.

Heidemann reviews the known and deduced history of the interaction between the Hephthalites and the Sasanians. The Hephthalites arrived in Transoxiana in the c. 440s and may have played a role in the installation of Peroz on the throne. They may also have assisted Peroz in defeating the Kidarites and occupying Balkh in 464/5. The Balkh dinars of Peroz wearing his second crown probably date from this time. Heidemann says that the Hephthalites acknowledged Sasanian overlordship, which was of course true at that time although later Peroz was compelled to pay tribute to the Hephthalites. Indeed, the subsequent conflict between the two sides was due to the refusal of Peroz to pay the tribute. Either way, the Sasanians and Hephthalites clashed in c. 474, when Peroz was captured and had to pay a large ransom to secure his release, and then again in c. 484 when the Sasanians were humiliated and Peroz was killed.

The imitation coins in the parcel are mostly Göbl 287 types with variations. This type has four pellets on the obverse and carries the Bactrian legend *eb* (for Ebadolo – Hephthalite) between 1 and 2 o'clock, and the mint name *βοχλο* on the reverse. Some of these legends are blundered and some in the past have been read by others as *σοαμο* or even *ιοαμο*. Heidemann

argues that, considering the homogeneity of the hoard, these legends in fact are simply blundered versions of *βοχλο*. He assigns all the coins to Balkh and argues that the degeneration in the legends was a consequence of the very long period over which the coins were issued, perhaps close to a century between 474 and 586.

31. JONGEWARD, D. and CRIBB, J. with DONOVAN, P., *Kushan, Kushano-Sasanian and Kidarite coins – A catalogue of coins from the American Numismatic Society* (New York, 2015).

This volume publishes for the first time the collection of Kushan, Kushano-Sasanian and Kidarite coins at the American Numismatic Society. Added to the ANS collection is a small group of coins from the collection of the late Dr. Larry Adams. A total of 2,638 coins are catalogued. By any measure, this is a substantial collection, no doubt the most important public collection of these coins in North America, and there are some extremely rare and previously unpublished types.

We are concerned here, however, with the Kidarites only, and these number a modest 35 coins. The organization is based on CRIBB (69), and some coins attributed by GÖBL (72) to the late Kushan “*Maiores domus*” are here identified as Kidarite.

34. KUMAR, S., The question of a standard vs. a javelin vs. a rajadanda on Gupta dynasty gold coins, *JONS* 227 (2016) pp. 14-17.

In this paper, the author argues that the Gupta gold coins referred to as the “Standard” or the “Sceptre” type should be divided into two types, which he calls the Javelin and the Rajadanda types. He correctly points out that the object the king is holding on these coins is not depicted in a consistent manner; sometimes there are round pommels on both ends and sometimes the lower end seems to have a spear point. ALTEKAR (66), in noting these different depictions, had expressed his inability to clearly identify the object and therefore resorted as a fallback position to refer to these coins as the “Standard” type. Kumar calls this an error and insists that there are two different objects. He does not, however, make a case for why we should consider these different depictions to truly represent intentionally different objects rather than their just being different interpretations of an object which the die cutter may not have truly understood, since this was a device that was borrowed from the Kushan coins on which Gupta coins were based. Since the type disappears from the coinage of Kumāragupta I and all later kings, it seems plausible to think that this was not a meaningful device for the Guptas. Further, the author does not comment on how strange it would be to hold a spear or javelin with its point downward to the ground. In such a position, the weapon would be losing its sharp point (and thereby suffering a diminution in its capacity as a weapon). In the examples of sculptures he cites where individuals are shown holding spears, the points are invariably pointed upwards, as was the case on those Kushan coins which showed the king holding an obvious spear. On the other hand, a standard or sceptre could well be equipped with a point at its base so it could be thrust into the ground to hold it steady, and this could account for the points at the bottom.

35. KUMAR, S., *Treasures of the Gupta Empire* (Shivlee Trust 2017).

This volume is the first comprehensive type catalogue of Gupta coins since ALTEKAR (66). The author, a collector, has amassed an impressive collection and has also gathered a large number of images of coins from public and private collections. As a result, he is able to greatly extend the number of types, varieties and sub-varieties identified by Altekar. As a pure listing of different varieties of coins, it is a huge advance. The presentation, with all coins illustrated in color enlargements, is handsome.

The volume also provides a detailed metal analysis, via the X-ray fluorescence (XRF) technique, of a large sample of coins. This is a first attempt to provide such information and will be of considerable help to scholars interested in the metallurgy of Gupta coins.

The author makes a bold attempt to reclassify to Candragupta I a large group of coins traditionally assigned to Candragupta II. This is an attempt to resolve a debate that has continued among students of Gupta coins for over a century: whether or not Candragupta I issued any coins. The so-called King and Queen type bears an image of the royal couple Candragupta I and his wife Kumāradevī. Many authors, including SMITH (81), ALTEKAR (66) and GUPTA (76) attribute the type to Candragupta I since his image is clearly on it. However, ALLAN (65) argued that the King and Queen type could not have been the first Gupta coin type because it was stylistically too far removed from the Kushan prototypes that clearly inspired the Gupta designs. Rather, Samudragupta's so-called "Standard" type deserved that honor. Therefore, Allan argued, the King and Queen type must have also been issued by Samudragupta in honor of his parents. Ellen Raven and many other authors subscribe to this view.

Kumar attempted to resolve this question in favor of the Candragupta I attribution by reassigning to him a large number of coins traditionally attributed to Candragupta II. Since there are Standard type coins in this group, he argues that these could have been the first Gupta coins. However, these coins are stylistically more removed from Kushan coins than are the Samudragupta Standard type coins. In addition, TANDON (61) has explored in detail the weights of a large sample of all the relevant coins (and also the coins in Kumar's database) and showed that the reattributed coins indeed do belong to Candragupta II. He also shows that the analysis of weights further confirms that the King and Queen type belongs to Samudragupta.

36. MAJUMDAR, S. B., *The Kalighat hoard: The first Gupta coin hoard from India* (Kolkata, 2014).

This is a very valuable reconstruction of the first known hoard of Gupta gold coins, discovered in 1783 on the banks of the Hooghly in a place called Kalighat, some 10 miles north of Kolkata. The hoard is thought to have numbered over 200 coins and was found in a pot, probably made of brass. It was handed over to the landowner, one Raja Nabakrishna Deb. He, in turn, presented it to Warren Hastings, the East India Company's Governor-General. Hastings appears to have sent 172 of these coins to the Directors of the Company in London, while retaining some coins, presumably more than 28, in India. The exact disposition of the hoard thereafter is not fully known.

The author has engaged in a clever piece of detective work in order to trace what happened to the coins of the hoard. Reconciling conflicting accounts, and tracing various sources of information, she has been able to partially reconstitute it. She has identified 117 coins as

almost certainly belonging to the hoard, identifying them largely by their provenance and by a common blackish patina exhibited by all of the coins. In addition, she has identified 11 more coins as “probable” remnants of the hoard.

The availability of this reconstituted hoard will be of tremendous help to researchers on Gupta coins. Evidence of this is already clear, in that the information on the hoard proved to be of great use in the study of Gupta coin attributions by TANDON (61).

37. PAYNE, R., The making of Turan, *Jour of Late Antiquity* 9 (2016) pp. 4-41.

This paper traces the historical development of the hybrid political culture of Turan, the ancient area northeast of Iran. The area was dominated first by Hun and then Turk conquerors, who adopted many Iranian ideas while retaining many of their own.

The author first traces the history of the Hun and Turk ascendancy over the Sasanians that occurred from the 4<sup>th</sup> century onwards, first with the Kidarites, followed in succession by the Alkhan, the Hephthalites and the Turks. He points out that coins are the key to studying these dynasties, although he also draws heavily from literary and archaeological sources, paying special attention to the Bactrian documents studied by Nicholas Sims-Williams.

The Huns who conquered Bactria and Gandhāra from the Sasanians took over the Sasanian mints and continued issuing coins inspired by Sasanian prototypes, including the thin silver drachms of Gandhāra and the gold Kushano-Sasanian style coins of Bactria. They continued to use Sasanian style designs, including the crowns worn by the kings and the reverses featuring deities or fire altars. This continuity allowed them to appeal to the local aristocracy, which continued in service to the new political authority, just as they did to the old. Thus the Huns not only extracted tribute from the Sasanians, but also took over the taxation of the local economy, giving them a firm financial base. At the same time, they introduced elements unique to themselves, such as the name Kidara and the use of tamghas, in order to simultaneously appeal to their nomadic cohorts. The Alkhan introduced quite distinct portraits, with unique crowns and beardless chins. The Hephthalites started using the term eb or ebo to denote their Ebodalo name.

While they adopted Sasanian political structures, they retained their nomadic military culture, which was superior to the Sasanian and tied them to the steppe.

To some extent, the Huns adopted many of the same myths as the Sasanians for their origin stories. Rustam, the famous Persian king, seems to also play a role in the Hun mythology as depicted in the paintings at Panjikent. At the same time, they appear to have adopted the role of the arch-enemies of the Iranians, taking Afraysab, the legendary enemy of Wishtasp, the primordial king of Iran, as their ancestor. Thus they seemed to have created a hybrid historical story in the same way as they created a hybrid political culture.

38. PAYNE, R., The reinvention of Iran: The Sasanian Empire and the Huns, in MAAS, M. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Attila* (Cambridge, 2014) pp. 282-300.

This paper is concerned with the question of how the Sasanians were able to retain power in their homeland after their humiliating defeats at the hands of the Hephthalites in 474-5 and 484.

Around the year 370, the Kushano-Sasanians gave way to the Kidarites and in the 420's Varhran V Gor attacked them from his base in Gurgan. All he managed to achieve was possession of the Merv oasis. Peroz eventually recovered Bactria from the Kidarites in 467, when he issued his gold coins there, but this was after years of war conducted by his father Yazdgerd II and himself. And then came the humiliating defeats at the hands of the Hephthalites, when they seized Bactria and Merv. Sasanian coinage disappears from Merv at this time, and only reappears some decades later.

The Huns adopted Sasanian symbols such as the crowns, etc and issued seals proclaiming their majesty. Their economy flourished, driven largely by Sogdian traders; this period saw great growth at Samarkand, Bukhara, Paykend and Panjikent. One of the sources of Hun revenue had been the tribute they extracted from the Sasanians until Yazdgerd I refused to pay, which echoes their treatment of the Guptas and the eventual refusal by Baladitya to pay (see TANDON 53).

Peroz had been captured in 475 and gained his freedom after paying a huge ransom. He returned in 484 with an army but was resoundingly defeated when his army fell into a concealed trench. Peroz's body was never recovered. But the Sasanian nobility was able to raise an army and protect the homeland from further Hun incursions.

Through their identifying themselves with the Kayanian dynasty of the Avesta, the Sasanian kings were able to keep a hold over the minds of the nobility, who continued to support them, financing and provisioning the building of two great walls on either side of the Caspian Sea and eventually helping Khusro I to recover Bactria in c. 544.

39. PFISTERER, M., *Hunnen in Indien* (Wien, 2013).

Although this book was published in the year before the period under consideration in this volume, I mention it here for two reasons. First, there was no chapter written for these coinages in the last edition of the *Survey*. Second, this volume is in many ways a companion to the two-volume catalogue of VONDROVEC (62), as it is another part of the multi-volume update of the work of Robert Göbl on the coinage of the Iranian Huns. Pfisterer's catalogue covers the Hunnic coin collections of the Bern Museum and the noted Swiss collector Jean-Pierre Righetti. It follows the same rubric as the volumes by Vondrovec, and is particularly strong on the coins of the Alkhan Huns. One especially notable finding is the discovery that many of the coins attributed to a king named Narendra should really be attributed to a king named Toramāṇa, who would be the second king with that name.

40. PFISTERER, M. and Uhlir, K., Coinage of the Nezak Shah: A perspective from the hoard evidence, in McAllister, P., Scherrer-Schaub, C. and Krasser, H. (eds), *Cultural flows across the Western Himalaya* (Wien, 2015).

This paper provides an excellent overview of the Nezak coinage, which is perhaps the most copious of all the Hun coinages. Most of the coins are variations of a single basic type, although they can be divided into two broad groups, based on the legend, the so-called š-type and ā-type. The š-type commenced earlier, around the year 460 or so, in the area of Ghazni. The ā-

type commenced c. 515, at a time when the Alchon seem to have re-focused their attention on India (this was the time when Toramāṇa was being chased out of Mālwa) and lost the Kabul region to the Nezak.

The authors then present coins from two large hoards, the Gardez and Kandahar hoards, which contained large numbers of Nezak coins. Considerations of stylistic development, along with XRF analysis of the metal content of the coins, allow for an improved chronological ordering of the Nezak types.

41. RAVEN, E. M., Kumāra *cum* Kumāra, *Pratna Samiksha: A Journal of Archaeology* (2015) pp. 63–88.

In this paper, the author advances a new interpretation of what some of the coins of Kumāragupta I tell us about the king. Raven notes that there are very few inscriptions known for the Gupta kings and so coins are a major source of information on them. For this study, she explores in particular the message contained in a new type of coin issued by Kumāragupta I, the Kārttikeya type, which shows the king feeding a peacock on the obverse and the god Kārttikeya riding his peacock mount on the reverse. The two Kumāras mentioned in the title of the paper are Kumāragupta and Kumāra, which is another name for Kārttikeya.

The presence of Kārttikeya on a Gupta coin is quite exceptional. The author notes that, prior to this time, the only deities featured on Gupta coins were Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu (the latter only via his attribute *cakra* in Candragupta II's rare *cakrapuruṣa* type of coin). So the choice by Kumāragupta to issue the Kārttikeya type must have been of some significance.

The traditional interpretation of the Kārttikeya type is that it is an expression of Kumāragupta's devotion to the deity, after whose he had chosen the name by which he wished to be known. The act of feeding the peacock, the chosen mount of Kārttikeya, is then seen as the making of an offering. Indirectly, the type is then an indication of the king's Śaivite predilections, since Kārttikeya is a son of Śiva.

Raven, on the other hand, proposes that Kumāragupta is here identifying himself with Kārttikeya. She notes that the figure of Kārttikeya on the reverse is not bestowing any blessing on the king through the offering of jewels or coins, as Lakṣmī is frequently depicted. Thus the act of feeding the peacock need not be seen as an offering but simply as a portrayal of the young warrior with "his" peacock. Supporting this is the king's choice of epithet, *mahendra*. This is normally interpreted as "Great Indra," but Raven instead argues that this is identifying Kumāragupta with Kārttikeya as *mahendra*, the young commander or general for the gods. She particularly points to the use of the epithet *mahendrakumāra* on both sides of the coin.

Finally, Raven argues that the same message is being conveyed through another unique coin type issued by Kumāragupta: the Apratigha type. This is normally translated as the "immovable" one and has been thought by some to represent the king's decision to abdicate the throne. However, Raven argues that instead it should be read as the "invincible" one, and is another way in which Kumāragupta portrayed himself as the army general, the choice of his parents. One point which the author does not make is that it is quite possible that Kumāragupta

was not the natural heir (that distinction belonging to a possible older brother Govindagupta) and so he may have felt the need to portray himself as the choice of his parents, perhaps because of his military prowess. A similar interpretation of this coin is offered by BAKKER (14).

42. RAVEN, E. M., Samudragupta's Asvamedha coins in the patterning of early Gupta coin designs, *Pratna Samiksha, A Journal of Archaeology* (2016) pp. 95-126.

This paper is another in a continuing series in which the author explains her system for organizing Gupta gold coins. All the catalogues of Gupta coins are really classification systems, simply organizing the coins by Type and Variety. The Types are easy to see. For example, Samudragupta is known to have issued coins of the Archer, Asvamedha, Battle-axe, Kāca, King & Queen, Lyrst, Sceptre, and Tiger-slayer types. These different types are easy to recognize from the coin designs. Within each type, there are Varieties; these are more difficult to organize on a scientific basis. Most authors simply follow the lead of the cataloguers of the past, such as SMITH (81), ALLAN (65) and ALTEKAR (66), basing their varieties on differences in legend or the attitudes or positions taken by the obverse design. Raven has a different approach, which she calls the mint-idiomatic approach. Her attempt is to organize the coins within any given type into Groups, with coins of many different Types falling into the same Group. The way in which she does this is to focus on the stylistic elements of the designs that are visible across types. In this way, she attempts to organize the coins in a way that reveals which coins of different types may have been made in the same mint at roughly the same time. The method is extremely difficult as it requires a detailed knowledge of the stylistic art involved in the coin designs. The author, being an art historian, is uniquely well equipped to do this.

The paper focuses on the Asvamedha coins of Samudragupta. The author explains the features that help her classify the coins into different Groups, and then into different varieties. Again, the method is difficult to follow because of the minute details involved. Nevertheless, this is the only approach that allows us to organize the coins on a scientific basis. The conclusion from this study is that the Asvamedha coins belong to just two groups and that it is quite likely that they were all made at the same mint and at roughly the same time.

Along the way, the author also discusses a couple of controversial aspects of the Asvamedha coinage. The figure on the reverse has been thought to be the Emperor's queen, because the queen was an important participant in the Asvamedha ritual. However, Raven argues that it actually represents the goddess Lakṣmī. The main identifying feature is that she is depicted standing on a lotus, a clear attribute of the goddess. Raven argues that the goddess is meant to signify a Divine queen. Another possible interpretation, however, is that the human queen becomes divine in the act of performing the ritual. Further, there could be a conscious attempt to identify the queen with the goddess, much as the author herself argues that Kumāragupta does in his Kārttikeya type (RAVEN 41).

Besides the reverse figure, the author also discusses in great detail the legends on the obverse of the coins and points to many remaining difficulties in adequately reading all of the four purported legends.

43. RAVEN, E. M., From third grade to top rate: The discovery of Gupta coin styles, and a mint group study for Kumāragupta I, in WESSELS-MEVISSSEN, C. and MEVISSSEN, G. J. R. (eds), *Indology's Pulse: Arts in Context, Essays Presented to Doris Meth Srinivasan* (New Delhi, 2019).

This paper is yet another in the continuing series in which the author explains her system for organizing Gupta gold coins. The first part of the paper reviews the art historical scholarship on Gupta coins, noting that most art historians have ignored them, or at best paid them cursory attention. The “third grade” in the title refers to the widely held view among art historians that Gupta coins are of generally low artistic quality. This view, in the author’s opinion, reflects Western prejudices of what constitutes fine art and the proper way to model the human body. The “top rate” in the paper’s title is a reference to the very high prices being realized for Gupta gold coins in the market today, a reflection perhaps that collector opinion differs markedly from that of the art historical community.

The author then turns to a case study of the coins of Kumāragupta I, in particular to what the author has designated his Groups 7 and 8. Raven provides detailed descriptions of each type and points to the features by which she has reached the conclusion that they belong in the same Group, that is, that they were probably made in the same mint at roughly the same time. The types include a wide variety of Kumāragupta’s coin types: Lion-slayer, Archer, Horseman, Rhinoceros-slayer, Elephant-rider, Elephant-rider Lion-slayer, Lyrist, Aśvamedha, and Apratigha. The only types known for this king that are left out of the list are the Kārttikeya, Swordsman, and Tiger-slayer types. One question that might arise is when in Kumāragupta’s reign the coins were issued. If the Group numbering is similar to that followed by the author in RAVEN (79), the higher Group numbers would be thought to be later than the lower numbers. Here, we have the Apratigha type included, which, by most authorities and Raven herself, is seen as a very early issue. So does this imply that Groups 7 and 8 were early issues of the king?

The author summarizes her approach as follows (p. 212):

The coalescing bond of a shared mint idiom ... filters through in body contours, in the use of a small and specific range of facial features and hairstyles, in postures of body, heads, hands and feet, in fittings of banners and handles, in attributes and the shaping thereof. It also expresses itself in the palaeography of the legends and in choices where and how to place the legends and the symbols.

The difficulty for the average collector or even numismatist, not trained in art historical methods, is that it is extremely difficult to be able to identify which features become decisive in assigning coins to any particular Group. As the author herself continues:

The extent to which the shared idiom shines through may vary per coin type, and may differ for either side of one particular die pair. Each side of a coin is a new ensemble of device features, which is why we have to weigh the evidence that obverse and reverse together offer us.



As a result, the mint-idiomatic approach used by the author is extremely difficult to implement for others. We await her complete statement of the Groups and how she arrives at them.

44. RAVEN, E. M., Messing up the system, Gupta gold coin forgeries, in MYRDAL, E. (ed), *South Asian Art and Archaeology 2014* (New Delhi, 2020) pp. 283-295.

This paper takes up the knotty problem of identifying forgeries of Gupta gold coins. The forging of coins is of course not a new problem; it is mentioned even in Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*, although gold coins are not mentioned, indicating that the text was composed prior to the widespread introduction of gold coinage by the Kushans. ALLAN (65) and ALTEKAR (66) do not mention forgeries at all, so it is possible that they did not think there was a big problem of forgeries of Gupta coins in our time. The author of this survey, however, has seen many forgeries in the collections of the Uttar Pradesh Museum system, and they also show up with some regularity in the trade market, so there is no doubt that a problem exists.

Excavations have revealed clay molds used in the production of cast forgeries during Gupta times. Molds for the production of imitation coins of Candragupta II have been found in Rajghat, near Varanasi, and Rohtak. Also, molds to forge coins of Narasimhagupta have been found in Nalanda. The author considers the proposal that these finds indicate the existence of Gupta mints in these locations and concludes that this is likely the case.

Modern forgeries can be cast or struck. Surprisingly, the author has seen cast forgeries that seem to have used coins from the Bayana hoard and the British Museum as their templates. For the latter, electrotypes issued by the Museum may have been used. The electrotypes themselves are faithful reproductions but weigh only about half the original coin. But they could be used to create molds from which other cast forgeries can be made. The author details the signs to look for in order to identify cast coins. Since Gupta gold coins were never cast, the demonstration that a coin is cast is sure evidence that it is not authentic.

Struck forgeries present a more difficult problem. If the forger has developed the coin dies himself, an expert can normally tell this from various failures to reproduce the original design in a convincing way. This is true of some struck forgeries of Samudragupta *Aśvamedha* type coins considered by the author. If an authentic coin is used to create the dies for the forgeries, the problem becomes much trickier. Now careful attention needs to be paid to the weight of the coin. Possibly in the future the metal composition might be another crucial identifying factor. But even this could be stymied by the use of genuine, but common or low quality (highly worn), Gupta coins as the source of gold for the forgeries.

45. REZAKHANI, K., A note on the Alkhan coin type 39 and its legend, *Dabir Journal* 1 (2015) pp. 24-27.

In this very interesting short paper, the author notes that nobody has yet provided a meaningful reading of the legend on type 39 from GÖBL (71). He suggests that the legend reads *χιδρο βατανο*, which means Kidara, King Majesty, referring of course to the eponymous founder of the Kidarite dynasty. The most controversial element of this suggestion is the interpretation of the first letter *χ* as interchangeable with *κ*. The author points out that, although

this would normally not be a permissible interchange, the name Kidara is rendered as Khydr in some Islamic sources. He therefore suggests that the legend may well be referring to the Kidarite king. While the argument is certainly not conclusive, it is indeed suggestive and provides a very provocative and interesting interpretation of the coin. This interpretation would add to the growing evidence of the closeness of the so-called “Kidarite” and “Alkhan” dynasties, which some regard as possibly one polity.

47. SHAH, S., Symbol of syncretism: A unique trident type coin of Kumāragupta I, *Num Dig* 40 (2016) pp. 62-66.

This paper examines the rare trident type silver drachm of Kumāragupta I, noting that the trident on the reverse appears to have legs that echo the legs of Garuḍa on the Garuḍa type drachms. He argues that this reflects a type of syncretism: the trident was imitated from the coins of the Maitrakas, probably reflecting the popularity of Śaivism in that part of Saurashtra, while the legs reflected the Vaishnava preferences of the Gupta kings. Some might think it implausible, however, that a Gupta king would imitate coins of a minor dynasty such as the Maitrakas.

48. SIMS-WILLIAMS, N., Bactria – Balkh: Variations on a place-name, in PIRART, É. (ed.), *Études de linguistique iranienne. In memoriam Xavier Tremblay* (Leuven/Paris/Bristol, 2016) pp. 273–281.

This paper looks at some variant spellings for the place name Bactria – Balkh and supports an argument, made by Étienne de la Vaissière, that Sogdian βγtyk or βxtyk and Bactrian βαγδδγγο are also variant spellings of the same name. The argument added here is that the substitution of [d] for [l] could lead to the introduction of the delta for lambda in βαχλο, a well-attested spelling for the name on coins.

49. SINGH, K., The Murshidabad hoard of Gupta coins, *JONS* 221 (2014) pp. 22-25.

This brief paper attempts to provide information about a hoard of Gupta gold coins found in West Bengal in May 2013. The author visited the site late in that year and was able to examine 59 coins still in the possession of local residents and 11 more coins that were in the custody of the police. According to his information, another 10 coins had already been purchased by traders and had entered the coin market. Apparently the coins are all in “superb” condition, indicating that they had not seen much circulation. The 11 coins seized by the police were independently published by BANIK (19).

The author provides photographs of 13 coins and a breakdown of all of the 70 coins of which he has knowledge by king and type. All of the Gupta kings from Samudragupta to Narasimhagupta are represented. Because the attribution of coins continues to be contested, it would have been far more useful if the author could have provided photographs of all the coins and also provided at least their weights if not their diameters also. Nevertheless, this was a very useful exercise in reconstituting a hoard and providing information on the find spot.

Even more interesting is the author’s exploration of the historical importance of the find spot. He convincingly argues, citing literary evidence from roughly that time period, that the location where the coins were found may have been the site of an ancient temple. He cites

evidence that there was a Buddhist stupa in the area and also a temple built by “a Maharaja called Sri Gupta ... for the use of Chinese priests.” He argues that the coins may have been offerings at this temple, accounting for their superb condition.

50. SINGH, K., First silver coin of Gupta king Ghatotkachagupta, *JONS* 232 (2018) pp. 25-26.

This brief paper introduces an important new coin type, a silver drachm of the *madhyadeśa* type issued by the Gupta prince Ghatotkachagupta. Coins of this type are known for Kumāragupta I, Skandagupta and Budhagupta, so this new discovery adds a fourth king to the list. The style of the coin fits the series perfectly and the legend, while not perfectly legible, seems to be clear enough to be quite sure of the attribution. The author reads the legend as ... *(va) yati Ghatot(k)achaguptoyam pi* ... Singh surveys the silver coinage of the Guptas in general and assigns the coin to the period between Kumāragupta and Skandagupta.

Kumāragupta's *madhyadeśa* coins carried the legend *vijitavanir avanipati Kumāragupta divam jayati*. He did not have the *guptoyam* ending. Skandagupta's coins had the legend *vijitavanir avanipati jayati divam skandaguptoyam*. So he had the *guptoyam* ending, but the word prior to his name on the circular legend would have been *divam*. Finally, Budhagupta's coins featured the legend *vijitavanir avanipati sri budhagupto divam jayati*. So the *guptoyam* ending had disappeared and the word before his name was *avanipati*. An examination of the coin photo published by Singh, while not containing the full legend, does show parts of all of the letters in it. Counting up these bits and pieces indicates that there were simply not enough letters to yield the customary legend; there are too few letters by a significant margin. The author does not look into this question at all, which might be important in determining when exactly in the sequence the coin was issued. Singh seems to favor placing the coin between Kumāragupta and Skandagupta, but this could be questioned for reasons discussed by TANDON (53).

Nevertheless, this is an important new coin type to add to the corpus of Gupta coins and one of some historical importance. It may help elaborate the role that this prince played in Gupta history.

51. TANDON, P., Horseman Coins of Candragupta III, *NC* 173 (2013) pp. 171-185.

Although this paper was published in 2013, it is included here because of its importance and because there was no section on the Guptas in the last INC Survey volume. The paper published for the first time some new coin types and varieties of the Gupta king Candragupta III. The existence of this king is not universally accepted, although it was first proposed by ALLAN (65) and carried forward by a number of authors, most notably GUPTA (75). Some of these authors thought that Candragupta III might have ruled immediately after Kumāragupta I (and before Skandagupta) but P.L. Gupta thought he ruled later, sometime between Budhagupta and Vainyagupta. RAVEN (80) had argued for the post-Kumāragupta date. In this paper, further evidence in favor of this date is furnished and the Sun variety of the Archer type and the Horseman type were introduced for the first time. The author also argued that the object known as the Architectural symbol featured on some coins was actually a fire altar. The author made the tentative suggestion for the first time that this king may have been Kumāragupta's only known legitimate son, Purugupta.

52. TANDON, P., Notes on the Evolution of Alchon Coins, *JONS* 216 (2013) pp. 24-34.

Although this paper was published in 2013, it is included here because of its importance and because there was no section on the Huns in the last INC Survey volume. The paper argues in favor of a more robust use of the Schøyen inscription in understanding the coinage of the Alchon Huns. In his seminal work, GÖBL (71) had attempted to organize the coinage chronologically. What the Schøyen inscription has made clear is that the Hunnic tribes must have formed a confederacy of some sort, with different kings ruling simultaneously in different geographic areas. The four kings mentioned in the inscription, Khīngīla, Toramāna, Mehama and Javūkha, could well have been ruling at the same time. The present paper shows that their coins are stylistically distinct and therefore were probably the output of different mints. If we assume that there were at least four different series of coins from four different mints, the coins of other kings could then be fitted into one or other of these series based on their style. The purpose of the paper was to demonstrate the viability and potential usefulness of this approach in organizing the coinage.

53. TANDON, P., The succession after Kumāragupta I, *JRAS* 24 (2014) pp. 557-572.

This paper examines the numismatic and other evidence surrounding the period after the death of Kumāragupta I. Traditionally, the successor to Kumāragupta has been taken to be his son Skandagupta, as we have dated inscriptions of the latter. However, there is a gap of 8 years between the known dates of Kumāragupta and Skandagupta, giving rise to the possibility that another king may have ruled in the interim. There is also inscriptional evidence that the period after Kumāragupta's death was an unsettled one, suggesting the possibility of a civil war of succession.

WILLIS (82) and BAKKER (15) have argued that there was a struggle for succession and that this struggle was between Skandagupta and Kumāragupta's brother Ghaṭotkaca. One of the key pieces of evidence they cite is the gold coin of Ghaṭotkaca, in the collection of the Hermitage Museum, which indicates the imperial ambitions of that prince. We know that Ghaṭotkaca was Kumāragupta's viceroy in Vidiśā and so the notion that he may have challenged Skandagupta for the throne is a plausible one, especially considering that Skandagupta was surely the son of a concubine and therefore not an immediate candidate for the throne.

The author argues, however, that the coin provided as evidence of Ghaṭotkaca's claim could not possibly have been issued soon after the death of Kumāragupta because it is too heavy (9.16g) and too large (diameter 23mm). Coins of that period do not conform to these measurements, indicating that it was issued years later. Rather, he points to the growing consensus that Kumāragupta was followed by a king we call Candragupta III, most likely Kumāragupta's legitimate son Purugupta, since we know of a series of coins of that king. Nor is there any sign in the coins of a power struggle between Purugupta and Skandagupta. Rather, it seems that Purugupta must have succeeded to the throne and issued coins, with Skandagupta issuing coins only later. As for the wars that Skandagupta was fighting during this period, the author argues that Skandagupta's inscriptions tell us that the enemy was outside his family, most likely the Huns. He suggests that the Hun opponent may well have been the king who issued

coins in the name Prakāśāditya. However, this is unlikely, now that we know that Prakāśāditya was the Hun king Toramāṇa, whose time period, c. 495-515, is much later than Skandagupta. The opponent could well have been some other Hun king, or the Vākātakas, as Bakker had suggested.

54. TANDON, P., The coins of Purugupta, *Num Dig* 38 (2014) pp. 88-117.

This paper attempts to solve a problem that is more than a century old: to identify the coins of Purugupta, son of Kumāragupta I, who is known from the inscriptions of his descendants, but whose coins have not yet been identified. The lack of a coinage for this king has led many scholars to discount the possibility that he ever ruled, despite the fact that he is identified as a *maharājadhirāja* in inscriptions.

First the paper dispenses with the various attempts to identify Purugupta's coinage, the most popular one being that Purugupta was the same as Prakāśāditya, the issuer of the well-known horseman lion-slayer coins. This theory can be discarded now that we know that Prakāśāditya was actually the Hun king Toramāṇa (TANDON 56).

The paper then goes on to argue that the coins of the king who is known in the literature as Candragupta III are in fact the coins of Purugupta. The timing, immediately following the reign of Kumāragupta I, is correct. There is no other candidate person to have been Candragupta III. And there are literary references to suggest that Purugupta may have been known also as Candragupta and as Vikramāditya (which would account for the epithet *śrī vikrama* seen on the reverse of the Candragupta III coins).

55. TANDON, P., Abhimanyu: A newly identified Hun king, *JONS* 225 (2015) pp. 29-30.

This brief paper provides an improved reading of the name of a Hun king, whose coins were first published by GÖBL (71) as his type 75. Göbl had been unable to read the name of the king on his coins, but PFISTERER (39) provided a tentative reading as Avamazha. Based on a clearer coin, this paper now correctly reads the name of the king as Abhimanyu, one more name to add to the list of Hun kings in South Asia.

56. TANDON, P., The identity of Prakāśāditya, *JRAS* 25 (2015) pp. 647-668.

This paper solves a problem that had puzzled numismatists and historians for more than 150 years: who was the king who issued the gold horseman lion-slayer coins and identified himself on the reverse by the epithet *prakāśāditya*? All scholars other than Robert Göbl had assumed this king must have belonged to the Gupta dynasty, as the coins appear to belong to the Gupta series. GÖBL (73), however, had argued that the king was a Hun, on account of the fact that the crown he wore bore a crescent on the brow.

The author solves the problem by providing the first ever reading of the obverse legend, of which only one letter had to be inferred. It reads: *avanipatitoramā(ṇo) vijitya vasudhām divam jayati*. This reading clearly identifies the king as the Hun king Toramāṇa and conforms closely with the legend used by him on his Gupta-inspired silver coins. A possible inspiration for the

design of the coin is also identified: a Sasanian silver plate in the British Museum that shows a mounted king killing a lion.

57. TANDON, P., New evidence on the date of Chandragupta III, *Num Dig* 40 (2016) pp. 67-77.

This paper presents some previously unrecognized Archer type coins of Skandagupta which show an object, either a fire altar or a *śrīvatsa*, between the face of the king and the Garuḍa banner at left. These coins prove conclusively that Skandagupta issued his coins after Candragupta III and therefore cement the dating of Candragupta III as ruling after Kumāragupta I and before Skandagupta. Details of these and other related coins shed some light on the competition between the Guptas and the Huns in the second half of the fifth century.

58. TANDON, P., Attribution of the nameless coins of the archer type, *NC* 178 (2018) pp. 247-268.

This paper reports on an Archer type gold coin of the “Nameless” variety discovered in the Lucknow Museum which features the epithet *śrī prakāśa* on the reverse. Following the discovery that the king with the epithet *prakāśāditya* was none other than the Hun king Toramāṇa (TANDON 56), this coin would therefore also be attributed to that king. A careful stylistic analysis of all of the coins of the “Nameless” variety (Archer type coins which lack the name of the issuing king in a vertical format in the right field of the obverse) reveals that all of them (including the *śrī prakāśa* coin) are stylistically similar to one another and distinct from all other Gupta coins. The natural conclusion is that all of the Nameless coins are Hun issues.

This discovery is important not only because it gives us better insight into the correct attribution of the Nameless coins but also because it shows that the Huns must have made an incursion deep into the Gupta heartland in what is now eastern Uttar Pradesh. The fact that they did is suggested by the ancient text, the *Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*, and also in the account of the Chinese pilgrim Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsiang). The attribution of the Nameless coins to the Huns now provides the first physical evidence of this incursion.

59. TANDON, P., Two newly-identified Hun kings and a hoard from Pushkalavati, *JONS* 237 (2019) pp. 8-12.

This brief paper reports on the discovery of copper coins of two previously unknown Hun kings and on a hoard containing largely copper coins of Kīṅgila.

The first king reported, now known from two coins found near Multan, is named Bagīcca or Bagīkhkha. The obverse of the coins show the bust of a crowned king facing right along with the legend naming the king in Brāhmī letters. The reverse shows a couchant lion right wearing a ribboned necklace. The author dates the coins approximately to the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century.

The second king is reported from two coins which were part of a larger hoard of 145 copper coins apparently found in a bronze lidded container in Pushkalavati. The coins show the bust of the king left on the obverse and the name in Brāhmī letters on the reverse; the name reads

Khunva or possibly Khunca. As most of the coins in the hoard were those of Khiṅgila, although a few others attributable to Toramāṇa and Vaysira were also present, the coins can be dated to late in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

The hoard contained 115 coins of Khiṅgila, all of type Göbl 54. The author does a metrological analysis and finds that the coins do not seem to adhere to a weight standard; the distribution of the weights between 0.6 and 1.0 gram seems to be almost uniform. Given that most of the coins appear to be clipped, he speculates that this shows that the coins may have been a fiat currency, with a value higher than the metal content.

60. TANDON, P., The Coins and History of Toramāṇa, in DARYAEE, T. and LERNER, J. A. with REY, V. (eds.) *Dinars and Dirhams: Festschrift in Honor of Michael L. Bates*, (Irvine 2020) pp. 269-282.

This paper examines how our understanding of the history and coinage of the Hun king Toramāṇa has changed in recent years thanks to the discovery of new coins, inscriptions and other evidence. The most important of these discoveries was the fact that Toramāṇa used the epithet *prakāśāditya* (TANDON 56) and was the issuer of the well-known horseman lion-slayer coins displaying that epithet on the reverse. This discovery allows us to also attribute to Toramāṇa other coins identified only by the epithets *prakāśāditya* or *śrī prakāśa*. However, there have been other significant discoveries, notably the Schøyen inscription, the Sanjeli copper plates, the Rīsthal Inscription of the Aulikara king Prakāśadharman, and various new coin types, including a Sasanian style silver drachm that must have been produced in Gandhāra.

The new coins confirm or are consistent with a lot of what we already knew or suspected was true of Toramāṇa's history. He started his career in the area of northern Punjab, perhaps in the foothills of the Himalayas, and then conducted a successful campaign into Mālwa, where the famous Eran boar inscription was created. But we now know that he extended his sway further west into what is now northern Gujarat. Further, he appears to have suffered a defeat at the hands of Prakāśadharman, and then to have conducted a successful campaign into the Gangetic valley, reaching at least as far east as Varanasi. He seems to have defeated the Guptas and consolidated Hun rule in the area, before apparently dying of natural causes around the year 515.

61. TANDON, P., Reattributing some (more) Coins of Candragupta II to Candragupta III, *NC* 180 (2020) pp. 361-392.

This paper addresses a long-standing controversy about the correct attribution of some Gupta gold coins and then goes on to propose reattributing a major group of coins traditionally assigned to Candragupta II to Candragupta III. Methodologically, it introduces for the first time the use of statistical methods in the analysis of Gupta coin weights. The database for the analysis consists of 1,609 Gupta gold coins from 7 public and 9 private collections.

The controversy taken up in the first part of the paper relates to the attribution of certain coins (known as the King and Queen type) to Candragupta I. Allan had argued that these coins should be assigned to Samudragupta. KUMAR (35) disputed this attribution, arguing in favor of the view held by many others that they should be assigned to Candragupta I. But Kumar went

further, assigning a further group of coins to this king, namely all the coins traditionally assigned to Candragupta II that feature the goddess on the reverse seated on a throne rather than a lion.

The present paper argues on the basis of style and a careful statistical analysis of the weights that none of these coins should be attributed to Candragupta I. Rather, the King and Queen types should be assigned to Samudragupta, as Allan had suggested, and the Goddess on Throne types to Candragupta II, as has traditionally been done.

The latter half of the paper is devoted to arguing that a major group of coins, traditionally attributed to Candragupta II should be reassigned to Candragupta III. The argument is based on the style of the coins and is confirmed once again by a careful statistical analysis of the weights. The implication of this finding is that Candragupta III was a much more important king (as measured by the breadth and quantity of his coin production) than previously thought, strengthening the case to identify him as Purugupta, as the author has previously argued. Another potentially important finding of the paper is that it appears that Gupta coin weights rose not only from king to king, but also year to year within the reign of individual kings. This throws into doubt the traditional attempts to assign different coins to particular weight standards.

62. VONDROVEC, K., *Coinage of the Iranian Huns and their Successors from Bactria to Gandhara (4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Century CE)* (Vienna 2014).

This is a major part of a long overdue enterprise to update the path-breaking work on the coinage of the Iranian Huns by GÖBL (71). Based on the collection of the noted Pakistani collector, Aman ur Rahman, it is a new catalogue (the first in English) of the coins of the Kidarites, the Alkhan, the Nezak, and the so-called “genuine” Hephthalites. Along with the catalogue, Vondrovec surveys the political and cultural context in which the coinages were produced.

Since Göbl wrote his four volume survey of these coinages, many new types have emerged and there is much new evidence on the historical context. Thus the update was very much needed. Vondrovec has done a tremendous job gathering material on the new types and preparing new readings of many of the known types. He has been able to improve on Göbl’s attributions and to arrange the coins in more logical sequences. The Aman ur Rahman collection is particularly strong on the small copper coins produced in Gandhāra and neighboring regions and, as a result, the catalogue is particularly strong in this area. The presentation, in two handsome volumes, is magnificent, although one might have hoped for better photographs; many of the images are quite dark.

Unfortunately, a decision to adhere to Göbl’s numbering system has made the catalogue difficult to use, as the coin sequences had to be modified from the ones adopted by Göbl and are therefore no longer in any kind of numerical order. Nor has any attempt been made to use the valuable information revealed in the Schøyen inscription, which included the names of four Hun kings whose coinage we know: Khīṅgīla, Toramāṇa, Mehama and Javūkha. Nevertheless, the catalogue is surely an indispensable resource for students of Hunnic coinage.



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