

Marks of Empire: Extracting a Narrative from the Corpus of Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions

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A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2017

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

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Abstract

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This dissertation constructs a history of the Kuṣāṇa Empire (ca. 50-350 CE) from the corpus of inscriptions composed during this period. The corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions compiled in this study consist of two hundred ninety-five extant texts composed in Bactrian, Gāndhārī, and Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit. These inscriptions are considered marks of empire both in their literal sense, as marks on a surface meant to record information, and in their figurative sense, as visual marks that imprinted the Kuṣāṇa's authority. "Appendix 1: Corpus of Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions" includes a transcription, translation, and notes for all two hundred ninety-five inscriptions and represents the most up-to-date, and searchable, compilation of the inscriptions composed during this imperial period. The intention in creating this corpus was to make the epigraphic material accessible to anyone interested in the history of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

The six chapters that constitute this dissertation extracts the material from these inscriptions to craft a narrative of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. This imperial narrative is divided into three parts: imperial initiation, imperial perpetuation, and imperial diminution. Each part of this dissertation contains two chapters, one that deals specifically with the inscriptions composed in the reigns of the Kuṣāṇa rulers associated with a specific phase, and a second that focuses on a related topic.

In Part A: Imperial Initiation, chapter one provides the historical background of the Kuṣāṇas, the territory they ruled, their imperial currency, trade networks, and the state of Buddhism in the pre-Kuṣāṇa period. Chapter two examines the inscriptions composed in the reigns of Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises and uses the texts to show how they initiated their empire. Part B: Imperial Perpetuation represents the height of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and chapter three examines the inscriptions associated with the Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I. The relative abundant amount of epigraphic evidence produced in this period allows for these texts to be analyzed according to year they were composed, the types of inscribed objects, and the donors who sponsored the objects. The fourth chapter focuses on the role of Buddhism in the imperial period and argues that a Buddhist public emerged in the Kuṣāṇa period comprised of a diverse donative sphere orbiting around institutionalized Buddhist monastic complexes that the Kuṣāṇas utilized to exert their influence.

Chapter five, the first chapter in Part C: Imperial Diminution, looks at the how the epigraphic records for Kaniṣka II, Vāsiṣka, and Kaniṣka III reflect the decline of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. With the narrative of empire concluding in chapter five, the sixth and final chapter of this study expands outward and compares the Kuṣāṇas with their Roman, Arsacid and Sasanian, and Later Han contemporaries. During first three centuries of the Common Era empires emerged that integrated almost all of Eurasia, from Rome to India and China. This chapter examines the congruencies among these empires, and then compares the Kuṣāṇa Empire with the well-documented Roman and Later Han empires to gain a better understanding of this empire.

Through comparing the Kuṣāṇas with other empires and providing a detailed analysis of the marks of empire, this dissertation highlights the significance of the Kuṣāṇa Empire to South Asian and world history.

Acknowledgements

The list of people who have assisted me in this journey is long. As a sign of gratitude, I will borrow a benediction from the inscriptions in this study, and dedicate my efforts “for the reward of health to all of you” (युष्माकमारोग्यदक्षिणायै).

In writing this dissertation, and over the course of my time at the University of Washington, I have benefited tremendously from working with, and learning from, everyone on my committee. I could not have accomplished this without their valuable insights and encouragements. Dr. Richard Salomon’s erudition in all matters epigraphic and historical has been invaluable for this project, and every question I asked was answered, usually with request to read his article on the topic. Dr. Collett Cox helped me work through many questions I had with the Buddhist components of this project, and furnished me with numerous Sanskrit black-boxes. Dr. Christian Novetzke’s influence on my thinking is apparent throughout this dissertation, and I feel fortunate to have studied with him. Dr. Purnima Dhavan’s probing questions made me think deeper about many facets of this project, and helped me develop ideas that I did not even know I had. Thanks also to Dr. Kyoko Tokuno for agreeing to be my GSR. Thanks to all of you.

This project could not have been accomplished without the generous funding provided by Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship, which allowed me to cultivate the seeds of ideas about the Kuṣāṇa Empire into this dissertation. I would also like to thank the Fulbright Program for giving me the opportunity to conduct research on Kuṣāṇa inscriptions in India. A special thanks goes to the staff at the Fulbright Delhi office.

While on the Fulbright, Dr. Ranabir Chakravarti generously gave his time to assist me in my research, and I am grateful that I had the opportunity to sit in his class and learn about Indian history from him. Thanks to Dr. Suchandra Ghosh for writing me a letter of affiliation for the Fulbright and to Dr. Susmita Majumdar for assisting me with my research in Kolkata. I look forward to visiting the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture again soon. I fondly remember my afternoon tea with Sushil Sharma at the American Institute of Indian Studies Archive in Gurugram, and I would like to thank AIIS for allowing me to access their pictures and use them in this study. Finally, the assistance given to me by the directors and staff at the Government Museum in Mathurā, the Indian Museum in Kolkata, and the State Museum in Lucknow greatly contributed to the project.

I met and studied with many wonderful people over my years in the Department of Asian Languages and Literature, I will remember you all fondly. A special thanks goes to Dr. Tim Lenz for his overall kindness and encouraging spirit and Joe Marino, who has been with me since day one of this program.

Finally, thanks to my parents for their encouragement in everything I do, to my wife who might even like India more than me, and my son who reminds me to have a wonderful day.

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Transcriptional Conventions

The transcriptional conventions are modeled on those used in previous volumes of the Gandhāran Buddhist Text series (University of Washington).

- [] An unclear or partially preserved *akṣara* whose reading is uncertain.
- () An *akṣara* or a component thereof that is implied but not actually written.
- (*) A lost or illegible *akṣara* that has been conjecturally restored on the basis of context, parallels in inscriptions, or other evidence.
- < * > An *akṣara* or a component thereof that was omitted by the engraver and has been conjecturally restored.
- < i > An *akṣara* that was written above or below a line.
- . A missing portion (consonantal or diacritic vowel sign) of a partially legible *akṣara*. For example, *.e* represents an *akṣara* in which the vowel diacritic *e* is visible, but the consonant to which it was attached is lost or illegible; *g.* signifies that the consonant *g* is legible but incomplete so that one cannot determine whether or not a vowel diacritic was attached to the syllable.
- ? A visible or partially visible but illegible *akṣara*.
- + A missing *akṣara* that would have appeared on a lost or obscured portion of the inscription.
- // Beginning or end of an incomplete line.
- = A word division within an *akṣara*, used in phrases such as *evam=eva*, in which the final *m* of the preceding word and the initial vowel of the following word are written together as a single syllable. Also used to indicate sandhi.

Introduction

To commemorate the second Kuṣāṇa ruler Vima Takto's conquest of northern Indian his imperial officer, the *bakanapati* Humaṣpala, had a royal statue gallery built at Maṭ, a village about an hour north of Mathurā. Today this site lies practically unnoticed in the middle of a field, but during the Kuṣāṇa period it housed a collection of colossal royal images which served



Fig. 1: The Great King Kanishka I
Photo: Government Museum, Mathurā

as a testament to the Kuṣāṇa's imperial power. Vima Takto's statue depicts him sitting in a throne, comfortably overseeing the empire his father Kujula Kadphises founded. A statue of Vima Takto's grandson, Kanishka I, shows him standing, clad in nomadic attire, with his hand resting authoritatively on his sword. Across the front of the statue is this ruler's name, "The Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Kanishka" (*mahārājā rājātirājā devaputra kaniṣko*) [9]. His pose and accompanying inscription leaves little doubt about his imperial status, and these textual and visual components encapsulate the marks of empire examined in this dissertation.

Marks of empire include the inscription and the objects on which it was composed, and both connotations will be employed to extract

a narrative of this period from the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus. Because the epigraphical attributes that marks of empire encompass serve as such an integral part of this study, this concept requires further clarification. On the one hand, inscriptions are literal marks, texts engraved on a durable medium that convey a message. In the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus the majority of inscriptions are donative texts that provide information about the donor, the type of object they donated, and the beneficiaries of the gift. These texts typically begin with a dating formula that cites the year, month, and day of the Kuṣāṇa ruler along with a list of the king's royal epithets, and this information helps to determine who donated what and when. The message conveyed in these donative texts, along with the few inscriptions that directly refer to the Kuṣāṇa rulers, function as the building blocks of the imperial narrative constructed in the study. On the other hand, inscriptions are visual marks, or graphic representations of empire, and the act of seeing an inscription and an inscribed object is as significant as the text itself. In the Kuṣāṇa period anthropomorphic images became the dominant donative medium, and donors recorded the installation of these objects to monastic sites on the pedestals of these images. This made inscriptions not just textual records but also “public declarations... available for public observance... [they] do their work because they are social texts and public performance” (Novetzke 2016: 75). The public component of inscriptions, whether they were engraved on religious images, boundary stones, or commemorative slabs, and the work they perform in conveying an imperial message marks their dual textual and visual attributes. In what follows, the narrative of the Kuṣāṇa Empire will be constructed through evaluating both the literary and visual features expressed in these marks of empire.

Kaniṣka I's statue embodies the two epigraphic attributes of these marks of empire, and his missing head further signifies a key feature of the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic record. Like Kaniṣka

I's decapitated state, the inscriptions composed in the Kuṣāṇa period give shape to this empire, but some crucial elements are missing. For example, these inscriptions provide a relatively secure dynastic chronology of the Kuṣāṇas but tell us very little about their political ideology or how they instituted their rule. Similarly, there are numerous political, social, and religious donors listed in the inscriptions, but they reveal very little about their day-to-day lives or their sentiments towards the Kuṣāṇas. By assembling this epigraphic corpus and then arranging it into a narrative, this study attempts to flush out some of these details, but, like Kanīṣka I's head, some imperial features are missing.

The remainder of this introduction will present the corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, discuss why and how it was assembled, and describe the methods used to extract a narrative from this epigraphic material.

I. The Corpus of Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions.

The corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions consists of two hundred ninety-five texts engraved on two hundred ninety-three extant inscribed objects. The discrepancy between inscriptions and inscribed objects results from the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription [6] composed in the reign of Vima Takto that includes both a Bactrian and Gāndhārī text and an inscription composed in year forty-six [68] of Huviṣka written in both Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit and Gāndhārī.¹ Among these two hundred ninety-five inscriptions five are written in the Bactrian language and Greek script, thirty-eight in the Gāndhārī language and Kharoṣṭhī script, and two hundred and fifty-two in Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit [hereafter EHS] and the Brāhmī script.² This corpus of inscriptions

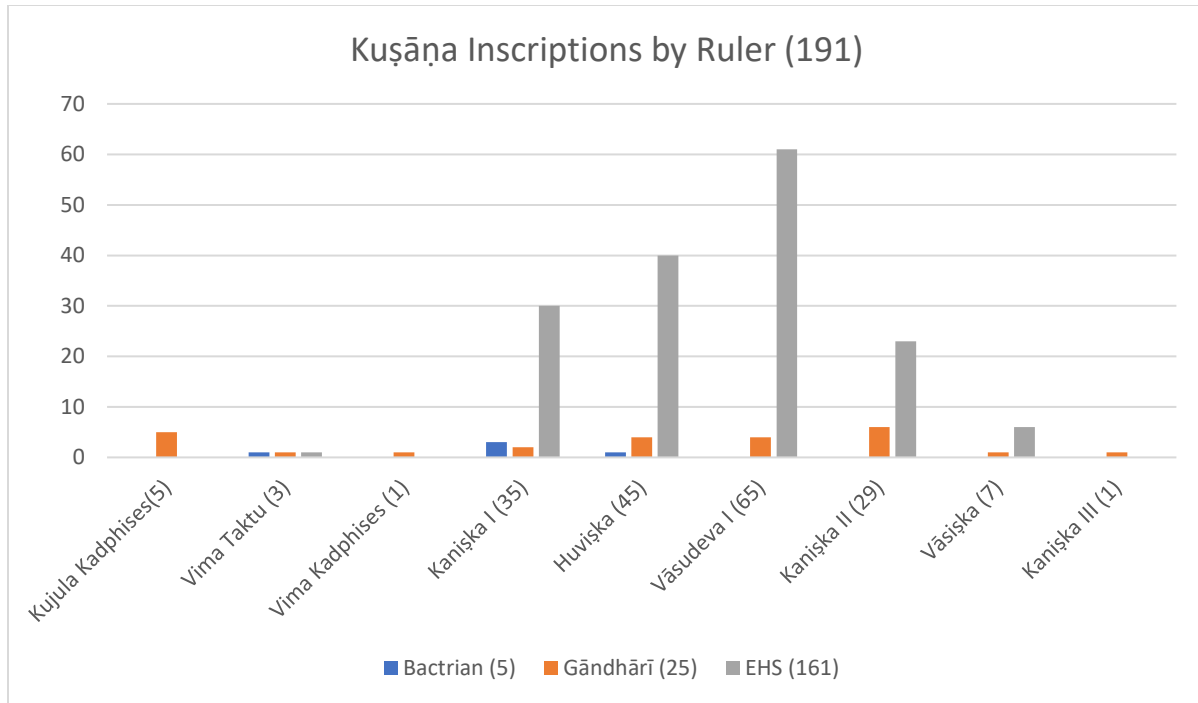
¹ There is a third text found at Dasht-e Nāwūr that is believed to be written in a Śaka language and has been translated by János Harmatta (1994: 408-10). However, the reading of this text is uncertain and I have not included it in my corpus.

² For a discussion about the term Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit and its use in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, see Damsteegt 1978.

has been divided into two categories. The first includes one hundred ninety-one that can be assigned to a specific Kuṣāṇa ruler based on their name or date of rule cited in the text, and the second are one hundred four inscriptions that are unnamed, undated, or both. Unnamed or undated inscriptions are attributable to the Kuṣāṇa period based on their paleographic features, stylistic elements, or their provenance at attested Kuṣāṇa sites. Among the unnamed and undated inscriptions, thirteen are in Gāndhārī and ninety-one are in EHS. In this dissertation, the one hundred ninety-one that can be assigned to a specific ruler will be emphasized.

For the duration of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, ca. 50-350 CE, thirteen Kuṣāṇas rulers have been identified through a combination of epigraphic and numismatic evidence: Kujula Kadphises (ca. 50-90), Vima Takto (ca. 90-113), Vima Kadphises (ca. 113-127), Kaniṣka I (ca. 127-150), Huviṣka (ca. 153-89), Vāsudeva I (ca. 191/4-226), Kaniṣka II (ca. 231-49), Vāsiṣka (ca. 249-67), Kaniṣka III (ca. 267-70), Vāsudeva II (ca. 270-300), Mahi (ca. 300-5), Ṣaka (ca. 305-335), Kipunadha (ca. 335-50). Among these rulers, epigraphic evidence only exists for the first nine, from Kujula Kadphises up to Kaniṣka III, and remaining four Kuṣāṇa rulers, namely Vāsudeva II, Mahi, Ṣaka, and Kipunadha, are known only through numismatic evidence.³ The one hundred ninety-one inscriptions that can be assigned to a specific Kuṣāṇa ruler are distributed as follows (graph 1):

³ The chronology for these later Kuṣāṇa rulers is given in Jongeward et al. 2015: 4.



In the reign of Kujula Kadphises there are five Gāndhārī inscriptions that mention this ruler. For Vima Takto there are three inscriptions written in Bactrian, Gāndhārī, and Brāhmī, but the Bactrian and Gāndhārī texts are both composed on a rock at Dasht-e Nāwūr near modern Ghazni in southern Afghanistan. There is only a single Gāndhārī inscription that references Vima Kadphises, and this text was found on a boulder at Khalaste located in the Upper Indus River valley near Leh in the Ladakh district of Jammu and Kashmir. In the reign of Kaniṣka I there are thirty-five inscriptions: three in Bactrian, two in Gāndhārī, and thirty in EHS. During Huviṣka's rule, a total of forty-five inscriptions were composed: one in Bactrian, four in Gāndhārī, and forty in EHS. As noted above, one inscription is bi-lingual [68], containing three lines written in EHS and a fourth line in Gāndhārī, meaning there are only forty-four inscribed objects attested in his reign. There are sixty-five inscriptions composed in the reign of Vāsudeva I: none in Bactrian, four in Gāndhārī, and sixty-one in EHS. For Kaniṣka II, twenty-nine inscriptions were composed in his reign, six in Gāndhārī and twenty-three in EHS. There are only seven inscriptions in Vāsiṣka's reign, one in Gāndhārī and six in EHS. Kaniṣka III is the

last attested Kuṣāṇa ruler in the epigraphic record, and this inscription was written in Gāndhārī and dated to year (one hundred) forty-one, making 268 CE the last confirmed date in this corpus. The transcriptions and translations of these inscriptions, as well as the unnamed and undated inscriptions, are provided in appendix 1, and the numbers in brackets used throughout this dissertation correlate with the numbers provided in the appendix.

The collection of one hundred ninety-one inscriptions attributable to the nine above mentioned Kuṣāṇa rulers is the engine driving this imperial narrative and will be used to determine the duration of their rule, the types of objects donated during each ruling period, and the affiliation of the donors who sponsored these objects. The methods employed in constructing a narrative from these inscriptions will be provided in the last section of this introduction, but first we must address why an updated corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions is needed and how this corpus has been assembled.

II. Compiling the Corpus of Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions.

The majority of the inscriptions composed in the Kuṣāṇa period are found in two sources, Heinrich Lüders' *Mathurā Inscriptions*, edited and published posthumously in 1961 by Klaus Janert, and Satya Shrava's *Dated Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions* published in 1993.⁴ Thus, any Kuṣāṇa inscriptions found or published since 1993 are unaccounted for, creating a need for an updated corpus. Also, although these works are extremely useful surveys of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, they have certain limitations. Lüders is a highly renown epigraphist, and his editions of the inscriptions from Mathurā together with his extensive linguistic, paleographic, and historical

⁴ Other compilations of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions were made by Puri (1977), Rosenfield (1967: 265-73, appendix III), and Bracey (2004: kushan.org/inscriptions/index.htm). However, none of these provide transcriptions and translations of the texts. Early Kuṣāṇa inscriptions composed in Gāndhārī were compiled by Konow (1929), and Jain inscriptions from Mathurā but held in the State Museum at Lucknow and not included in Lüders' study are found in Bühler 1892a/b and 1894.

notes are essential for any study of the Kuṣāṇa period. Therefore, the limitations in his edited work are not due to its content but to its scope, namely that this survey only includes inscriptions found at Mathurā. Therefore, Kuṣāṇa inscriptions from other regions, such as Bactria, Gandhāra, and other areas of northern India, are omitted. Shrava's compilation of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions expands on Lüders' work by including inscriptions from these regions, but there are also certain limitations in Shrava's *Dated Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions*.

In the process of compiling this corpus I am aware of the efforts Shrava took in assembling his dated Kuṣāṇa inscriptions in 1993, but there are some issues in his work that need to be addressed. The first is that for every inscription Shrava only provides a brief summary of the inscription, a transcription, and a translation taken directly from a previous edition. This approach is very useful for reading the inscription and locating earlier editions, but he does not include any deeper historical or epigraphic analysis, as did Lüders. The second issue is more vital to the history of the Kuṣāṇa Empire and pertains to various issues in Shrava's chronological arrangement of both the Kuṣāṇa rulers and the inscriptions themselves. Shrava places Vāsiṣka between Kaniṣka I and Huviṣka, but based on numismatic and epigraphic evidence we now know he ruled after Kaniṣka II.⁵ This confusion is due in part to the fact that Shrava does not distinguish between Kaniṣka I, who ruled from ca. 127-50 CE, and Kaniṣka II, who ruled approximately a century later, ca. 231-49 CE. The existence of two Kuṣāṇa centuries, the latter of which drops the hundreds in the dating formula, will be discussed shortly, but this theory was first proposed by Johanna van Lohuizen-de Leeuw in 1949, meaning Shrava should have been aware of this issue even if he disagreed with van Lohuizen-de Leeuw. Shrava also dates a set of

⁵ The most convincing evidence is Kaniṣka III's Āra inscription [189] that states he is the son of Vāsiṣka, meaning Vāsiṣka would have to come later in the Kuṣāṇa dynastic chronology. For the numismatic evidence that show continuities between the coins of Kaniṣka II, Vāsiṣka, and Kaniṣka III, see Jongeward et al. 2015: 164-8.

pillar bases found at Jamālpur to year forty-seven rather than seventy-seven, even though Lüders (1931) had argued in favor of the first numeral being seventy. In Brāhmī, both the numerals seventy and forty resemble an uppercase X, but the upper left and lower right arms in forty have a distinct curl whereas the arms of the numeral seventy are straighter. After closely comparing the numerals in this collection of pillar bases with other seventies and forties in the Kuṣāṇa corpus, seventy is the intended year in this set of inscribed objects. Shrava also includes many specimens of dated graffiti found in the upper Indus capillary routes. However, these short texts have been reedited by Neelis (2001: 114-334) who shows they do not contain the names of Kuṣāṇa rulers and the dates cannot be definitively fixed to the Kuṣāṇa period. As a result, these short texts are not included in this corpus. In addition to these chronological issues there are some inaccurate readings in Shrava's work, which have been corrected in the appendix of this study.

With this said, the corpus presented here could not have been compiled without Shrava and Lüders' significant contributions to Kuṣāṇa epigraphy. This corpus combines the dated and undated Kuṣāṇa inscriptions from Mathurā edited by Lüders, the dated Kuṣāṇa inscriptions assembled by Shrava, and Kuṣāṇa inscriptions published after 1993. Locating editions of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions published after 1993 required scouring through numerous journals and digging through bibliographies, and some recently published inscriptions have undoubtedly been overlooked. For Bactrian and Gāndhārī inscriptions two sources have been extremely helpful in compiling this corpus. Nicholas Sims-Williams's article "Bactrian Historical Inscriptions of the Kushan Period" (2012) provides a survey and gives an English translation of all the Bactrian inscriptions from the Kuṣāṇa period along with their previous editions. A Bactrian inscription on a silver plate [16] recently edited by Sims-Williams (2015: 257) can now be added to the list of

Kuṣāṇa period Bactrian texts. For Gāndhārī inscriptions published since 1993 I have consulted the “Catalogue of Gāndhārī Inscriptions” [hereafter CGI] that is available on the gandhari.org website developed and maintained by Stefan Baums and Andrew Glass. This site provides information about the inscription, a transcription of the text, the primary editions, and secondary references. The English translations for these inscriptions are not provided online, so I have included translation from secondary sources in my corpus. My next project is to create an online database of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, so any inscriptions discovered after 2017 or missed in this survey will be made available online.

III. Dating the Inscriptions in the Kuṣāṇa Corpus.

The most significant challenges in compiling a corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions are determining the date for when Kaniṣka I inaugurated the Kuṣāṇa era and arranging the inscribed objects in their proper chronological order.⁶ This corpus uses 127 CE for the start of the Kuṣāṇa era and employs two different Kuṣāṇa centuries with the hundreds numeral dropped in the second to organize the objects. Both decisions require an explanation. The date of Kaniṣka I, and subsequently the start of the Kuṣāṇa era, has been one of the most vexing problems in the field of Kuṣāṇa studies. Robert Bracey’s forthcoming article provides a comprehensive account of the numerous proposals for the date of Kaniṣka I and shows how 127 CE has become the most likely, although not definitive, solution.⁷ To summarize Bracey, in 1960 a conference was organized by A.K. Narain in London that brought together scholars from many different disciplinary backgrounds in an attempt to determine the date of Kaniṣka. The proceedings of this conference were published in 1968 and no consensus for a date of Kaniṣka was reached, with the

⁶ I have chosen to refer to the dating system inaugurated by Kaniṣka I as the Kuṣāṇa era rather than the Kaniṣka era because, as will be shown, it now appears that he revived the earlier Yavana era rather than initiated his own era.

⁷ Chakravarti (2016: 435-9) also provides an overview on the different dates attributed to Kaniṣka I.

participants divided between year 78 CE corresponding with the Śaka era, a date in the range of 100-44 CE, and sometime in the third century CE. A majority, but not all, of the participants at this conference leaned towards a year between 100-44 CE being the most probable date for Kaniṣka I (Bracey forthcoming; Basham 1968).

It was not until very recently that 127 CE became the most likely candidate for the date of Kaniṣka I and the start of the Kuṣāṇa era, and this was only arrived at through a combination of literary and epigraphical evidence. One of the biggest breakthroughs in determining the date of Kuṣāṇa era was Harry Falk's (2001) revised reading of verse 79.15 in Sphujiddhvaja's *Yavanajātaka*.⁸ According to Falk's (2001: 126) reading, "the distance between the Śaka era, starting in spring 78 AD, and the Kuṣāṇa era is exactly 149 years, which leads us to the beginning of a Kuṣāṇa reckoning in the year 227 AD." To arrive at 127 CE, Falk employed van Lohuizen de-Leeuw's dropped-hundreds theory (discussed below) in which she argues that after Kuṣāṇa year ninety-nine the dating system reverts to year one, thus dropping the hundreds. By employing this theory with the hundreds place omitted, year 227 calculated in Sphujiddhvaja's text could be converted to 127 CE. Although not a definitive solution, Falk's insights did provide a literary correspondence for this date.

Joe Cribb (2005), building on Falk's argument, used different evidence to arrive at 127 CE for the start of the Kaniṣka era. At a conference in 2003 Richard Salomon (2005: 363) presented an inscription from the Apraca dynasty dated to Vijayamitra's twenty-seventh regnal year, the seventy-third year of the Azes era, and the two hundred first year of the Yavana era.

⁸ David Pingree translated this verse as "take the number of years that have elapsed of the Koṣāṇas, add 149, and subtract from this (sum) the time of the Śakas (i.e. the year in the Śaka era); (the remainder) is the number of years in the yuga which have elapsed," and Falk revises this to "the elapsed years of the Kuṣāṇas in combination with 149 (change into) the time of the Śakas. Subtracting from this (Śaka time [plus 56]) the elapsed (yuga, i.e. 165 years) (produces) the elapsed years of the second yuga" (2001: 124,127).

This triple dated inscription was the first conclusive evidence for the Yavana era, and moreover gave a date for its inception, 186/5 BCE, based on the difference of one hundred twenty-eight years between this era and the Azes era, which presumably commenced in 58/7 BCE in concurrence with the Vikrama era. Cribb (2005: 214) noted a possible correspondence between the Yavana era and the Kuṣāṇa era, namely that by moving the Yavana era forward about decade to 174 BCE then the first year of the Kuṣāṇa era in 127 CE would align with year three hundred one of the Yavana era. Cribb's hypothesis about an alignment between the Yavana and Kuṣāṇa eras has since found support. In an article by Harry Falk and Chris Bennett (2009: 209-11) the authors used the intercalary month of Gorpaios found in Gāndhārī inscriptions and occurs in a nineteen-year cycle to decouple the Azes era from the Vikrama era, and argued that the Azes era needs to be moved forward about a decade, to begin in either 48/7 or 47/6 BCE. This revised date for the Azes era consequently moved the Yavana era forward a decade to align with Cribb's previous conjecture.

These findings suggest that 127 CE is the plausible, but not certain, starting date for the Kuṣāṇa era, and this year is used in my study. Furthermore, the year 175/4 BCE will be used for calculating Yavana era dates and year 47 BCE, the year that falls in both possible reckonings of the Azes era purposed by Falk and Bennett, will be used for inscriptions dated in the Azes era.⁹ 127 CE is also considered the first year of Kaniṣka I's reign, and it seems likely that this date was specifically chosen to correspond with year three hundred one of the Yavana era as "part of [Kaniṣka I's] rejection of all things Greek" (Cribb 2005: 214).

Before discussing the possibility of two Kuṣāṇa centuries there is one further point to cover in relation to the Kuṣāṇa dating system, that being when the Kuṣāṇa year began. Years in

⁹ For a more comprehensive discussion on eras used in early historic South Asia, see Falk 2007.

the Kuṣāṇa era were divide into three seasons: rainy (*varṣa*), winter/cold (*hemanta*), and summer/hot (*grīṣma*). Each season contained four months of thirty days each that most likely coincide with mid-June to mid-October for the rainy season, mid-October to mid-February for winter, and mid-February to mid-June for summer seasons. This three-season, four-month, thirty-day calendrical system was probably incorporated from dating formulas used in north India prior to arrival of the Kuṣāṇas.¹⁰ When this year began is still unclear, but, in what follows, I propose the first month of summer. Falk (2015a: 284-6) suggests that the onset of the monsoon, presumably the first month of the rainy season or mid-June, would be a probable start of the Kuṣāṇa year since this is when Venus crosses into Leo (Venus is the astral counterpart of the Goddess Nana who, as recorded in the Rabatak inscription, conferred the Kuṣāṇa Empire to Kaniṣka I), is close to the summer solstice (making this a solar rather than lunar based calendar), and is an auspicious time when rain revitalizes the parched earth. However, the Kuṣāṇa year cannot start in the rainy season because year seventy-seven found in the pillar base inscriptions is concurrent between the fourth summer month [99] and first rainy month [100].¹¹ Therefore, the start of the Kuṣāṇa year would have to begin on the first month of either summer or winter. In Hindu calendrical systems, according to the solar calendar the new year starts in mid-April when the sun enters Meṣa (=Aries) at the beginning of Vaiśākha, and in the lunar calendar in mid-March in the month of Caitra.¹² It is not clear if the Kuṣāṇa year is solar or lunar, but since the

¹⁰ Four examples of pre-Kuṣāṇa inscriptions from Mathurā contain this year, month, day dating formula: a stone slab dated to year 116 winter month 4, day 30, a Buddhist pedestal dated to rainy month 2, day 6, and two Jain āyāgaṇas dated to year 21, (?) month 2, day 26 and year 72, winter month 2, day 9 respectively (Quintanilla 2007: 255, #2; 267, #21; 272, #9; and 275, #15). For a more detailed discussion of the calendrical systems used in the Kuṣāṇa Empire, see Pingree 1982: 357.

¹¹ For a list of the dated pillar bases, see table 2 in chapter 4 (4.2.2).

¹² Jacobi (1892: 404-7) states that Caitra starts in mid-February and Vaiśākha begins in mid-March. Pillai's (1982: 12) table for the scheme of months in 1 BCE places the start of Caitra in mid-February or mid-March and Vaiśākha in late March. Salomon (1998: 176-8) states that Caitra begins in March/April. In all of these cases, the beginning of the solar and lunar year would correlate with the first month of summer rather and winter.

year in the solar and lunar Hindu calendars begins in what would be around the first month of summer, I propose that the Kuṣāṇa year also began at this time. Based on this assumption, the inscriptions in my corpus are arranged with the Kuṣāṇa year beginning on the first month of summer, but the first month of winter is still possible.

The last issue to be addressed with regard to dating Kuṣāṇa inscriptions is the two different centuries. The apparent conflict between the dates in Kuṣāṇa sculptures and their stylistic features were first noticed and addressed by J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw in her *The “Scythian” Period* published in the 1949. In this work van Lohuizen-de Leeuw tried to resolve the discrepancy between images dated around the same time but which looked remarkably different in both their stylistic and paleographic features.¹³ The outcome of her study was twofold. First, she proposed a chronology of the objects, and second, based on this chronology argued for two Kuṣāṇa centuries with the hundreds numeral dropped in the second. It appears a Kuṣāṇa named Kaniṣka ruled at the beginning of each Kuṣāṇa century, and by distinguishing between Kaniṣka I and Kaniṣka II the discrepancies in the art historical record could be resolved; all the objects with earlier features could be placed in the reign of Kaniṣka I and all those with later features could be assigned to Kaniṣka II’s rule. The existence of two Kaniṣkas ruling a century apart has since been confirmed on numismatic grounds, with Kaniṣka I’s coinage displaying a wide variety of deities on the reverse and portraits of the king on the obverse, whereas Kaniṣka II’s coins mainly depict the goddess Ardochsho on the obverse and a standing

¹³ In van Lohuizen-de Leeuw’s (1949: appendix C) study she uses Brāhmī *ku* and *sa* as her main paleographic determinants. She notes that the *u* diacritic on the vertical stem of the *ka* becomes more rounded over time, and the earlier angular *sa* develops a loop in the left arm of the *akṣara* in the later period. Bracey (2011: 65-79) has also studied the paleography of these inscriptions and uses the *akṣaras na, ṇa, ra, sya, bha, pra, ma* and *va* and the *i* vowel *mātra* as the diagnostic tools to evaluate the chronology. Bracey includes comprehensive paleographic tables to compare these inscriptions but does not arrive at any definitive conclusion about their chronology. Ideally, with the digital images of Kuṣāṇa inscribed objects that I have collected I can produce a more detailed paleographic study in the future, and for this reason, and space considerations, I did not include a paleographic study of these inscriptions in this dissertation.

Semi-circular lines



Snail-shell curls



Fig 2: Hairstyles
Photo: AIIS

king on the reverse (Göbl 1984: 37-7, 58-61, and 75-7). This numismatic evidence supports van Lohuizen-de Leeuw's theory of Kaniṣka I and Kaniṣka II ruling a century apart, but a closer study of the stylistic features of these images will be helpful as they directly relate to the arrangement of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions in this corpus.

One of the most notable developments van Lohuizen-de

Leeuw notices is the change in hairstyle. The hairstyle on images produced earlier in the Kuṣāṇa period were composed of semi-circular lines then transitioned into

snail-shell curls. Furthermore, the Buddhist images produced in this earlier period were depicted wearing a thin robe draped over the left shoulder, exposing the right shoulder and the image's feet. The later types with snail-shell curls wore a full fan-like pleated robe with a V-shaped neck that covered both shoulders (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 231). Härtel (1985: 659-62) further notes that Kapardin Buddhas produced prior to Kuṣāṇa year forty-five (=172 CE) are seated, flanked by attendants, and referred to as Bodhisattvas.¹⁴ After Kuṣāṇa year forty-five the Kapardin

Robe (early type)



Robe (later type)



Fig 3: Robes
Photo: Government Museum, Mathurā; AIIS

¹⁴ For a Kapardin Buddha images, see fig. 7 in chapter 3 (3.1.1).

Buddhas are only depicted as standing, the attendants are omitted, and are referred to as Śākyamuni or just a “Buddha image” (*buddha-pratimā*).

Formulating a chronology for Jina images proved more difficult, since these figures lack garments. For these images van Lohuizen-de Leeuw applied her hairstyle metric, and, in cases when the head was detached from the image, focused on the lions flanking the side of the



pedestal. Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 250) determines the chronology of these objects based on the outward-facing lions found on objects with earlier dates in contrast to forward-facing lions with rounder manes and heads protruding above the socle produced later. Another innovation in Jain sculpture that can be used to distinguish between the first and second centuries are the four-sided Jinas (*pratimā sarvvatobhadrikā*), which were first produced north of Mathurā in

Ahichchhatra with the earliest dated to year seventy-one of Vāsudeva I [89] (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 241-6).¹⁵

This chronology of Mathurā art based on the stylistic features identified by van Lohuizen-de Leeuw has not undergone any major revisions.¹⁶ However, her “dropped-

¹⁵ For an example of a four-sided Jina see fig. 15 in chapter 3 (3.3.1).

¹⁶ Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw’s follow-up article, “The Second Century of the Kaniṣka Era,” published posthumously in 1986, confirms many of the proposals she made almost forty years prior. In this article, she also addresses Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions dated in the Kuṣāṇa era and again attempts to assign them to the respective century in which they were composed. Harry Falk’s (2015b: 111, §94; 126-7, §117) compilation of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions in *Kuṣāṇa Histories* adheres to van Lohuizen-de Leeuw’s (1986: 6-8) chronology for these Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions and are followed in my corpus.

hundreds” theory has been questioned. The main opponents of the “dropped-hundreds” theory cite a Nāga statue dated to year one hundred seventy which appears to use the hundreds numeral (Chakravarti 2016: 438). However, Falk (2002-3: 43) has recently revised the reading of this date to year eighty and does not see the hundreds cipher, thereby removing this date as a possible argument to disprove van Lohuizen de-Leeuw’s theory. If new evidence emerges that shows the hundreds numeral was retained in some second century Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, then this debate could be reopened.

This art historical and numismatic evidence suggests that there were in fact two Kuṣāṇa centuries with a king named Kaniṣka ruling at the beginning of each. There are additional clues within the corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions that lend credibility to the likelihood of two Kuṣāṇa centuries with the hundreds dropped in the second, and this epigraphic evidence has been noted throughout this dissertation. In conclusion, in this study 127 CE represents year one of the Kuṣāṇa era and of Kaniṣka I’s rule, and the inscribed objects that contain the name of Kaniṣka have been divided between the reigns of Kaniṣka I and Kaniṣka II.

IV. Extracting a Narrative from Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions.

This narrative of the Kuṣāṇa Empire is divided into three parts: imperial initiation, imperial perpetuation, and imperial diminution. The nine Kuṣāṇa rulers for whom there is epigraphic evidence are divided equally among these three imperial phases: the reigns of Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises align with the phase of imperial initiation; Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I ruled during the phase of imperial perpetuation; and the diminution of the Kuṣāṇa empire occurred during the reigns of Kaniṣka II, Vāsiṣka, and Kaniṣka III. Each part of this dissertation consists of two chapters, one that examines the inscriptions composed in the reign of each ruler and a second that focuses on a related topic.

In part A, imperial initiation, chapter one sets the imperial stage by reviewing the history of the Kuṣāṇas, the political conditions in the regions they that consolidated into their empire, how Kuṣāṇa coinage transformed their territory into an integrated commercial zone, trade networks that connected these regions, and Buddhism in the pre-Kuṣāṇa period. The second chapter focuses on the inscriptions composed in the reigns of Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises to see what these reveal about the process of initiating an empire. Part B, imperial perpetuation, correlates with the height of the Kuṣāṇa Empire reached during the reigns of Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I. During this phase of empire, the epigraphic record for the Kuṣāṇa Empire drastically increases, and chapter three looks at how these inscriptions reflect this period of prosperity. Chapter four investigates the role of Buddhism in the Kuṣāṇa period and argues that a Buddhist public consisting of a diverse donative sphere emerged around institutionalized monastic complexes that the Kuṣāṇas utilized to exert their influence. In Part C, imperial diminution, chapter five examines the decline of the Kuṣāṇa Empire as reflected in the inscriptions associated with the reigns of Kaniṣka II, Vāsiṣka, and Kaniṣka III. The last section of this chapter (5.4) discusses the unnamed and undated inscriptions composed in the Kuṣāṇa period. Chapter six expands the scope of this study by situating the Kuṣāṇa Empire on the world historical stage and comparing the Kuṣāṇas with their Roman, Later Han, and Arsacid and Sasanian imperial contemporaries. There are also two appendices in this dissertation. The first is the corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions that includes a transcription, translation, and notes for all two hundred ninety-five inscriptions in this corpus. The second appendix is a catalogue of Kuṣāṇa coins discussed in this study.

In chapters two, three, and five that use inscriptions composed in the reign of a specific Kuṣāṇa ruler to construct a narrative of a particular imperial phase the epigraphic data are

analyzed as follows. First, these inscriptions are graphed according to their date, when available, to show the duration of each Kuṣāṇa's reign and how many inscribed objects were donated in each year of their rule. Organizing these inscriptions by their date of production highlights the increase or decrease of donations in each ruling period, and these peaks and valleys can be compared with literary and numismatic evidence to see if there are any possible correlations that would explain these donative patterns. Due to the limited amount of inscriptional evidence for the imperial initiators, Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises, and the later Kuṣāṇas, Vāsiṣka and Kaniṣka III, it is not possible or practical to affix the inscriptions to their years of rule, but for Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, Vāsudeva I, and Kaniṣka II this approach reveals interesting insights in their respective reigns. Second, the information contained in the inscriptions is organized according to the types of inscribed objects and the affiliation of the donors. For each ruler, I group types of donations and their donors into classes and use the data to analyze each ruling period. This allows for a better understanding of which communities received donations during this period and also what types of people sponsored these donations. The types of inscribed objects are divided into six classes: Buddhist, Jain, Nāga, Indic, imperial, and architectural. The donors are again divided into six classes: Buddhist, Jain, Nāga, Indic, imperial, and professional. The only difference between the classes is architectural types of objects and professional donors. My methods for differentiating among these classes is as follows.

The Buddhist and Jain classes are relatively straight forward and consist of objects donated to these religious communities and the donors who sponsored them. Buddhist and Jain objects can be distinguished since Buddhist figures wear a robe while Jain figures are depicted in the nude. In cases where the image is missing and only the pedestal remains, the difference

between Buddhist and Jain donative formulas, discussed in chapter three (3.2.2.), can assist in determining the type of object. Buddhist donors are determined either by their designation, i.e. monk, nun, lay follower (*upāsaka/upāsikā*) or by their donation to a Buddhist monastic center. Likewise, Jain donors are determined by a reference to their monastic standing or by the Jain object the donor sponsored.

Nāga objects and affiliated donors make up a small percentage of inscriptions from this period, but substantial enough to warrant their own category. Nāga images are mainly found at Buddhist sites, suggesting a close connection between these two communities. However, as will be shown, Nāga worshipers had their own shrines and own priests, and are therefore classed separately.

The Indic class is a broad category that includes religious images, such as Kubera, Sarasvatī, and Kārttikeya, pillar donations, a merit-hall, and perhaps a Śiva temple. I have chosen the designation Indic rather than Brahmanical or Hindu as it accommodates the wide array of objects and donors whose only shared characteristic is that they originated in India. A term like Brahmanical seems too restrictive and would not account for a Sarasvatī statue found in a Jain monastery, and to call these objects and donors Hindu might be anachronistic, presupposing that what we recognize as Hinduism today existed in the early centuries CE. Thus, the Indic class is used in this study.

Donations classed as imperial are those that can be associated directly with the Kuṣāṇas. The images of Vima Takto and Kaniṣka I found at the royal statue gallery at Maṭ are useful examples of imperial objects, but this class also encompasses inscriptions that record the deeds of the Kuṣāṇas, like the Rabatak and Bactrian silver plate inscriptions, or appear to demarcate

imperial boundaries, such as the Dasht-e Nāwūr and Khalatse inscriptions. Imperial donors are those designated as Kuṣāṇa officials or local rulers most likely associated with the Kuṣāṇa.

The last class of inscribed objects is architectural. This term designates donated objects that are infrastructural rather than devotional. Architectural objects include pillars, pillar bases, wells, and railings, and are distinguishable from religious images. Although donors most likely accrued merit by installing these objects at monastic sites, their architectural function should be taken into account and are therefore classed accordingly.

The professional class of donors refers to those donors whose specific occupation is mentioned in an inscription. These include caravan leaders, heads of guilds, ironsmiths, and cloak makers, and represent the social elite who were prospering during this period of imperial stability and patronizing religious communities. In Kuṣāṇa inscriptions some donors are specifically mentioned by their profession, but in other cases the primary donor is referred to as the wife of the caravan merchant or the son of the cloak maker. In these instances, I have only included the person identified by their occupation in the profession class rather than both individuals, since it is not clear if a wife or son would follow the same occupation.

The classes of objects and donors are major components in the imperial narrative that will unfold over the course of these six chapters. Moreover, the donative inscriptions and the objects themselves serve as textual and visual marks of empire, and these two attributes will be utilized to articulate the significance of the Kuṣāṇa Empire to South Asian and world history.

Part A: Imperial Initiation

This section examines the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. The first chapter focuses on pre-Kuṣāṇa history and examines how the Kuṣāṇa transitioned from their Yuezhi nomadic past to an entity able to construct an empire, the political conditions in the regions Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises conquered, the trade networks that connected Bactria, Gandhāra, and northern India, and the state of Buddhism prior to the imperial period. This chapter also includes a discussion on the imperial currency the Kuṣāṇas introduced. The second chapter utilizes the inscriptions composed in the reigns of Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises to craft a narrative of the initial stage of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. The epigraphic record from this period is rather minimal, but the information extracted from this evidence demonstrates how these rulers were able to successfully initiate their empire.

Chapter 1: Setting the Imperial Stage

Today a flight from Balkh, located in northern Afghanistan, to Mathurā, a city in northern India about 150 km south of Delhi, would take the better part of a day depending on the availability of connections in Kabul and Delhi. However, two millennia before the convenience of air travel, layovers excluded, this trip covering approximately 1,850 km was much more arduous and involved navigating a range of topographical obstacles that included crossing the deserts of Bactria, traversing the mountain passes of the Hindu Kush, fording the many rivers of northern Pakistan and the Punjab, and braving the jungles of northern India. Overcoming these obstacles would also dramatically extend the duration of this trip. For example, if an ox-driven caravan can travel an estimated 15 km per day (3 km per hour x 5 hours per a day), to go from Balkh to Mathurā would take about 123 days, or approximately four months, and this is without taking into account stopping to rest and acquiring the necessary provisions.¹⁷ The reason for highlighting this journey between Balkh and Mathurā is that these two cities represent the primary western and eastern administrative centers of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and the territory between these cities, which included Bactria, Gandhāra, and northern India, constitute the heartland of this empire. The success of the Kuṣāṇa Empire hinged on the ability of its rulers to provide security for merchants, administrators, and Buddhist monks to traverse the routes within their borders. In addition, the internal stability provided by this empire facilitated external connections radiating out of Balkh eastward to China along the Silk Road and westward across Persia to the Mediterranean. A similar network radiated out from Mathurā to the eastern stretches of the Ganges River and to central and southern India, which in turn linked up with

¹⁷ In Engels' (1978: 15) study on the logistics of Alexander the Great's campaign, he calculates that a two-oxen cart can move at a rate of 10 miles a day (2 mph for 5 hours a day) and can pull up to 1,000-1,200 pounds.

networks spanning the Indian Ocean. This chapter examines how the early Kuṣāṇa rulers, namely Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises, integrated the people who populated the regions between Balkh and Mathurā into a single imperial conglomerate by focusing on the political, economic, and religious conditions that preceded the emergence of this empire.

Empires do not just spontaneously materialize, but are formed when a person or cadre of people are able to exert their influence over localized power bases, assume control of regional economic systems, and convince people to acknowledge their authority. For the narrative of imperial initiation, the first step involves setting the imperial stage to examine how the Kuṣāṇas rose to power and what local powers they encountered in the regions conquered. The first section of this chapter focuses on the period prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire and looks at the what forces compelled the Yuezhi, a nomadic group situated on western borderlands of China, to settle in Bactria, now northern Afghanistan. This is followed by an investigation of the three regions that constitute the Kuṣāṇa Empire: Bactria, Gandhāra, and northern India. In assessing how Kujula Kadphises consolidated his power and Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises expanded their territory it is important to know the political conditions in the regions they encountered. The second part of this chapter focuses on economic factors, and examines how the Kuṣāṇas consolidated the economies in these regions by first adapting local coin types and then introducing an imperial currency. By providing political stability and economic security the Kuṣāṇas facilitated the movement of traders throughout their empire, and the third section looks at the trade routes that connected these regions and geographical features that defined them. The final section evaluates the state of Buddhism in the pre-Kuṣāṇa period, laying the groundwork for my fourth chapter that argues Buddhist monastic sites played an integral role in imparting

Kuṣāṇa authority. The following map shows the Kuṣāṇa Empire at its greatest extent, and this chapter tells the story of how this empire formed.



Map 1: Kuṣāṇa Empire
(Asia Society, Naveed 23 June 2015, www.ancient.eu/image/3944)

1.1. Kuṣāṇa Consolidation of Bactria, Gandhāra, and northern India.

Kujula Kadphises' crossing of the Hindu Kush from Bactrian into Gandhāra in the mid-first century CE signifies the initiation of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. But Kujula's presence in Bactria was due to events that occurred approximately two centuries prior. Similarly, the regions that he and his successors incorporated into their empire each possessed their own distinct history, culture, and language and included Hellenistic Graeco-Bactrians that ruled in Bactria, the Śaka and Indo-Parthian groups that settled in Gandhāra, and a mixture of local kingdoms and branches of Śaka migrants that controlled northern India. Each region presented particular challenges and

advantages to the nascent stage of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and both of these factors will be addressed in this section. Although each region discussed below has a distinct history, a political continuity existed among them, and developments in one region affected the others. Therefore, the political consolidation implemented by the early Kuṣāṇa rulers does not represent a rupture, but rather the culmination of historical and political processes dating back to at least the second century BCE.

1.1.1. The Prehistory of the Kuṣāṇas.

Before looking at these regions individually, it is necessary to review when the Kuṣāṇas arrived in this region and where they originated. Kujula Kadphises and the Kuṣāṇa clan are believed to be descendants of the nomadic Yuezhi tribe. The Yuezhi might be related to the Yuzhi, who are mentioned in the *Guanzi*, a Chinese legalist text that in some sections can be dated to the seventh century BCE, as jade traders living near Khotan on the southern rim of the Tarim Basin in Xinjiang, China (Falk 2015b: 17, 30-2, §1; Liu 2001: 265). A more definitive account of the Yuezhi is recorded in multiple Chinese sources that recount a conflict between the Yuezhi and a rival nomadic tribe, the Xiongnu, that begun in ca. 209-7 BCE and ended, according to the version in the *Hanshu*, with the Xiongnu leader Modu turning the Yuezhi chief's skull into a drinking vessel (Falk 2015b: 39, §12).¹⁸ This conflict set in motion the migration of the Yuezhi from their territory, which at this time was located in Gansu on the eastern extent of the Tarim Basin, to Bactria. After moving west, settling for a time either at Urumqi in Tian Shan mountains north of the Tarim Basin or further west in the Ill Valley and areas around Lake

¹⁸ There are a few more references to the Yuezhi in Chinese sources prior to the account of the war with the Xiongnu, but, since the focus of this study is the initiation of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, the discussion here will only provide a brief survey of the pre-Kuṣāṇa period. For a more detailed history of the Yuezhi, see Liu 2001, Benjamin 2007, and Hill 2009: 310-18. For a summary of Chinese literary references to the early Yuezhi, see Falk 2015b: 32-6, §2-7, and for the references to the Xiongnu defeat of the Yuezhi, see Falk 2015b: 37-9, §9-12.

Balkhash, the Yuezhi were again attacked in 174 BCE by either the Xiongnu or Wusun (Falk 2015b: 48-9, §22; 53-8, §24-8). After being expelled for a second time the Yuezhi at some point arrived in Bactria, and established their capital at Lanshi.¹⁹ It was at this city that the Han envoy Zhang Qian visited the Yuezhi court in 129 BCE, and this is the first direct evidence for the Yuezhi presence in Bactria. Zhang Qian's report of the Yuezhi and their capital is recounted in the *Shiji*, a Chinese text compiled by the famous historian Sima Qian in ca. 91 BCE, that states "the population is large, numbering some 1,000,000 or more persons... [the capital called Lanshi] has a market where all sorts of goods are bought and sold. Southeast of Daxia [Bactria] is the kingdom of Shendu (India)" (Falk 2015b: 21; 65, §37; Zürcher 1968: 367). Zhang Qian's account suggests that by the last quarter of the second century BCE the Yuezhi had started to transition from a pastoral to a more settled lifestyle.

After this visit by the Han ambassador in 129 BCE, there is little information about the Yuezhi and what led to the emergence of Kujula Kadphises in the mid-first century CE. Based on Chinese sources, it appears that at some point the Yuezhi spilt into five clans each headed by a yabǔ, or clan chief.²⁰ The exact areas that each yabǔ controlled is not entirely clear, and the approximate territories are as follows:²¹

- 1) the yabǔ of Xuimi ruling from Hemo (Karategin in the high Wakhsh Valley near the Ferghana valley).
- 2) the yabǔ of Shuangmi ruling from Shuangmi (Hisar west of Dushanbe).
- 3) the yabǔ of Guishuang ruling from Huzao (Wakhshu or Wakhshab near present day Takht-i Sangin).
- 4) the yabǔ of Xindun ruling from Bomao (Kafirnigan valley).

¹⁹ The exact location of the Yuezhi capital of Lanshi is still unknown and the competing theories for this site are the Baghlan area (Hill 2009: 558-74), Khulm (Grenet 2006: 328-330), and Balkh (de la Vaissière in Falk 2015b: 65). Falk (2015b: 66, §37), following Hill, associates Lanshi with a site somewhere near Baghlan/Pul-i Khumri in northern Afghanistan.

²⁰ The association of the Chinese designation *xihou* and the Turkish title yabǔ is discussed in Falk (2010c: 76-7) and the entry "*jabǔyua*" in the *Encyclopedia Iranica* (www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jabguya).

²¹ This list is a summary of the Chinese source material compiled by Grenet (2006) and cited in Falk 2015b: 69-75, §44-7; 75-8, §48. A similar list with the distances of the yabǔ territory from Chang'an is given in Zürcher 1968: 365.

5) the yabǵu of Gaofu/Demi/Yenfuye ruling from Gaofu (Termez).

Among these five yabǵus, the yabǵu of Guishuang is the most important to Kuṣāṇa history because Kujula Kadphises, referred to as Qiujiuque, assumed control of this branch of the Yuezhi and subdued the four other yabǵus (Falk 2015b: 85, §55). The clan affiliation of Guishuang is the basis for the name Kuṣāṇa, and after defeating, or uniting, the five yabǵus, Kujula crossed the Hindu Kush and began his imperial quest.

1.1.2. Early Encounters in Bactria.

It is unclear when exactly the Yuezhi arrived in Bactria (Daxia in Chinese sources) and established their capital at Lanshi, but by the last quarter of the second century BCE they had established their presence in this region. Similarly, it is difficult to gauge if the arrival of the Yuezhi, or other migrant groups, played a role in destabilizing this region, but by 129 BCE when the Han ambassador Zhang Qian visited this region, it appears that the Yuezhi had occupied the political vacuum left by the Graeco-Bactrians.

The Graeco-Bactrians ruled Bactria for close to a century, ca. 250-145 BCE. Bactria, as a defined political unit, was the eastern most satrapy of the Seleucid Empire, founded in 315 BCE by Seleucus I Nicator after the death of Alexander. In around 250 BCE Diodotus I and his son Diodotus II, themselves Hellenized descendants of the Greek colonies established during Alexander's campaigns, broke away from Seleucid control and founded an independent kingdom in Bactria (Cribb 2005: 207). Diodotus II was succeeded by Euthydemus I ca. 225 BCE, and this does not seem to have been a peaceful transition based on archeological records, which reveal the razing of cities in this region, and numismatic evidence, which shows a reduction in weight of Diodotus II's later coins (Holt 1999: 104-6). Demetrius I, the son of Euthydemus I, succeeded his father but the exact dates of his rule are uncertain, as is the case for a succession of Graeco-

Bactrian rulers: Euthydemus II, Pantaleon, Agathocles, and Antimachus.²² The reign of Eucratides I is a little more secure, believed to be ca. 171-45 BCE (Holt 2012: 177). In 145 BCE there appears to have been some sort of crisis in Bactria reflected in the destruction of Ai Khanoum and the discontinuation of copper coinage, but whether this was caused by the arrival of the Yuezhi or dynastic infighting is unclear (Cribb 2005: 212).

The decline of the Graeco-Bactrians around 145 BCE, whether caused by internal strife or external invasion, or a combination of the two, was advantageous for the Yuezhi, allowing them to settle in Bactria and establish control over this region. The Yuezhi also benefitted from the previous century of Graeco-Bactrian rule through the moneyed economy put into place by these kings. The extensive, although still controversial, numismatic record left by the Graeco-Bactrians demonstrates that they had implemented a highly-stylized currency with each ruler minting their own coins, with some apparent overlap (Cribb 2005). A testament to the grandeur of Graeco-Bactrian coinage is Eucratides I gold coin, the largest gold coin minted in the early historic world (Holt 2012: 50-66). Furthermore, the palatial residences and civic infrastructure found at Ai Khanoum suggests that it was a flourishing urban center up to Eucratides I's rule, before it was abandoned and destroyed after his death (Mairs 2014: 47-164). What this means for the Yuezhi who settled in Bactria is that, although the Graeco-Bactrians had declined, these nomadic tribes inherited a region that, shortly before their arrival, had been politically and economically integrated. From 129 BCE until the rise of Kujula Kadphises in the mid-first century CE, it would seem that this group transitioned from nomadic pastoralists to a more settled society capable of crafting an empire.

²² For the chronology of the Graeco-Bactrians, see Cribb 2005: 208, 216-220.

Indicators of this Yuezhi transition, and the renewed prosperity of Bactria are further evident in the funeral deposits at Tillya Tepe and the Yuezhi palace complex Khalchayan. Excavations at Tillya Tepe, a site located east of Balkh and dated somewhere between the late-first century BCE to the early-first century CE, unearthed around twenty-thousand gold objects as well as two Chinese mirrors.²³ The concentration of gold jewelry found at this site indicates the prosperity of Bactria in the centuries prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and the discovery of objects originating from China demonstrates that trade routes between these two regions were active in the pre-Kuṣāṇa period. At Khalchayan, an urban center located in the Surkhan Darya valley north of the Amu Darya, palaces with wall paintings and sculptures that depict kings dressed in nomadic attire and facial characteristics similar to those found on the Kujula Kadphises' coins were discovered, suggesting that this was an early Kuṣāṇa site (Benjamin 2007: 194-200). All of this evidence points to the fact that, however smooth or chaotic the transfer of power was between the Graeco-Bactrians and the Yuezhi, from 129 BCE to the mid-first century CE this nomadic group become more integrated into this region, a process that enabled Kujula Kadphises to initiate his empire.

1.1.3. Gandhāra and the Fragmentation of Power.

The region of ancient Gandhāra is situated in what is now northern Pakistan, extending from Peshawar to Taxila and encompassing the alluvial plains comprising the Kabul, Swat, and Indus rivers. The fertile terrain of Gandhāra supported a higher concentration of urban centers than arid Bactria, and the three main cities Peshawar (Puruṣapurā), Charsadda (Puṣkalāvātī) and Taxila served as nodes of trade, administrative centers, and sites for the construction of Buddhist

²³ For a survey of the excavations at Tillya Tepe, see Sarianidi 1980:125-31, and for the dating of this site, see Zeymal 1999: 239-43.

monasteries (Neelis 2011: 186-211). Because of the presence of urban centers and land that could be taxed to derive revenue, numerous local rulers vied for power in this region creating a fractured political landscape that Kujula Kadphises would have to navigate.

Prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire three distinct cultural groups controlled Gandhāra: the Indo-Greeks, Śakas, and Indo-Parthians. The Indo-Greeks were originally Graeco-Bactrian rulers who expanded their control from Bactria into Gandhāra and northern India in the early second century BCE. Demetrius I, who directly preceded Eucratides (c. 171-145 CE), appears to have initiated this political incursion into Gandhāra, and after the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom dissolved, the remnants of this dynasty who resided south of the Hindu Kush became the Indo-Greeks (MacDowall 2005: 197-203; Salomon 2005: 365-71). The successor of Demetrius I was Menander (ca. 165-130 BCE), the most historically significant and numismatically prolific Indo-Greek ruler. His coins have been found throughout northwest South Asia, especially around Taxila, demonstrating that these regions were incorporated into his kingdom. Menander, as a historical figure, is mentioned in *The Geography of Strabo*, which states that he advanced as far as the Yamuna River and Plutarch, who remarks that upon this king's death his ashes were divided up into equal shares and set up in monuments (Bopearachchi 1993: 14-18). Menander also plays major role in the *Milindapañha*, a Buddhist text in which the monk Nāgasena engages King Milinda in a philosophical debate (Bopearachchi 1993: 20-22; Holt 2012: 20). Although the Indo-Greeks ruled over a century prior to the rise of the Kuṣāṇas, these kings established a pattern of expansion from Bactria to Gandhāra that subsequent migratory groups followed, the Kuṣāṇas among them.

Over the course of the first century BCE and continuing into the first century CE different waves of Śaka groups, originally from the Transoxiana borderlands of Central Asia and the

regions around the Black Sea, settled in Gandhāra and carved out local kingdoms (Neelis 2007: 56-70). The first Śaka ruler who emerged in this region was Maues (c. 90/80-60/75 BCE), and his coins have been found throughout Gandhāra and the Swat Valley, indicating the extent of his influence (Senior 2001: 25-7; Bopearachchi 1999: 124-6). Maues was succeeded by the subsequent Śaka ruler, Azes I (ca. 47/6 BCE), and the coins minted by him and his successors Azilises and Azes II suggest that this dynasty continued to have a political presence in Gandhāra up to at least the early first century CE (Neelis 2011: 116-7). The Apracas in Bajaur and the Oḍis in Swat also carved out localized kingdoms in the vicinity of Gandhāra in the early to mid-first century CE, further fragmenting this region (Salomon 2007: 267-79; Skinner and Rienjang forthcoming). The final migratory group who emerged as a prominent power in Gandhāra directly prior to the arrival of Kujula Kadphises were the Indo-Parthians, led by Gondophares (Neelis 2011: 74, 207). This ruler appears to be a direct political rival of Kujula Kadphises, and their relationship will be discussed more explicitly in the next chapter.

The influx of different groups into Gandhāra in the two centuries prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire transformed this region into a cauldron of competing factions. Kujula Kadphises, at the beginning of his career, can be seen as yet another migratory claimant looking to exploit the resource and revenue rich region of Gandhāra. However, he is the only ruler able to consolidate his power, subdue the local rulers, and integrate this region into a burgeoning empire.

1.1.4. Northern India and the Significance of Mathurā.

Northern India, like Gandhāra, consisted of urban centers over which local rulers could consolidate their power and sedentary societies from which they could draw revenue. After the Śakas established their presence in Gandhāra with the arrival of Maues in the early-first century

BCE, sub-groups continued to push east, assuming control over the cities of Mathurā and as far south as Ujjain and north into Kashmir. In addition to these Śaka migrants, coins minted by local monarchies and republics in northern India, such as the Audumbaras, Yaudeyas and Kunindas in the Punjab, the Pañcālas kings at Ahichchhatra, the Vatsa kings at Kauśāmbī, and the Kosala kings at Ayodhyā, indicate that many different localized polities emerged in the post-Maurya and pre-Kuṣāṇa period (Bopearachchi and Pieper 1998: 43-58). One of the byproducts of this political consolidation was increased urbanization with cities functioning as administrative, commercial, and religious centers as well as nodes of trade along expanding trade networks.

One city in northern India that displays the effects of this urbanization was Mathurā, which as noted in the opening of this chapter would become the administrative capital of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. The Kuṣāṇas did not expand into this region until the reign of Vima Takto, but upon arriving they capitalized on Mathurā's position along the northern (*uttarāpatha*) and southern (*dakṣiṇāpatha*) trade routes and quickly incorporated this city into their empire, which is evident in the construction of their royal statue gallery at Maṭ in the reign of Vima Takto (Neelis 2011: 998-105; Rosenfield 1967: 149-152). Upon assuming control of this city sometime in the early second century CE, the Kuṣāṇas unified the three core territories of their empire.

Prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, Mathurā had already developed into a flourishing commercial and religious center, and many different groups vied for control of this city.²⁴ An indication of Mathurā's transition into an economic and political hub can be traced

²⁴ Archaeological excavations conducted at Sonkh, located about 20 km southwest of Mathurā, show that in the first century CE improvements were made to its urban infrastructure that included roads lined by residential blocks, a transition in building materials from mud to baked bricks, the construction of public and private ring-wells, a citadel, and apsidal temples (Härtel 1993: 503). Although no such excavations have been conducted in Mathurā,

back to the Mitra kings, who ruled this city around the late second to mid-first century BCE and issued their own coins.²⁵ In the first century CE, the Śaka king Rajula took control of this city and ushered in its Kṣatrapa phase. It is during this period that the production of Jain art intensifies, mainly in the form of *āyāgapaṭas* slabs (Quintanilla 2007: 97-103). The artisans who fashioned these objects are also active in the Kuṣāṇa period when anthropomorphic Buddhist and Jain images become the dominate donative medium. Epigraphic evidence also increases during the Kṣatrapa period, with inscriptions containing virtually standard Sanskrit passages found on objects donated at the site of Morā near Mathurā.²⁶ The Mathurā lion capital inscription, composed in Gāndhārī, is an important text from this period. The primary purpose of the Mathurā lion capital inscription is to record a relic donation by Rajula's chief queen Yasi Kamui and a land grant by his son Śoḍāsa, presumably to the Sarvāstivādins. But this inscription also mentions other Kṣatrapas ruling around Taxila, demonstrating the political connections that existed among regions in the first century CE.²⁷ Kujula most likely subordinated these localized polities when consolidating his power in the latter half of the first century CE.

By focusing on each region individually, this section laid out the different political landscapes the Kuṣāṇas encountered as they attempted to construct their empire. In Bactria, the Yuezhi ancestors of the Kuṣāṇas either took advantage of the internal unrest of the Graeco-Bactrians or actively contributed to their downfall, and seized this opportunity to settle in this region. The Indo-Greeks, most likely related to the Graeco-Bactrians, initiated the pattern of

these same types of infrastructural improvements were probably being implemented in this more integral urban center.

²⁵ There are eight different Mitra rulers all sharing the same nominal suffix: Gomitra I, Sūryamitra, Brahmamitra, Viṣṇumitra, Gomitra II, Satamitra, Dhruvamitra, and Dṛḍhamitra (Chattopadhyaya 1989: 20).

²⁶ The three inscriptions that include Sanskrit passages are a well inscription, an inscribed doorjamb, and a stone slab (Lüders 1961: 154, §113; 155, §115; 203-4, §178)

²⁷ The Mathurā lion capital inscription is a complicated text both in the way it was written on all sides of the capital and in the information in the text itself. Falk (2011) provided a new reading of the inscription and discussed its historical significance, and a further revision to this text was made by Baums (2012: 233-4).

movement between Bactria and Gandhāra and then into northern India, and this path was followed by the Śakas and then emulated by the Kuṣāṇas. Gandhāra and northern India presented Kujula Kadphises and his successors with a much more convoluted political landscape than the Yuezhi had confronted in Bactria in the second century BCE. From Kujula's initial incursion into Gandhāra from Bactria in the mid-first century CE until the emergence of Kanīška I in 127 CE, the three imperial initiators subdued these local rulers and incorporated these regions into their empire. One of the tools that the Kuṣāṇas utilized to consolidate their power was control over the economy, and this required minting their own coins and devising an imperial currency.

1.2. Economic Consolidation of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

One shared feature among the Graeco-Bactrians, Indo-Greeks, Śakas, Indo-Parthian, and local republics in northern India is their minting of coins. The production of coins marks a ruler's rise to power in three ways. First, they show that a ruler controlled the resources needed to manufacture coins, namely the mines and mints. Second, the legend on coin enables the ruler to state their name and royal titles. Third, the design on the reverse of obverse allows the ruler to propagate their political message. The power to mint coins reinforces the power to rule, a connection succinctly pointed out by Joe Cribb:

Coinage in Rome reflected the nature of state power, and once that power was vested in an individual, their personal power became closely associated with the coinage. The imperial control of coinage also brought with it an implication that control of coinage could represent imperial power. It became a necessary part of the process of coming to power that coins had to be issued as part of the process (2009: 505).

The same link between coins and power in the Roman context are applicable to the early stages of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and Kujula Kadphises' imitation of Augustus' coins suggests that he was aware of this correspondence.

Two features of early Kuṣāṇa currency reflect the ways these rulers utilized coins to validate their authority. The first is Kujula Kadphises' adoption of previous coin types in his issues. By appropriating Graeco-Bactrian, Śaka, Indo-Parthian, and even Roman prototypes, Kujula Kadphises adhered to the 'acceptance factor' that stipulates currency introduced into a pre-existing commercial network needs to be acceptable to the people who used them in their daily transactions (Bhandare 1999: 36-7). Imitating previous coins while at the same time modifying the legends to include his name and royal epithets allowed Kujula to announce his political status while keeping markets operational. The second phase of Kuṣāṇa coinage, presumably initiated by Kujula Kadphises but fully implemented by Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises, represents a radical departure from Kujula Kadphises' early imitation issues, and instead these two rulers introduced an entirely new imperial currency (Cribb 2015: 110-1). Kuṣāṇa coins deserve their own chapter in the narrative of the Kuṣāṇa Empire and cannot be fully developed in this study; however, this section will present an abridged version of the key numismatic changes that occurred in the initial stages of the Kuṣāṇa empire.

1.2.1. Influences on the Coins of Kujula Kadphises.

The coins of Kujula Kadphises can be divided between his early issues in Bactria north of the Hindu Kush and those circulating south of the Hindu Kush, possibly minted in Begram and Taxila. Prior to the emergence of Kujula Kadphises, silver tetradrachms (16 g) and obols (0.6 g) based on Eucratides I (ca. 171-45 BCE) and Heliocles I (ca. 120-90 BCE) prototypes were minted in Bactria and contained the names Sapadbizes, Agesiles, Pseigacharis, and Pabes, who may have been Yuezhi yabḡus ruling in this region (Jongeward et al. 2015: 22). When Kujula Kadphises came to power in Bactria he continued to issue these coins, especially a series of copper Heliocles I imitations, and also introduced a new series, the Heraus type that contained

his portrait on the obverse and replicated the king on horseback from Gondophares' coins on the reverse (app. 2, 1A).²⁸ Kujula also issued silver and copper coins that adopted the design of the Graeco-Bactrian ruler Eucratides I's coin that showed a helmeted bust on the obverse, but he substituted the mounted Dioscuri on the reverse with a standing or mounted ruler (app. 2, 1A). Kujula also incorporated his own legend, engraved on the reverse, that identified him as the Kuṣāṇa (KOPPANNOY/KOPΣANOY) (Cribb 1993: 120-1, 126-7). In these early Kuṣāṇa issues north of the Hindu Kush the Graeco-Bactrian legacy is quite apparent, and by making only minor changes to this coinage Kujula Kadphises was able to introduce his own currency into this region.

South of the Hindu Kush the coins of Kujula Kadphises are much more varied and display a range of influences. One of the earliest coins Kujula Kadphises issued in this region, found largely in Begram north of modern Kabul, are the posthumous Hermaeus type that had a bust of the king on the obverse and Heracles on the reverse (app. 2, 1B). Hermaeus was the last of the Indo-Greek kings, ruling up to 70 BCE, and Bopearachchi (1999: 129-33) has identified ten successive groups of his coin types minted from the time of his death up to Kujula's reign. Besides providing a clear example of Kujula adoption in his coins, what is significant about the Hermaeus coin series is that overtime the silver content is debased resulting in the final three groups being minted in only copper (Bopearachchi 1999: 33). The debasement of silver occurred in all coins minted in the first half of the first century CE across Bactria and Gandhāra (Cribb 2015: 103). This disruption in the availability of silver could have been a major factor in Vima Takto's implementation of his Soter Megas series minted primarily in copper. There are

²⁸ The Heraus coin series is named after Alexander Cunningham's reading of Heraus (HPAOY) in the legend. Cribb (1993: 108, 130) revises this reading to "Hiao" (HIAOY) that he equates to meaning King. Alram (1999: 24-5) notes that although the numismatic evidence points to Heraus coins being those of Kujula Kadphises, it is possible that these were minted by different, or earlier, yabḡu named Heraus.

two other notable examples of Kujula Kadphises' imitations circulating south of the Hindu Kush. The first is his copper bull and camel series, found mainly in Jammu-Kashmir and Taxila, and, as the name suggests, displays a bull on the obverse and a camel on the reverse (app. 2, 1B). These coins were based on the bull and lion coins minted by Zeioniese/Jihonika, who himself had borrowed the design from Azes II, providing an example of single prototype being imitated by two different rulers (Cribb 1999: 198). The final, and most remarkable, imitation coins minted in Kujula's reign are those based on Roman prototypes (app. 2, 1B). The two Roman types are mainly found in Taxila; one has a bust based on Augustus' coins and the other depicts the ruler seated in a curule chair (Alram 1999: 32). These Roman coins reflect the long-distance trade routes that existed in the first century CE between the Mediterranean world and South Asia, a topic that will be discussed further in chapter six.

1.2.2. The Establishment of an Imperial Currency.

Starting in the reign Kujula Kadphises and continuing through Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises' reigns, the coinage produced in the Kuṣāṇa Empire was drastically reformed. Whereas Kujula Kadphises' coins, for the most part, adhered to earlier prototypes with some design innovations and legends altered to include his name, the Kuṣāṇa coinage of the two other imperial initiators radically departed from this model. Towards the end of Kujula's rule and throughout that of Vima Takto they discontinued the numerous types of coins circulating in their territory and introduce the Soter Megas series.²⁹ The introduction of the Soter Megas series

²⁹ Prior to the translation of the Rabatak inscription in 1995-6 (Sims-Williams and Cribb) that confirmed the identity of Vima Takto and his position within the Kuṣāṇa dynasty the Soter Megas coinage had long confounded numismatists. It was clear that there was a gap in the Kuṣāṇa coinage between Kujula Kadphises and Vima Kadphises, but the identity of the anonymous Soter Megas was a source of debate. Some scholars, like Göbl (1984: 7) sought to associate this coinage with Vima Kadphises or another unnamed Kuṣāṇa ruler, while others like Fussman (1998: 621) and Bopearachchi (2012: 130) argue that this figure usurped the Kuṣāṇa throne. Cribb (2015: 110-1), in his most recent publication on the Soter Megas series, lays out all these theories and argues that, as stated above, the Soter Megas coinage was initiated in the later stages of Kujula Kadphises' reign and fully implemented by Vima Takto.

solved the issues in the disruption of silver that caused widespread debasement in the early century CE by being minted only in copper, and moreover standardized the imperial currency so as to consolidate the distinct regions of Kuṣāṇa Empire into a single economic unit (app.2, 2). The design of the general issue Soter Megas coins was simplified, limited to the god Miiro on the obverse, a mounted figure on a horse on the reverse, and the legend that read Soter Megas, “Great Savior” (Cribb 2015: 97).³⁰ Along with these metallurgical and typological changes, the denominations and weights were standardized, with only two drachms (8.5 g) and a half drachm (2.1 g) coins being minted according to the “reduced Attic” standard (Jongeward et al. 2015: 7). The Soter Megas coins have been found in abundance from northern Bactrian to Mathurā, indicating that they circulated throughout the Kuṣāṇa Empire and became the imperial currency.

Simplifying the imperial currency to just eight types of copper coins, the Soter Megas series allowed Vima Takto to control the minting process and standardize the newly issued imperial currency. With the Soter Megas coins circulating throughout the Kuṣāṇa Empire and standardizing the economy, Vima Takto’s successor, Vima Kadphises was free to add his own innovations to the imperial currency. He continued to issue copper coins but increased the denominations to four, two, and one drachm (16, 8, and 4 g), and more significantly introduced, for the first time in South Asian history, gold coins weighing four, two, and one drachms (Jongeward et al. 2015: 7, 53). Robert Bracey’s (2009: 32-5) extensive die study of Vima Kadphises’ gold coinage revealed five phases of production, starting with a limited prestige issue using only a single pair of die for the obverse and the reverse and increasing in output and design variation in each subsequent phase. Vima Kadphises also modified the design choices in his

³⁰ Cribb (2015: 97-105) identifies eight types of Soter Megas coins, distinguishing between the more common general type and seven less common local types. The local issues found in Bactria, Gandhāra, Mathurā, and Kashmir display different obverses and reverses than the general type.

copper and gold issues from that of the Soter Megas series. On the reverse, he was depicted in various postures, such as standing, sitting, in a window, on a mountain, and, on the obverse, he put the Parthian deity Wesho, presumably the Avestan wind God but who shares many attributes with Śiva (app. 2, 3).³¹ Furthermore, he greatly expanded the legend, substituting the anonymous Soter Megas with the more grandiose “Great King, King of Kings, Lord of all People, the Great Lord, Vima Kadphises, the Savior” (*maharajasa rajadirajasa sarvaloga-iśvarasa mahiśvarasa vima kapthiśasa tratara*) (Jongeward et al. 2015: 53-4; Bracey 2009: 31). This coinage, copper and gold with the king on the reverse and a deity on the obverse, remained the standard imperial currency for the duration the Kuṣāṇa Empire. In the reigns of Kaniṣka I and Huviṣka the gold coins would undergo yet another innovation with a greatly expanded pantheon of deities depicted on the obverse (Bracey 2012a: 203).

The advent of the Kuṣāṇa imperial currency in the reigns of Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises marks the establishment of these rulers as the preeminent power ruling over Bactria, Gandhāra, and northern India, and the merchants and markets within these regions directly benefited through this economic standardization.

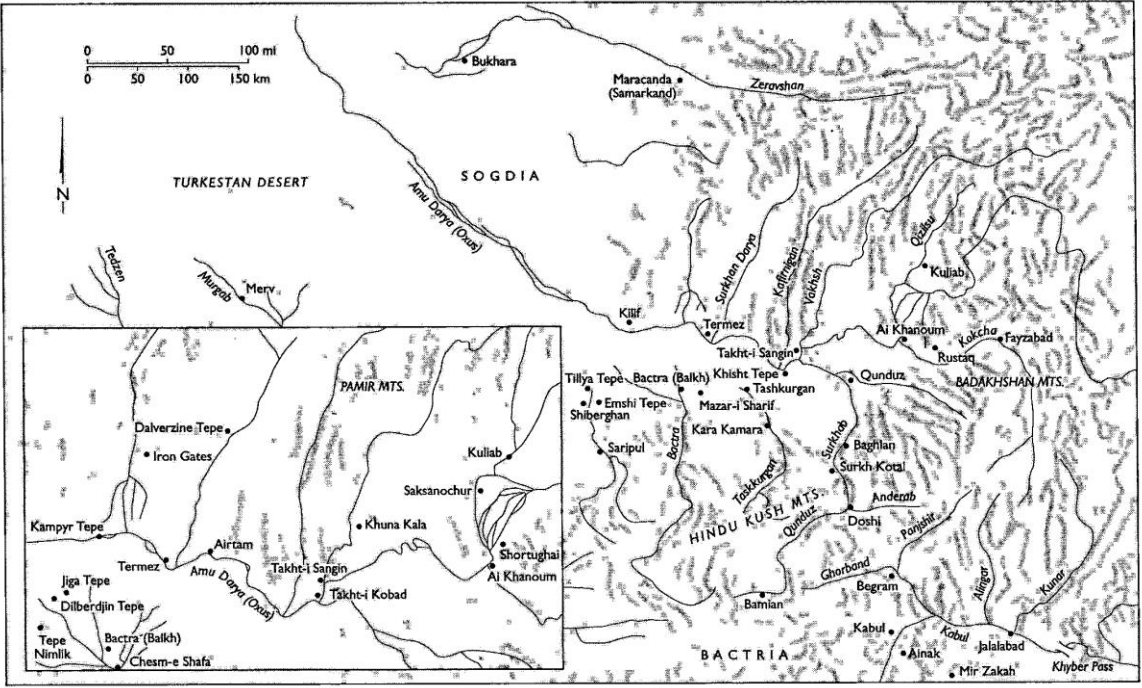
1.3. Trade networks and Imperial Topography.

A major component of the imperial narrative constructed throughout this dissertation is the donors of inscribed objects, and a significant number of these donors were merchants and other professionals who benefited from the increased volume of trade that occurred during the Kuṣāṇa period. Kuṣāṇa consolidation, both politically and economically, enhanced trade networks through providing stability and security over a vast region from the Amu Darya to the

³¹ On Vima Kadphises’ copper coins Wesho/Śiva is mainly depicted as leaning against a bull with an erect liṅga, holding a trident, and a scarf draped over his right shoulder and on his gold coins Wesho/Śiva stands alone with an erect liṅga, holding a trident in his left hand and a water pot in his right, and an animal skin draped over his right arm (Cribb 1997b: 13-4).

Ganges River. The people who profited from the increase in trade included the conglomerate of long-distance traders stationed at the east-west intersection of the Silk road in Bactria, urbanites in Gandhāra, and local producers at markets in northern India. By welding these wealthy elites into a single imperial unit all using the same imperial currency, the Kuṣāṇa Empire facilitated the acquisition of capital that could be used to sponsor donations at religious sites. This section examines the interregional networks of transmission and traces the geographical contours of each region in order to gain a better understanding of the scale of this empire and how people navigated its varied topographical zones. Also provided in this section are maps of each region that can be used as a general reference for important cities and religious sites discussed in later chapters.

The primary route that linked all the regions of the Kuṣāṇa Empire together was the “northern route” (*uttarāpatha*) that ran from Balkh to Mathurā. Bactria represents the northern terminus of this route for traders coming from the subcontinent, but this region also served as the gateway to the Silk Road that extended east to China and west to the Iranian plateau and the Mediterranean Sea. The geographical boundaries, important urban centers, and pre-Kuṣāṇa sites of Bactria can be seen this map:



Map 2: Bactria
(Holt 2012: 28)

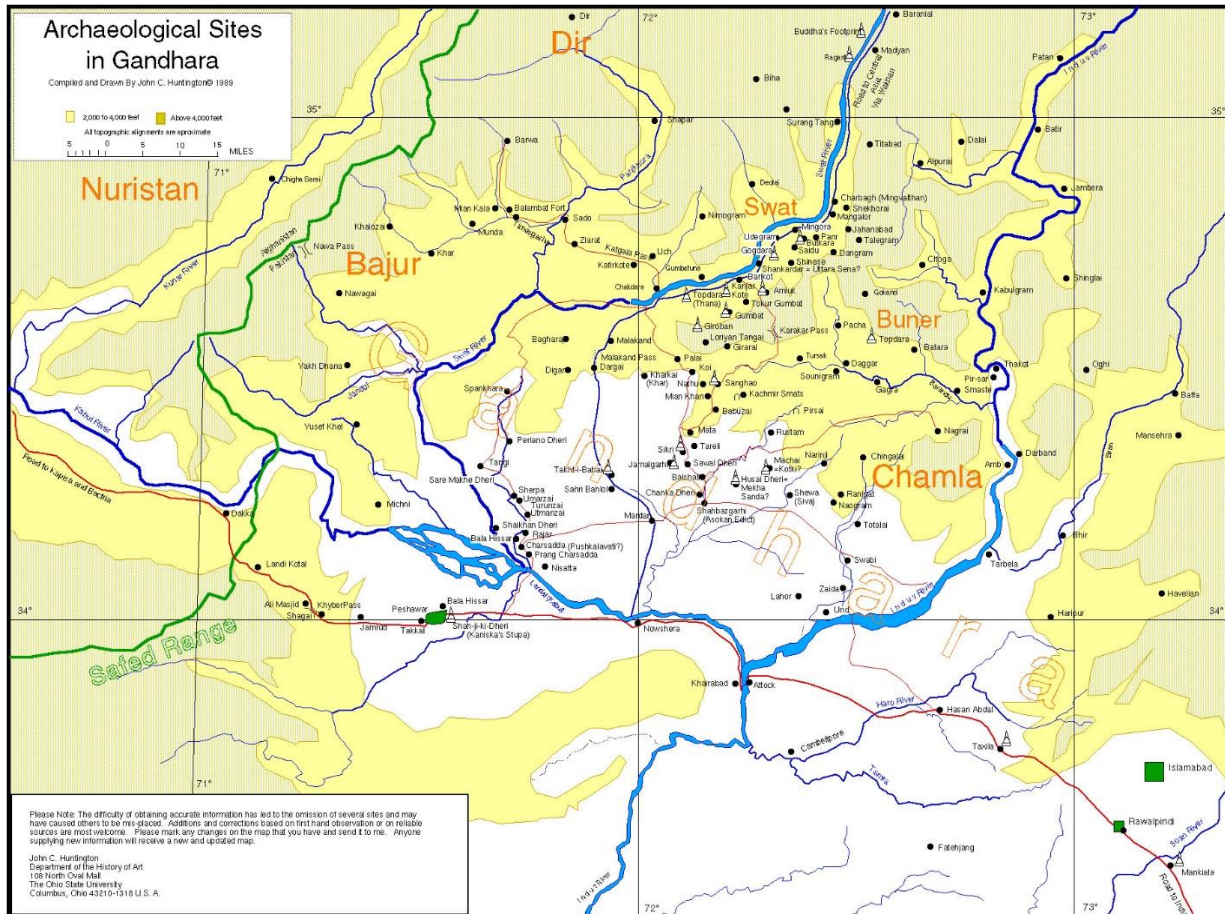
To the northeast of Bactria are the resource-rich Pamir Mountains that contained the precious metals needed for minting coins (Abazov 2008: 5-6). To the east of the Pamir Mountains lies the city of Kashgar (not seen on this map), an important node on the Silk Road located on the western edge of the Tarim Basin, and from this city traders could traverse the northern or southern edge of the Taklamakan Desert on their way to China. Most of the urban sites in Bactria are located on the Amu Darya or in the valleys carved by its many tributaries. Balkh, situated south of the Amu Darya where the Bactra River spills out into the arid plain, was an important hub of trade. Recent archaeological excavations conducted at the site of Zadiyan, about equidistant between Balkh and the Amu Darya, have unearthed a huge quadrangular wall measuring 4 km on each side with a citadel built directly in the middle. It is believed that this site was a military outpost, intended to protect the northern border of the Kuṣāṇa Empire (Vaissière et al. 2015). The Hindu Kush mountains, on the southern border of Bactria, formed a

natural pinch point between Bactria and Gandhāra, meaning that anyone who controlled the passes that snake through these mountains could regulate trade moving from the South to Central Asia. Conversely, the Hindu Kush also made the region of Bactria vulnerable to invasion, as forces stationed in the south had to pass through this challenging terrain before they could respond to a military threat. Bactria's vulnerability arises in the early reign of Huviṣka and with the emergence of the Sasanian Empire ca. 230 CE.

Moving southeast along the *uttarāpatha* from Bactria and through the mountain passes of the Hindu Kush one reaches the city of Begram (ancient Kapisa). Charles Masson's excavations of Begram in the 1830s unearthed numerous objects and abundant coins dated to the Kuṣāṇa period, suggesting that this city served as summer capital for the Kuṣāṇas when the subcontinent got too hot (Rosenfield 1967: 47). Eastern Afghanistan also contains one of the largest copper mines in the world located at Mes Aynak, about 40 km southeast of modern day Kabul. The copper needed to produce the Kuṣāṇa imperial currency might have come from this site, which means Begram could have served as a Kuṣāṇa mint (Bracey 2012b: 123).³² Heading east down the Kabul River the next major settlement is Nagarāhāra, near present day Jalalabad and home to the important Buddhist site of Haḍḍa (Tarzi 2013). From here there are two routes into Gandhāra, one north up the Kunar River and into Bajaur and Chitral and another east through the Khyber Pass, and into Gandhāra via Peshawar (Dar 2006: 71-80; Falk 2005b: 347-8).

The more open plains of Gandhāra contained cities, namely Peshawar (Puruṣapurā), Charsadda (Puṣkalāvati), and Taxila and numerous Buddhist sites, as seen on this map:

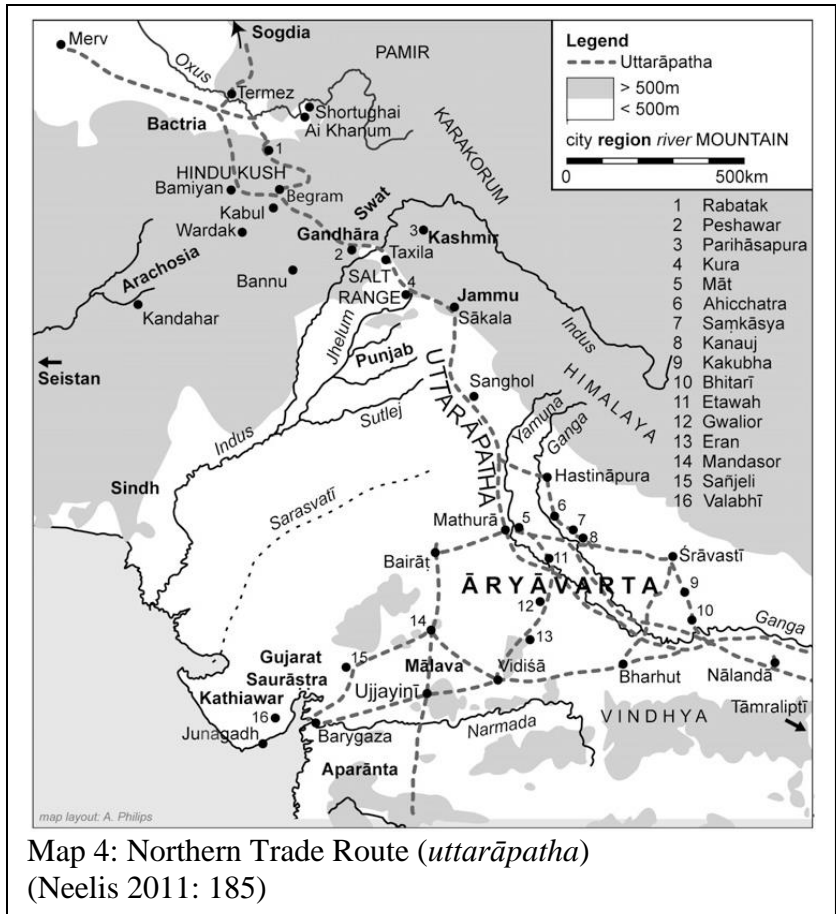
³² Archaeological excavations at this site have revealed copper smelts as well as numerous Buddhist relics and monastic complexes dating to the Kuṣāṇa period. However, a proposed mining operation at this site threatens to destroy these Buddhist antiquities. The tension between modern economics concerns and historical preservation are addressed in the documentary *Saving Mes Aynak* by Brent Huffman (2014).



Map 3: Gandhāra and Surrounding Areas
 (kaladarshan.arts.ohio-state.edu/maps/gandh.html)

To the north of Gandhāra is Bajaur and Swat, home to the Apraca and Oḍi dynasties. The Indus River provided ample water for the irrigation of crops to support the urban centers in this region, and also served as a conduit of transmission. Heading up-river leads to the numerous capillary routes that served as an alternate path to the Tarim Basin and subsequently the Silk Road to China, and travelling down-river brings you to the Indian Ocean and its maritime trade networks (Neelis 2011: 186-211; 245-57).

Continuing east from Gandhāra along the northern route, traders would cross the Punjab plains, which functioned as a borderland between Gandhāra and northern India. Although not nearly as challenging as the Khyber Pass or the Hindu Kush, the five rivers flowing through this region still posed a formidable obstacle. Mathurā was the southern terminus of this route that



crossed the entire expanse of the Kuṣāṇa Empire as seen on this map. From Mathurā, traders could continue to follow the Ganges River into eastern India or head south along the southern route, *dakṣiṇāpatha*. This southern route connected Mathurā with Ujjain, the western Kṣatrapa’s capital, and ultimately led to Barygaza, a main port city of the Indian Ocean trading

network (Neelis 2011: 205-17).

Very few traders probably endured the four-month journey from Balkh to Mathurā, and instead traveled between cities in their general vicinity. However, for those hearty enough to undertake such an expedition there was plenty of profit to be made, which could be used to sponsor the installation of a religious image, the interment of the Buddha’s relics, or the construction of any number of architectural objects at a monastic site. In this initial phase of the Kuṣāṇa Empire the political and economic consolidation enacted by Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises created a commercial zone spanning three different geographical regions and uniting a diverse population into an interdependent conglomerate. Merchants and other professionals depended on the Kuṣāṇas to provide stability and currency, and in return the

Kuṣāṇa depended on the wealthy elites to acknowledge their authority. However, it was not just merchants who traversed these routes, but Buddhist monks as well, and as Harry Falk (2005b: 353) observes, “where there is a protected road there is business, and where there is business stūpas are not far away.” The next section will examine the state of Buddhism prior to the rise of the Kuṣāṇas.

1.4. Buddhism Prior to the Rise of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

There is one last group operating in the regions controlled by the Kuṣāṇas that has so far been overlooked, that being the large and influential Buddhist community. Chapter four of this study focuses specifically on the role of Buddhism in the Kuṣāṇa period, and this section examines the state of Buddhism in these regions prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇas. Northern India, being the Buddhist heartland, had a vibrant and well-entrenched Buddhist community prior to the rise of the Kuṣāṇas, exemplified by stūpa sites at Sāñcī and Bhārhut. For Gandhāra it is difficult to determine when Buddhism spread to this region, but coins found in the Dharmarājikā stūpa at Taxila are dateable to the second century BCE, and the initial foundation of the great stūpa at Butkara I in Swat was probably constructed in late-third or early-second centuries BCE (Behrendt 2004: 41; Faccenna 2007: 165-6). From this initial establishment of stūpas in Swat and Taxila, Buddhist monastic sites gradually radiated outward along the trade networks that intersected Gandhāra (Neelis 2011: 233, 245). By the late-first century BCE to the mid-first century CE the Apraca and Oḍi rulers patronized these Buddhist communities by establishing the Buddha’s relics at stūpa sites (Salomon 2007: 284-5). Fourteen out of the seventeen known Apraca inscriptions record a relic donation, and five of these reliquary inscriptions note that these relics were placed in “a previously unestablished place” (Skt.

apraṭiṣṭhāpitapūrve pradēśe).³³ The phrase “a previously unestablished place” can be interpreted as either endowing an existing stūpa with sacred properties or founding an entirely new stūpa.³⁴ In either case, this collection of inscriptions provide the most conclusive evidence for the existence of permanent Buddhist complexes in Gandhāra prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇas. These sites and their accompanying monastic and lay communities formed a Buddhist network that spread throughout northern India, Gandhāra, and Bactria in the pre-Kuṣāṇa period, and this development serves as the basis for imperial Buddhism discussed in chapter four.

1.5. Conclusion

In setting the imperial stage this chapter highlighted the Kuṣāṇa’s peripatetic past and the history of the three regions that these rulers would integrate into an empire. Many of the topics covered in this chapter will shape this empire and be discussed throughout this dissertation. The localized polities, merchants, and monastic communities that existed within these regions would be retained by the Kuṣāṇa and utilized to assist in implanting their authority. The reforms made to the currency circulating in their empire and the political stability instituted by these rulers stimulated the economy and allowed donors to accrue wealth that they could use to sponsor donations to a variety of religious communities. With this historical background established, the next chapter will fill in this narrative of imperial initiation by looking more closely at the inscriptions associated with Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises.

³³ The importance of this phrase to the foundation of a stūpa site was first realized by Gérard Fussman (1980: 14) and appears in the Indravarma schist reliquary [CGI 242], the Ramaka stone slab [CGI 251], the Uttara reliquary [CGI 255], the Śatruleka reliquary [CGI 257], and the Ṇagaṇaḍa reliquary [CGI 454], all of which are inscriptions connected to the Apraca dynasty.

³⁴ Salomon and Schopen 1984: 115-21.

Chapter 2: The Epigraphic Narrative for the Imperial Initiators

The inscriptional evidence for the initial phase of the Kuṣāṇa rulers is very limited, consisting of nine inscriptions in total, five associated with Kujula Kadphises, three with Vima Takto, and only a single inscription for the time of Vima Kadphises.³⁵ The dearth of epigraphic material might be the result of either the Kuṣāṇas not yet asserting their authority over the many localized powers that existed in Gandhāra and northern India in the mid-first and early second century CE, or donors not yet acknowledging the Kuṣāṇas as a preeminent power in their donative texts. Comparing the epigraphic record of the early Kuṣāṇa with other imperial formations in early historic South Asia, a pattern emerges that only after a ruling group has firmly consolidated its power would the production of inscriptions commence.³⁶ This model, exemplified in the Kuṣāṇa context, suggests that the emergence of inscriptions did not just serve as marks of empire to record donations or document a ruler's deeds, but in fact marked the transition from an emergent political entity to an entrenched power.

Rather than viewing this scant epigraphic evidence as a hindrance in evaluating the initial phase of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, one can read these nine inscriptions as a reflection of the arduous process of founding an empire. At no point during the phase of imperial initiation was the

³⁵ Vima Takto's Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription [6] contains a Bactrian and Gāndhārī text.

³⁶ Limited epigraphic evidence for the early rulers of political entities in South Asia is quite typical. This pattern occurs at the very inception of South Asia's epigraphic record during the Maurya Empire (ca. 325-185 BCE). For the first two rulers Chandragupta and Bimbisāra there are no inscriptions, and it is only in Aśoka's reign (ca. 273-232) that inscriptions are composed with any frequency in the entire subcontinent (Chakravarti 2016: 125-33; Thapar 1961). A similar situation occurs with the Sātavāhanas (late-first century BCE-225 CE) and the Western Kṣatrapas. In both cases the early rulers are underrepresented epigraphically, with only a few texts associated with Sātavāhana rulers prior to the emergence of Gautamīputra Sātakarni in the latter half of the first century CE. Likewise in the early Kṣaharāta phase (ca. late-first century BCE-60 CE), only Nahapana's son-in-law Ṛṣbhadatta left a notable epigraphic record, while only after the Kārdamakas took over western India from the Kṣaharāta, did they seriously start composing inscriptions, epitomized by Rudradāman I's highly Sanskritized text found at Junāgaḍh (Mirashi 1981; Chakravarti 2016: 194-201). The successor of the Kuṣāṇas, the Guptas, also follow this pattern with the first epigraphic evidence for these rulers being the Allahabad inscription, most likely composed in the reign of Chandragupta II, that records the deeds of the deceased fourth Gupta ruler, Samudragupta, while no inscriptions have been discovered in the reigns of the first three Gupta rulers: Śri Gupta, Ghaṭotkaca, and Chandragupta I (Fleet 1888: part 1, 132-3; part 2, 5-6).

success of the Kuṣāṇas guaranteed. The transition of the Kuṣāṇas from a regional power in Bactria to an expansive polity ruling over Gandhāra and northern India took approximately seventy-seven years from Kujula Kadphises' emergence around 50 CE until Kaṇiṣka's coronation in 127 CE. While initiating this empire the early Kuṣāṇas had to expand their territory, subjugate the numerous localized rulers, implement an imperial currency, and, most of all, impart their authority over the people inhabiting Bactria, Gandhāra, and northern India. The absence of a proliferation of epigraphic references for the kings in this initial period of Kuṣāṇa rule reflects the difficulty of empire formation, and in each successive period of rule Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises moved towards consolidating their power and stabilizing socio-economic systems. The information contained in these inscriptions assist in framing this narrative of imperial initiation, both in what they say about these early rulers as well as the way the conglomerate of donors reacted to their imperial agenda.

2.1. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Kujula Kadphises.

All five inscriptions composed in the reign of Kujula Kadphises, approximately 50-90 CE, reflect the challenges this ruler faced in initiating his empire. The first challenge Kujula confronted was the numerous localized powers who ruled in Gandhāra and northern India; polities that had to be either subdued through military means or subordinated through diplomatic channels. The second challenge required convincing the population to recognize his emerging status, because without firmly imprinting his authority Kujula's imperial aspirations would have gradually faded after his death, or he would have been usurped by another opportunistic leader. Failing on either of these two fronts would mean ending this imperial narrative before it began. The information contained in the five texts associated with Kujula Kadphises demonstrates that

this ruler engaged with the local polities and resonated with donors across political, social, and religious fields.

For the narrative of imperial initiation, the fact that all of the inscriptions containing references to Kujula Kadphises were written in Gāndhārī, and those with a secure provenance were found in Gandhāra, indicate that, from an epigraphic standpoint, his efforts to craft an empire were concentrated in this region.³⁷ It is important to note that Kujula did not directly sponsor any of the donations that mention his name; instead the inscriptions tell us that he had risen to level of prominence in Gandhāra that resulted in donors choosing to acknowledge his political status or to include him as one of the beneficiaries of the gift. The absence of Brāhmī inscriptions for this ruler supports the assumption that Kujula's influence did not extend past the Punjab and into northern India. The lack of Bactrian inscriptions, on the other hand, is somewhat surprising, given the fact that Bactria was the presumed Kuṣāṇa homeland. This might be the result of Bactrian not being used as an epigraphic language during Kujula Kadphises' reign, as it is first attested in the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription composed in the rule of Vima Takto, or perhaps, the habit of inscribing objects had yet to spread from Gandhāra and into Bactria.³⁸ Whatever the case may be for the lack of Bactrian texts associated with Kujula

³⁷ The numismatic record shows a much larger impact of Kujula Kadphises' rise to power, as his coins have been found in Bactria, Gandhāra, Jammu and Kashmir, Sindh, Mathurā, and even, in the case of his Hermaeus and bull and camel types, as far away as Khotan (Sims-Williams and Cribb 1995-6: 103; Cribb 1999: 184; Jongeward et al. 2015: 30-2). It must be noted that the fact that a ruler's coins are found in a specific region does not necessarily indicate overt political control; rather it reflects the circulation of currency more than the expansion of territory.

³⁸ The use of Bactrian as an 'official' Kuṣāṇa language is alluded to in the third line of the Rabatak inscription that states, "and he issued(?) a Greek edict(?) (and) then he put it into Aryan [i.e. Bactrian]" (Sims-Williams 2004: 56. The shift from Greek to Bactrian also occurs in Kaniṣka I's coins, supporting the argument that there was some linguistic elevation of Bactrian during Kaniṣka I's rule (Bracey 2012b: 123). The only pre-Kuṣāṇa inscriptions from Bactria are those found at Ai Khanoum, but these were written in Greek and are dated to around the time of Eucratides I (ca. 145 BCE), almost two hundred years prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire (Rapin 1992; Mairs 2014: 60-1, 189). To my knowledge, there are no inscriptions found in Bactria and composed in Bactrian prior to those found at Rabatak [14] and the Palamedes inscription from Surkh Kotal [15] datable to the reign of Kaniṣka I.

Kadphises, once this ruler arrived in Gandhāra in the mid-first century CE his name, or titles associated with him, began to appear in inscriptions.

Inscriptions composed in the reign of Kujula Kadphises can be divided into three categories based on the dates, where available, and on how Kujula Kadphises is referred to in the text. The first category includes the so-called Takht-i-bāhī [1] and Priavaśa [3] inscriptions, and in these texts Kujula Kadphises appears to be referenced by the titles prince (*erjhuṇa*) and yabḡu (*yaiiasa*) respectively. The so-called Takht-i-bāhī inscription is dated to year 56 CE, towards the beginning of Kujula's career, and the Priavaśa inscription is dated to 79 CE, towards the end. The second category also contains two epigraphs, the Panjtar [2] inscription dated to year 75 CE and the Taxila silver scroll [4] inscription dated to year 89 CE. In these inscriptions Kujula Kadphises is referred to as the Great King (*G maharaja*) and the Kuṣāṇa (*G guṣaṇa/khuṣaṇa*). There is only one inscription in the final category, the Seṇavarma gold leaf [5] inscription, and this text is the only instance where Kujula Kadphises' name appears in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic record. This text is dated to Seṇavarma's fourteenth regnal year, making it difficult to determine its precise date, but since the Oḍi kings ruling in Swat appear to be contemporaries with Apracas, for whom we do have dates (ca. 10 BCE - 70 CE), Seṇavarma most likely ruled around the mid-first century CE (Salomon 2007: 276-9). In weaving the career of Kujula Kadphises into a narrative of imperial initiation, the different gradients of recognition found in the texts composed during his reign reveal this ruler's path to power.

The so-called Takht-i-bāhī inscription [1] records the donation of an enclosure (*parivara*, Skt *parivāra*) by Balasami dated to year one hundred three of the Azes era and in Gondophares' regnal year twenty-six, both corresponding to 56 CE.³⁹ This date falls in the beginning of Kujula

³⁹ Takht-i-bāhī is a relatively well-preserved Buddhist monastic complex datable to the Kuṣāṇa period and located about 20 km northwest of Mardan, Pakistan (Behrendt 2004: 181-9). Konow (1929: 57) refers to this text as

Kadphises' expansion into Gandhāra, a time when the Indo-Parthian ruler Gondophares held the title of Great King while Kujula Kadphises was honored only as "Prince Kapa" (*erjhuṇa kapa puyae*). The designation *erjhuṇa* is derived from the Śaka *alysānai* "prince," and the more enigmatic *kapa* appears in Gāndhārī legends on Kujula's early Heraeus copper coins "of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra, Kujula Kata Kapa" (*maharayasa rayatirayasa devaputra kuyula kata kapasa*).⁴⁰ The name Kapa appearing on Kujula's coins suggests that he is the one mentioned in this inscription and, as a prince, is subordinate to the Great King Gondophares. There is a possibility however that *erjhuṇa kapa* refers to another prince named Kapa governing the area around Takht-i-bāhī. However, the correlation between the date on this inscription and numismatic evidence, which includes Kapa as an appellation for Kujula and overstrikes of Kujula's Hermaeus coins on Gondophares' coins, suggests these two rules were contemporaries, and that Kujula Kadphises is the intended recipient of Balasami's homage (Alram 1999: 28):

This epigraphic evidence fits nicely into the imperial narrative of initiation by illustrating the nascent stage of imperial formation. Balasami's acknowledgement of Gondophares' status in the dating formula, while at the same time honoring Kujula Kadphises in the benedictory section seems to capture a transitional moment in Gandhāran history, a time when a new political player had emerged, that being Prince Kapa (=Kujula Kadphises) who had yet to consolidate his

the so-called Takht-i-bāhī inscription because Alexander Cunningham first stated this inscribed stone slab was discovered at Shāhbhāzgarhī, but later mentioned it came from Takht-i-bāhī. For the present study, it should be noted that both sites are only about 30 km apart north of Mardan, so that the provenance, although not certain, would be in the same vicinity. The significance of Takht-i-bāhī is discussed in chapter 4 (4.4).

⁴⁰ Konow (1929: 61) derives *erjhuṇa* from the Śaka word *alysānai* (*eyśānai* < *alzānai* < *ezānai*), and interprets the meaning of prince from the Khotanese equivalent of Skt *kumāra*. Sharma (1978: 127-8) suggests a connection between *erjhuṇa* and the Ārjunāyanas tribe mentioned in Chandragupta II's Allahabad inscription, with the Śaka *ālśata*, 'silver', and *arjuna*, 'white', both connoting leadership. For the occurrence of Kapa on Kujula Kadphises' coins, see Cribb 1993: 124. The identification of Kujula Kadphises as a prince in this inscription does beg the question, from whom did he assume power? The only evidence available for possible predecessors of Kujula Kadphises is found in coins minted in Bactria prior to his rule that contain the names Sapadbizes, Agesiles, Pseigacharis, and Pabes (Jongeward et al. 2015: 21). However, no firm connection between these presumably previous Kuśāṇa rulers and Kujula Kadphises has been established.

power. The donor Balasami himself carries the title of Boyaṇa, which Konow (1929: 60) interprets as “savior” derived from the Iranian root \sqrt{baug} or \sqrt{bauj} , “to save,” and the suffix *āna*, and equating to Greek *soter* and Gāndhārī *tratara*, both meaning “savior.” These two terms appear on Kuṣāṇa coin legends, e.g. Vima Takto’s Soter Megas series, and if the title Boyaṇa has a political connotation, then Balasami’s recognition of both Gondophares and Kujula Kadphises might have positioned him between these two rivals.

Kujula Kadphises’ association with the Priavaśa inscription [3] is also not definitive, but there is reason to believe that he is referred to in this text. This inscription is engraved on four sides of the stone box that presumably housed a reliquary, now lost, and records the donation of the Buddha’s relics and a vihāra by the *śramaṇa* Priavaśa in Azes era year one hundred twenty-six (=79 CE).⁴¹ The fifth line of this text, directly after the dating formula, states that this donation was established “in the reign of the yabḡu” (*yaiūasa ra[j]ami*), mirroring the phrase “in the reign of the Great King, the Kuṣāṇa” (*maharayasa guṣaṇasa raja[mi]*) found in the Panjtar [2] inscription also written directly after the dating formula.⁴² This formulaic correspondence suggests that the author of this text wanted to clearly indicate the ruler, perhaps in response to the many polities active in Gandhāra at this time. However, rather than stating Kujula Kadphises’ name or his clan affiliation (Kuṣāṇa) as found in the later Panjtar text, Kujula Kadphises was instead identified by his status as a Yuezhi chief, the yabḡu. In Fussman’s edition (1985: 49) of

⁴¹ The date given in this inscription was originally read as twenty-six by Fussman (1985: 47-51), but has since been emended to one hundred and twenty-six by Salomon based on similar dating formulas that insert the word for year (G *vaṣa* Skt *varṣa*) between the tens and hundreds place (Salomon 1995: 128-30)

⁴² Baums (2012: 235) interprets the word *rajami* as *rajyami*, “in the reign of,” based on its locative form, revising Fussman’s (1985: 48-9) original interpretation of *rajami* as *rakṣami*, “for the protection,” which, if correct, would most likely appear in the dative case (**rajae*). This phrase also appears in the Priavaśa inscription, cited above and discussed below, and in the Ariaśrava inscription [CGI 358], an Apraca-period inscription that states the donation was made, “in the reign of Abdagases, nephew of Gondophares, in the reign (of?) General Aśpavarma, son of Imḍravarma (I)” (*gupharasa bhratuputrasa avakaśasa rajami imḍravarmaputre statree aśpavarmame rajami*). The Ariaśrava is dated to Azes year 98 (=51 CE), around the same time that Priavaśa donated his reliquary box.

this inscription, he notes that *yabḡu* is found on the earliest bronze coins of Kujula Kadphises, written in Greek as *zaoov* and in Gāndhārī as *yāiia*.⁴³ This numismatic evidence for Kujula using the designation *yabḡu* in his legends would support the argument that the “reign of the *yabḡu*” found in the Priavaśa inscription was in fact a reference to Kujula Kadphises. Without a clear provenance for this reliquary box, it is not out of the question that some other Yuezhi *yabḡu* ruling somewhere in greater Gandhāra was mentioned in this inscription, but the lack of corroborative evidence for such a figure other than Kujula Kadphises makes the association between this ruler and epigraph plausible.⁴⁴

Just as important as the reference to Kujula Kadphises in this inscription is Priavaśa status as a Buddhist monk (*śramaṇa*). If, as appears to be the case, the *yabḡu* cited here is Kujula Kadphises, this means that members of the religious sector also acknowledged his status as, at the very least, the head of the Kuṣāṇa clan. In the narrative of imperial initiation, this example of a monastic Buddhist donor recognizing Kujula Kadphises as a prominent figure indicates that his political status resonated within religious circles. The next two inscriptions associated with Kujula Kadphises are made by donors in the social sphere, and in these texts Kujula’s rise to power is explicitly stated.

In both the Panjtar [2] and the Taxila silver scroll [4] inscriptions, dated 75 CE and 89 CE respectively, Kujula Kadphises attained the title of Great King (Skt *mahārāja*), showing a transition from his previous designation as a prince and *yabḡu*. In addition being a Great King,

⁴³ Additional examples of the term *yabḡu* in the coins of Kujula Kadphises occur on various types of the Heracles series: *yavugasa* in the Hermaeus type, *yavuga* in the Maharaja type, and *yavuga* in the Kujula Kadphises type. This term also appears as *yavua* in the Helmeted Warrior type and *yāiia* in the Roman Emperor (Augustus) type (Jongeward et al. 2015: 30-5). The latter example shows the phonetic change *vug < u* consistent with the bronze coins noted by Fussman and in the Priavaśa inscription.

⁴⁴ Greater Gandhāra refers to the regions surrounding Gandhāra proper, namely eastern Afghanistan, the valleys north of the Peshawar plain, and the areas east of Taxila, that used Gāndhārī in their official records and were influenced by Gandhāran art (Salomon 1999a: 3).

in both texts he is also referred to as the “the Kuṣāṇa”, spelled *guṣaṇa* in the Panjtar inscription and *khuṣaṇa* in the Taxila silver scroll.⁴⁵ Again, Kujula’s name is not explicitly stated in the texts, but based on the dates of these inscriptions that align with Kujula’s reign, the term Kuṣāṇa that appears on Kujula Kadphises’ coins, and Humaṣpala’s Maṭ [7] inscription that identifies Vima Takto as the son of the Kuṣāṇa (*kuṣāṇaputra*), it is more than likely that the Great King cited in these inscriptions is Kujula Kadphises.⁴⁶ The Panjtar inscription records what appears to be the construction of a Śiva temple (*G śivathala*, Skt *śivasthala*) by Moika in “the reign of the Great King, the Kuṣāṇa in the eastern region of Kasua” (*maharayasa guṣaṇasa raja[mi] [ka]suasa praca [deśo]*).⁴⁷ The date of this inscription shows that Kujula Kadphises was acknowledged as a Great King by 75 CE, and indicates that, based on the provenance of this inscription in Panjtar, the territories under his control included the area east of Mardan, north of Swabi, and south of the Māban mountains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The Taxila silver scroll, most likely found east of Panjtar at the important urban center of Taxila, records a relic donation by Urasaka in year one hundred thirty-six of the Azes era (=89 CE), at the conclusion of Kujula’s reign. Urasaka directs the reward of this donation “for the gift of health of the Great

⁴⁵ The phonetic alteration of unvoiced *k* to voiced *g* is common in intervocalic position, but not usually found in word-initial position (Salomon 1999: 125). However, a similar voicing of *kuṣaṇa* to *guṣaṇa* appears in the Kamra well inscription [188] (*vazeṣkasa guṣaṇasa*) dated to year (one hundred) thirty of Vāsiṣka, and in the compound “the promoter of the Kuṣāṇa lineage” (*G guṣaṇavaśasaṃvardhaka*, Skt. *kuṣāṇavaśasaṃvardhaka*) in the Manikyala inscription [174] dated to year (one hundred) eighteen of Kaniṣka II. The aspiration of *k* to *kh* is rather uncommon, but in the Kharoṣṭhī legend on a Mahārāja type coin of Kujula Kadphises *kh* for *k* also appears in *khushanasa*, indicating that both spellings were used for the designation *kuṣāṇa* (Jongeward et al. 2015: 32, 70-2). I would surmise that although these inscriptions reveal that donors and scribes were aware of this ruler’s status, there was some uncertainty in how to pronounce or spell his non-Indic clan affiliation, and *guṣaṇa* and *khuṣaṇa* were intended to be phonetic and orthographic approximations.

⁴⁶ For Kujula Kadphises’ coins containing the title Kuṣāṇa, see Cribb 1999, and for Vima Takto’s Maṭ inscription, see Lüders 1961: 135, §98.

⁴⁷ Konow (1929: 69) chooses to translate *śivathala* as “an auspicious ground,” but does note that the Skt *śivasthalaṃ* could mean “a Śiva sanctuary.” A Śiva sanctuary being erected in Gandhāra is not out of the question, and Carter (1995: 143) has documented large terracotta panels, purported to have come from Afghanistan, that depict figures dressed in Kuṣāṇa attire worshiping a god that resembles Śiva. This article also emphasizes the connection between OEŠO (Wesho) and Śiva found on Kuṣāṇa coins and provides a survey of Śiva images found at Gandhāran sites. Based on these facts, the establishment of a Śiva temple should not be discounted, and this inscription could suggest a community of Śiva adherents were present in this area of Gandhāra.

King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Kuṣāṇa” (*maharajasa rajatirajasa devaputra khuṣaṇasa arogadakṣiṇae*), and the phrase “for the gift of health,” (*G arogadakṣiṇae*, Skt *ārogyadakṣiṇāyai*) specifies what benefit is intended, and for whom. Very few inscriptions composed in the Kuṣāṇa period directly honor a Kuṣāṇa ruler, suggesting that Kujula Kadphises, in this case “the Kuṣāṇa,” possessed significant political clout.⁴⁸

What distinguishes these two inscriptions in terms of constructing a narrative of this period is that these donations were made by members of the social elite. The inclusion of Kujula Kadphises in Urasaka and Moika’s inscriptions indicates that Kujula had traversed the line between the narrow arena of politics to the broader field of society, and this marks a significant step towards initiating an empire. Although the inscriptions tell us very little about who Urasaka and Moika were or what they did, they obviously possessed the capital required to sponsor a donation, and their recognition of Kujula Kadphises as a Great King indicates that his status reverberated through social networks as well as across political spheres. In donative formulas, the donor determines who should benefit from the gift, so acknowledging that Kujula ruled over Kasua, as stated by Moika, and directing the benefit of gift to the health of this Great King, as intended by Urasaka, demonstrates that these individuals felt, on some level, compelled to include his name in their respective texts.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ The only other reference to a Kuṣāṇa king directly benefiting from a donation occurs in the Wardak vase inscriptions dated to year fifty-one when the donor Vagamrega specifies that a principle lot (*G agrabhaga*, Skt **agrabhāgāya*) should be for the Great King, King of Kings, Huvīṣka (*maharaja-rajatiraja-hoveṣkaṣa agrabhagae bhavatu*) [78]. Both Wardak reliquary vases include the phrase *arogadakṣiṇae* (Skt *ārogyadakṣiṇāyai*): “may it be for the gift of health of all beings” (*sarvasatvaṇa arogadakṣiṇae*) in Vagamrega’s [78] and “may it be for the gift of health of me and (my) daughter” (*maheya ca dhidae arogadakṣiṇae*) in his daughter’s [79]. The phrase “for the gift of (their) own health” (*ātmanasya ārogadakṣiṇāya*) appears in one of the two pillar-bases dated to Huvīṣka’s thirty-third year [59], but the people receiving the gift of health are the donors, Buddharakṣita and Dharmarakṣita.

⁴⁹ The Kālāwān copper plate inscription records a relic donation made by Cadrabhi provides a good example a donor choosing whom to honor (Baums 2012: 236; CGI 172). Kālāwān is located three miles southeast of Taxila and the inscription is dated to Azes year one hundred thirty-four (=87 CE), making it almost contemporary with the Taxila silver scroll. In the dedicatory section of this text Cadrabhi honors her family members and the kingdom and town (*raṭhaṇikama*, Skt *rāṣṭranigama*) but makes no reference to Kujula Kadphises, who would

The last, and most conclusive, reference to Kujula Kadphises occurs in the Seṇavarma gold leaf inscription [5] and exemplifies the political maneuvers needed to ensure the successful establishment of an empire. This text, the longest extant Gāndhārī inscription, records the repairs made to a stūpa and the rededication of the Buddha’s relics sponsored by Seṇavarma, an Oḍi King ruling in the lower Swat valley. After recounting the destruction of the Ekaūda stūpa by a lightning strike and praising the Buddha, the text enters the benedictory section where Seṇavarma honors his family, relatives, and allies. It is here that Kujula Kadphises’ name appears, when his son Sadaṣkaṇa is honored by Seṇavarma.⁵⁰ This reference to the Kuṣāṇas reveals the negotiations of power transpiring in and around Gandhāra in the latter half of the first century CE. Firstly, in the inscription Kujula Kadphises is acknowledged as the Great King (*mahārāja*), King of Kings (*rājātirāja*), and the Devaputra whereas Seṇavarma is referred to as just a King (*rāja*), alluding to Kujula Kadphises’ political superiority over Seṇavarma. Secondly, Kujula and his son are honored directly after Seṇavarma’s parents, his father the previous Oḍi King Ajidasena and his mother Queen Uzaṃda, and the Kuṣāṇa’s placement in the list of honorees indicates a close relationship between them and the Oḍi royal family (Baums 2012: 231-2). This esteemed position suggests an alliance between the localized Oḍis and the increasingly powerful Kuṣāṇas, perhaps motivated by the connection between the Apraca general Aśpavarma and Indo-Parthian ruler Sasan, whose coins share similar Gondopharid monograms (Senior 2001: 94). Although Seṇavarma’s inscription is dated in his fourteenth regnal year

presumably be a significant political force at this time judging by his inclusion in the Taxila silver scroll inscription. Kings are often, but not always, honored in donative inscriptions, so perhaps Cadrabhi omission of Kujula’s name in this inscription was unintentional and she wanted to direct the benefit to her immediate family. On the other hand, perhaps leaving Kujula’s name out of the donation was intentional, indicating that she had allegiances to another ruler or wanted her donation to be apolitical. For more on the honorees and beneficiaries in donative formulas, see Salomon 2012: 188-94.

⁵⁰ Line 8g reads, “Sadaṣkaṇa, **son** of the Great King, chief King of Kings, Kujula Kadphises, the Devaputra... is honored” (*maharaja-rayatiraya-kuyula-kataph[śp]a-putro sadaṣkaṇo devaputro... puyita*) [5].

making it difficult to determine when it was composed in relation to Kujula's reign, it must have been composed after Kujula Kadphises assumed a relatively prominent position within the Gandhāran political landscape.

What appears to be expressed through these epigraphic gradients of recognition is that during the initial phase of Kuṣāṇa expansion there was some uncertainty as to where exactly Kujula Kadphises stood in the political hierarchy of Gandhāra, a situation that correlates well with nascent stage of empire building. In the earliest references to this ruler in the Takht-i-bāhī inscription he is noted as subordinate to the Indo-Parthian Gondophares, but his title as a Great King in the Senavarma, Panjtar, and Taxila silver scroll inscriptions reflect Kujula Kadphises' emergent royal status. These epigraphic references, although limited, demonstrate that Kujula's authority resonated across political, social, and religious fields and make clear that he overcame the challenges involved in carving out an empire. His efforts carried out over an estimated forty-year reign laid the imperial foundation that his son Vima Takto and grandson Vima Kadphises would bring to fruition.

2.2. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Vima Takto.

There are three inscriptions on two inscribed objects associated with the reign of Vima Takto. The first is the Dasht-e Nāwūr [6] inscription, which is a group of five texts written in Bactrian, Gāndhārī, and a still undeciphered language engraved on a potato-shaped boulder on the peak of Tepe Qādagak overlooking a large basin about 60 km west of Ghazni, Afghanistan (Fussman 1974: 2-50; Sims-Williams 2012: 76-7). Among these five texts only the Bactrian and Gāndhārī inscriptions are legible. The second inscription associated with Vima Takto is a four-lined text [7] engraved between the feet Vima Takto's statue found at the Kuṣāṇa royal statue gallery in Maṭ near Mathurā discussed in the introduction. Vima Takto's name appears in both

the Dasht-e Nāwūr and Maṭ inscriptions, but is spelled differently in each text. Furthermore, a secure date for this ruler, 279 in the Yavana era, is supplied in the Bactrian [6, DN 1] and Gāndhārī [6, DN IV] versions of the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscriptions. This presumably Yavana era date corresponds to 104/5 CE and falls within the purported reign of Vima Takto that began around 90 CE and concluded sometime before 112/3 CE, the date when the Khalatse inscription [8] containing Vima Kadphises' name was composed.⁵¹

Although the inscriptional evidence for Vima Takto is even more limited than that of Kujula Kadphises, the one striking difference between the inscriptions associated with Vima Takto and those of Kujula Kadphises is their imperial tenor. In the inscriptions associated with Kujula Kadphises the titles attributed to him vary and the donor is the primary subject of the text, whereas in those related with Vima Takto his political standing is explicitly stated. The opening lines of the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription, reconstructed from the partially preserved Bactrian and Gāndhārī texts, make clear who is being referenced, “the Great King, King of Kings, the Great salvation, Vima Takto, the righteous, the just, the god worthy of worship, who gained(?) the kingship by his own will...” (Sims-Williams 2012: 77). What exactly is being conveyed in the remainder of the text is unclear due to the boulder being defaced, but the opening lines show that there is no question about who is ruling. A similar series of royal epithets are found in the Maṭ inscription that refer to Vima Takto as “the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra, son of the Kuṣāṇa, Ṣāhi” (Lüders 1961: 135, §98). From this point forward in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic record most inscriptions will include some or all of these royal epithets, and it appears that this epigraphic precedent was established in Vima Takto's reign.

⁵¹ This date is based on Falk and Bennett's revised start of the Yavana era to 175/4 BCE (2009: 211).

The period of Vima Takto's rule, although not definitively known, represents a shift in the imperial narrative of initiation from establishing power to demarcating borders. The significance of these two inscriptions lies not just in the message of imperial power expressed in the marks on the stone, but also in how they mark the extent of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Their location, one found in southwestern Afghanistan and the other in the Yamuna-Ganga doab, confirms that Vima Takto extended the Kuṣāṇa's sphere influence over a much larger territory.

Gérard Fussman, one of the few people who has seen the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription *in situ*, gives an account of the terrain and harsh climate surrounding this site, and notes the lack of archaeological evidence for an urban settlement or a religious complex in the vicinity that could have induced Vima Takto to inscribe his edict here.⁵² The absence of any trace of permanent settlements in this hostile environment suggests that this inscription was not intended to record a donation but rather served as an imposing symbol to demarcate the southwestern border of Kuṣāṇa territory. Ghazni's location south of Kabul, on the border of ancient Arachosia and Paropamisadae, made it an important node along the trading routes heading west to Iran via Kandahar and Herat, east to Bannu, and southeast into Baluchistan and the lower Indus valley through the Bolan Pass (Dar 2006: 32-4). Travelers who plied this Kabul-Ghazni-Kandahar route, and perhaps even troops moving through this region, when glimpsing the peaks of Dasht-e Nāwūr would be reminded of whose territory they were entering. By engraving a multilingual inscription, it appears that Vima Takto wanted to be acknowledged as the preeminent force in this region and to communicate this message to a diverse audience, echoing Aśoka's bilingual

⁵² Fussman (1974: 6) states, "Je ne connais donc, dans le Dast-e Nāwūr, aucun site antique habité important, qui expliquerait la présence des inscriptions que nous publions ici. Au reste, les conditions de vie semblent trop dures pour permettre l'existence d'une agglomération de taille moyenne."

Greek-Aramaic edicts found at Kandahar, located 351 km southwest of Ghazni.⁵³ This is not to suggest that Vima Takto deliberately imitated Aśoka, but rather points to a parallel between both rulers who employed multilingual texts situated on their borders that perform, at the very least, as public symbols of their power. Furthermore, firm control over this southern border was paramount to the Kuṣāṇa's geo-political security since they were most likely aware that the recently subdued Indo-Parthians had themselves migrated from Seistan into Gandhāra by way of Kandahar, through the Bolan Pass, then up the Indus River (Neelis 2007: 61, 74).⁵⁴ Therefore, any possible retaliatory strikes by the Indo-Parthians would have to be monitored, and Dasht-e Nāwūr would have served as a formidable sentry point from which to watch this borderland.

Whereas Dasht-e Nāwūr is remarkable for its remoteness, the inscription associated with Vima Takto at Maṭ is notable for its centrality, being situated 15 km north of the important city of Mathurā. The Maṭ inscription [7], as mentioned previously, records the construction of the Kuṣāṇa royal statue gallery (*devakula*) carried out by Humaspala, the *bakanapati* of Vima Takto (*[vema] ta[kṣu]masya bakanapatina hu[maṣpal.s]ya*) (Lüders 1961: 135, §98). Vima Takto's royal self-representation, both textually and visually, leaves little doubt that he fashioned himself as a preeminent ruler, and the construction of this structure to house his image and those of his successors stands as tangible proof of the Kuṣāṇa's imperial stature. A further testament to the imperial turn that took place during Vima Takto's reign is the presence of the *bakanapati*

⁵³ Three Aśokan edicts were inscribed near Kandahar, one bilingual text composed in Greek and Aramaic, a second Greek text, and a third in Māgadhī Prakrit transliterated into Aramaic (Falk 2006b: 241-6). There are also Aśokan edicts composed in the Gāndhārī language and Kharoṣṭhī script found at Mānsehrā, just north of modern Abbottabad, and at Shāhbāzgarhī, due east of Mardan (Falk 2006b: 127-9; 132-5). These bilingual texts and the adaptation of the local script utilized in the Aśokan edicts might have influenced later epigraphic habits of the Kuṣāṇas, considering that at this time there were presumably scribes who could still read these earlier royal proclamations.

⁵⁴ The strategic location of Ghazni as a gateway to South Asia is also reflected in two, albeit, much later examples. First, Ghazni is the city from which Mahmud of Ghazni conducted raids into India from 1001-26 CE (Thapar 2004). Second, during the First Afghan War (1839-42), General Macnaghten led his Army of the Indus through the Bolan Pass and conquered Ghazni prior to occupying Kabul (Dalrymple 2013: 161-91).

Humāspala at Mathurā, proving that even at this nascent imperial stage the Kuṣāṇas had implemented an administrative apparatus to govern their expansive realm. Although the exact function of a *bakanapati* is unclear, the ability of this official to harness the economic, human, and material resources necessary to undertake the construction of this monument suggests that a *bakanapati* wielded significant political influence in this period.⁵⁵ The production of royal images was not limited to Maṭ, as similar statues were found at the Kuṣāṇa temple (*bagalago*) of Surkh Kotal, suggesting that the construction of *devakulas* was part of an imperial project initiated by the emerging Kuṣāṇas to cement their newly acquired political position (Rosenfield 1967: 154-8). The Kuṣāṇa's presence in Mathurā would, by the reign of Kaniṣka I, transform this city into an epicenter of artistic production, and the undercurrents of this transition can be traced directly back to reign of Vima Takto, whose official was already patronizing local artisans to produce royal images.

What the Maṭ inscription tells us is that in Vima Takto's reign Mathurā was clearly incorporated into the Kuṣāṇa sphere of influence, which, when combined with the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription, would have encompassed Bactria, southwestern Afghanistan, and northern India in addition to Gandhāra. Thus, these two inscriptions, although limited in their subject matter, assist in extracting a narrative for this initial stage of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

⁵⁵ Lüders (1961: 137) interprets *bakanapati*, and the corresponding official title *vakanapati* found in the merit-hall pillar inscription of Huviṣka year twenty-eight, as "an Iranian loan word denoting some functionary" and not, as Konow (1931-2: 60) argues as the "Lord of the Wakhān," referring presumably to the Wakhān valley in Badakhshan Konow. Falk (2010c: 78) interprets this title to mean an official "responsible for the service of the Gods." In general, the meaning of titles for Kuṣāṇa officials and their specific functions are difficult to determine, but there does seem to be a common non-Indic locution for these administrative titles, suggesting that they were introduced by the Kuṣāṇas into northern India.

2.3. Inscription Composed in the Reign of Vima Kadphises.

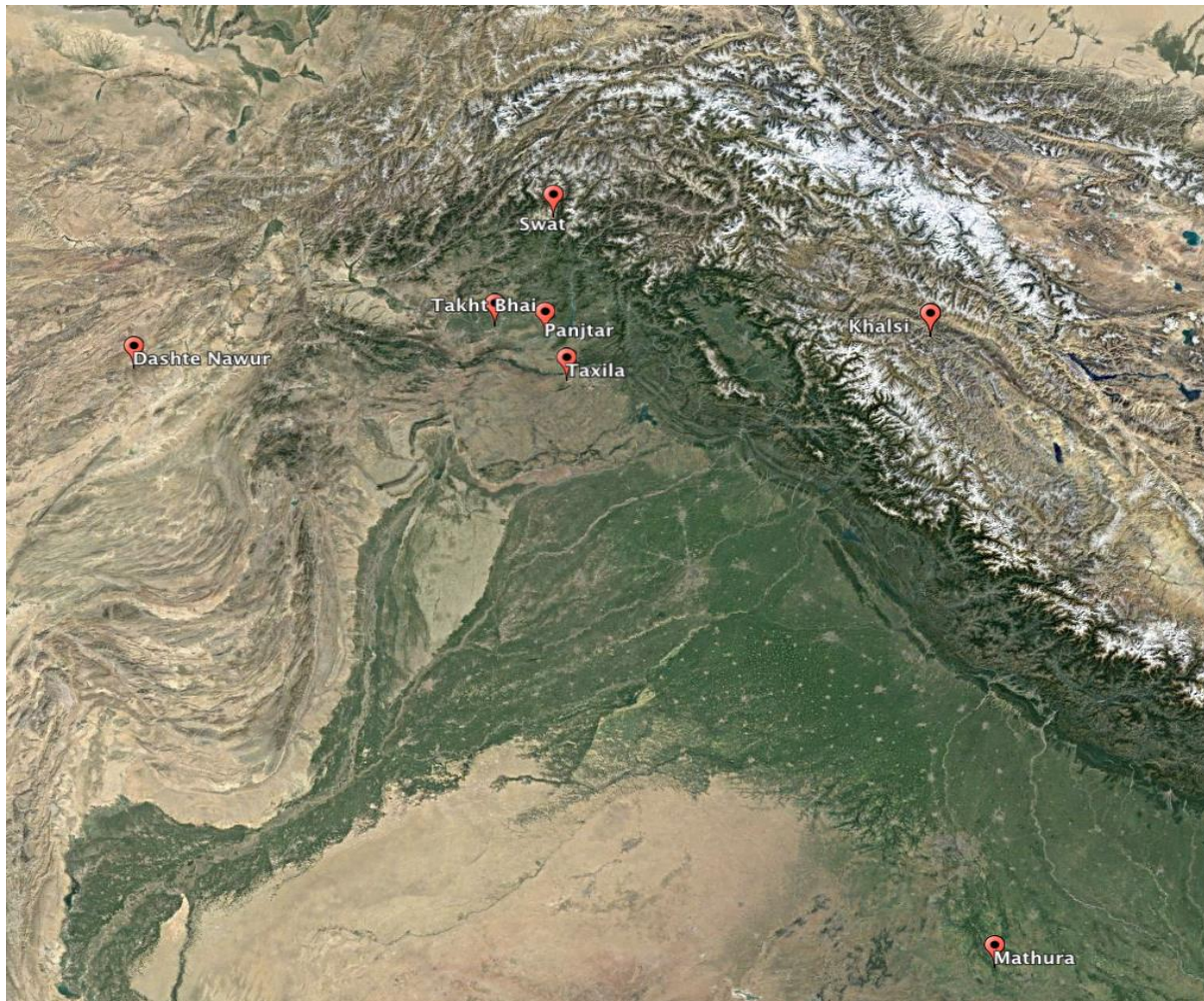
Vima Kadphises is the final member of the Kuṣāṇa triumvirate of imperial initiators, and, as is the case with all the early Kuṣāṇas, the exact duration of his rule is not definitively established. The Rabatak inscription informs us that he ruled between Vima Takto, whose only known date is 104/5 CE based on the Yavana era year 279 in the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription, and Kaniška I, who implemented a dating system on the first year of his rule in 127 CE. It is unclear exactly when within this twenty-two or twenty-three years' span the transitions of power occurred. In determining the length of Vima Kadphises' reign the epigraphic evidence consists only of a single two-line inscription [8], the first line providing a date and the second the ruler's name. The inscription is written in Gāndhārī on a stone found in the village of Khalatse, modern Khaltse, situated on the northern bank of the Indus River along the Srinagar-Ladakh road about 85 km west of Leh in the Ladakh district of Jammu and Kashmir and (Konow 1929: 79-81). The extremely limited epigraphic evidence and seemingly remote provenance of this text stands in stark contrast to Vima Kadphises' numismatic legacy, epitomized by the introduction of gold coins discussed in chapter one, which displayed his portrait on the obverse and a Kharoṣṭhī legend on the reverse that styled him as, "the Great King, King of Kings, Lord of all People, the Great Lord (*maharajasa rajadirajasa sarvaloga isvaraja mahisvarasa*)" (Jongeward et al. 2015: 54; Bracey 2009; app. 2, 3).⁵⁶ What these gold issues signify, from an economic perspective, is that Vima Kadphises built upon the legacy of his two predecessors, and put Kaniška I and his two successors, Huviška and Vāsudeva I, in a position to perpetuate the Kuṣāṇa imperial project.

⁵⁶ Richard Salomon suggested translating *sarvaloga isvaraja* as "Lord of the people of all the world" (personal communication).

The name of Vima Kadphises and the title of Great King stated in the second line of this text leaves little doubt that whoever composed this inscription was aware of who was ruling and in what capacity. The correct reading of the date, however, has not been so straight-forward. For a more detailed discussion of the revisions made to this date see the note given in the translation of this text in appendix 1 [8]; to summarize, what Konow originally read as 184 or 187 was changed to 287 by Joe Cribb and Richard Salomon (Konow 1929: 81; Cribb 1997: 320; and Salomon 2005: 376). This new reckoning provides a date of 287, most likely in the Yavana era, that would correspond to 112/3 CE. The year 287 comes after the Yavana year 279 given in Vima Takto's Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription and therefore aligns with what we know about the Kuṣāṇa's chronology. What still remains unclear is when in the eight-year gap between 279 and 287 (=104/5-112/3 CE) Vima Kadphises succeeded Vima Takto and whether there was an interim between the abdication of Vima Kadphises and Kaniška I's first year in 127 CE. This time frame does, however, open a window of at least fifteen years for the reign of Vima Kadphises, more than enough time for him to make his substantial mark on the imperial currency.

Even with the date of this inscription on firmer footing and the name of Vima Kadphises relatively clear, the question of why an inscription was engraved on a boulder so far removed from the core of the Kuṣāṇa Empire still lingers. One possible interpretation for the location of the text could be that it served to demarcate the northeastern extent of the Kuṣāṇa's dominion, similar to Vima Takto's Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription establishing the southwestern Kuṣāṇa border near Ghazni, Afghanistan. If these epigraphs did function as quasi-border markers, then the Khalatse inscription would indicate that Vima Kadphises' influence spread to the upper stretches of the Indus River and would inform those passing through the Ladakh valley who held sway

over this region. The notion of inscribed boulders establishing imperial boundaries appears more convincing when mapping the inscriptions of the early Kuṣāṇa rulers, as shown here:



Map 5: Location for the inscriptions of the Imperial Imitators
(Google Earth)

The inscriptions of Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises correlate nicely with the narrative of imperial initiation that documents the stages of Kuṣāṇa expansion. All the inscriptions with an attested provenance composed in the time of Kujula Kadphises' are concentrated in and around Gandhāra, found at Takht-i-bāhī [1], Panjtar [2], Taxila [4], and Swat [5] respectively, indicating that his influence was limited to this region. In the second stage of imperial expansion, once the Kuṣāṇas had consolidated their power over Gandhāra, Vima Takto

extended the Kuṣāṇa's territory southwest to the area around Ghazni and southeast, across the broad Punjab plain and into northern India at Mathurā. The location of the Khalatse inscription [8] seems to suggest that Vima Kadphises incorporated the upper stretches of the Indus River into the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

Although Khalatse might appear rather remote, its position on the upper Indus River would have enabled Vima Kadphises to regulate the movement of goods and people along this waterway. Khalatse also served as a major ferry station across the Indus and the two main overland routes that connected Srinagar to Leh converged at this spot. Starting at Srinagar, both routes go east to Kargil, and from this city the northern route follows the Indus River, passing through Khalatse before arriving at Leh. The second route heads south out of Kargil, traverses the Suru River valley, and then crosses the 3700-meter-high Namika-la pass before descending into the central Ladakh valley where it meets with the northern route at Khalatse (Rizvi 2012: 24-7).⁵⁷ From Khalatse, it is a one-hundred-kilometer trek up the Indus to Leh, and from Leh routes head north over the Karakorum Mountains to the southern branch of the Silk Road in the Tarim Basin and east to the vast Tibetan Plateau. With the convergence of numerous routes at Khalatse and its position as a major crossing point of the Indus River, the motivation to inscribe Vima Kadphises' name, royal epithet, and date at this important junction becomes more apparent.

There might be another, more politically expedient factor, that explains why Vima Kadphises had his name engraved on a boulder at Khalatse. The *Hou Hanshu* records an episode of political intrigue at Kashgar [Shule], a city located on the western edge of the Tarim Basin in

⁵⁷ Rizvi (2012: 108) notes the existence of a fortified collection house located at Khalatse dating from the ninth century CE, and although the structure postdates the Kuṣāṇa Empire by many centuries, demonstrates the importance of this site as a major junction on the Indus River in the central Ladakh valley.

what is now the Xinjiang province of China, between Anguo, the king of Kashgar, and his maternal uncle Chenpan. This dispute over inheriting the Kashgar throne appears to have drawn the Kuṣāṇas into the affairs of this region. At some point during the Yuanchu period in the reign of the Han Emperor An (114-120 CE) Anguo exiled his uncle Chenpan who took refuge with the Kuṣāṇas. After Anguo died his mother, Chenpan's sister, ruled the kingdom and installed Chenpan's younger brother's son on the throne. Chenpan, who had ingratiated himself with the Kuṣāṇa king (Vima Kadphises?), advised his host that he should rule and was then escorted back to Kashgar by the Kuṣāṇa army where he was installed as king. Upon regaining power, Chenpan allied with the rulers of Yarkand [Suoju] and became a significant force in the Tarim Basin on par with Kucha [Qiuci] and Khotan [Yutian] (Falk 2015b: 110, §93). These events transpired during the reign of Vima Kadphises, and the date of the Khalatse inscription would have posited a Kuṣāṇa presence in this region at this time, suggesting that Vima Kadphises was either directly involved in this power struggle or, at the very least, cognizant of the political situation in the Tarim Basin. Furthermore, connections between the Kuṣāṇas and the Kashgar court would have made the Ladakh valley a strategic region for the Kuṣāṇas to integrate into their empire, positioned as it was on the threshold of overland and riverine networks connecting the regions north of the Karakorum Mountains with Jammu-Kashmir, Gandhāra, and northern India. The Khalatse inscription seems to suggest that Vima Kadphises, or someone acting on his behalf, seized the opportunity to engrave his name on this boulder as both a textual and visual mark of imperial power.

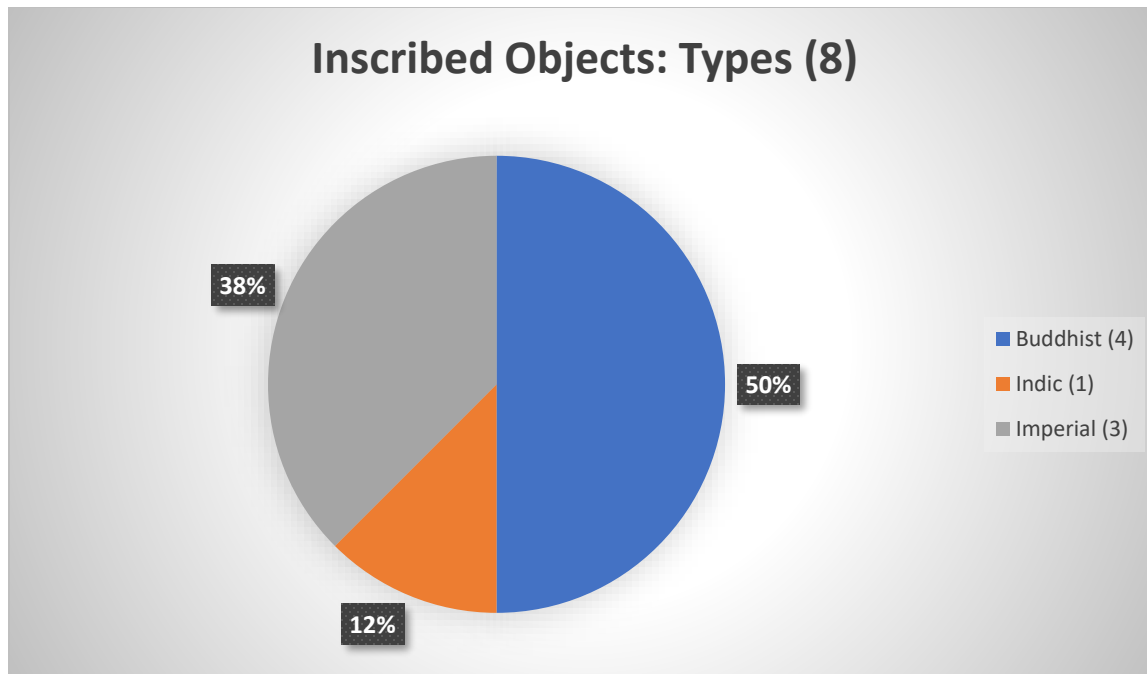
2.4. Analysis of the Inscriptions Composed in the Period of Imperial Initiation.

With such a small sample size of inscriptional data available for the early Kuṣāṇa rulers it is difficult to draw any conclusive inferences about this period based on the types of objects

donated and their respective donors. This situation will change in part B of this study that focuses on the imperial perpetuators, where the amount of inscriptional data for Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I increases substantially and the duration of their reigns are more securely known. However, grouping all nine inscriptions together assists somewhat in contextualizing what these texts tell us about this approximately seventy-five-year period of imperial initiation, however it must be noted that any conclusions drawn from this material will be general rather than specific; a study in broad strokes rather than fine detail. Some of these broad strokes have been more or less addressed in constructing the narrative of imperial initiation, namely the early acknowledgement of Kujula Kadphises' authority within political, social, and religious arenas, the imperial nature of Vima Takto's inscriptions, and the expansion of empire undertaken by Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises. Nonetheless, the types of objects and their donors do reveal some interesting details about this period.

2.4.1. Types of Inscribed Objects in the Period of Imperial Initiation.

The eight types of inscribed objects found in the inscriptions of Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises fall into only three of the six classes provided in the introduction, namely Buddhist, Indic, and imperial. The classes of inscribed objects are provided in the following graph (2), but as noted, the small sample size does not make this very statistically significant:



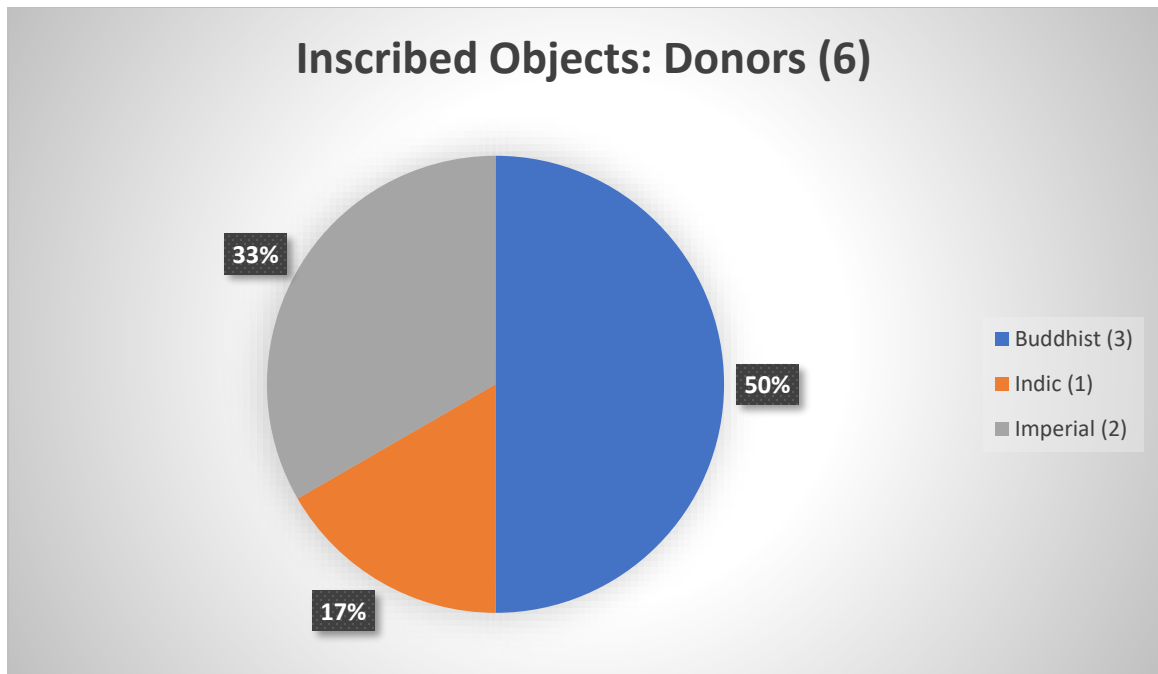
Among these eight types four are Buddhist. The Priavaśa [3], Taxila silver scroll [4], and Seṇavarma gold leaf [5] inscriptions record relic donations, and the fourth is the construction of an enclosure (*parivara*) made at Takht-i-bāhī [1]. Although there is no evidence that Balasami Boyaṇa was a Buddhist and an enclosure is not a specifically Buddhist donation, this object has been grouped in the Buddhist category based on its provenance at, or around, Takht-i-bāhī, which was an important Buddhist site at that time.⁵⁸ The single Indic object is the possible Śiva temple donated by Moika at Panjtar [2], and if this association is correct then this would suggest that a Śaivite community was present in Gandhāra by the first century CE. Three objects containing four inscriptions are classified as imperial, namely the two found at Dasht-e Nāwūr [6], one at Maṭ [7] and one at Khalatse [8]. This imperial classification however, might be misleading since at this nascent stage the Kuṣāṇas were still in the process of consolidating their empire, but Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises' inscriptions seem to be more politically oriented.

⁵⁸ An enclosure was also sponsored by the monk Naḡadata at Sui Vihār [CGI 147] in year (one hundred) eleven of Kanīṣka II.

One important observation regarding the types of inscribed objects is that those composed in the reign of Kujula Kadphises were all religious donations whereas those associated with Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises lean more towards imperial. Any definitive explanation for this discrepancy would be an *ex silentio* argument, but the fact that Kujula Kadphises' enjoyed a long career, estimated to be about forty years, might have provided the opportunity for more donations to be made during his lifetime, in contrast to the shorter reigns of Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises. What does appear to be the case is that, when Kujula Kadphises was emerging as a political force in Gandhāra there was no discernable rupture in donative practices; more specifically, Buddhist and Śaivite communities continued to be patronized by local kings, social elites, and a Buddhist monk.

2.4.2. Donors of Inscribed Objects in the Period of Imperial Initiation.

Only six of the donor's names have been preserved among these nine inscriptions, with the three lacking a donor being Vima Takto's Dasht-e Nāwūr multilingual inscriptions due to its fragmentary condition and the fact that it was probably an imperial proclamation, and Vima Kadphises' two-line Khalatse text, which only contains a date and the ruler's name. The donors listed in the six remaining texts represent a cross-section of the political, social, and religious donative sphere and are graphed (3) as follows:



The minimal amount of data limits what can be inferred from these texts, but these inscriptions give some idea about who was sponsoring donations in the early phase of the Kuṣāṇa period. The largest group of donors, not surprisingly, are Buddhists and the three donors named in these texts are Balasami Boyaṇa [1], the monk (*śramaṇa*) Priavaśa [3], and Uraska [4]. Donations made by monks and nuns is a topic discussed at length by Gregory Schopen, so the fact that the *śramaṇa* Priavaśa established a vihāra and donated the Buddha’s relics would have been a common occurrence at this time (Schopen 1997: 72-85). For the donors Balasami Boyaṇa and Uraska, their Buddhist affiliations are a little more difficult to determine, but since they sponsored the construction of an enclosure and established the Buddha’s relics respectively, it seems safe to assume they had some affiliation with the Buddhist lay community. Their exact social and political status, however, is not clear. If Konow’s suggestion of associating *boyaṇa* with “savior” is correct, and echoes the Greek *soter* and Gāndhārī *tratara* noted previously, then maybe Balasami was, by extension a local official. But this designation is by no means certain and he could just as easily have been a wealthy professional. The Taxila silver scroll provides a

little more information about Urasaka, stating that he was the son of Iṃtavhria who came from Balkh (*G bahalie* Skt *bāhlīka*) (Konow 1929: 74). Balkh, as has been noted, was an important city in Bactria, and the presence of a person hailing from the far northwestern extent of the Kuṣāṇa Empire in Taxila during the reign of Kujula Kadphises demonstrates that networks of transmission that integrated these two important urban centers into a commercial zone. The interregional connections between these cities might also suggest that Urasaka was a merchant who traversed these routes, navigating many of the obstacles described at the beginning of chapter one. Moika is classified in the Indic category based on his Śiva temple donation [2] and we also know very little about him other than his father was Urumauja and that he resided in the eastern region of a place called Kasua, which must have been the name of Panjtar at that time.

Although the status of Balasami Boyaṇa, Urasaka, and Moika are uncertain, the two donors in the imperial category, Humaṣpala [7] and Seṇavarma [5], are of interest. Humaṣpala's significance as the *bakanapati* of Vima Takto has been discussed previously, and even though the exact function of this official and his position within the Kuṣāṇa administrative hierarchy remains uncertain, it is evident that he had enough power and prestige to organize the construction of the Kuṣāṇa royal statue gallery at Maṭ. Likewise, Seṇavarma's relationship with the Kuṣāṇas has been touched on, and what is important about this inscription is that it demonstrates how the classifications of types of inscribed objects and their donors can overlap. In this case, Seṇavarma is clearly a political figure, an Oḍi king, and the homage he pays to Kujula Kadphises' son Sadaṣkaṇa had a presumably imperial purpose, to forge an alliance, but the relic donation and stūpa renovation are clearly made for the Buddhist community living within his domain. Inscriptions that straddle categories are of particular interest when reconstituting these texts into a narrative format because they demonstrate how the donative

sphere was constituted, that is to say how donors from different classes sponsored similar types of objects. The imbrication of political, social, and religious donors into a Buddhist public orbiting a monastic center is discussed in chapter four, but the *Seṇavarma* inscription provides an early example of how inscriptions can mark these interactions.

2.5. Conclusion.

In the narrative of imperial initiation Kujula Kadphises can be cast as the imperial protagonist who consolidated his power in Gandhāra and established the groundwork that led to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Vima Takto built upon his father's imperial aspirations by extending the territory of the Kuṣāṇa Empire to encompass the three main geographic zones of Bactria, Gandhāra, and northern India as well as standardizing the imperial currency with his Soter Megas coinage. With the core of the Kuṣāṇa Empire relatively stable, Vima Kadphises channeled this prosperity into minting gold coins and possibly utilized his imperial position to settle a political dispute in the Tarim Basin. While the initial Kuṣāṇas consolidated politically they simultaneously integrated the conglomerate of donors residing in their territory into an imperial unit. The inscriptions composed in the reigns of these three rulers mark the emergence of an empire, and in the next imperial phase the marks of empire drastically increase to reveal how this empire was perpetuated by Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva.

Part B: Imperial Perpetuation

During this phase of empire the epigraphic record drastically increases, and this evidence will be used to examine the history of the Kuṣāṇa Empire under the rule of Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I. Chapter three begins by looking at the changes to the inscriptions themselves, and how these were reconfigured on inscribed objects. The remaining part of this chapter is divided among the reigns of the three rulers and graphs how many inscriptions were composed during each rule, examines types of objects that were donated, and identifies the donors of these objects. The second chapter uses a specific set of inscribed objects, namely thirty pillar bases donated in year seventy-seven of Vāsudeva I at the Huviṣka viḥāra in Mathurā, to examine the emergence of imperial Buddhism. Imperial Buddhism represents the intersection of institutionalization that was taking place and Buddhist monastic sites and the imperial world in which these sites operated. This chapter argues that during the phase of imperial Buddhism monastic centers served as a fulcrum between the Kuṣāṇa rulers and the people they ruled, and this was made possible by the formation of a Buddhist public comprised of a donative sphere that emerged around these sites.

Chapter 3: The Epigraphic Narrative for the Imperial Perpetuators

The increased number of inscribed objects donated in the reigns of Kaniṣka I (ca. 127-50 CE), Huviṣka (ca. 153-89 CE), and Vāsudeva I (ca. 191/4-226 CE) ushers in a new chapter in the narrative of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, that of imperial perpetuation. In this period, the marks of empire proliferate allowing for a much more detailed examination of this period of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. The perpetuation of empire requires achieving an equilibrium among the political, social, and religious spheres (Goldstone and Haldon 2009: 17-8, 25). In the stage of imperial initiation, the challenges facing the early Kuṣāṇa rulers centered around acknowledging authority, demarcating territory, and standardizing the economy; all issues that are evident in the epigraphic record of the early Kuṣāṇas. In the phase of imperial perpetuation, the rulers' role shifts from consolidating power to maintaining stability, promoting themselves as legitimate rulers, and inculcating an environment conducive to prosperity. The high-volume of extant inscriptions from this approximate one-hundred-year period of Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I's rule testifies to the fact that they did succeed in achieving an equilibrium between political stability and socio-economic security that perpetuated their the Kuṣāṇa Empire. It is this imperial environment that facilitated donations to religious centers sponsored by officials, wealthy elite from various professions, and members of the Buddhist, Jain, Nāga, and Indic religious communities.

During this century of imperial perpetuation, the corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions expands from nine inscriptions composed over a seventy-five-year period of imperial initiation to one-hundred and forty-five: thirty-five composed in the reign of Kaniṣka I, forty-five in the reign of Huviṣka, and sixty-five in the reign of Vāsudeva I. Kaniṣka I's reign demarcates a transition in the history of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and to mark the Kuṣāṇa's accomplishments in constructing

their empire Kaniṣka I initiated an era in 127 CE that was most likely associated with the earlier Yavana era (Cribb 2005: 213-5; Falk 2007: 137). By his aligning this era with his presumed first year of rule, Kaniṣka I cemented his power and “cleared the field” of other reckoning systems used prior to his rule. After 127 CE, the Kuṣāṇa era supplanted the Azes era in dating formulas, whereas the Yavana era continued to be used in inscriptions from Gandhāra, but not nearly to the same extent as the Kuṣāṇa era.⁵⁹

This inauguration of a new era was accompanied by the standardization of the dating formula used donative inscriptions, meaning that these marks worked to both record a donation as well as acknowledge the Kuṣāṇa’s authority. This standardized formula placed at the beginning of inscriptions begins with some or all of the Kuṣāṇa royal epithets (Great King, King of King, Devaputra, Śāhi) followed by the name of the Kuṣāṇa ruler then the year, seasonal month, and day when the donation was made.⁶⁰ The date of the ruling Kuṣāṇa was distinguished from the rest of the inscription with a conjunctive phrase, typically “on this occasion” (*etasya pūrvayaṃ*), “on this day” (*atra divase*), or “at this moment” (*etasya kṣune*). This textual standardization instituting a clearly defined dating formula functioned to perpetually remind those living in the Kuṣāṇa Empire of who was in control of both territory and time.

This standardization of donative texts also corresponds to a visual reconfiguration of inscriptions. Before the Kuṣāṇas expanded their empire into northern India donative texts primarily consisted of short labels that identified the donor and donation written directly on the

⁵⁹ The last inscription dated in the Azes era is the Saṭaṣakad Muṃji reliquary dated to Azes year 156 (=109 CE) and then reestablished by Aprakhaka in Azes year 172 (=125 CE), just two years before Kaniṣka I started his era [CGI 328]. I have only included in my corpus inscriptions dated in the Azes era between the emergence of Kujula Kadphises and Kaniṣka I that contain the names of Kuṣāṇa rulers. Inscriptions dated in the Yavana era datable to the Kuṣāṇa period are listed in the appendix section 4.3, but since they do not contain the names of the Kuṣāṇa rulers they are also omitted from the overall total Kuṣāṇa inscriptions.

⁶⁰ This type of dating formula is found mostly on Buddhist and Indic inscribed objects, whereas inscriptions on Jain images typically omit the name of the ruler and include only the year, month, and day when the object was donated.

object. These are found in abundance on the architectural features surrounding stūpa sites at Sāñcī, Bhārhut, and Amarāvātī.⁶¹ However, at the onset of Kaniṣka I's rule the types of donative objects transitioned from railings, panels, and aniconic representations of the Buddha (footprints, an empty throne, the Bodhi tree, or the *dharmacakra*) to anthropomorphic images of the Buddha. In this visual field engraving a donor's name directly on the Buddha would mar the image, so the pedestal became the space to engrave the epithets of the Kuṣāṇa ruler, date, donor's name, type



of object, and list of beneficiaries. This figure above shows this visual reconfiguration of inscriptions in the Kuṣāṇa period. On the left is a panel from Bhārhut, dated to the second century BCE, with short labels written all around the surface of the object. On the right is a Buddhist image from Mathurā, with clearly defined visual and textual fields. The changes in both the composition of the inscription and its presentation on the image reflects a degree of

⁶¹ For surveys of label inscriptions at Sāñcī, see Milligan 2010, for Bhārhut, Lüders 1963, and for Amarāvātī, Burgess 1970: 100-6.

standardization that occurred in this period, a process that correlates with an increase in donative activity facilitated by the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Furthermore, the name Kuṣāṇa ruler and his year of rule written at the beginning of an inscription served as a textual and visual mark of empire.

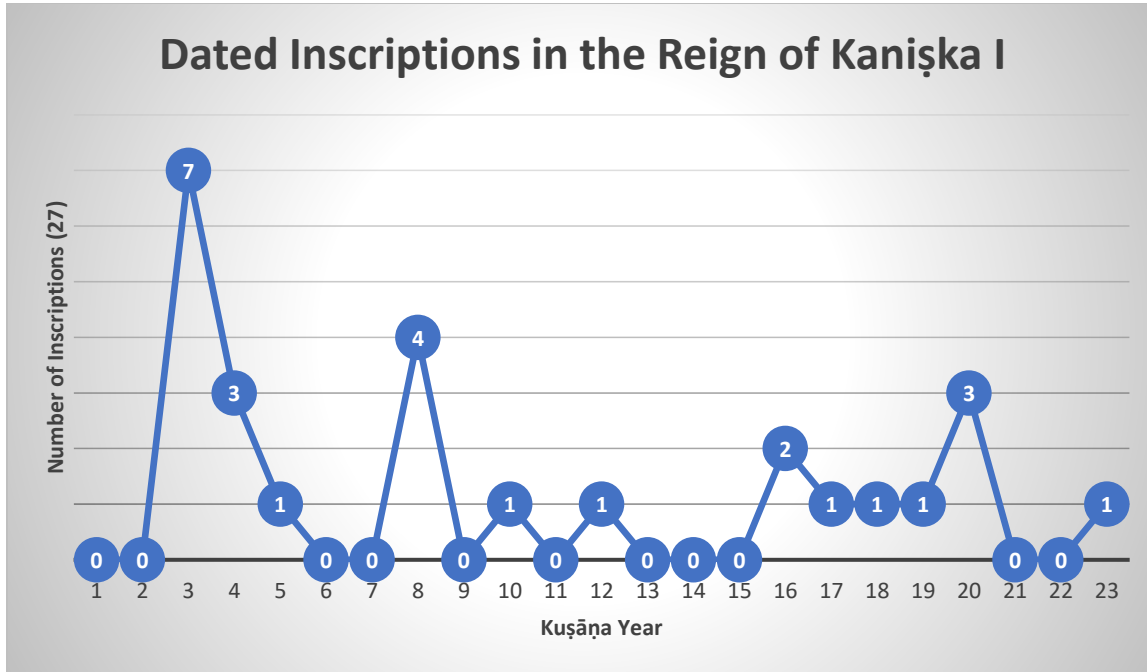
The remainder of this section will look more closely at the inscriptions composed in the reigns of Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I in order to determine the number of donations made during each ruling period, ascertain what types of inscribed objects were being donated, and identify the affiliations of these donors. Arranging these inscriptions by ruler and analyzing this epigraphic data will provide a framework with which to extract a narrative of imperial perpetuation.

3.1. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Kaniṣka I.

There are thirty-five inscriptions composed in the reign of Kaniṣka I, consisting of three in Bactrian, two in Gāndhārī, and thirty in Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit. Among the thirty-five inscriptions eight are undated and the remaining twenty-seven contain dates ranging from year three to twenty-three, indicating that Kaniṣka I ruled from 127 to at least 150 CE.⁶² Among the undated inscriptions two Bactrian texts, the Rabatak [14] and the silver plate inscriptions [16], contain dates that refer to events in Kaniṣka I's reign, but it is unclear when exactly these texts were composed. The Rabatak inscription references Kaniṣka I's first year as the time when he inaugurated his era (line 2), submitted cities in India to his will (lines 4-7), founded this temple, and assumed the Kuṣāṇa throne (line 20). There are also references to Kaniṣka I's third year (line 10) and possibly his sixth (line 19); if the year six is the correct reading, this inscription was composed either in this year (=133 CE) or shortly thereafter (Sims-Williams 2004: 56-7, 65-6).

⁶² The earliest dated inscription for Huviṣka is year twenty-six, and it is unclear when in the span of these three years the Kuṣāṇa throne passed from Kaniṣka I to Huviṣka.

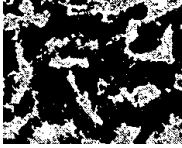




The Bactrian silver plate states that Kaniṣka I “[returned] from India to Tokhwarstan in the tenth year with the spoils (?) of victory (?),” and therefore this text might have been composed around this time (=137 CE) to commemorate Kaniṣka I’s apparently successful military campaign (Sims-Williams 2015: 257). The twenty-seven inscriptions that have a secure date can be graphed according to their year of composition, as seen here (graph 4):



This graph shows that there was a spike in the number of inscribed objects in Kaniṣka I’s third year, a lull in the middle of his reign, and then a consistent period of donations towards the end of his rule. The seven inscriptions dated to Kaniṣka I’s third year primarily consist of standing Bodhisattvas and their parasols found at Kauśāmbī, Sarnath, Śrāvastī, and Mathurā, with the exception being a small Buddha image donated by the Ārya Vasumitra found at Mathurā.⁶³ The standing Bodhisattvas have been dated from years two to six, but these were most likely all donated in the Kaniṣka I’s third year since they have the same donors, the monk

⁶³ In EHS inscriptions the term Ārya is almost always used to designate Jain monastics, so it is interesting that someone using this designation donated a Buddhist image.

Bala or nun Buddhāmitrā, similar stylistic features, and, after a close inspection of these inscriptions, what appears to be the numeral three for the year. The following table presents the preserved numerals found on the inscriptions alongside the original reading of the date, and then my remarks for why they should all be read as year three (table 1):

Provenance [#]	Numeral	Original Reading	Remarks
Kauśāmbī [17]		Year 2: (Goswami 1937-8: 210-2)	To upper stroke is missing, but the middle stroke is visible and the bottom stroke is noticeably below the <i>he</i> , suggesting that there were originally three strokes.
Kauśāmbī [18]		Year 6: (Sharma 1968: 44)	 Here is an example of the rounded Brāhmī 6 from the Amitābha inscription [49].
Kauśāmbī [19]	Numeral missing		
Sarnath [20a/b]		Year 3: (Vogel 1905-6: 176)	The three strokes are clear.
Śrāvastī [21a/b]	Numeral missing		
Mathurā [22]		Year 3: (Lüders 1961: 183)	The three strokes are clear.

Although the upper stroke of the numeral three in the Kauśāmbī inscription [17] is not visible and the numeral in the Kauśāmbī [19] and Śrāvastī [20a/b] Bodhisattva inscriptions is missing, it is probable that these were all produced at the same time, and most likely in the same workshop

in Mathurā.⁶⁴ This temporal and sculptural correlation suggests that in the third year of Kaniṣka I's reign there was a concerted effort to patronize simultaneously these far-flung, but religiously relevant, Buddhist centers. In fact, at Kauśāmbī, Sarnath, and Śrāvastī these seven-foot-tall Bodhisattvas were erected on a promenade (*caṃkrama*) and they would have been fully visible to monastics living within these vihāras and inherently attractive to the lay community who wished to witness such an imposing image (Schopen 1997: 244-6). Although the primary donors of these objects were monastics, the inscription on the Sarnath Bodhisattva [20a/b] mentions that it was installed with (*saha*) the Mahākṣatrapa Kharapallāna and the Kṣatrapa Vanaṣpara. Whether these officials personally had this image installed in the monastery is unclear, but this text does suggest that this standing Bodhisattva was intended to be seen by more than just the monks inhabiting the monastery. These larger-than-life images produced simultaneously and then exported to historical Buddhist sites around northern India would have taken a tremendous amount of coordination involving artistic, economic, religious, and social sectors, and the ability to harness this collective activity is indicative of a well-organized empire.

The second spike in donations occurred in year eight, again in the early stage of Kaniṣka I's rule. Three of the four objects are Buddhist images [29-31] and were most likely all installed in Mathurā. The provenance of the Russek collection Buddha [31] is unknown, but it displays all the stylistic features of Mathurā images (the Buddha seated with his left hand resting on his knee, a light robe, and a pedestal with two outward facing lions on either side and a forward-facing lion in the center), suggesting that this image was also made in this city.⁶⁵ The non-Buddhist object is an image of the Nāga Lord Bhumo [28] donated by the “*niyavaḍaki* of Mathurā

⁶⁴ A side-by-side comparison of three standing bodhisattvas dated to year three is given in fig. 6.

⁶⁵ For photos of this image see Fussman 1988: pl. III-V. This statue resembles the Kimbell Art Museum Buddha shown in fig. 7.

(*[māthu]rasya niyavaḍ[a]kisyā*)” (Lüders 1961: 148-9, §102). The term *niyavaḍaki* is again enigmatic, but it appears to be the title of an imperial officer, and his sponsorship of this Nāga object demonstrates that this religious community existed in Mathurā at this period and they were being patronized by presumably an imperial official.

In the six-year period between the ninth and fifteenth year there are only two donations, a village temple (*hārmya*) [32] and a pillar [33], and the donor’s name is not persevered in either inscription. It is hard to account for this downturn in donations, as there does not appear to be any fluctuation in the imperial currency in Kaniṣka I’s rule, unlike that of his successor Huviṣka. One possible explanation might be found in the Bactrian silver plate that references Kaniṣka I bringing back spoils of war from India to Bactria in year ten. The date in this inscription aligns with Tibetan and Chinese literary accounts of a campaign led by Kaniṣka I to conquer the city of Sāketa aided by the kings of Kucha and Khotan that most likely occurred sometime between 136-147 CE, Kuṣāṇa year 9-20, when Chinese control over the Tarim Basin waned.⁶⁶ Sāketa, present day Ayodhyā, is about 531 km east of Mathurā, so if Kaniṣka I extracted funds and troops from Mathurā to undertake this military expedition, then perhaps there is a correlation between this diversion of resources and the decrease in donations made around this time.

In the concluding years of Kaniṣka I’s rule there appears to be a relatively constant flow of donations, although for many of these years only one inscribed object survives. It is also at this point in Kaniṣka I’s rule when the first Gāndhārī inscriptions appear. There are two Gāndhārī inscriptions associated with the reign of Kaniṣka I, both recording a Buddhist donation.

⁶⁶ In the Tibetan *Li yul lun-bstan-pa* Kaniṣka I captured the city of So-ked (Sāketa?) with the assistance of the kings of Gu-zan [=Kucha] and Li [=Khotan] at a time when Chinese control over the Xinjiang region had weakened between the Yangjia period (132-6 CE) and before the reign of the Han emperor Huan (147-67 CE). The *Hou Hanshu* calls the town Kaniṣka I sacked Shaqi (Sāketa?) and states that it was located in the center of “the kingdom of Dongli [‘Eastern Division’] more than 3,000 *li* [1,247 km] southeast of Tianzhu [Northwest India],” which is a close approximation of distance of present day Ayodhyā from northern Pakistan (Falk 2015b: 115-7, §99).

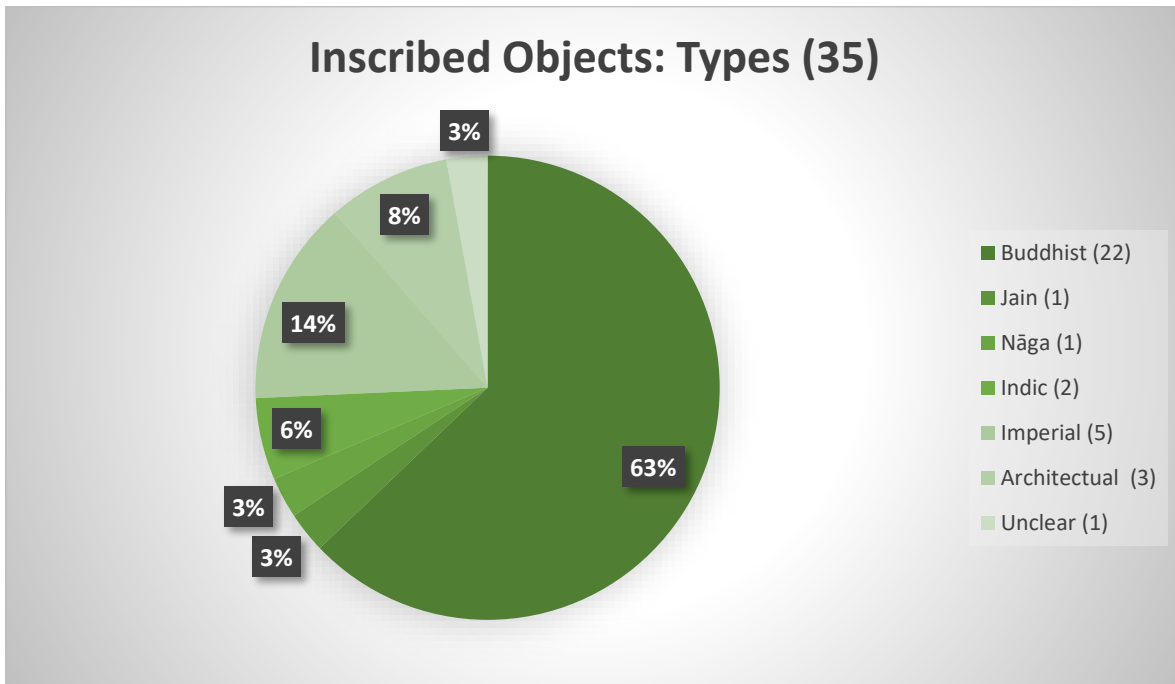
The first is an inscribed brass box-lid [37] (provenance unknown) that records the relic donation of the monk Gotama in year eighteen, and the second is a stone slab [42] dated to year twenty that records an unspecified gift by the monk Buḥavaruma found at Garhi Matani, which is located on the Indus River a little north of Cambellpore, Pakistan. The remaining donations in the later stage of Kaniṣka I' rule, years 16-23, are five Buddhist images [34, 36, 38, 39, and 40], a pillar possibly found near Agra [35], and a statue of Kubera statue [41] found in a Buddhist monastic site of Pālīkherā located about three miles southwest of Mathurā. The final inscription [43] that names Kaniṣka I, dated to year twenty-three, was found in Sonkh, a site about thirty minutes west of Mathurā, and this is one of the only Kuṣāṇa period sites that has been scientifically excavated (Härtel 1993: 50-9). This seated Kapardin Buddha was donated by Puśyada(tā), the daughter of Gunda the Lord of the vihāra (*vihārasvamin*), and was erected in her own vihāra (*svake vihāre*). Puśyada(tā)'s reference to her own vihāra and her father's position as the Lord of the vihāra, suggests that a Buddhist monastic complex was located in the vicinity of this settlement and that the lay community donated religious images and assisted in the management of this complex.

This last spurt of donative activity in the reign of Kaniṣka I consisted of inscriptions engraved on a variety of media, a brass-box, stone slab, and statues, and were sponsored by both religious and social donors, and are representative of the types of inscribed objects produced in this period and the different donor affiliations. The next two sections will more closely examine these inscribed objects, classified by their type and donor.

3.1.1. Types of Inscribed Objects in the Reign of Kaniṣka I.

Classifying the inscribed objects by type provides insights into the donative activity taking place during the first phase of imperial perpetuation. This is important, as inscribed

objects reveal which communities were being patronized and, more specifically, what kinds of objects constituted a donation. All but one of the thirty-five inscribed objects donated over the course of Kaniṣka I’s twenty-three-year reign can be divided into the following six categories (graph 5):⁶⁷

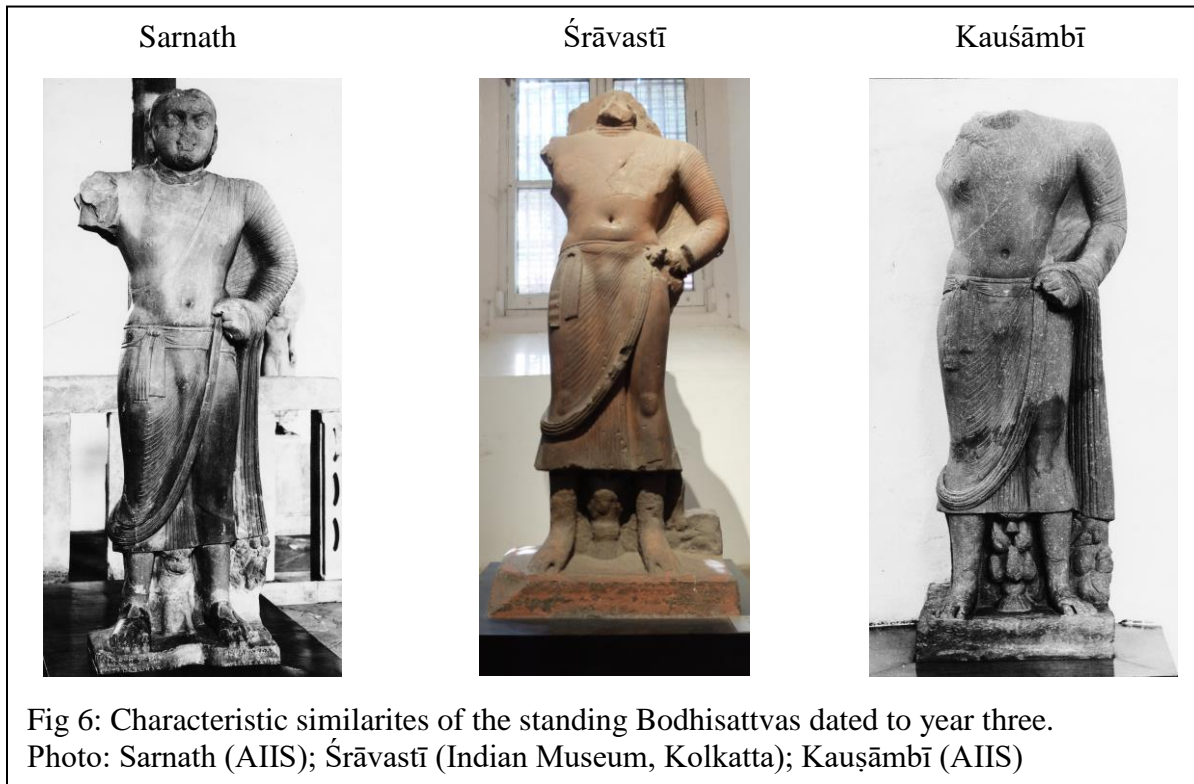


Buddhist images constitute the majority of inscribed objects of this period, accounting for twenty-two out of the total of thirty-five objects. This suggests that Buddhist communities were a prominent force in the Kuṣāṇa Empire during Kaniṣka I’s rule, and the monastic sites that received donations during this time extended from Sarnath, near Varanasi in eastern Uttar Pradesh in the east, to at least Garhi Matani on the bank of the Indus River to the west.⁶⁸ The earliest Buddhist images produced in Kaniṣka I’s reign were the series of standing Bodhisattvas

⁶⁷ One inscribed object that cannot be safely classified since only a broken pedestal dated to year four remains [24]. This image is most likely religious, but it is unclear if the figure wore a robe. If the figure had a robe, it would be Buddhist, and if it was naked, it would be Jain. In the graph, this image is labeled as “unclear.”

⁶⁸ The Kaniṣka casket [47] found at Shah-ji-ki-Dheri in Peshawar indicates that a Buddhist stūpa site associated with Kaniṣka I existed in the western extent of Gandhāra during his rule, even though the casket itself was most likely donated in Huviṣka’s reign (Errington and Falk 2002: 106).

dated to year three, which have been discussed above. The stylistic consistencies, another indication that they were all produced in a single workshop, are shown here:



The common features of the robe draped over the left shoulder and gathered at the waist in the left hand, the figure's posture, and the object between the Bodhisattva's feet, most likely a lotus flower, indicate that the artisans responsible for the sculpting these images were working from a similar archetype. This stylistic uniformity represents the artistic standardization that occurred in the Kuṣāṇa period, and the forms of standardization on a local level helped to perpetuate the Kuṣāṇa authority on an imperial level.

In addition to standing Bodhisattvas, the school of art developing at Mathurā in the early phase of Kaniṣka I's reign produced images of seated Bodhisattvas, often referred to as the Kapardin Buddha. These Buddha images are depicted sitting on a lion throne depicted on the pedestal, wearing a diaphanous robe draped over the left shoulder similar to the standing

Bodhisattvas, resting his left hand on his knee, forming a ‘*vyāvṛtta*’ mudra with his right hand, and with his hair tied in a top-knot.⁶⁹ The seated Bodhisattva is flanked by a chowrie-bearers and behind the image is a rounded nimbus with a scalloped edge. The earliest Kapardin Buddha, shown here, is dated to Kaniska I’s fourth year and is now housed at the Kimbell Art Museum in



Fig 7: Kimbell Kapardin Buddha
 (Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas)
 Indian
Seated Buddha with Two Attendants
 Kushan Period (c. 50 B.C.-A.D. 320)
 Red Sandstone, 36 5/8 x 33 5/8 x 6 5/16 in.
 (93 x 85.4 x 16 cm)
 AP 1987.06

Fort Worth, Texas. Out of the twenty-one types of Buddhist inscribed objects donated in the reign of Kaniska I, all but two are religious figures depicted as either standing or sitting. The two exceptions are the Gāndhārī inscriptions cited above, one being an inscribed brass-lid [37] of a reliquary and the other an inscribed stone slab [42] that commemorates the donation of a pious gift. This preponderance of Buddhist images clearly demonstrates that these became the most popular type of donations, a fact made more remarkable when taking into account that representations of the Buddha in human

form were practically non-existent in northern India prior to Kaniska I’s rule. In Gandhāra, images of the Buddha were also produced in this period, but rarely inscribed, and donative records were primarily relegated to relics, either by inscribing the stone or metal reliquary itself

⁶⁹ The Kapardin Buddha has been discussed by Coomaraswamy (1928: 829), van Lohuizen de-Leeuw (1949: 153-4, 179-82), Härtel (1985: 653-68), and Falk (2012a: 491-99).

or placing an inscribed gold or silver sheet inside the reliquary. This might indicate different epigraphical habits in these two regions; in Gandhāra the practice of documenting relic donations was maintained in the Kuṣāṇa period whereas in Mathurā the new forms of donations, namely images, required developing documentary techniques of placing the inscription on the pedestal. These inscriptions demonstrate that Buddhist communities were actively sponsoring donations in both northern India and Gandhāra in the reign of Kaniṣka I, creating a religious network that connected the two regions. The importance of this Buddhist network and the donors associated with monastic sites will be discussed in chapter four.

Jain communities in Mathurā during the reign of Kaniṣka I seem to have hesitated in adapting to this new donative environment, a situation that will change in the reign of Huviṣka. There is only one Jain inscribed object attributed to Kaniṣka I's reign, and all that remains of the image is the left portion of the base [13]. The first line on the upper rim of the pedestal contains Kaniṣka I's name and the letters on the lower rim of the pedestal are almost completely worn away. The legible text appears to be *sya*, possibly the genitive ending for the monastic figure who requested the donation, and a *ni*, most likely the initial *akṣara* of the word *nirvartanā*, "at the request," which is part of the typical Jain donative formula. The preserved part of the donative formula, and the fact that this object was found at the Jain monastic site of Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā suggests that this was a Jina image. The paleographic and stylistic features make the first Kuṣāṇa century the likely time of production, but this image could have been donated in the reign of Kaniṣka II, since Jain inscribed objects increase in the reign of Huviṣka and become quite common by the start of the second Kuṣāṇa century.

As mentioned in the introduction, Jain inscriptions, for the most part, do not include the name of the Kuṣāṇa ruler and instead just cite the year, in numerical form, at the beginning of

their donative texts. If further research shows that some of the Jain inscribed objects assigned to the reign of Kaniṣka II do belong to the first Kuṣāṇa century, then the groupings devised here will be adjusted accordingly. It must also be noted that Jains in Mathurā did produce inscribed objects prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, in the form of *āyāgapataṣ*, which are square slabs decorated with a stūpa or aniconic image in the center surrounded by floral designs and geometric patterns (Quintanilla 2007). Perhaps this delay in transitioning to the production of anthropomorphic images initiated by Buddhists might have been due to the fact that the Jain community already possessed their own donative artistic traditions.

Nāga and Indic communities present at Mathurā also do not appear to have appropriated

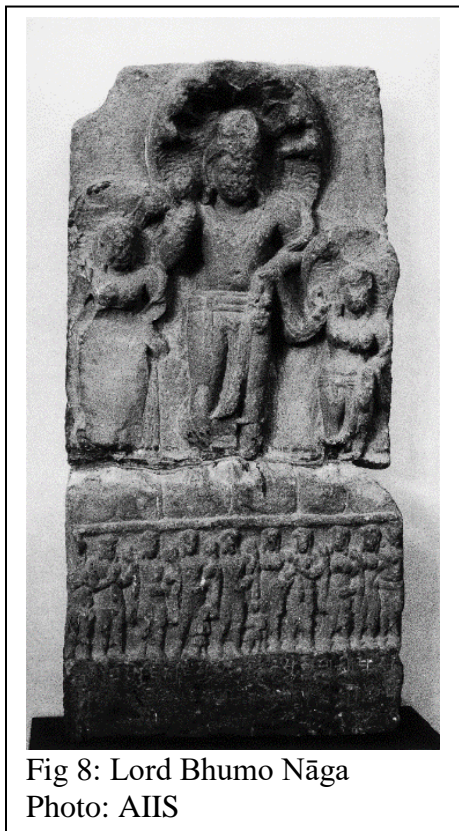


Fig 8: Lord Bhumo Nāga
Photo: AIIS

this new donative medium to the same extent as their Buddhist neighbors. The single Nāga object the image of the Nāga Lord Bhumo was discussed above, and was dated to year eight and found in the predominately Buddhist site of Rāl Bhaḍār in Mathurā. The integration of Nāga images at Buddhist sites is quite common, and the connection between the Nāga cult and Buddhism can be traced back to the period of the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*, when it was said that the Nāgas received one of the eight reliquaries containing the Buddha's ashes. The epigraphic evidence from Mathurā seems to confirm this textual association (Strong 1983: 111-4).

In the reign of Kaniṣka I two inscribed objects are classified as Indic, a Kubera statue [41], found at the same Buddhist site of Pālīkheṛā, and stone slab [32] that records the

construction of a village temple (*hārmya*) donated in the northern Navamikā (*[u]tarāyaṃ na[va]mmikāyaṃ*) that was intended to please the Goddess (*priyatām devi*).⁷⁰ These two objects reflect the malleability of the Indic class of objects employed in this study. Kubera is a trans-religious figure whose images are found at both Buddhist and Jain sites, thus ascribing him to either of these religions would be difficult. Similarly, a Sarasvatī images [83] found at the Jain site of Kaṅkāli Tīlā cannot be classified solely as Jain since she is also the consort of Brahma. Therefore, an Indic classification seems most appropriate. The temple dedicated to an anonymous village goddess also demonstrates the utility of the Indic classification, since she was a revered local figure and not, as far as the inscription states, associated with any specific religious community.

The last two categories, imperial and architectural, refer to inscribed objects that are not specifically religious in orientation, although in many cases religious overtones are present in the texts. For example, the Rabatak inscription [14], which is categorized as imperial, records the foundation of a temple sponsored by Kaniška I and praises a host of Iranian and Indic deities, but this inscription also lays out Kaniška I's imperial pedigree, documents his accomplishments, and proclaims his imperial stature.⁷¹ There are five inscribed objects that can be classified as imperial, and three among them are composed in Bactrian: the Rabatak inscription [14], a fragmentary inscription engraved on a stone plaque found at Surkh Kotal [15] in which only the titles of Kuṣāṇa officials and the name of the scribe are preserved, and the Bactrian silver plate [16]. In general, texts composed in Bactrian seem to be more imperial in nature, as is the case with the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription of Vima Takto, and these types of imperial donation

⁷⁰ A photo of this stone slab held at the British Museum is provided in fig. 10.

⁷¹ The Seṇavarma gold leaf [5] inscription represents another case where religious and political information is included in the same text.

recorded in Kaniṣka I's reign suggest a connection between Bactrian texts and imperial subject matter.⁷² The final two imperial inscribed objects are a seal [11] containing Kaniṣka I's name found in Kosam where a standing Bodhisattva was donated, and Kaniṣka I's statue [9] found at the Kuṣāṇa royal gallery in Maṭ. This statue, as noted in the introduction, epitomizes marks of empire, both textually, by simply stating Kaniṣka I's name and his royal epithets, and visually, by depicting the king in his royal nomadic attire standing authoritatively with his hand firmly clasping his sword.

The final category of inscribed objects is architectural, and items that belong to this category are non-religious figures and objects used in the construction of various structures. Most likely these objects were erected in or around religious sites and were donative, meaning that the donor accrued merit through sponsoring their production. However, since they do not depict religious figures, house sacred objects, or record a pious donation, they should be differentiated from these types of objects. The three architectural pieces donated in the reign of Kaniṣka I are a female figure [12] and two pillars [33 and 35]. The female figure was found at Morā, near Mathurā, and is undated, but the inscription states that the donor was the wife of the Kalavaḍa of Mathurā, and the image is presumably of a figure named Tośā. As usual, it is unclear what function a Kalavaḍa performed in the Kuṣāṇa administration, but presumably this official was based in Mathurā. The exact nature of this inscribed object is also uncertain; Lüders (1961: 154; 1937-8: 201-2) suggests Tośā might be a local Goddess since a similar name appears on another inscription, also from Morā, attributed to the Kṣatrapa period. Tośā could also be one of the many female statues, *śālabhañjikās*, used as primarily as decorative elements on railing

⁷² In the reign of Kaniṣka I the languages used in the legends on his coins switches from Greek and Gāndhārī to Bactrian and Gāndhārī, further supporting the idea that Bactrian became an official, or 'imperial', language at this time (Jongeward et al. 2015: 6).

pillars at religious sites in Mathurā, and depict a standing lady wearing anklets, a decorative girdle, and a cloth draped over the left hand that is poised on her hip.⁷³ Harry Falk (2014: 15-6) has recently edited an inscription found on pedestal of a female statue that contains the phrase “an image of a lustful lady, *kāmuk(i)-ibhā[ye] (pra)[ti]mā*,” that he believes depicts a *nāyikā*, a

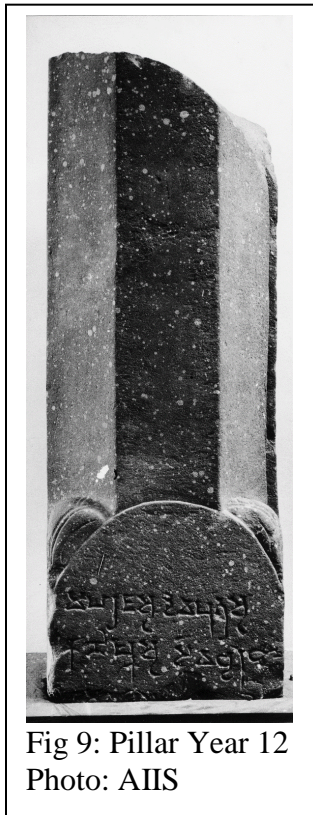


Fig 9: Pillar Year 12
Photo: AHS

female erotic figure found in literature. The *Tośā* inscription contains a similar phrase, “an image of *Tośā (tośāye pratimā)*,” and therefore this object might also be one of these female literary archetypes rather than a *śālabhañjikā*, although I have been unable to corroborate the term *tośā* with a conclusive literary reference. What is clear is that this object, and the two pillars discussed below, are not Buddhist, Jain, or *Nāga* images, and therefore deserve their own category.

Pillars and similar architectural objects are another donative item that can be construed as having religious as well as pragmatic properties. On the religious side, donating an object to help with the construction a religious complex would result in accruing merit, and prior to the *Kuṣāṇa* period almost all donations were architectural.

Pragmatically, however, pillars are not devotional but rather infrastructural and used in the construction of religious structures, thus they need to be distinguished as such. Among the two inscribed pillars donated in the reign of *Kaniṣka I*, one was found in *Govind Nagar* in *Mathurā*, dated to year twelve [33], and the second, which might have come from a site near *Agra*, is dated to year sixteen [35]. The donor of the year twelve pillar is not stated, but for the year sixteen pillar the primary donor is a monk whose name is lost, and the concluding section of the text

⁷³ For images of these female figures see Falk 2014: 13-4.

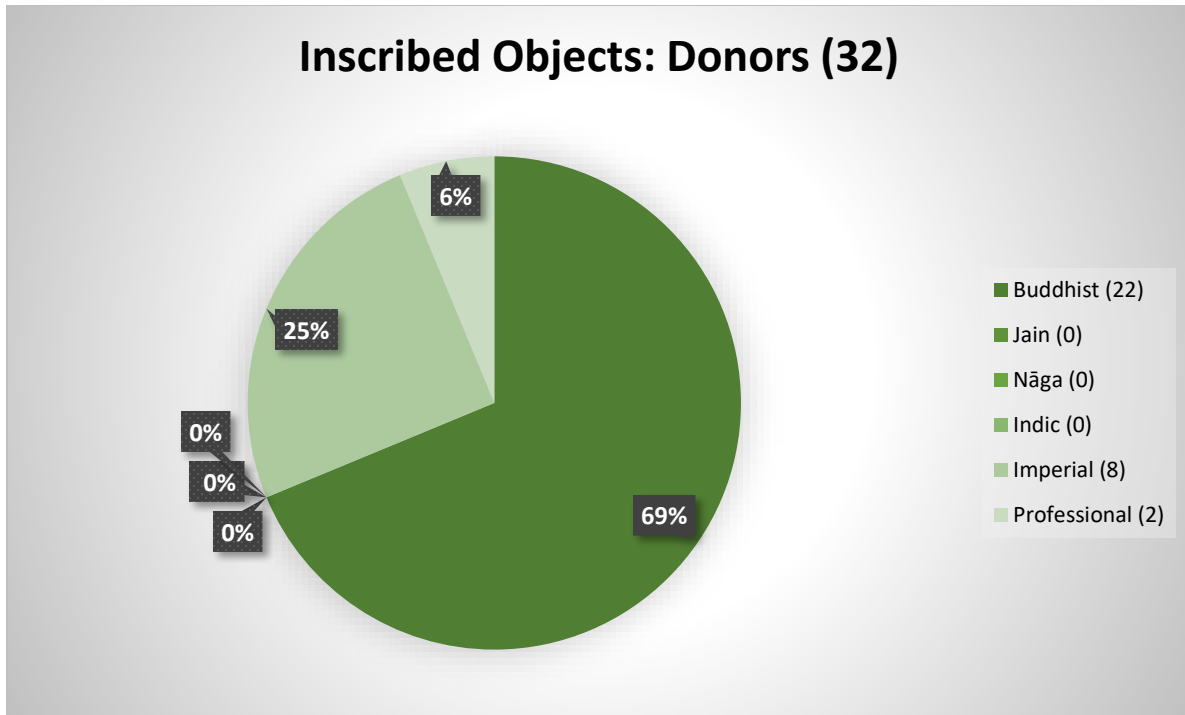
appears to reference a second monk who either co-sponsored the donation was honored by the main donor. The practice of co-sponsoring architectural donations is most common among the thirty pillar bases dated to year seventy-seven in the reign of Vāsudeva I [108, 114, 115, 116, and 118], and this pillar inscription indicates that co-donors also sponsored architectural objects at this earlier stage of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

These thirty-five inscribed objects clarify what types of objects constituted donations during the reign of Kaniṣka I and what types of people made and received these donations. Buddhists, both lay and monastic, were actively sponsoring donations, indicating the prosperity of this religious community in Mathurā as well as in Gandhāra. The epigraphic evidence shows that Jain, Nāga and Indic adherents did not conform to the donative innovation of inscribing objects like their Buddhist counterparts in the reign of Kaniṣka I. Later evidence will reveal that Jains did adjust and begin producing inscribed religious images, but the number of Nāga objects remains low, probably due to this being a minor cult in Mathurā specifically and South Asia generally. The inscribed objects that belong to the Indic class also continues a small percentage of the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus, but a thorough study of uninscribed Indic types of objects might present a different picture of the donative tendencies of this broadly defined class. For imperial donations, the number produced in the reign of Kaniṣka I is larger than in any other ruling period, indicating, along with the overall increase in inscribed objects, that the Kuṣāṇa Empire entered a new phase during his reign. This phase, as argued above, perpetuated the Kuṣāṇa's imperial legacy initiated by Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises. For architectural objects, the single inscribed female shows that images were not only religious in nature, and that artisans of the Mathurā school produced a diverse range of sculptures. Lastly, the inscribed pillars provide a glimpse into the construction methods used in the first century CE,

in this case for a religious structure, but this could be extrapolated into all forms of stone buildings that required pillars.

3.1.2. Donors of Inscribed Objects in the Reign of Kaniṣka I.

Like the types of inscribed objects donated during the reign of Kaniṣka I, donors can also be grouped into classes and analyzed to provide more insights into the social, religious, and political players that were active in the second quarter of the second century CE. The donors of the inscribed objects are divided into six classes determined either by the type of object they donated or by their specific designation. An example for the methods used to classify donors is provided by an inscribed seated bodhisattva installed in year seventeen by the lay follower Nagapiyā, the wife of the Goldsmith Dharmaka (*dhar[a]k[a]sa sovaṇik[a]sa kūṭubiniye upāsikā nagapiyā bodhisvatva pratiḥāpeti*) [36]. In this case, the lay follower Nagapiyā is put in the Buddhist class because she is identified as a lay follower (*upāsikā*) while her husband Dharmaka is grouped in the professional category based on his occupation mentioned in the text. Dharmaka could very well have been a Buddhist, and likewise Nagapiyā would most likely have been affiliated with the profession as her husband, but I have tried, when possible, not to cross-list the donors so as to better ascertain the total number of donors in each class. For inscriptions that do not specify the donor's affiliation, which is predominantly the case, the donor is classified according to the type of object they donated, based on the hypothesis that people within a certain religious community would donate to that group. Here is the breakdown of donors mentioned in the inscriptions composed during the reign of Kaniṣka I (graph 6):



The discrepancy between the number of inscribed objects and the total number of donors identified in inscriptions is due to the fact that some donor's names are either completely missing from the text or illegible. Not surprisingly, the largest class of donors is Buddhist, and this corresponds with this community receiving the largest number of donations in this period. Among the twenty-one Buddhist donors eleven are identified as monastics, consisting of six monks, two nuns, one male *śramaṇa* from Gandhāra, and one male Ārya named Vasumitra, who might be a Jain. On two occasions the inscriptions provides information about the role the monastic donor performed within the monastic community. The nun Buddhāmitrā and monk Bala, who donated the standing bodhisattvas at Kauśāmbī [17,18, and 19], Sarnath [20a/b], and Śrāvastī [21a/b], are both identified as a *trepīṭaka*, “one who is versed in the *Tripīṭaka*,” and a monk mentioned in a pillar dated to year sixteen [35] is identified as a Dharma reciter, *dharmakhattiya*.⁷⁴ These examples of liturgical diversification indicate that in the early reign of

⁷⁴ The portion of the text that contains this information is quite damaged and only the end of the title is legible, and appears to read *khattiya*. Although the beginning of this title is missing it can be reconstructed using

Kaniṣka I Buddhist monasteries were becoming more institutionalized, and the ramifications of this institutionalization to the Kuṣāṇa’s ability to ruler their empire will be the focus of the following chapter. There are also two examples of the primary monastic donor recognizing their co-resident (Skt *sārdhamvihārin*). Secondary monastic figures have been included in the total number of donors since their names appear in the inscriptions and they provide a more accurate estimation of the number of Buddhists inhabiting, and donating to, Kuṣāṇa period monasteries.⁷⁵

The remaining eleven donors recorded on Buddhist inscribed objects are all members of the lay community and can be divided between seven male donors and four female donors. There may be more lay donors attributable to this period because the inscription on an undated seated Kapardin Buddha found at the Jamālpur mound in Mathurā contains what appears to be a list of donors [10], but the text is extremely eroded and the list of names is only partially legible. This inscription shows that images were sponsored by groups as well as individuals and the group of donors presumably pooled their resources and reaped the collective merit. The designation of donors as lay followers, *upāsikas* or *upāsikās*, is somewhat rare in Kuṣāṇa period inscriptions, but an alternative method for determining the lay status of a donor is through clues provided in the text.⁷⁶ For example, the inscribed seated Kapardin Buddha from Sonkh was donated by Puśyada(tā), the daughter of Gunda the Lord of the vihāra (*vihārasvāmi*) [43]. A *vihārasvāmin* is believed to designate the lay “owner” of the vihāra who performed functions

the title *dharmakathika* “Dharma reciter” found in a pillar base [100] donated by the monk Dharmmadatta and in the Gāndhārī Sui Vihār copper plate inscription [166] that mentions the monk Nagadata as a Dharma reciter (*dha[rma]kathi*), and records his donation of a staff.

⁷⁵ The nun Buddhāmitrā mentions her co-resident Puśyavuddhi [20a/b and 21a/b] and the monk Dharmanandī mentions his co-resident Bodhisena [25].

⁷⁶ The only examples of the term *upāsika* or *upāsikā* occurring in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions are found in a pillar base dated to year thirty-three of Huviṣka “the lay followers Buddharakṣita and Dharmarakṣita (*upāsakanam buddharakṣitaddharmarakṣita*)” [58], a standing Buddha dated to year forty-five of Huviṣka “the lay follower Khvasicā (*upāsikāye khvasicāye*)” [66], an undated seated bodhisattva “the lay follower Śirika (*upāsakasya śirikasya*) [213], and the Sui Vihār copper plate “the lay follower Bālanandī (*upasika [ba]lanandī*)” [166].

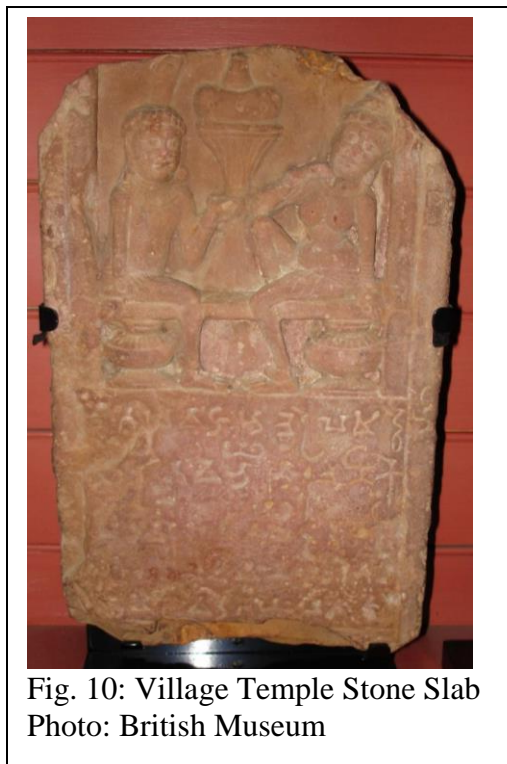
that monks, according to *vinaya* codes, were not allowed to engage in, such as owning property (Schopen 1996: 84). Furthermore, as noted previously this inscription tells us that Puśyada(tā) installed a seated Buddha in her own her own *vihāra* (*svake vihāre*), showing that influential lay members could be allotted their own personal space within the monastic setting, thus integrating themselves into this religious space.

This point, that donors could claim ownership over a *vihāra* is important, and seems to suggest that monasteries were accessible to the public. It is hard to imagine a situation where once an image was installed, especially in “one’s own *vihāra*,” it was then sealed off from the viewing public. Installing an image not only resulted in accruing merit but also opened religious spaces, drawing in more potential donors who would in turn sponsor the installation of more images. Inscribed objects performed as public markers of religious participation, and monastic sites served as the place where social, political, and religious members of a donative sphere interacted. A closer examination of how monastic complexes served as the fulcrum between state and society will be the basis of the next chapter of this study, but for the remainder of this chapter attention should be paid to the diverse body of donors active in each ruling period.

In conjunction with identifying specific monastic donors, these texts reveal information about the Buddhist community that inhabited Mathurā during Kaniṣka I’s rule. In these inscriptions three *vihāras* are identified in and around Mathurā: the Hakiya *vihāra* [30], the Kāṣṭhikīya *vihāra* [34], and the unnamed *vihāra* in Sonkh [43] managed by Gunda and patronized by his daughter. Furthermore, the inscription on the London Kapardin Buddha [39] states that this image was installed by the monk Aśvadatta “in the area of the Mahākṣatrapa (*mahākṣatrapa-varḍhamāne*)” (Falk 2002-3: 38). Besides being a name for Mahāvira, *varḍhamāna* can also refer to a plot of land for monks, most often occurring in Ikṣvāku

inscription from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Falk 2002-3: 39-40). This phrase suggests that in Mathurā a plot of land owned by a Mahākṣatrapa contained a structure able to house an image of the Buddha, and presumably monks as well. The London Buddha is dated to Kaniṣka I's twentieth year, suggesting that at this point in his reign the local Mahākṣatrapa assisted him in the administration of Mathurā. Various Buddhist sects are also named in these texts, namely the Sarvāstivādas (Śrāvastī) [21 a/b], the Mahāsāṅghikas (Mathurā) [34 and 39], and the Dharmaguptakas (Mathurā) [36]. The information extracted from these inscribed objects illustrates the flourishing state of Buddhism that existed at this stage of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

Donor's names and their affiliations serve as vital pieces of information for



reconstructing a narrative of the Kuṣāṇa period, but in many cases this data is missing. For the Jain, Nāga, and Indic images, all the donors' names are missing, meaning we know very little about them other than the Nāga donor was a Kalavaḍa. The Indic stone slab commemorating the donation of a village temple seems to be a complete text, as shown here, but for some reason does not cite the donors [32]. Knowing who in the village sponsored this donation, or if it was done collectively, would have provided valuable information about local religious practices outside of a monastic

setting. For Jain inscribed objects, the number of identifiable donors greatly increases in the reigns of Huviṣka and Vāsudeva I, but for Nāga and Indic donors there is a dearth of epigraphic evidence that reveals who patronized these communities.

The identity of eight imperial donors mentioned in the inscriptions provides some idea about the structure of the Kuṣāṇa Empire in the reign of Kaniṣka I. The three Bactrian texts associated with Kaniṣka I mentions four prominent officials, three by their name and title and one whose name is missing but title is preserved. The Rabatak inscription [14] contains the most names, referencing Shafar and Pyash, both called the ‘lords of the marches’ (*karalrang*), and Nukunzuk who holds the title of is an *ašto-wa[lgo]*, a term which has yet to be definitively defined.⁷⁷ In this text, Shafar is instructed to construct the temple (*bagalago*) at Rabatak, revealing that one job of the ‘lord of the marches’ was to oversee temple construction, but any other administrative or military roles that the ‘lord of the marches performed is not specified. The *ašto-wa[lgo]* Nukunzuk is a fascinating figure in Kuṣāṇa history who must have been a close advisor because in the Bactrian silver plate [16] he claimed to be in Vima Kadphises’ service, and in the Surkh Kotal inscription [48] dated sometime after Kuṣāṇa year 31 in the reign of Huviṣka he is again mentioned, in this instance as “the lord’s favorite.” From these Bactrian inscriptions the career of Nukunzuk appears to have spanned three generations of Kuṣāṇa rulers: Vima Kadphises, Kaniṣka I, and Huviṣka. The third Bactrian reference to Kuṣāṇa officials comes from a fragmentary text written by Palamedes at Surkh Kotal that reads “the chief [...], chief of the armory, the *ašto-wa[lgo]* made this temple” [15]. The name of the official is missing, so he could be one of the aforementioned officers or a separate individual who apparently held many titles, one of which was the “chief of the armory.” This title is the only inscriptional evidence related to the Kuṣāṇa military organization present in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus.

⁷⁷ For a definition and derivation of the Bactrian title ‘lord of the marches’ (*karalrango*, *καραλαραγγο*) see Sims-Williams and Cribb 1995-6: 92, and for the enigmatic term *ašto-wa[lgo]* (*αφτοοαλγο*) see Sims-Williams 1998: 86.

Based on the names of the officials found in EHS texts, it appears that the Kuṣāṇas both introduced their own administrative apparatus into northern India as well as preserved the role of local functionaries. In the reign of Vima Takto, his *bakanapati*, a title of apparently Iranian origin, Humaṣpala had the Kuṣāṇa royal gallery built at Maṭ, proving the Kuṣāṇas appointed officials prior to Kaniṣka I's rule. In reign of Kaniṣka I, two new Kuṣāṇa officials are referenced in the epigraphic material, and in both cases the text specifies that they were governing in Mathurā. The first reference to a Kuṣāṇa officer is Odakhi, presumably the wife of the Kalavaḍa of Mathurā, who installed the Toṣā image at Morā [12]. The fact that the majority of the Mathurā Kṣatrapa inscribed objects were found at Morā suggests that this site held some political significance, and the wife of the Kalavaḍa installing an object at this site might have registered to the people in Mathurā that authority had been transferred from the Mathurā Kṣatrapas to the Kuṣāṇas. The second Kuṣāṇa official referenced in inscriptions is the Niyavaḍaki of Mathurā who donated the Lord Bhumo Nāga image at the Rāl-Bhaḍār mound along with a tank and a grove (*pukṣiriṇi aramo ca*) in year eight [28]. It is interesting that in neither case did these Kuṣāṇa officials patronize the prominent religious communities of Mathurā, which might suggest that at this phase in the empire there was a distinction between the political and religious sphere, a situation that would change in the time of Huviṣka when his name becomes associated with a vihāra at Jamālpur.

As for local rulers, they too participated in the donation of Buddhist objects, evident in the Sarnath Bodhisattva inscriptions [20a/b] that mentions the Mahākṣatrapa Kharapallāna and the Kṣatrapa Vanaṣpara. Presumably, these two figures were local governors of this region, and it appears that they were either allowed to remain in power in the early stage of Kaniṣka I's rule or possibly appointed by Kaniṣka I to govern this area. The same can be said about the

Mahākṣatrapa in Mathurā who owned a plot used by Buddhist monks [39]. If the export of standing bodhisattvas to various Buddhist locales east of Mathurā in Kaniṣka I's third year signifies the expansion of Kuṣāṇa imperial authority, it would appear that by adding their names to this donation, Kharapallāna and Vanaṣpara acknowledged the Kuṣāṇa's authority. Even if these two local powers did not directly submit to Kaniṣka I, the dating formula used in this text informed them who was ruling, the Great King Kaniṣka I, and that he had initiated an era. Although drawing conclusions from such limited data is problematic, it appears that in Kaniṣka I's reign Kuṣāṇa officials in Mathurā were not fully integrated into the Buddhist donative network, whereas local officials, at least in Sarnath, participated in these donative activities.

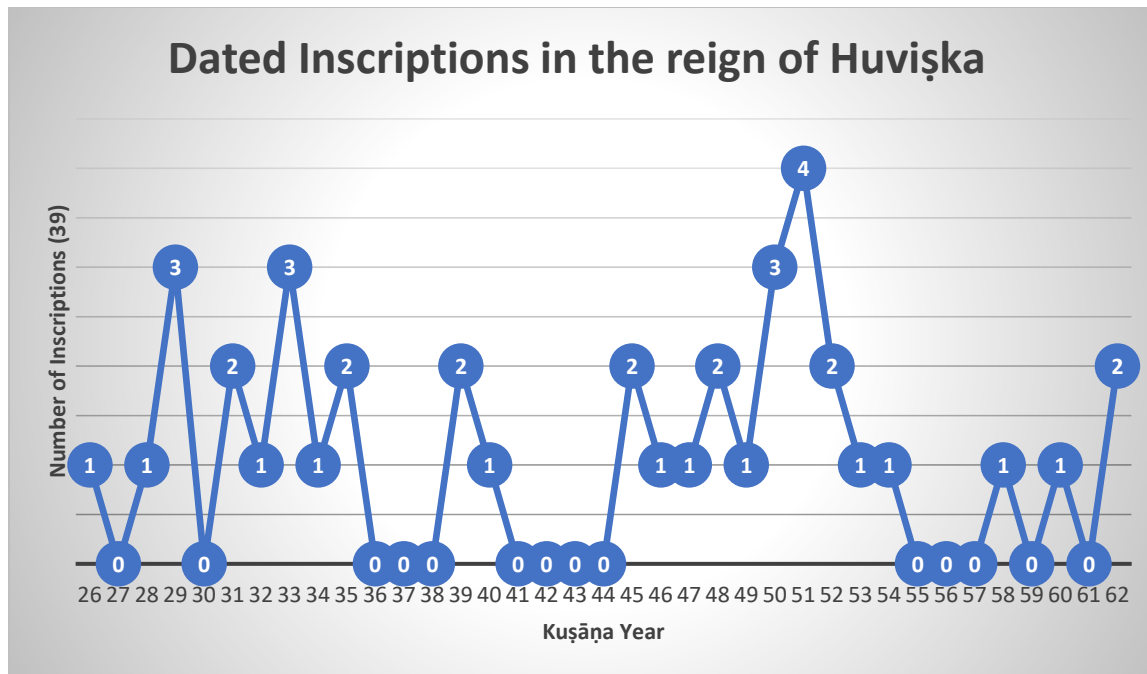
The final class of donors is the professionals, and members grouped into this category are determined by their specific occupation. Identifying the professionals sponsoring donations assists in reconstructing the socio-economic conditions of the Kuṣāṇa empire. For inscriptions composed in the time of Kaniṣka I there are only two professionals mentioned, a caravan leader (Skt *sārthavāha*) Bhavaśiri, whose wife donated a seated Bodhisattva in year four [26], and a goldsmith (Skt *suvarṇakāra*) Dharmaka, whose wife installed a bodhisattva in her own sanctuary (*savākāyā ce[ti]yākuṭiyā*) in year seventeen [36]. The professionals mentioned in these texts display two features of the economic system of the Kuṣāṇa period; long distance trade conducted by caravan merchants and localized production undertaken by the goldsmith. The Kuṣāṇa Empire brought political stability, eased interregional movements by protecting trade networks, and standardized the currency, measures that would directly increase benefit caravan merchants like Bhavaśiri. This flourishing interregional trade in turn spurred local production, and goldsmiths like Dharmaka who had access to markets to sell his wares and procure raw materials, both in Mathurā as well as other urban centers connected by these interregional trade

networks. Dharmaka's wife Nagapiyā, it must be remembered, is the only donor of this period who specifies that she is a lay follower (*upāsikā*) in her donative text, making her affiliation with the Buddhist community secure and proving that at least the wives of professionals were patronizing Buddhist monastic sites. Nagapiyā, like Puśyada(tā) from Sonkh, also established her own place, a *caitya*, within the monastic setting that she adorned with a Buddhist image.

The donors active in the reign of Kaniṣka I provide some insights into the religious, political, social, and economic conditions of this period. Moreover, these donations, divided by type and donor, reveal the imbrications between various objects sponsored, different donor affiliations, and the recipients of these donations. The analytical framework used in this section will be applied to the inscriptions composed in the reigns of the next two Kuṣāṇa rulers, namely Huviṣka and Vāsudeva I, to examine how these reflect the perpetuation of empire.

3.2. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Huviṣka.

Huviṣka enjoyed one of the longest reigns of any Kuṣāṇa ruler, at least a thirty-four-year period demarcated by dated inscriptions that contain this ruler's name ranging from year twenty-six to sixty of the Kuṣāṇa era, equating to 153-187 CE. There are two additional inscribed images Jain images dated to year sixty-two [86 and 87] but do not mention Huviṣka. These most likely fall in the reign of Huviṣka because the earliest date for Vāsudeva I is year sixty-four or sixty-seven [88], therefore the Jain images have been assigned to Huviṣka's reign extending it an additional two years up to 189 CE. During Huviṣka's rule forty-five inscriptions were composed on forty-four objects due to the bi-lingual text [68] containing both a Gāndhārī and EHS text. Among these five are undated and the remaining thirty-nine dated inscriptions can be divide as follows according to the Kuṣāṇa year contained in the text (graph 7):



The contours of Huviṣka’s reign, based on this epigraphic evidence, shows a period of sustained donations made at the beginning of his rule, a downturn from the years thirty-six to forty-four, followed by a period of increased donative activity before levelling off again at the end. The nine-year period of minimal donative activity might correlate with what is known of Huviṣka’s reign provided by epigraphic and numismatic evidence.

The numismatic record for the early coins of Huviṣka, most notably his copper issues, display highly corrupted legends, exceedingly worn dies, and remarkably debased metal content, all of which suggests that the imperial mints were no longer producing standardized coins and local minters were producing their own versions of Kuṣāṇa coins (Göbl 1984: 67-70). Two inscriptions, both imperial, attest to some form of calamity befalling the Kuṣāṇa empire at this early stage of Huviṣka’s rule. The first is the Surkh Kotal inscription [48] that states, “when there was an attack(?) by enemies, then the gods were displaced from (their) seat, then they were taken to the stronghold (of) Lraf and the citadel was abandoned” (Sims-Williams 2012: 78-9). A date, year thirty-one, is mentioned in this text, but it is unclear if the inscription was composed at

this time or a short time later to commemorate the repairs made to this imperial temple.

However, what is clear is that the attack on Surkh Kotal occurred prior to year thirty-one, or before Huviška's fifth year. The second inscription that references some type imperial disruption is an undated text found at Maṭ, the site of the Kuṣāṇa royal gallery [45]. In this text, there is a reference to its ruinous state and records the restorations made by a Mahādaṇḍanāyaka, whose name is missing, but who would have been a high-ranking imperial officer. Since the date of this inscription is unstated, there is no way to correlate these two texts, however both inscriptions, along with the numismatic evidence, seem to indicate that the Kuṣāṇa Empire suffered some disruption in the early part of Huviška's reign.

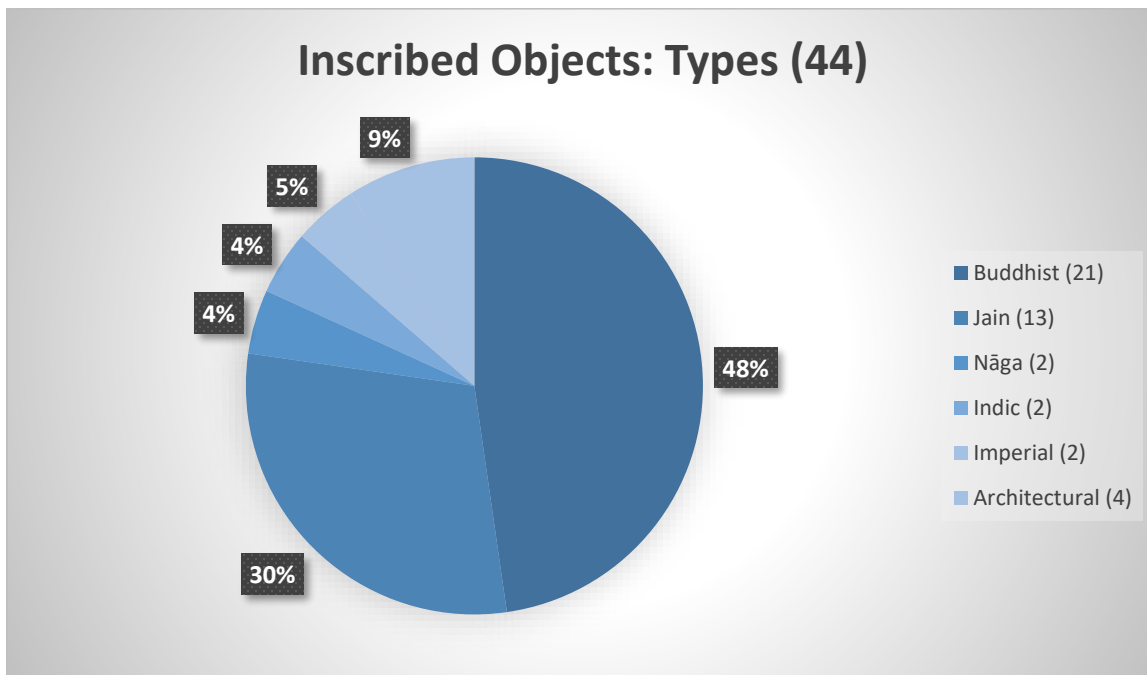
Returning to the graph of inscriptions dated in the reign of Huviška, there is no discernable change in the donative activity for the first nine years. However, directly after this period, there is a drastic decline in inscribed objects that lasts again for nine years. What might be reflected here is a delayed response to the confrontation that took place between the Kuṣāṇas and their unnamed assailants in Bactria. Since Mathurā is where many of the Kuṣāṇa inscribed objects were installed, perhaps this region was not directly affected by the battles being waged on the opposite end of the empire, and this might explain why in this early period of Huviška's reign donations continued unabated. Yet, the disruption to the imperial currency would have had economic repercussions felt throughout the empire. This again might not have been immediate, and the lag, or possible empire-wide recession caused by the currency debasement, could be reflected in the donative downturn that began in year thirty-six, Huviška's tenth year. How long it took for Huviška to restart his mints and to extract the imitation copper coins from circulation is unknown, but based on the epigraphic data, in year forty-five donations resume and remain steady for the next ten years. Perhaps then, the ruinous state of the Kuṣāṇa royal gallery was not

caused by rampaging invaders but rather imperial neglect, and it was only after the Kuṣāṇas restored the economy and secured their borders that they turned their attention to repairing their once proud imperial monument.

A secure date for the Maṭ inscription would greatly clarify the chronology of these events, but the revival of inscribed objects in the second half of Huviṣka’s rule indicate that this ruler recovered from his earlier trials and successfully perpetuated the Kuṣāṇa Empire. A closer examination of the types of objects donated and who these donors were will help to fill out the narrative for this stage of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

3.2.1. Types of Inscribed Objects in the Reign of Huviṣka.

In Huviṣka’s reign all six classes of inscribed objects are represented, consisting of twenty-one Buddhist, thirteen Jain, two Nāga, two Indic, two imperial, and four architectural. Among the forty-five inscriptions one is written in Bactrian (the Surkh Kotal inscription mentioned above), four in Gāndhārī, and the remaining forty in Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit. The graph of the types of inscribed objects is shown here (graph 8):



In Huiṣka's reign Buddhist communities continue to receive the largest quantity of inscribed objects, but here we see a drastic increase in Jain objects in comparison to the single image donated in the reign of Kaniṣka I. The remaining classes have only a few inscribed objects, a situation that is rather consistent throughout the span of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, with the exception of thirty pillar bases installed in Vāsudeva I's seventy-seventh year. Imperial types of inscribed objects decrease in this period in comparison to the five objects attributed to Kaniṣka I's reign, and as outlined above this decrease might correspond to the imperial disruption at the beginning of Huiṣka's rule.



Fig. 11: Ahichchhatra Kapardin Buddha
Photo: AIIS

Among Buddhist types, seated and standing Buddhist images remain the dominant form of donation in this period. Interestingly, the Kapardin Buddha archetype appears to have been exported to Ahichchhatra as artisans in this city began producing this style of Buddhist image. The Ahichchhatra Kapardin Buddha [56] shown here is dated to year thirty-two, meaning that the influence of the Mathurā school had expanded to Ahichchhatra in the beginning of Huiṣka's reign. Ahichchhatra was the capital of the northern Pañcāla kingdom and is today located in the city

of Ram Nagar, Bareilly District, Uttar Pradesh, about 200 km northeast of Mathurā (Law 1942).

The influence of Mathurā art in this region does not prove that the Kuṣāṇas were directly in

control of Ahichchhatra, rather than Mathurā, where the Kuṣāṇas had a strong imperial presence, was at the forefront of artistic innovations at this time.

The three Buddhist inscribed objects that were not religious images are all from Gandhāra, and include the undated Kaniṣka casket [47] found at Peshawar and two vases dated to year fifty-one from Wardak [78 and 79], a site located 123 km west of Kabul.⁷⁸ The Kaniṣka casket was found at the Shah-ji-ki-Dheri stūpa in Peshawar, and because this text contains the phrase “in the vihāra of the Great King Kaniṣka (**mahara*)*jasa kaṇiṣkasa vihare*,” it was long believed to be evidence for this stūpa being built by Kaniṣka I mentioned in Xuanzang’s *Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* written in 646 CE. However, based on parallels between the images found on the casket and portraits on Kuṣāṇa coins, Elizabeth Errington assigns this object to the reign of Huviṣka, possibly deposited when the stūpa was enlarged (Errington and Falk 2002: 106-10). The two Wardak vases were found in one of the four large stūpas located on the upper Wardak River and record the relic donations of Vagamarega, presumably a local official, and his daughter (Fussman 2015: 171-5). Vagamarega, in his reliquary donation, dedicates the “best lot to the Great King, King of Kings, Huviṣka (*maharaja-rajatiraja-hoveṣkasa agrabhagae bhavatu*),” which seems to suggest that by year fifty-one, Huviṣka’s twenty-fifth year, he has reasserted his authority in this region (Baums 2012: 243-4). Moreover, allotting of the best part of the merit accrued through this donation suggests that Vagamarega had some connection with the Kuṣāṇas, either serving as a local official or representing himself as such.

⁷⁸ One Buddha image found at Peshawar [61] dated to year thirty-five has an inscription in Brāhmī and might have been exported from Mathurā to Gandhāra, similar to the standing bodhisattvas exported from Mathurā to eastern India in Kaniṣka I’s third year (Falk 2004: 139-40).

One of the most significant Buddhist objects donated in Huviṣka's rule, and also the earliest attested year for this ruler, is the Amitābha Buddha statue dated to year twenty-six [49]. Prior to the discovery of this image in 1997 at Govindnagar near Mathurā, the earliest epigraphic evidence for figures related to Mahāyāna Buddhism was a seventh century inscription from Sāñcī. Schopen (1987: 111), in discussing the significance of this inscribed Amitābha Buddha, makes clear that this image does not indicate that an Amitābha cult was active in Mathurā or that the Mahāyāna path was, at this time, clearly distinguishable from other types of Buddhism. Yet, the discovery of this object does reveal the "beginnings" of Amitābha worship in north India and the gradual emergence of what would later become an important figure in Mahāyāna worship (Schopen 1997: 124). Just three years after the installation of the Amitābha Buddha, year twenty-nine, an image of Maitreya was commissioned by a nun whose name is missing [51]. The presence of Amitābha and Maitreya images demonstrate an expansion of the Buddhist sculptural lexicon in Huviṣka's reign from only standing bodhisattvas and seated Kapardin Buddhas produced in Kaniṣka I's reign.

Besides the ongoing donations made to Buddhist monastic sites during Huviṣka's rule, in this period the Jain community also began donating a sizable number of inscribed religious images. There are thirteen Jain objects dated to Huviṣka's reign, all but one from a single monastic complex in Mathurā, Kaṅkāli Tīlā, which was extensively excavated from 1870-1896 and shown to date from at least the Śuṅga period (Lüders 1961: 39-44).⁷⁹ The earliest Jain image from this period is dated to year twenty-nine, and from this moment onwards Jain inscribed objects will continue to be well-represented in the overall total of donative objects produced in the Kuṣāṇa period. It seems safe to say that this epigraphic evidence reflects the prosperity Jain

⁷⁹ The Jina image dated to year sixty-two [87] is said to have come from Rani-ki-Manḍī, a site near Arjunapura that is a short distance from Kaṅkāli Tīlā (Shrava 1993: 101).

communities enjoyed during the Kuṣāṇa period. All of these Jain images, whether or not they contain the name of Huiṣka, can be placed within this period based in large part on their stylistic features, notably the pedestals that displays outward-facing lions. The following figure shows a Jain pedestal and the pedestal of the Maitreya Buddha, both dated to year twenty-nine and both exhibiting similar characteristics:



Fig 12: Outward-facing lions on the pedestals of a Jain and Maitreya image, year 29.

(upper Jina) Photo: AIIS

(lower Maitreya) Photo: Government Museum, Mathurā

Images of Jinas were depicted as either standing, sitting, or squatting, and the standing and sitting Jinas conform in style with their Buddhist counterparts, while the squatting Jina seems to be an intrareligious artistic innovation. The Jina Tirthankaras represented in these

images are Vardhamāna (Mahāvira) [52], Sambhavanātha (the third Tīrthaṅkara) [70], Manisuvratanātha (the twentieth Tīrthaṅkara) [72], and the first Tīrthaṅkara, Ṛṣabhanātha, who is praised in the concluding phrase of a Jina dated to year sixty, “may the lord Ṛṣabhaśrī be pleased (*prīyatām=bhagavān=ṛṣabhaśrīḥ*)” [85]. Vardhamāna, also known as Mahāvira, was a contemporary of the Buddha and is the most commonly depicted image among Jain inscribed objects.

There are two Nāga images donated in the reign of Huvīṣka, one a large standing image dated to year forty found at Chāṛgāon [65a] and the other, also standing, dated to year fifty-two

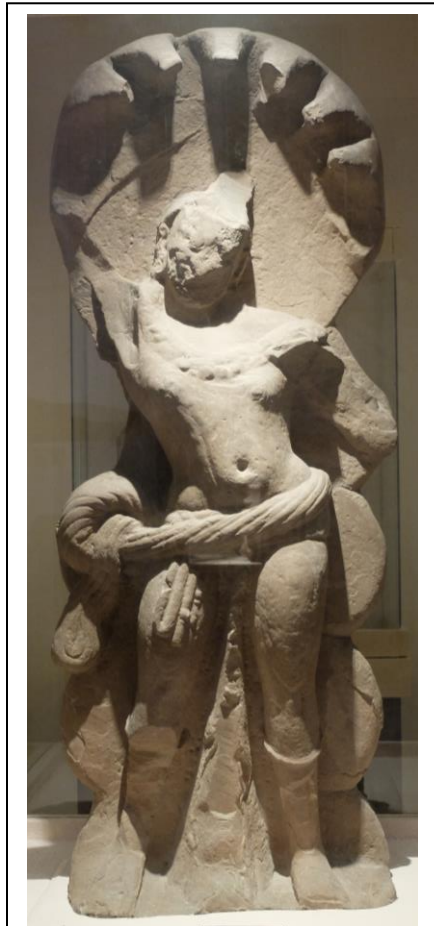


Fig 13: Standing Nāga year 40
Photo: Government Museum,
Mathurā

discovered at Bhuteswar [80]. Unfortunately, the inscription on the Nāga image found at Bhuteswar is almost completely missing except for the date and the word “lord” (*bhagavato*), which would presumably have been followed by the name of Nāga being represented. The Nāga from Chāṛgāon, on the other hand, is almost completely intact and is one of the most impressive sculptures produced in the Kuṣāṇa period. The inscription is engraved on the back of the image, rather than on the pedestal, and states that it was donated by Senahasti and Bhoṇḍaka along with water tanks, but no other information is provided about these co-donors besides their respective fathers’ names. This sculpture is about six feet tall and is one of the most exquisite examples of Mathurā art. A more qualified art historian could better describe this

image and its relevance to the Mathurā school of art; for now, I will just draw attention to its snake hood, posture, and exquisitely carved rope belt.

There are two inscribed images that can be classified as Indic. The first is a statue of Sarasvatī found at the Jain complex of Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā, showing once again the trans-religious nature of Indic deities in the Kuṣāṇa period [83]. The donor of this object, Goya, is identified as an ironsmith (Skt *lohakāra*), indicating that professionals donated objects to both Jain and Buddhist monastic complexes. The second Indic object is of particular interest to the history of the Kuṣāṇa Empire and the socio-religious setting of Mathurā in the early centuries CE. This inscription is engraved on a pillar dated to year twenty-eight and records the perpetual endowment (*akṣayanīvī*) of a merit-hall (*puṇyaśālā*) for Brahmins by the *bakanapati* Kanasarukamāna [50]. This text indicates that right at the beginning of Huviṣka’s reign a Kuṣāṇa official extended imperial support to the Brahmanical community in Mathurā. In the concluding section of the text it states that two guilds, one identifiable as the flour-makers (*samitakara* Skt *samitākāra*), would both contribute 550 *purāṇas* (a measure of silver) to the perpetual endowment, suggesting a connection between this imperial officer, the moneyed elite, and the Brahmanical community residing in Mathurā. Huviṣka himself is mentioned in this inscription as one of those, along with his associates, who benefits from the rewards of the merit-hall donation: “whatever merit there is here, may that be for the Devaputra, Śāhi Huviṣka and also to those to whom the Devaputra is dear (*ya cātra puṇya[m] taṃ devaputrasya śāhisya huviṣkasya yeṣā[m] ca devaputra priyaḥ teṣāmapī p[u]ṇya[m] bhavatu*)” (Falk 2015b: 121).⁸⁰ Directing the benefit to Huviṣka seems to suggest that he firmly controlled his empire in his

⁸⁰ This is the earliest use of the phrase “whatever merit there is may it be” (*yamatra puṇyaṃ taṃ bhavatu*) found in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, which will become a stock benedictory phrase in Gupta inscriptions.

second year of rule, so whenever the Kuṣāṇas were attacked probably occurred after this date, 155 CE, and before year thirty one, 158 CE, when Surkh Kotal was reconstructed.

The two imperial types of objects from Surkh Kotal [48] and Maṭ [45] have been previously discussed in relation to what they reveal about the state of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, namely repairs made to the main Kuṣāṇa temple at Surkh Kotal sometime around year thirty-one (158 CE) and the similar restoration project undertaken at Maṭ. Whereas the Surkh Kotal inscription was engraved directly on the stone face at this temple, the Maṭ inscription was composed on a pedestal, which according to the text, was most likely an image of Huviṣka's grandfather, Vima Kadphises.⁸¹ The pedestal, now broken into fourteen pieces, goes on to state that the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka performed this act “for the increase of the life and strength of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra (*m[ah](ā)raja-[rāj]ātirā[ja-d]eva[pu](trasya) huviṣkasya āyuba[lav](r)d(dhy)artha*)” (Lüders 1961: 138-9). This line, in conjunction with the merit-hall donation [50] and the Wardak vase [78] cited above, provides three examples of Huviṣka being specifically named as the main benefactor of the donation. Within the entire corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions only Huviṣka receives these benedictions with such frequency, indicating that he overcame whatever threats he faced to his imperial stature and reasserted Kuṣāṇa authority.

⁸¹ The reading of the opening line of this text reads, *mak[a]ra[s]ya satyadha(r)[m]asthitasya=nanayat =sarva-śca[m]ḍavirātisṛṣṭar[ā]jya[sya] ? (de)[va]kulaṃ mahārāja-rājātirāja-devaputrasya huvi[s]ka[s](y)[a] [p]itāmaha(sya)*. Lüders (1961: 138-43) found epigraphic and literary parallels for all the terms mentioned and translates “... of the... maker, who is steadfast in the true Law, on whom, on account of his devotion, the kingdom was conferred by Sarva and Ścaṃdavira (Caṇḍavīra... the temple, the ... of the grandfather of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Huviṣka.” Falk (205b: 288) offers a revised translation that interprets *nanayat* as *nanayotsave*, “festival of Nanaya,” and translates this passage as, “the family sanctuary of the... maker, who is steadfast in the true Law, on whom the kingdom was conferred by Caṇḍavīra at the festival of Nanaya.” In Falk's translation of this line, he attempts to connect the goddess Nana's granting Kaniṣka I control of the Kuṣāṇa Empire mentioned in the Rabatak inscription with the passage in this inscription. Due to the deteriorated condition of these first two lines, Falk's revised reading is plausible, but until corroborating evidence surfaces for festivals of deities in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions I will retain Lüders' reading.

The section of text containing the name of Huviṣka's grandfather seems to suggest that this was an image of Vima Kadphises. If this is correct, then the royal statue gallery at Maṭ contained images of Vima Takto, Vima Kadphises, and Kaniṣka I.

The architectural types of inscribed objects donated in the reign of Huvīṣka consist of two examples found at Kaṅkāli Tīlā [64 and 81] and two pillar bases [58 and 59] donated in the thirty-third year by the brothers, Buddharakṣita and Dharmarakṣita, who are identified as *upāsakas* from Taxila whose father was a Brahmin. The pillar bases were discovered relatively recently, 1989 [58] and 1998 [59] respectively, but at separate sites about 8 km apart in Mathura, which is surprising since both inscriptions state they were installed at the same place “in their [the brothers’] own vihara at Toyī (*svake vihare toyīyaṃ*). The fact that these brothers were originally from Taxila indicates that people living in the Kuṣāṇa Empire moved between regions, in this case from Taxila in eastern Gandhāra to Mathurā in the Ganga-Yamuna doab. Also, their father’s identification as a Brahmin while the brothers are Buddhist lay followers, is an interesting example of religious conversion in early historic South Asia. The two architectural objects found at the Jain monastic site of Kaṅkāli Tīlā include an elephant capital donated in year thirty-eight by a guild-member (*śreṣṭhin*) named Rudradāsa [64] and a *śālabhañjikā*, a female figure holding a tree adorned with anklets, donated by the ironsmith Goṭṭika [81]. The fact that both of these objects were found at Kaṅkāli Tīlā indicates that Jains were not just donating religious images but also items meant to decorate their monastic complex.

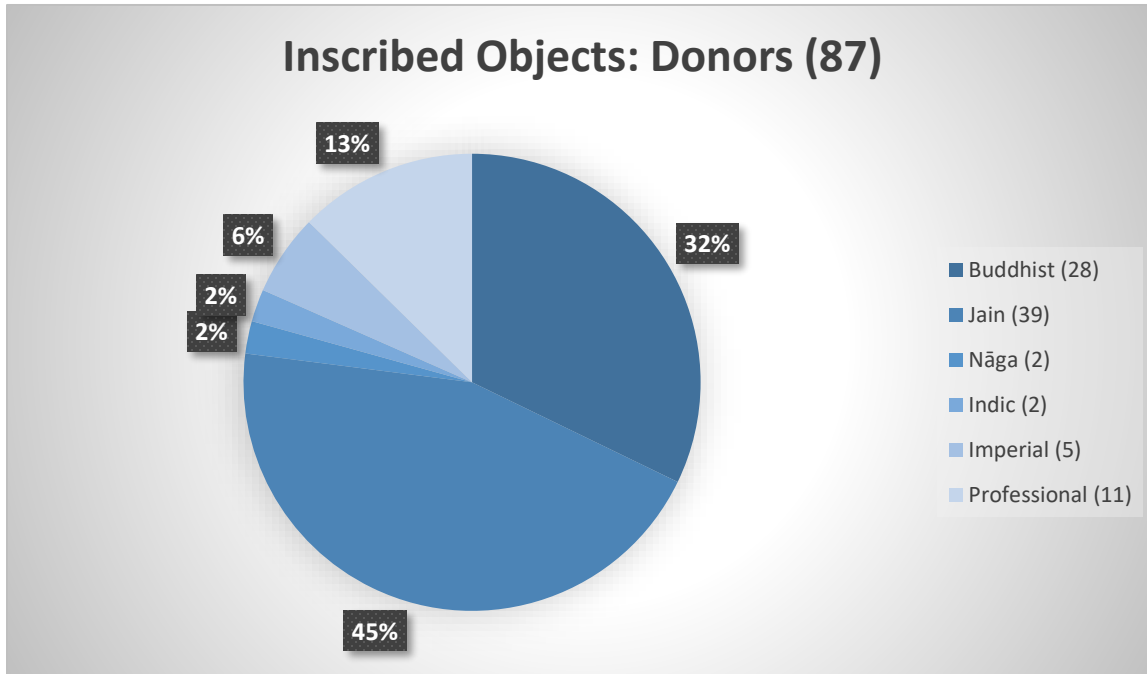
Over the course of Huvīṣka’s long reign numerous donors sponsored the installation of a wide range of objects. Alongside the Buddhist community, whose inscribed objects still outnumber all the other types, Jains became active producers of images. Nāga worshipers, although underrepresented in the number of inscribed objects, pooled enough resources to commission one of the most exquisite examples of extant Mathurā art. Among Indic objects, the sacrificial pillar stands out as a testament to the relationship formed between Kuṣāṇa officials, guilds, and the Brahmanical community in Mathurā. In reconstructing the history of the

approximately thirty-six-year rule of Huviṣka, the imperial types of inscribed objects, although not as common as those of his processor Kaniṣka I, provide valuable insights into state of Kuṣāṇa affairs. Architecturally, the two pillar bases, an elephant capital, and a *śālabhañjikā* demonstrate that both Buddhists and Jains sponsored the production of infrastructural and decorative objects in addition to religious figures. Turning from the types of inscribed objects, an examination of the donors sponsoring these donations provides further evidence for the political, social, and religious conditions of Huviṣka's reign.

3.2.2. Donors of Inscribed Objects in the Reign of Huviṣka.

The increase in Jain inscribed objects in the reign of Huviṣka introduces an entirely new segment of donors into the imperial world of the Kuṣāṇas. As touched on previously, Jain donative formulas differ from Buddhist formulas in that they usually omit the name of the ruling Kuṣāṇa king and instead just state the year. Sometimes this date is followed by a phrase that pays homage to Jain ascetics, Siddhas and Arhats, using a construction consisting of the revered figures in the genitive and *namo*, the vocative of Sanskrit *namas*, “homage,” but this is not always the case. After the date, the remainder of Jain inscriptions are comprised of three main elements: the Jain monk or nun who requested the donations, the donor, and the gift. For each Jain monastic who requested (*nirvartanā*) a donation, the inscription states the name of the primary requester, usually an Ārya, and then of their teachers, i.e. Ārya X, the pupil (male *śiṣya*/female *śiṣiṇi*) of Ārya Y, and then their lineage, i.e. their family (*kula*), sect (*gaṇa*), branch (*śākhā*), and community (*sambhoga*). In the text this information is written in reverse order, starting with the lineage, followed by the names of the teachers, and then the Ārya positioned before the “request” (*nirvartanā*). The request is followed by a list of the donor's familial relations, typically including the donor's husband or wife, the names of their parents, and in the

case of female donors the name of her father-in-law. After this the name of the donor is stated and then the donation, typically referred to as a gift (*dānaṃ*). The number of Jain monastics and extended family members of the donor cited in Jain texts results in a disproportionate number these figures being represented when compared to all the other classes of donors, as illustrated in this graph (9):



During the Huvīṣka's reign there are eight more Buddhist types of inscribed objects than Jain (twenty-one to thirteen), but because of the donative formula many more Jain donors are cited. Among the thirty-nine donors whose names appear on these thirteen inscribed objects, twenty-one are either monks or nuns and eighteen are the donors and their respective family members. Among the donor's names preserved in these inscriptions, there is an almost equal distribution between male and female donors, with six female donors and five male donors, showing that all members of the Jain lay community were sponsoring the production of inscribed images in the mid-second century CE. This gender ratio will change later in the Kuṣāṇa period when females will become the sole donors. Among the monastics, there are only two Jain nuns

referenced in a single inscription [70] dated to year forty-eight, Dhañśiri, the pupil of Dhañivala (*dh[a]ñiv[a]lasya śiśin[i]ya dh[a]ñśiri*) who requested (*nirvat[a]na*) the image of Saṃbhavanātha from Yaśā, the granddaughter of Ś(i)vatrāta (*śavātrāta-potr[i]ya*) and the daughter-in-law of Budhika (*b(u)dh[i]kasya vādhuye*). The remaining nineteen Jain monastics cited in the texts are monks. This information about the donors, both lay and monastic, indicates that the Jain community in the reign of Huviṣka thrived and devised a donative formula to commemorate a full spectrum of lay and monastic donors.

The Buddhist community also prospered during this period, and twenty-eight donors are accounted for in the twenty-one inscribed objects. Over the course of Huviṣka's rule, there does appear to be a predominance of donations sponsored by the monastic community, as nineteen of the donors are identified as monks or nuns, while only nine lay followers made donations. The discrepancy between monastic and lay donors is even more acute when accounting for one object, a standing Buddha donated in year forty-five [66] that contains the names of six individuals, the primary donor, the lay follower Khaviscā, and her additional five relatives who benefitted from the gift. This means that, besides this one object, only three other lay members made donations over this thirty-six-year span. Among the nineteen monastic donors, there are thirteen monks and six nuns. One Buddhist nun, Dhanavatī, is of interest as the inscription that records her installation of a seated Bodhisattva in year thirty-three [57] states that she is the niece (sister's daughter, *bhāgineyī*) of the nun Buddhāmitrā who sponsored the series of standing Bodhisattvas in Kosam and Sarnath in Kaniṣka I's third year. From the information provided in this inscription, it appears that Dhanavatī followed in the footsteps of her maternal aunt and entered the Buddhist monastic order.

This collection of Buddhist donative inscriptions also provides the names and locations of six monastic complexes active in the Kuṣāṇa empire during Huviṣka's rule. Three of these sites appear to be patronized by the Kuṣāṇa rulers or their officials, contrasting with the pattern in Kaniṣka I's reign when imperial donors only commissioned a Nāga image and an architectural object. The most explicit evidence of a Kuṣāṇa ruler directly associated with a vihāra is provided by the Kaniṣka casket [47], on which the text clearly states the object was donated in his vihāra, albeit probably in the reign of Huviṣka. It also appears that Huviṣka himself was closely associated with the monastic complex situated at Jamālpur. The evidence for this comes from an inscription composed on a standing Buddha dated to year fifty-one by the monk Buddhavarma [77]. At the conclusion of this text it states that the Buddha image was installed "in the vihāra of the Great King, the Devaputra" (*mahārāja-d[e](v)a(putra-v)ihāre*) (Lüders 1961: 64-5). The Jamālpur mound in Mathurā is the same location where the thirty pillar bases were installed in Vāsudeva I's seventy-seventh year. The Kuṣāṇa connection with this site will play a pivotal role in chapter four that examines imperial Buddhism. The third reference of an imperial connection to a Buddhist monastic site comes from a bi-lingual inscription composed in both Gāndhārī and Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit that records the donation of a Bodhisattva dated to year forty-six in the vihāra of the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka of Mathurā [68]. It is tempting to associate this Mahādaṇḍanāyaka with the one who made repairs to the Kuṣāṇa royal gallery at Maṭ; however, in both texts the name of this figure is missing so any connection would be conjectural. Taken together, these three inscriptions suggest that in the reign of Huviṣka a closer relationship developed between imperial donors and Buddhist religious sites, not just in the installation of images but also in their association with religious spaces, namely vihāras. Three other vihāras are referenced in the inscriptions composed in the reign of Huviṣka and are all

located in Mathurā: the name of the first vihāra is lost [51], while the second is the Toyī vihāra where the brothers from Taxila donated their two pillar bases [58 and 59], and the third is the Rośikā vihāra, stated to be at a place called Āḷikā, where Khvasiḥā, together with her retinue, installed a standing Buddha [66].

For Nāga and Indic donors there are only two mentioned in each category. The Nāga donors were Senahasti and Bhoṇḍaka who donated the large standing Nāga at Chargāon discussed above [65a], and unfortunately, we know nothing about them. I have grouped the brothers Buddharakṣita and Dharmarakṣa who co-sponsored the two pillar bases in year thirty-three [58 and 59] in the Indic category because their father Somaputra, is identified as a Brahmin from the Opavaṇa gotra (*somaputraṇaṃ brahmaṇanaṃ opavaṇa-sagotraṇaṃ*) (Falk 2000: 29-30). This means that they were probably raised in a Brahmanical community, in accordance with their father's lineage, and later converted to Buddhism and became *upāiikas*, as is clearly stated in both texts. The primary Indic type of inscribed object from this period, the pillar inscription commemorating the establishment of a merit-hall [50], refers to the Brahmanical community in Mathurā at-large but does not include any specific names other than the imperial donor and the two guilds that funded the perpetual endowment.

The two *śreṇis*, or guilds, mentioned in the Indic pillar inscription are part of the eleven professionals referenced on the inscribed objects donated during Huviṣka's reign. On the pillar inscription [50] only the name of the flour-maker guild (*samitākāra-śreṇi*) remains, and the title of the other guild is illegible. In addition to the two *śreṇis*, there are two caravan leaders (*sārvthavāhas*); Satcaka, the paternal grandfather of Nāgarakṣita who donated the Amitābha image in year twenty-six [49], and Indrabala, whose son Purohaśalaka recorded an unspecified donation on a stone slab dated in year fifty [73]. Three guild leaders (*śreṣṭhins*) are also

mentioned: Balakatta, the maternal grandfather of the above mentioned Nāgarakṣita [49], and Rudrasena and his father Śivadasa who together donated an elephant capital to the Jain site of Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā [64]. The other professionals consist of two ironsmiths (*lohitakāras*) [81 and 83], a wine maker (*surakāra*) [81], and a cotton-dealer (*kārpāsika*) [85], all of whom installed Jain images at Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā. The eleven professionals mentioned in inscriptions composed during Huviṣka's reign exceeds the number found in any other ruling period, and this seems to suggest that although the Kuṣāṇa Empire faced military and economic challenges in Huviṣka's early years, this ruler was able to revive, and perpetuate, his empire.

The imperial class of donors is comprised of six individuals hailing from all three regions of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. The Bactrian official encountered in these texts is the seemingly ever-present Nukunzuk, who in Huviṣka's reign was elevated to rank of 'lord of the marches,' and was put in charge of repairing Surkh Kotal around year thirty-one [48], much like Shafar did during the time of Kaniṣka I at Rabatak. South of the Hindu Kush, Vagamarega seems to have served as a local regent for the Kuṣāṇas in the area of Wardak, situated on the western periphery of greater Gandhāra in eastern Afghanistan. Vagamarega's official title is not clear, the word *kadalayiga* precedes his name in the text, but the exact meaning of this term, or if it is the title of an official, is unknown [78]. Among the Brāhmī inscriptions composed in northern India three officials were mentioned: the *vakanapati* Kharasalerapati who had the merit-hall built in year twenty-eight [50], and two Mahādaṇḍanāyakas, one who repaired the Maṭ statue gallery [45] and the other who established a vihāra and whose donative inscription was composed in both Gāndhārī and EHS [68]. As noted above, there is a chance that the same Mahādaṇḍanāyaka is referenced in both texts, but since the names are missing there is no way to determine if this is the case. This cadre of imperial officials spanning the entire breadth of the Kuṣāṇa Empire

indicates that Huviṣka's administrative apparatus operated in each region, although six officers responsible for over almost 2000 km of territory seems rather insufficient – a situation that will be addressed in the next chapter.

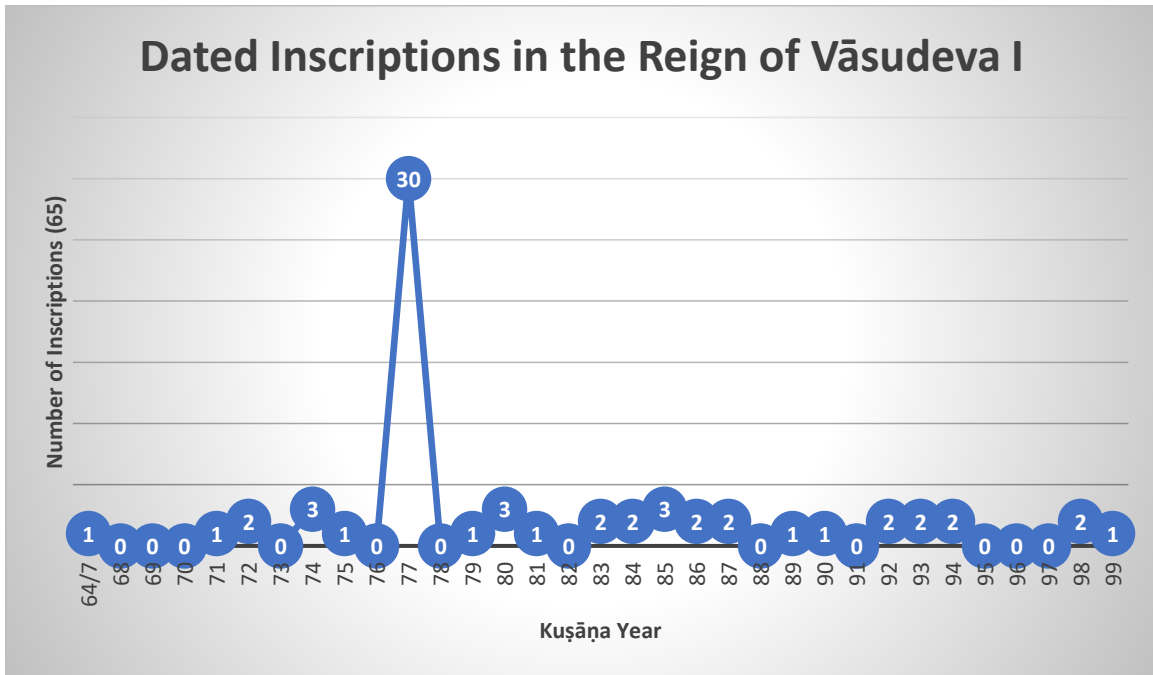
In a narrative about imperial perpetuation one would expect to find a period of sustained prosperity and stability, however, Huviṣka's rule shows that the contours of empire are more complex. Over these approximate thirty-six years the numismatic and epigraphic evidence indicates that in the early stage of his rule some disruption took place that resulted in the debasement of this coins and the destruction of the primary Kuṣāṇa religious center at Surkh Kotal. However, this same body of evidence also shows that Huviṣka was able to revive his imperial standing. Upon regaining control over imperial mints he went on to produce gold coins with an expansive variety of deities depicted on their reverse (Bracey 2012a: 203).

Epigraphically, after a lull of inscriptions being composed in the middle of Huviṣka's reign, by his nineteenth year of rule, Kuṣāṇa year forty-five (=172 CE), donors once again started to sponsor the production of religious objects and his name was attached to a vihāra in Mathurā. This evidence proves that whatever challenges the Huviṣka faced in the initial stage of his rule, he was able to reassert his power and perpetuate his empire. The perpetuation of the Kuṣāṇa Empire will continue through Vāsudeva I's rule.

3.3. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Vāsudeva I.

The approximate thirty-six-year reign of Huviṣka was followed by an equally long reign of his successor Vāsudeva I. The first inscribed object that contains the name of this ruler is a Śākyamuni image dated to either year sixty-four or sixty-seven [88], depending on the reading of the ones numeral that is unfortunately damaged, and the last inscription that contains the name of Vāsudeva I was composed in Kuṣāṇa year ninety-eight [151]. These dated inscriptions indicate

that Vāsudeva I ruled for either thirty-one or thirty-four years, a duration which equates to ca. 191/4-225 CE. There is an additional inscription dated to year ninety-nine [152], preceding the first inscription attributed to Kaniṣka II dated to year (one hundred) four [153], and this inscribed object can most likely be associated with Vāsudeva I, moving his last year of rule to 226 CE; almost exactly a century after Kaniṣka initiated the Kuṣāṇa era in 127 CE. Over this approximate thirty-two or thirty-five-year reign a total of sixty-five inscribed objects were donated, thirty of which were a set of pillar bases found at the Huviṣka vihāra at Jamālpur in Mathurā.⁸² Four of these inscriptions are in Gāndhārī and the remaining sixty-one are in Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit. Besides twenty pillar bases at Jamālpur, which are most likely dated to the year seventy-seven, the remaining forty-five inscriptions have dates and can be divide into the Kuṣāṇa years of Vāudeva I's rule as follows (graph 10):



⁸² A more detailed explanation for associating all thirty pillar bases with the Buddhist monastic site at Jamālpur in Mathurā in year seventy-seven is given in section 4.2.1.

As is apparent from this graph, the year seventy-seven was a high point in the epigraphic record of Vāsudeva I's rule, and all thirty of these objects are the pillar bases found at the Jamālpur. Leaving these thirty pillar bases aside, the remainder of the inscribed objects depict a relatively consistent donative record. There is an absence of inscriptions in the early years of Vāsudeva I's reign, maybe reflecting a less than smooth transition of power between Huviṣka and Vāsudeva I.⁸³ The period around year seventy-seven (=204 CE) witnessed an increase in donative activity, but not nearly as substantial as this year. For the remainder of Vāsudeva I's rule the donation pattern remains relatively stable, indicating that this ruler perpetuated the imperial stability brought about in the latter half of Huviṣka's reign.

Numismatic and literary evidence for the history of this period of the Kuṣāṇa empire does not reveal any significant deviations to the Kuṣāṇa's authority, suggesting that Vāsudeva I successfully perpetuated his empire. Vāsudeva I's gold and copper coins narrow the array of deities depicted on the reverses of Kaniṣka I and Huviṣka coins to mainly Wesho/Śiva, with some issues depicting Nana and Ardoxsho. Furthermore, his royal portrait on the obverse is standardized to depict a standing king, wearing armor, and making a fire offering in the left field (Göbl 1984: 72-3). Vāsudeva I minted abundant coins throughout his reign, and there is no sign

⁸³ The epigraphic evidence for the entire Kuṣāṇa period tells us very little about transitions between rulers. In the reign of Kujula Kadphises there may have been two princes, Sadaṣkaṇa mentioned in the Seṇavarma inscription and Vima Takto who assumed power, but these could also be the same person. There may also be evidence of two competing Kuṣāṇa factions after the reign of Kaniṣka II, based on the inscription from Sāñcī [182] that references a ruler named Vaskuṣāṇa who ruled in year twenty-two and Vāsiṣka, whose first attributable date is year twenty-four [183] (Falk 2015b: 127-8). However, the name Vaskuṣāṇa might just be an orthographic variant of Vāsiṣka, and therefore these two names refer to the same person. I am more inclined towards the latter interpretation as explained in 5.2.

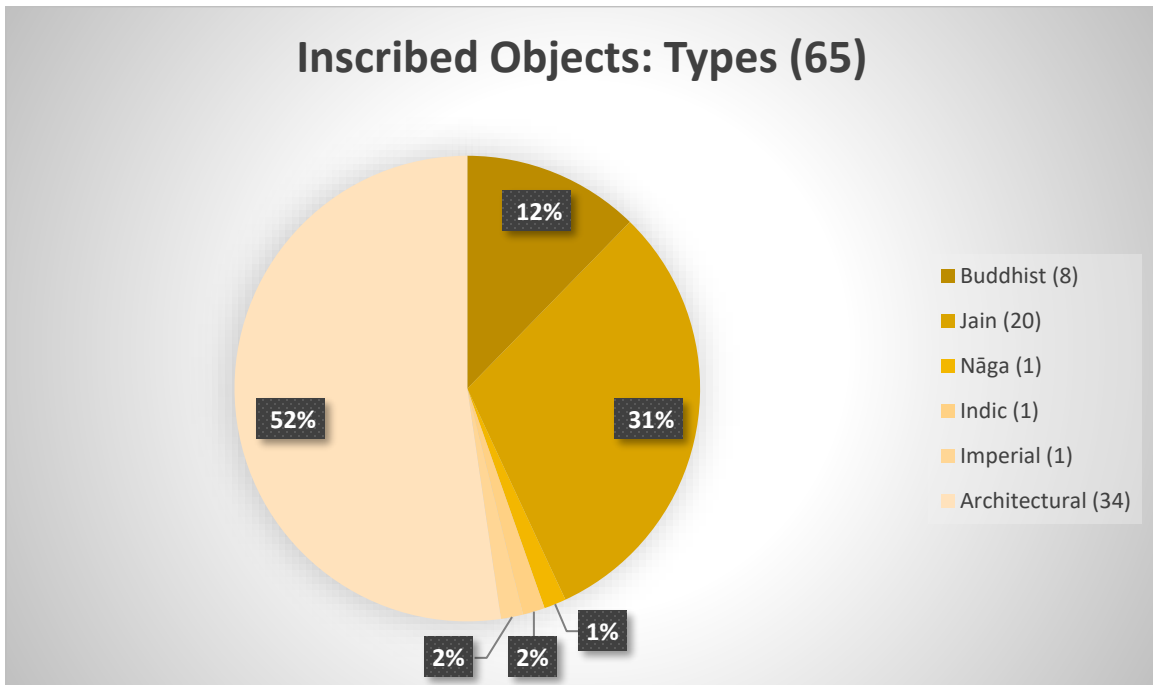
For the transition of power between Huviṣka and Vāsudeva I, there are two possibilities due to the uncertainty about earliest dated inscription to either year sixty-four or sixty-seven. The latest known date for Huviṣka is year sixty-one, so there is either a three-year or six-year gap between these rulers. Three years elapsing between Huviṣka and Vāsudeva I (years sixty-one to sixty-four) is a seemingly manageable period between rulers, and is the same amount of time that elapsed between Kaniṣka I and Huviṣka (years twenty-three to twenty-six). Six years (sixty-one to sixty-seven) between rulers could indicate that there was some difficulty in this transition. However, spans between rulers might just be indicative of the survival of the dated Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, so trying to make any definitive claim about what transpired between rulers is speculative.

of debasement or an increase in local “non-imperial” coinage, as was the case in the early stages of Huvīṣka’s rule. This might suggest that the transition of power was relatively smooth, and therefore perhaps the date in the first inscription attributed to Vāsudeva I should be the year sixty-four rather than sixty-seven. But this inference is merely hypothetical.

There is no direct literary references for Vāsudeva I, but there are some stray references to events that supposedly took place during his reign. A passage in the *Liangshu*, a Tang period (618-907 CE) text that recounts the history of the Liang dynasty (502-557 CE), states that an ambassador from the Wu dynasty (220-277 CE) encountered sailors returning from northern India who met with the King of the Ganges Meou-loun and purchased horses from the Yuezhi country (Falk 2015b: 20; 124-5, §124). This account would have taken place towards the end of Vāsudeva I’s rule, and seems to suggest that trade routes between northern India and Central Asia were still operational even with the expansion of the Sasanian Empire into Bactria that occurred at this time. There are also two references to Kuṣāṇa envoys sent in the waning years of Vāsudeva I’s rule, but neither specifically mention Vāsudeva I. The first is from a ninth-tenth century Arabic text, the *al-Ṭabarī*, that states a Kuṣāṇa king sent envoys to visit the Sasanian ruler Ardašīr (224-40 CE) at Fars (Falk 2015b: 27; 125-6, §114). The second is from the *Weishu* (written in 429 CE), that twice mentions Yuezhi envoys travelling to China to give tribute to the emperor around 229 CE (Falk 2015b: 22-3; 126, §115 and §116). The date of this meeting between the Chinese emperor and the Kuṣāṇa envoys would have occurred directly after Vāsudeva I’s rule, making a literary connection with him tenuous. This lack of external evidence for the reign of Vāsudeva I places more weight on the epigraphic evidence to reveal the political, social, religious, and economic conditions in South Asia from 191/4-226 CE.

3.3.1. Types of Inscribed Objects in the Reign of Vāsudeva I.

The types of inscribed objects donated in the reign of Vāsudeva I can be divided between the thirty pillar bases, classified as architectural, and the remaining thirty-five objects. Among these thirty-five objects, Jain images are the largest class, comprising twenty images. There are only eight Buddhist objects donated during this little over thirty-year period, representing the first time in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus that Jain images outnumber Buddhist images. A possible explanation for this decline in Buddhist donations will be addressed later in this chapter, but most likely resulted from the extensive construction project at the Huviṣka vihāra in Jamālpur that reduced Buddhist patronage to other sites in Mathurā. In addition to the thirty pillar bases and twenty-eight Buddhist and Jain images there are seven inscribed objects consisting of a Nāga, Indic, and imperial type and four architectural objects. The classes of inscribed objects donated in the reign of Vāsudeva I are as follows (graph 11):



All eight of the Buddhist types of inscribed objects produced during Vāsudeva I's rule are images of the Buddha. Seven of these objects are found in Mathurā: four are labeled as images

of the Śākyamuni [88, 93, 95, and 148], one is a Bodhisattva [126], one is unspecified [145], and one inscription refers to the Buddha as “the Lord, the Pitāmaha, who holds his own tenets, who was never refuted” (*pitām[ā]hasya svam[ā]tasya avirudhasya*) [147]. These designations of the Buddha are quite rare, and the Buddha is only referred to as Pitāmaha in one other inscription dated to year fourteen of Kaniṣka II [168]. The inscription in Vāsudeva I’s reign that contains the term Pitāmaha is dated to the Kuṣāṇa year ninety-three, and the recurrence of this term in year fourteen is a key piece of evidence for the “dropped-hundreds” theory. The use of this rather obscure term twenty-one years apart (years 93-114) between the reign of Vāsudeva I and Kaniṣka II seems more likely than a seventy-nine-year gap (years 14-93) that would have occurred between the reigns of Kaniṣka I and Vāsudeva II. Furthermore, the practice of specifying the image of the Buddha, namely as Śākyamuni but with other designations as well, occurs later in the Kuṣāṇa corpus, and the inclusion of *pitāmaha*, *svamāta*, and *avirudha* in the images dated to year ninety-three adheres to this pattern (Härtel 1985: 661).

The last remaining Buddhist object is a Gandhāran sculpture found at Mamane Dheri



Fig 14: Mamane Dheri Stele
Photo: Luczanits 2008: 232.

near Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan [142]. This Buddha image, dated to year eighty-nine and shown here, is a good example of the stylistic differences between Gandhāra and Mathurā art, most notably by the host of worshippers surrounding the Buddha whereas in Mathurā sculptures the Buddha is typically framed with a scalloped nimbus and the worshippers are positioned at his feet or

restricted to the pedestal. The stylistic features of this Mamane Dheri Buddha are very similar to the Brussels Buddha dated to year five [160], and on these grounds van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1986: 4-7) argues that the Brussels Buddha belongs in the second Kuṣāṇa century, and should be dated to year (one hundred) five in Kaniṣka II's reign.

When compared to the twenty-one Buddhist objects donated in the reign of Kaniṣka I and Huviṣka, the eight Buddhist images donated in the period of Vāsudeva I's rule is somewhat surprising. What appears to be the case is that the large-scale construction project at Jamālpur conducted in year seventy-seven absorbed a sufficient amount of donors' capital, thus limiting the number of images installed during this period at other Buddhist sites. The inscriptional evidence attests to at least four other vihāras operating in Mathurā during Vāsudeva I's reign: the Mihira vihāra whose location is unknown [93], the Maja vihāra at Caubārā [126], a vihāra owned by Hitaka (*vihārasvamin*) also at Caubārā [95], and the Veṇḍa vihāra, whose location is also unknown [145].⁸⁴ Among these vihāras only those at Caubārā received more than one donation, and it is unclear if the vihāra owned by Hitaka was the same as the Maja vihāra. While only a few images were installed in these three or four vihāras, at the Huviṣka vihāra a structure requiring at least thirty-seven pillar bases was constructed. There is no way to tell how long this project took to complete, but it would have required a vast amount of money and labor, both of which would have drawn from the finite amount of resources available at Mathurā.⁸⁵

While Buddhist donations declined in Vāsudeva I's reign Jain donations increased. In Huviṣka's reign thirteen Jain images were donated and the twenty attributable to this period shows the Jain community remained prosperous. Furthermore, in the reign of Kaniṣka II there

⁸⁴ The Caubārā mounds are a group of twelve mounds located just to the west of Kaṅkāli Tīlā and Kaṭrā in Mathurā. These were excavated by Cunningham in 1871-2 and again by Growse in 1880. Cunningham discovered a gold reliquary and a steatite relic casket at this stūpa site (Lüders 1961: 54).

⁸⁵ Details about this structure and its possible function are discussed in the next chapter (4.2.1. and 4.4).

are eighteen Jain donations, very much in line with the number of objects donated in Vāsudeva I’s rule. The economic, social, and religious forces underwriting the increase in Jain donations that occurred over the course of these successive reigns is not entirely clear. The Jain community at Mathurā was obviously flourishing, and one could argue that the enhanced trade networks that emerged during the Kuṣāṇa Empire was a major catalyst in driving this prosperity. The role of Jainism in early historic South Asia is an underrepresented field of South Asian history and deserves more attention than what is covered in this study. Furthermore, any theories I could offer about the Jain community at Mathurā based on their epigraphic evidence will require more research on my part, and instead this study will just present the information contained in their inscriptions.

The twenty Jain inscribed objects donated in Vāsudeva I’s rule were found at two sites in Mathurā, Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā and Balabhadra Kunda, and in Ahichchhatra. The dates of these objects span almost the entire duration of Vāsudeva I’s rule, with the earliest dated to year seventy-one [89] and the latest to year ninety-nine [152]. Among the twenty inscribed objects four are Vardhamāna images [90, 134, 144, 146], one is of Ṛṣabhadatta [133], and my reading of one figure’s name is Natadasaṃgha, whose identity is unclear [131].⁸⁶ In addition to depicting Jinās in a standing, sitting, or squatting posture, the artists working in Ahichchhatra introduced a new type of object, a four-sided image called a *sarvatobhadrika*.⁸⁷ The first example of this type of sculpture with Jinās carved on all four sides and an inscription on the base is dated to year seventy-four [92]. Although this is the only example from Vāsudeva I’s reign, the production of

⁸⁶ The only facsimile of this text is Cunningham’s eye-copy, making a definitive reading for the name of this figure difficult. The reading of this name is mine and is not transcribed or translated in the edition provided by Shrava (1993: 112-3, #139; 302, pl. XCII).

⁸⁷ Buhler (1892a: 382) translates this as, “an image lovely on all sides.”

these objects will increase during Kaniṣka II's rule and spread from Ahichchhatra to Mathurā.

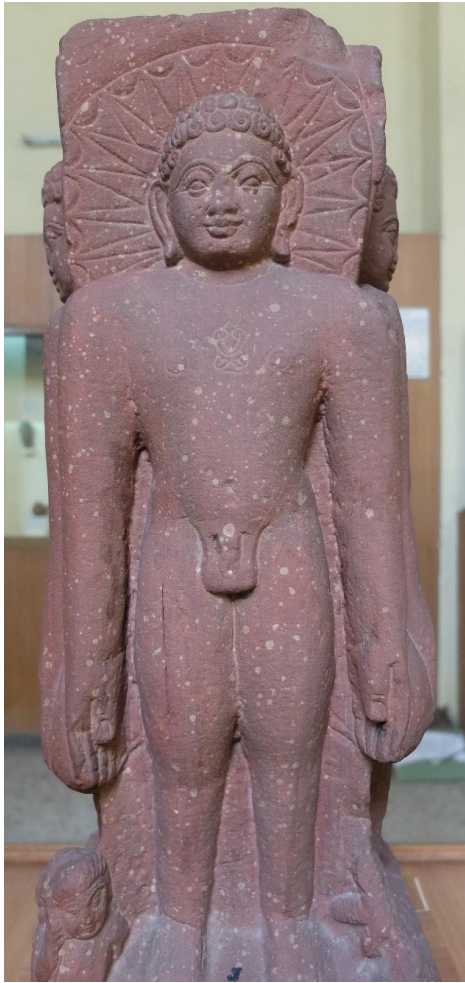


Fig 15: Undated Four-sided Jina
Photo: State Museum, Lucknow

This image of an undated four-sided Jain image in the State Museum at Lucknow shows the snail-shell hairstyle indicative of later Kuṣāṇa objects.

As noted in the introduction, the second innovation in Jain sculpture during this period is the shape of the lions on the pedestal. In the previous discussion on types of objects composed in the time of Huviṣka (3.2), two pedestals dated to year twenty-nine one Jain and the other Buddhist, were compared to show the stylistic similarities of the outward-facing lions (fig. 12). The outward-facing lions from this period would be replaced in Vāsudeva I's reign by forward-facing lions on Jain pedestals carved with much larger manes that extend above the upper socle (shown below). These stylistic innovations in Jain sculptures, the forward-facing lions, snail-shell curl

hair, and the four-sided images have been used by art historians to differentiate between Jain objects produced in the first and second Kuṣāṇa centuries (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 250).

There is one example each for Nāga, Indic, and Imperial types of inscribed objects donated in the time of Vāsudeva I. The Naga image [127] was originally dated to year one hundred seventy by Mukherjee (1987) but the date has since been revised to read *aśṭīti 80*,

“eighty 80,” and therefore can no longer be used to negate van Lohuizen-de Leeuw’s “dropped-hundreds” theory (Falk 2002-3: 42-4). Falk’s emended reading of this text also reveals the name of the Nāga, “Ārya Nakra,” and that it was donated by the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Trivāhana and the sons of the Account Keeper of Treasury (*gaṃja-hāmāraka*<*ra*>) Sulakṣaka.⁸⁸

The Indic object is an inscribed one-faced (*ekamukhi*) Śivaliṅga

dated to year eighty-six with no mention of the donor in the text [139]. There are other uninscribed Śivaliṅgas found at Mathurā datable to the Kuṣāṇa period based on their stylistic features, but to my knowledge this is the only inscribed specimen. Kuṣāṇa year eighty-six (= 213 CE) would place the production of this liṅgas to around the early third century CE, but more research on uninscribed Śivaliṅgas from this period is needed.

The single imperial object is a stone slab dated to year seventy-four [94]. The face of the stone has partly peeled away which obscures the reading of the gift, but the donor’s name is

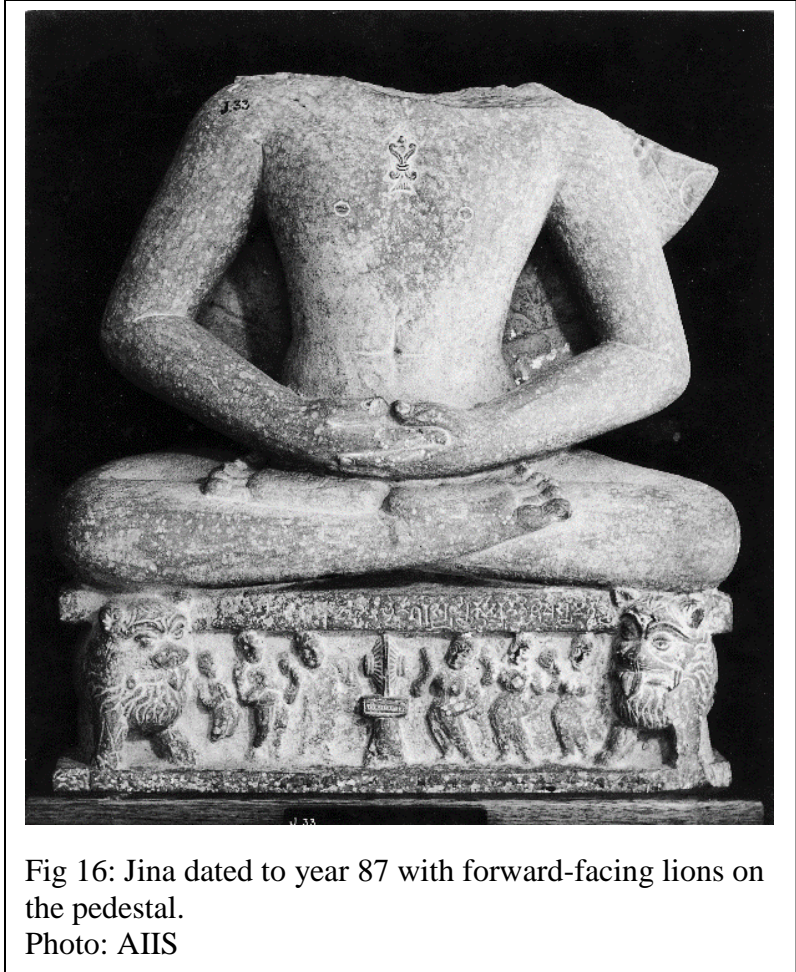


Fig 16: Jina dated to year 87 with forward-facing lions on the pedestal.
Photo: AIIS

⁸⁸ Falk (2002-3: 44-5) divides this compound between *gaṃja*, which he equates with *gañjavara* from the Śoḍāsa inscription from Mathurā (Lüders 1961: 99, §64), and *hāmāraka*<*ra*>, from Iranian *āmārakar*, “account keeper.”

partially preserved and he appears to be the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Vālana. Since it is unclear to whom Vālana dedicated this slab, this object has been classified as imperial based on Vālana's imperial title. A donor with a similar name, Ulānā, is mentioned in an undated text [260] composed on the upper-side of a pedestal between the feet of a figure wearing Śaka style felt boots. In this text Ulānā is identified as a Viśvasika, and Lüders (1961: 67-8) suggests that Ulānā and Vālana are the same person, and if this is the case then Ulāna/Vālana was promoted in rank from a Viśvasika to a Mahādaṇḍanāyaka by the year seventy-four.

Architectural types constitute the largest number of inscribed objects in Vāsudeva I's reign due to the thirty pillar bases installed at the Huviṣka's vihāra at Jamālpur. The significance of these pillar bases will be discussed in the next chapter, but for now one inscribed pillar base deserves attention [96]. This inscription contains a date, year seventy-seven, and states that the gift, pillar base number 25, was donated "in the vihāra of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Huviṣka" (*mahārājasya rājātirājasya devapūtrasya hūv[i]ṣkasya v[i]hāre*) (Lüders 1961: 68, §31). This inscription leaves little doubt that the vihāra receiving these donations was associated with Vāsudeva I's predecessor Huviṣka, and the number on the pillar base informs us that this object most likely comprised a larger set of objects, with the highest number being thirty-seven [103]. The four additional architectural objects consist of a Śaka figure dated to year seventy-two [91], two Gāndhārī well inscriptions dated to year eighty-five [136] and ninety-four [149], and a stone slab from Rānigāt located near Buner, Pakistan dated to year eighty-five [137]. Wells, like pillar bases, were most likely donated to monastic complexes to accrue merit, but these are infrastructural rather than devotional and are therefore classified as architectural. The former well was dug by the son of Nṛbhatṛśarman and the exact location of this well is unknown but presumably excavated at a site in Gandhāra [136]. The latter well inscription was

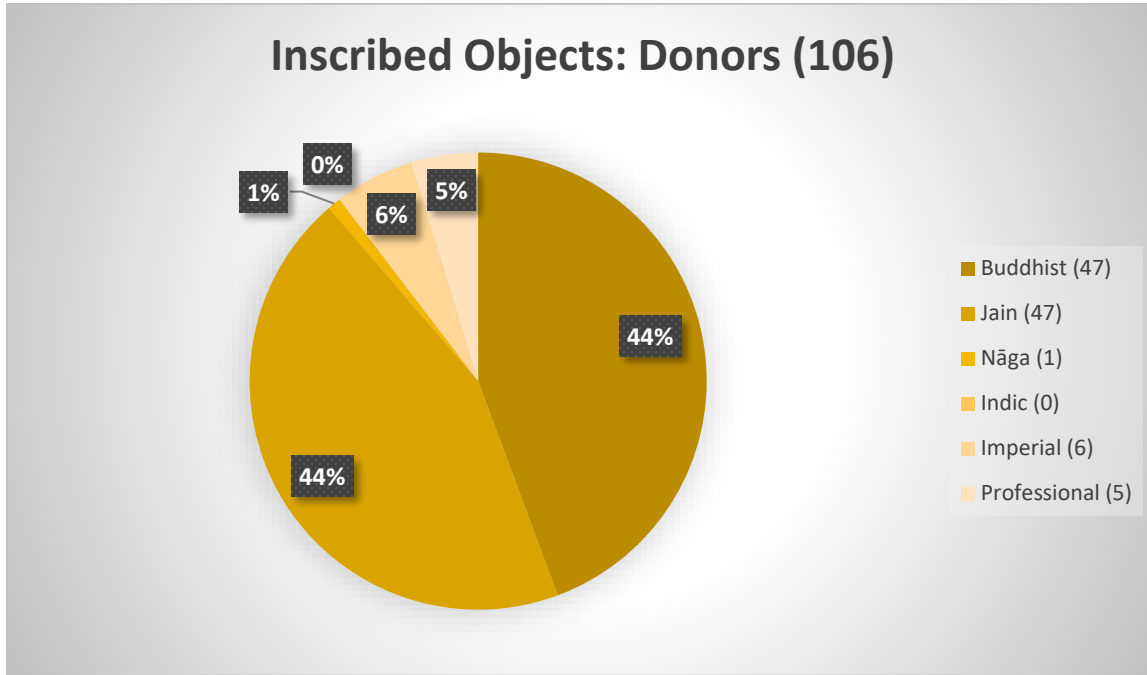
excavated by a cohort called the Aś[v]arakṣita companions (*sahayarehi aśarakṣitehi*), and the rock slab used to record this donation might have been found around Peshawar [149]. The stone slab from Rānigāt could have been either a paving stone or part of a lintel, and the inscription states that the largest share of the merit should be directed to Vāsudeva I (*[va]sudeva-maharaja-devaputraṣa agrabhaga-parihaṃśadae bhava[tu]*) (Odani 2000: 831-3).

The types of inscribed objects from this approximately thirty-year period shows that Jain donors continued to patronize monastics centers in both Mathurā and Ahichchhatra, and the artisans at Ahichchhatra introduced four-sided Jain images. Buddhist objects somewhat decline in the early third century CE, but the structure built at the Huviṣka vihāra demonstrates that Buddhists were still attracting a significant amount of donations. The single Nāga image and Indic Śivaliṅga show that these communities continued to receive donations, but not to the same extent as their neighboring religious communities. In Gandhāra, the donation of wells appears for the first time in the reign of Vāsudeva I, and donors will continue to sponsor these architectural improvements for the remainder of the Kuṣāṇa epigraphical corpus that concludes with the record of a well donation made in year (one hundred) forty-one of Kaniṣka III [189]. The next section will look more closely at the donors of these objects.

3.3.2. Donors of Inscribed Objects in the Reign of Vāsudeva I.

As seen with the two previous Kuṣāṇa rulers, Jains and Buddhists make up the largest segments of donors during the reign of Vāsudeva I. Among the twenty Jain objects forty-seven donors are mentioned. There are also forty-seven identifiable Buddhist donors extracted from the eight Buddhist images and the monastic and lay donors who sponsored a majority of the pillar bases. Four of the pillar bases were sponsored by two different imperial officials, with the Viśvasika Vakamīhīra donating three pillar bases along together his son Horamurṇḍaphara and

the Viśvasika Aśyala donating one. The remaining Nāga, imperial, and professional donors account for nine additional donors referred to in these sixty-five inscriptions. The totals in each class of donors is as follows (graph 12):



Among the forty-seven Buddhist donors there are thirty-two monastic figures and fifteen members of the lay community. One monk, Jivaka, who donated a pillar base, is identified as coming from Uḍḍyāna (*oḍḍyanaka*), which is most likely the Swat Valley where the Oḍi kings ruled in the time of Kujula Kadphises, and this inscription shows that monks travelled between monastic sites at this time [96]. Other monastic donors who donated pillar bases are also identified by their specialization, consisting of monks who studied the four-fold scripture (*caturvidyā*) [98], specialized in mediation (*prādhānika*) [108], recited the dharma (*dharmakathika*) [100 and 101], and preached (*bhāṣaṇaka*) [98]. This intra-monastic liturgical diversification indicates that by 204 CE Buddhist monastic sites had become more institutionalized. This point will be elaborated upon in the next chapter on imperial Buddhism. The lay donors mentioned in these pillar base inscriptions include a group of *saṅghaprakṛtas*

who donated a total of four pillar bases [110-13]. Lüders (1961: 84) translates *saṅghaprakṛta* as “Commissioners of the Community,” and suggests that they were lay members employed by the monastery in some capacity. This term does not occur in any other epigraphic or literary context, so the exact role these lay members served within the monastic setting is unclear (Silk 2008: 205). Balā, the daughter of the Lord of the Hitaka vihāra installed a Śākyamuni image in year seventy-five at the Caubārā site in Mathurā [95], and this donation parallels the donation made at Sonkh in Kaniṣka I’s twenty-third year by Puśyada(tā), who was also the daughter of a Lord of the vihāra [43]. These forty-seven monastic and lay donors represent the largest contingent of Buddhists actively sponsoring the production of inscribed objects in any period of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, supporting the idea that even though the total amount of images donated, eight, was rather small, Buddhist patrons were still very active in the reign of Vāsudeva I, but mainly concentrated their efforts at the Huviṣka vihāra.

There are also forty-seven Jains identified in these inscribed objects, representing the largest assemblage of donors from this religious community among any ruler in the Kuṣāṇa period. These forty-seven donors consist of nineteen monastics and twenty-eight lay members. In the inscriptions where the primary sponsor can be identified, all of the donors are women and there is also a noticeable upswing in female Āryas who requested these donations. How this fact relates to gender dynamics of this period is beyond the scope of this study and will be addressed after conducting further research, but it appears that in Vāsudeva I’s reign around the beginning of the third century CE women became the prominent donative force in the Jain community. Perhaps this was due to Jain men plying the northern and southern trade routes that converged at Mathurā.

Among the inscriptions composed at this time there are no donors who can be classified as Indic, mainly due to the missing donor's name of the of the Śivaliṅga. There is however one Nāga donor named Devila who installed a pillar base at Jamālpur [99]. In this inscription Devila is identified as the priest of the Dadhikarṇṇa shrine (*dadhikarṇṇa-devakulika*), which was most likely located at Jamālpur because an inscription dated to year (one hundred) twenty-six of Vāsiṣka records the donation made to the Nāga Lord Dadhikarṇṇa by a group of brothers at this site [185]. A headless statue of Dadhikarṇṇa was also found in the Yamuna river [253], indicating that this deity was an important figure in Mathurā in the beginning of the third century CE.

The six imperial donors mentioned in the inscriptions of this period are consistent with the five named in Huiṣka's reign (3.2.2) and nine identified in the reign of Kaniṣka I (3.1.2). Two Mahādaṇḍanāyakas governed during Vasudeva I's reign; Trivāhana who donated a Nāga image in year eighty [127] and Valāna whose name appears on a stone slab [94] dated to year seventy-four. As noted previously, Valāna might also be Ulāna, who is identified as a Viśvasika in undated inscription on the statue of a Śaka figure [260], indicating that he was both a Viśvasika and a Mahādaṇḍanāyaka. The Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Trivāhana donated his Nāga image along with the sons of the Account Keeper of the Treasury, Sulakṣaka, who I take to be an additional imperial official. The three remaining imperial donors are identified in the inscribed pillar bases. The first is the Viśvasika Vakamīhīra, who donated three pillar bases along with his son Horemurṇḍaphara [122-4]. Although Horemurṇḍaphara is not specifically mentioned as a Viśvasika, I have included him in the total number of imperial officers under the assumption that he would, most likely, be appointed to his father's position, similar to the hereditary succession between Kṣatrapas and Mahākṣatrapas. The sixth imperial figure is Aśyala, another Viśvasika who donated a pillar base [125].

The imperial officials referenced in inscriptions during Vāsudeva I’s rule reveal some insights into the administrative structure of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Both Vakamīhira and Aśyala are referred to as Viśvasikas in their pillar base inscriptions, suggesting that these officials governed simultaneously. It is unclear if they were both situated in Mathurā or administered different regions, and perhaps came to Mathurā to install a pillar base in the Huviṣka vihāra as an “official” obligation. If they both operated in Mathurā then at least two Viśvasikas were required to govern this city, and if they administered different regions then perhaps the Kuṣāṇa Empire was divided into districts with each governed by a Viśvasika. Furthermore, if Valāna and Ulāna are the same person, then it appears that a Viśvasika could be promoted to Mahādaṇḍanāyaka, indicating the administrative hierarchy in the Kuṣāṇa Empire. In fact, the two-line undated Ulāna inscription reads [1] *maha[daṇḍa]nā[yakasay] yamaṣa-* [2] *[heka]s[ya]* *[v]iś[v]a[saka]sya ulānāsyā paṭimā* [260] that Lüders (1937-8: 206) translates as “the image of the great general, the *yamaṣaheka*(?) (*and*?) *viśvasika*(?) Ulāna.” However, there is no “and” (*ca*) in the text, which would be expected to connect these three titles. An alternative reading could be, “the image of the Viśvasika Ulāna (the subordinate) of the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Yamaṣaheka,” with the genitive indicating possession in the sense of Ulāna being lower in rank than Yamaṣaheka. If the Viśvasika Ulāna is also the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Valāna, he would have taken over from his predecessor Yamaṣaheka around year seventy-four. Do to the uncertain association of names Ulāna and Valāna, this conclusion is not definitive, but plausible. What is certain from the epigraphic evidence is that there were at least two Viśvasika and two Mahādaṇḍanāyakas governing under Vāsudeva I.

The five professionals who sponsored images in the reign of Vāsudeva I is less than the eleven identified in Huviṣka’s rule, but this is most likely a result of the inscribed objects that

have survived rather than an indication of any economic downturn. All the professionals mentioned in these texts come from Jain donations. It is surprising that no inscribed pillar bases found at Jamālpur were donated by wealthy elites, but perhaps the *saṅghapraḳṛtas* included professionals and their individual occupations were not cited. Two Jain donors are identified as perfumers (*gandhikās*); Pu[?]vakhamī is referred to as a perfumer [131], and the perfumer Varuṇā is the father-in-law of the donor Mitrā [151]. Mitrā's father, whose name is missing, is a cloak maker, meaning a cloak maker's daughter married a perfumer's son. This union suggests that intermarriage between professional classes occurred among the Jain community in Mathurā. The other professionals mentioned are familiar from other texts, a *śreṣṭhin* named Riteka [141] and a goldsmith named Deva whose daughter donated a Vardhamāna image [146].

This broad spectrum of donors, especially those collaborating in the construction project at the Huviṣka vihāra, indicate that the Kuṣāṇa Empire remained prosperous during Vāsudeva I's reign. Within the Kuṣāṇa Empire, Jain and Buddhist monastic sites in Mathurā continued to receive a steady stream of patronage. The Mamane Dheri Buddha and the four-sided Jain image from Ahichchhatra show that artistic innovations took place throughout the Kuṣāṇa's territory during this period and not just at Mathurā. The lack of Bactrian inscriptions does stand out, and this might portend the events that transpired at the end of Vāsudeva I's rule, namely the emergence of the Sasanians in Iran and their subsequent annexation of Bactria in ca. 230 CE.

3.4. Conclusion.

The phase of imperial perpetuation is the best documented period of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, due in large part to the one hundred forty-five extant inscriptions that marked this period. This century of overall political stability and economic security provided by Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I facilitated donations to Buddhist, Jain, Nāga, and Indic communities. The

prosperous conditions experienced in this period also brought about large-scale construction projects, such as dedication of the Rabatak temple in Bactria at the commencement of Kaniṣka I's rule, repairs made at Surkh Kotal and Maṭ in Huviṣka's reign, and the structure built at the Huviṣka vihāra in Mathurā in year seventy-seven of Vāsudeva I. The wide array of donors identified in these inscriptions represent the donative sphere associated with monastics sites throughout the Kuṣāṇa Empire, with the Buddhist community being the most pervasive. The connection between different classes of donors and Buddhist religious centers, and the effect this had on the Kuṣāṇa's ability to rule their empire is the subject of the next chapter on imperial Buddhism.

Chapter 4: Imperial Buddhism

This chapter shifts perspective from constructing an imperial narrative to focusing on a single story articulated by a specific set of inscribed objects, namely the thirty pillar bases donated to the Huviṣka vihāra at Jamālpur in Mathurā in the year seventy-seven of Vāsudeva I, corresponding to 204 CE. The preceding three chapters set the imperial stage, surveyed the phase of imperial initiation, and analyzed inscribed objects and donors that marked the perpetuation the Kuṣāṇa Empire. The final phase of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, the narrative of imperial diminution, will be covered in the next part of this dissertation, but with the epigraphic evidence for the flourishing Kuṣāṇa century, which lasted from ca. 127-227 CE, firmly established we can now look more closely at a specific component of this empire: that being Buddhist monastic centers. Based on the information contained in these pillar base inscriptions and their architectural function, this chapter reconsiders the role of Buddhism within the Kuṣāṇa imperial setting, and argues that the orbit of donors circulating around monastic complexes, or vihāras, formed a Buddhist public in the Kuṣāṇa Empire.⁸⁹ This public, consisting of a heterogenous donative sphere of elites, enabled Buddhist vihāras to function as a fulcrum between the Kuṣāṇa rulers and those they ruled by facilitating interactions between political officials, social elite, and Buddhist monastics. Through a close examination of these thirty pillar bases this chapter intends to show how the interactions among donors operating within these disparate political, religious, and social fields ushered in, what is called here, imperial Buddhism.

Considering Buddhism not just as a religious force but as a key factor in the formation, and perpetuation, of the Kuṣāṇa Empire helps to clarify two related, and still unresolved,

⁸⁹ Jain monastic sites in Mathurā and Ahichchhatra and the Kuṣāṇa temples (*bagolagos*) in Bactria also attracted a diverse body of donors that might constitute a similar type of donative sphere, but, since both of these religious communities were confined to specific geographic locales, their influence was much more localized than Buddhist communities that spread throughout the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

questions about this period. The first question asks, “how did the Kuṣāṇas rule their expansive territory with such minimal evidence for an administrative structure?” The second question pertains to Buddhism, namely “why did Buddhism thrive during this period even though there is so little evidence for direct royal patronage?” By considering Buddhist vihāras not just as religious spaces but as a conduit between the Kuṣāṇas and elite donors we can address both questions. From the Kuṣāṇa perspective, they relied on their small cadre of officials and subordinated local powers to make donations on behalf of the Kuṣāṇas, and thereby interact this public to legitimize their rule. A public centered around Buddhist vihāras functioned as a flexible community through which the Kuṣāṇas could exert their influence, standing in for a structured military apparatus or centralized bureaucracy that served this purpose in the Roman and Later Han empires.⁹⁰ By simply providing conditions conducive to donative activity, such as political stability and economic security, the Kuṣāṇas employed this Buddhist public to exert their influence while even while not directly patronizing monastic centers. On the Buddhist side of this equation, the diffused donative sphere that constituted this public enabled these sites to thrive without direct royal patronage, since professionals, officials, and monastics were all participants. Furthermore, the location of these vihāras at urban centers and along trade routes created a religious network wherein each monastic institution replicated a public accessible, and amenable, to the Kuṣāṇas. And, lest we not forget, the dating formulas in almost all Buddhist inscriptions cited the name of the Kuṣāṇa ruler, his year of rule, and list of royal epithets, thereby reinforcing the Kuṣāṇa’s imperial status.

Imperial Buddhism, as defined in this chapter, refers specifically to the role Buddhism served in correlating the disparate conglomerate of donative groups into an imbricated public. In

⁹⁰ A detailed comparison between the Kuṣāṇa, Roman, and Later Han empires is the subject of chapter six.

the context of Buddhist history, imperial Buddhism would fall into the “middle” or “traditional” period, loosely defined as lasting from the second century BCE to the sixth century CE.⁹¹ In this study the limits of imperial Buddhism are confined to the duration of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, ca. the mid-first to mid-fourth centuries CE, a time when it is believed the canonization of Buddhist texts was underway and monasteries were becoming an established part of Buddhism.

In laying out the features of the imperial Buddhism, this chapter will first discuss what is meant by a public and how it functioned in the imperial and Buddhist setting. Next, the thirty inscribed pillar bases found at the Huviṣka vihāra in Mathurā will be consulted to show how a Buddhist public operated at this site and how this set of inscriptions demonstrate the institutionalization of Buddhism that occurred this period. A major feature of imperial Buddhism, and one that sets this phase apart from earlier periods, is the institutionalization of monastic complexes resulting from the specialization of monastic duties and the reconfiguration of monastic space to accommodate donors and their donations. The final sections of this chapter expands beyond pillar bases in Mathurā and examines Buddhist texts transmitted to China and archaeological evidence in Gandhāra that attest to the institutionalization of monastic complexes during the phase of imperial Buddhism. In this story centered on the inscribed pillar bases found at the Huviṣka vihāra and donated in the reign of his successor Vāsudeva I, this chapter argues that Buddhism played an essential role in perpetuating the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

⁹¹ Periodization that demarcates clear cut temporal boundaries is always problematic, and the history of Buddhism is not immune to this problem. The paucity of evidence for Buddhist history, namely, precise dates for texts and formative events, combined with a lack of archaeological evidence has led to many differing opinions to what constitutes middle Buddhism. Steven Collins (1998: 53-4) takes the reign of Aśoka, 268-239 BCE, as the demarcation point between early and traditional Buddhism. This transition is based in large part on the advent of writing found in Aśoka’s inscriptions and the archaeological evidence from northwest India dateable to the post-Aśokan period. For scholars of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the middle period corresponds to the first through fifth centuries CE when Mahāyāna texts and practices gradually took shape. However, the process of when, where, and how Mahāyāna developed is still open for debate (Schopen 2000: 1-2).

4.1. The Formation of a Buddhist Public.

The conception of a Buddhist public described in this chapter originated from two astute insights. The first was made by Gérard Fussman, whose recent survey Buddhist monastic sites from Nagarāhāra, near modern day Jalalabad, to Termez on the Amu Darya shows, almost without exception, that these sites were neither founded during the apex of Kuṣāṇa power in the reigns of Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I nor directly patronized by these Kuṣāṇa rulers (2015: 153-202). Instead of royal patronage, he attributes the construction and support of these Buddhist sites to “local converts, sometimes grouped into companionships (*sahayara*), peasants, landlords, and petty officials...” (Fussman 2015: 197). It is this conglomerate of donors identified by Fussman that closely resembles a public, and prompted my investigation of donative spheres associated with Buddhist monastic centers in other regions of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. The second comes from Christian Novetzke (2007, 2016), who applies Jürgen Habermas’ (1989: 36-7) theory of a public sphere built around “social intercourse” using “rational communication” by the commodification of information that emerged in eighteenth-century Europe to thirteenth century Maharashtra when the concomitant forces of bhakti practices and vernacular literature formed a public of reception intimated to everyday, or quotidian, affairs. Habermas (1989: xvii) explicitly states, “we conceive bourgeois public sphere as a category that is typical of an epoch. It cannot be abstracted from the unique developmental history of that “civil society” (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*) originating in the European High Middle Ages; nor can it be transferred, ideal-typically generalized, to any number of historical situations that represent formally similar constellations.” Novetzke (2016: 30) challenges this assumption by asserting, “to confine the idea of a public sphere to such a provincial realm would needlessly diminish its interest and power. Features of the concept, as Habermas identifies it, are apparent

in other places and in much earlier times.” The observation that features of a public could be extracted and applied to other contexts argued for by Novetzke opened the possibility of applying this concept to the early centuries of the Common Era when Buddhist monastic sites, supported by a host of donors, prospered during the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

Associating an eighteenth-century European bourgeoisie reading a newspaper in cafe with a Buddhist dharma-preacher donating a pillar base to a vihāra in Mathurā in the third century CE is filtered through Novetzke’s most recent work *The Quotidian Revolution* (2016). In this, Novetzke takes Habermas’ most distilled description of a modern public sphere, “a society critically engaged in a public debate,” and applies this concept to the pre-modern Maharashtrian landscape (Habermas 1989: 52; Novetzke 2016: 3, 28). The nascent public sphere that Novetzke identifies is based on three constituents: vernacularization, bhakti, and the quotidian. The process of vernacularization began in South Asia around the turn of the second millennium when “local language for the first time came to be written down for documentary purposes, and when it was first textualized for the workly tasks – the task of culture done by literature and the task of power done by political discourse” (Pollock 2006: 283). Marathi, the local language of Maharashtra, as Novetzke argues did not emerge in the halls of power surrounding the Yadava court, but rather in the arena of religion, with the composition of Chakradhar’s *Līlācarita* and Jnandev’s *Jñāneśvarī*. Both texts used Marathi as an instrument to engage with a receptive audience that had coalesced into a bhakti public, one that consists of a myriad of devotional practices and beliefs circulating in South Asia on the periphery of Brahmanical orthodoxy (Novetzke 2007: 261; 2016: 20-1).⁹² Bhakti, which wrested the cosmic from Brahmanical and Sanskrit monopolization, and Marathi,

⁹² Bhakti, commonly glossed as devotion, has a long history in South Asia, perhaps stretching as far back as the Vedic period, and hence cannot be covered here in any detail. For a concise overview of bhakti see the entry for *bhakti* in the *Encyclopedia of World Religions* (Novetzke 2006: 127-8), and for a more comprehensive history of bhakti and its influence on Indian religious traditions see Hawley 2015.

which spoke to social and soteriological concerns not confined to the Yadava court, intersected at a space Novetzke refers to as the quotidian. Everyday life, social inequalities, and the relationship with the divine embodied the topics addressed in the *Līlācarita* and *Jñāneśvarī*, and the bodies that received these messages in their local vernacular, composed this public (Novetzke 2016: 13).

My concept of a Buddhist public differs somewhat from the social, political, and religious forces that shaped thirteenth century Maharashtra. Whereas vernacular texts gave a voice to this nascent public sphere, since there is no evidence for what types of conversations took place between donors in the monastic settings during the Kuṣāṇa period, labeling this a public sphere might be a reach. However, the inscribed pillar bases found at the Huviṣka vihāra do denote a public comprised of a donative sphere, and whether these elites rationally debated political affairs, animatedly discussed their daily lives, or reverently listened to the Buddhist Dharma, they did interact. This interaction, situated in a common setting and engaged in a common pursuit of making donations is what demarcates a Buddhist public that emerged in the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Another difference is the areas in which these publics coalesced. The trajectory of the quotidian revolution that occurred in pre-modern Maharashtra had a centrifugal orientation, circulating on the margins of the Brahmanical ecumene and Yadava court. A Buddhist public, on the other hand, exerted a centripetal force, drawing the constellation of religious, economic, and imperial elites into the orbit of monastic sites. Because a Buddhist public was comprised of elite donors, in some ways this early historic public returns full circle to Habermas' conception of a public sphere inhabited by eighteenth-century bourgeoisie.

Inscriptions composed in the Kuṣāṇa Empire also share another dimension with the worlds discussed by Habermas and Novetzke, namely an innovation. Innovation and rupture are

two sides of the same coin of historical change, and the causes and consequences of these historical moments should prompt further examination. For Habermas, print media innovated the dissemination of knowledge and brought about a public sphere that could advocate for the protection of their basic rights in a liberal democracy (1989: 38, 83-5). Similarly, texts composed in vernaculars innovated modes of communication that resonated with a receptive, and ordinary, audience (Novetzke 2016: 34). In the Kuṣāṇa period the production of religious images and the standardization of inscriptions innovated donative practices. When a donor installed an image in a monastery they would most likely be granted access to see this object, and therefore be incorporated into this religious space. Buddhist inscriptions engraved on the object's pedestal typically adhered the standard formula that included not only the donor's name but also a list of beneficiaries, and most importantly the name, year, and royal epithets of the Kuṣāṇa ruler. Donations connected the donative sphere with monastic sites, and these linkages could be utilized by the Kuṣāṇas to exert their influence. The structure built at the Huviṣka vihāra in year seventy-seven serves as a valuable case study for examining how a Buddhist public operated within the field of empire because it is one of the few instances where the Kuṣāṇas were associated with a monastic complex. Furthermore, there is sufficient epigraphic evidence from this site to allow for an investigation into the institutionalization of Buddhism transpiring in this period of imperial perpetuation.

4.2. The Huviṣka Vihāra at Jamālpur.

The Buddhist site of Jamālpur is located in the southern section of Mathurā near what is now the Government Museum in the Dampier Park neighborhood. The Jamālpur mounds were first discovered in 1860 when building a new courthouse for the local British Magistrate and Collector, and were excavated by Alexander Cunningham in 1860, 1862-5, and 1871-2, with

continued excavations carried out by Bradford Harding, the Magistrate of Mathurā, and Frederic Growse up to 1877-8. In 1878, the entire site was leveled as a famine relief measure and no official reports of the excavations have been published, leaving the inscribed objects as the only record of this vihāra (Lüders 1961: 57). Over these seventeen years of archaeological activity this site yielded forty-six inscribed objects, making it the second most epigraphically productive site in Mathurā after the Jain monastic complex of Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā. Among the forty-six objects found at this site, thirty are pillar bases, and the remaining sixteen objects consist of six Buddhist images, five railing pillars, four donative stone slabs, and one miniature stupa. The earliest inscribed object is a stone slab that recorded the donation made by the treasurer of the Mahākṣatrapa Śoḍāsa in the first century CE, and the latest are a stone slab commemorating the donation of a cooking stone and an image of the Buddha datable to the Gupta period.⁹³ This long period of donative activity demonstrates that the monastic center at Jamālpur existed from at least the first century CE to the fifth or sixth centuries CE. However, it is during the Kuṣāṇa period that donations made to this monastic site reached their apex.

The earliest inscribed object from the Kuṣāṇa period found at Jamālpur is an image of a seated Buddha datable to the reign of Kaniṣka I, and the inscription records a list of donor's names with a partial dating formula containing only the ruler's name and his epithets but the date missing [233]. For dated inscribed objects from Jamālpur, the earliest example is an image of the Śākyamuni Buddha donated in year fifty-one of Huviṣka (=178 CE) by the monk

⁹³ All of the inscribed objects found at Jamālpur have been transcribed and translated by Lüders (1961:60-105). The thirty pillar bases will be discussed and cited later in this chapter and the other objects are as follows: six Buddhist images (two undated Buddha images [233 and 236], an undated Buddha from the reign of Kaniṣka I [10], a Śākyamuni Buddha dated year fifty-one of Huviṣka [77], a seated Buddha dated year twenty-eight of Vāsiṣka [187], and a standing Buddha from the Gupta period [Lüders 1961: 103, §67]); five railing pillars [234, 235, 238, 239, and 240]; four stone slabs (one from the Kṣatrapa period [Lüders 1961: 99-100, §64], the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Vālana's slab dated year seventy-four of Vāsudeva I [94], the Nāga Dadhikarṇṇa slab dated year twenty-six of Vāsiṣka [185], and a slab from the Gupta period [Lüders 1961: 100-1, §65]); and one miniature stūpa [237].



Fig. 17: Śākyamuni Buddha year 51
Photo: AIIS

Buddhavarma [77]. Both the visual and textual features of this object are significant to the history of this Buddhist complex. Visually, the image of the standing Buddha is flanked by a worshiper kneeling at the Buddha's

right carved in the round rather than in relief. Within the corpus of Buddhist images donated during the Kuṣāṇa period, both inscribed and uninscribed, very few depict worshipers in the same sculptural field as the Buddha, with most relegating worshipers to the pedestal scene, and this exception points to the elevated status of the donor. Additionally, the figure wears a knee-length tunic, reminiscent of nomadic attire, and sandals that further suggests that this figure had a high social standing (Basu 2006: 161-5).

In addition to the notable visual components of this object, the information found in this inscription marks the importance of this site to both the history of Mathurā and also in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic record. First, in regards to the relevance of the monastic complex at Jamālpur, this text concludes by stating the image was installed “in the vihāra of the Great King, the Devaputra” (*mahārāja-d[e](v)a(putra-v)ihāre*) [77], presumably a reference to Huviṣka who is named in the dating formula. This is one of few examples of a Kuṣāṇa ruler being directly

associated with Buddhist monastic complex in Mathurā.⁹⁴ Also, the inscription explicitly states that this is an image of Śākyamuni Buddha, and it is around this period in Huiṣka’s reign that Buddhist images shift from being labeled bodhisattvas to using the term Śākyamuni, the Buddha, and other appellations.⁹⁵ Another first in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus is the terminology used in Buddhavarma’s benediction that states “through the bestowal of this pious gift let there be attainment of nirvāṇa by the teacher Saghadāsa (*d[e]yadharmā-parityāgen[a] upadhy[ā]yasya saghadāsasya [n]irvā[n]ā[vā]ptaye=[s]t[u]*) (Lüders 1961: 64). This is the first occurrence of the term *deyadharmā*, “pious gift,” in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions from Mathurā as well as of a benediction directed towards the attainment of nirvāṇa.⁹⁶ Buddhavarma’s donation of an image in Kuṣāṇa year fifty-one provides a date for when the monastic center at Jamālpur became associated with Huiṣka, and the depiction of the worshiper in the same sculptural plane as the Buddha along with the innovated phrase in the inscription makes this donation, and the monastic site itself, stand out in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic record.

The Huiṣka vihāra at Jamālpur continued to receive donations up to the reign of Vāsiṣka, with the latest inscribed object, a seated Buddha [187], dated to the Kuṣāṇa year (one

⁹⁴ The only other direct evidence for a vihāra attributed to a Kuṣāṇa ruler is Kaniṣka I’s vihāra mentioned in the Kaniṣka casket inscription [47] found at the Shah-ji-ki-Dheri in Peshawar (Errington and Falk 2002).

⁹⁵ Härtel (1985: 659-62) notes that the appellations of free standing Kapardin style Buddhas produced after the year forty-five [66] shifts from referring to the image as a bodhisattva to Śākyamuni, and is followed by other designations for the Buddha, i.e. *Buddha-pratimā*, before appellations of these images cease to be included in inscriptions.

⁹⁶ For more on the term *deyadharmā* see Bhattacharya 1987: 39-60, 44. In fact, the use of term *deyadharmā* and the phrase *deyadharmā-parityāgena* deserves its own story within this imperial narrative, but will have to wait to be told until this current project is complete. The earliest use of this phrase in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus occurs on the Kaniṣka Casket presumably donated in the reign of Huiṣka [47]. After this image donated in year fifty-one, a Jain image dated to year sixty contains the word *danadharmā*, which has the same semantic meaning as *deyadharmā* [85]. Two pillar bases dated donated in the year seventy-seven contain the phrase *deyadharmā-parityāgena* [108 and 122]. The remaining usages of these, and related, terms in chronological order are: the Mamane Dheri stele, year eighty-nine (*deyadharmā*) [142], a Bodhisattva image, year (one hundred) four (*deyadharmā-parityāgena*) [154], the Zeda well inscription, year (one hundred) eleven (*danamukho*) [165], a Buddha image, year (one hundred) twenty-eight (*deyadharmā-pāri[tyāgena]*) [186], the Kham Zarkar Panel, year seventy-four or (one hundred) seventy-four (*danamukhe*) [207], and an undated seated Bodhisattva (*deyadharmā*) [213].

hundred) twenty-eight (=255 CE) in his reign. Two years prior, in year (one hundred) twenty-six, a stone slab found at Jamālpur was donated to the Nāga Lord Dadhikarṇṇa by the Cāndaka brothers, the sons of the actors of Mathurā [185]. Devila, the purveyor of this shrine, donated one of the thirty pillar bases in year seventy-seven [99] and these two inscriptions demonstrates that this Nāga shrine was located in or around this Buddhist monastic complex at Jamālpur. For the Kuṣāṇa period, these two objects represent the final epigraphic evidence for this site, but the two Gupta period objects show that Jamālpur continued to function as a prominent Buddhist site in Mathurā even after the decline of this empire. What is of primary concern for this chapter are the thirty pillar bases and their donors, who constituted a Buddhist public orbiting around this monastic center during in year seventy-seven (=204 CE) in the reign of Vāsudeva I.

4.2.1. The Thirty Jamālpur Pillar Bases.

In section 3.3.2 in the previous chapter the pillar base inscriptions composed in the reign of Vāsudeva I were briefly discussed, and these can now be analyzed in more detail. The first pertinent piece of information provided in these inscriptions comes from the pillar base donated by the monk Jivaka, stating that this object was donated “in the Huviṣka vihāra” (*hūv[i]ṣkasya v[i]hāre*) [96]. This inscription presumably confirms that the pillar bases belong to the Huviṣka vihāra, but there is still the issue of only ten of the thirty pillar bases being dated, meaning that the twenty with missing dates could have been donated at another time.⁹⁷ Fortunately, there is some evidence to suggest that all these objects were donated together. First, the text of an undated pillar base donated by the monk Buddhādāsa [107] begins *ku 2*, which is presumably an abbreviation for *kumbhaka* “pillar base” followed by the number of the pillar base donated within the set. There are two other numbered pillar bases, twenty-five [96] and thirty-seven

⁹⁷ For the dates of these pillar bases see table 2 given below.

[102], indicating that at least thirty-seven pillar bases were donated at this time, and it would seem likely that the undated and unnumbered pillar bases were part of this series. Second, the text on an undated pillar base donated by Buddharakṣ(i)ta [106] identifies him as a resident of Vojyavaśika, and in two other dated pillar base inscriptions the donors are similarly identified by



their place of origin, the monk Jivaka from Odiyāna [96] and the monk Buddharakṣita from Vaṇdakṣa [104 and 105] respectively. The pattern of mentioning the donor’s provenance shared among these three monks, and their presumably non-Mathurā origins, suggests that there was some connection between these donors and the objects they donated. Third, five separate pillar bases were donated by two monks [108, 114, 115, 116, and 118], and co-donations of a single object are not very common among the overall corpus of inscriptions found at

Mathurā. Since the structure being built required numerous pillar bases it seems plausible that these monks shared the cost of these donations. Fourth, the five pillar bases donated by the “Commissioners of the Community” (*saṅghaprakṛtas*) [109-13] were most likely donated as a set. The same can be said about the three pillar bases sponsored by the Viśvasika Vakamīhira

and his son [122-4], and their three donations contain the same version of a text with minor orthographic variants. Since the seventy-seventh Kuṣāṇa year seems to be a moment of concentrated donative activity, it is probable that these pillar bases were all part of this collaborative enterprise. Although none of this evidence definitively proves that the twenty undated pillar bases were donated in year seventy-seven, there is strong possibility that this was the case.⁹⁸

What makes the pillar bases donated at Jamālpur unique, and valuable in telling the story of imperial Buddhism, is that at no other point in the Kuṣāṇa period do we see such a concentration of donative activity around a single site at a specific time. Furthermore, since no systematic excavations of this, or any other monastic site, were conducted in Mathurā, these pillar bases provide a rare glimpse into how these religious spaces were structured and who were active in their construction. It would be a little too ambitious to use the Huvīṣka vihāra as a model for other monastic sites in Mathurā, especially because of its imperial association, but the features of a Buddhist public consisting of a donative sphere and the characteristics of monastic institutionalization expressed in these pillar base inscriptions are, on some level, applicable to other Buddhist complexes in the urban setting of Mathurā.

In the case of the donative sphere at Jamālpur, the donors who collaborated to fund this project consisted of monks, a Nāga priest, a cadre of lay followers, and two Kuṣāṇa officials. The people involved in carrying out this construction project, however, were not limited to the donors who sponsored the pillar bases but required an untold number of skilled laborers and a vast amount of resources. Harnessing all of these ancillary components, human and material,

⁹⁸ There might be common stylistic features that further suggests that these pillar bases were donated all together at one time, but I was unable to view the pillar bases held in the archive of the Indian Museum in Kolkata to compare them with those I viewed in the Government Museum in Mathurā.

points to a coordinated effort between those directly associated with the monastery, that is, the monks, lay followers, and imperial officials, and the surrounding community of artisans and laborers who may or may not have been Buddhists.⁹⁹

These types of large scale construction projects are indicative of empire, in facilitating a prosperous environment to fund these project, and institutionalization, in organizing the internal and external components needed to complete such an undertaking. It is this confluence of empire and institutions that constitutes imperial Buddhism. The political stability and economic prosperity provided by the Kuṣāṇa Empire underwrote the initiation of this project, but the institutionalization of monastic centers enabled it to come to fruition.

The inscribed pillar bases reflect two features of institutions coalescing at monastic centers during the Kuṣāṇa period in Mathurā. The first pertains to the monks who donated these objects that demonstrate the internal institutionalization of monasteries. On many pillar bases the monastic donors included a personal designation in their donative texts, either their liturgical specialization or place of origin. Including monastic duties and a donor's provenance is not unique to this monastery; for example, the monk Bala and nun Buddhāmitrā who sponsored the Bodhisattvas in the third Kuṣāṇa year both held the title of "one who knows the Tripiṭaka" (*trepīṭaka*) and the brothers who donated two pillar bases at their own vihāra at Toyī (somewhere in Mathurā) in year thirty-three stated they came from Taxila (*takhaśīlāka*). However, at no other point in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic record were monastic specializations or places of origin cited with such consistency as happened at the Huviṣka vihāra. The information provided in these inscriptions suggest that by the Kuṣāṇa year seventy-seven (=204 CE) Buddhist monastic

⁹⁹ As noted in section 3.3.1, the fact that there are only eight Buddhist donations made during the reign of Vāsudeva I might have been caused by this concentration of activity at the Huviṣka vihāra.

communities had assigned monks with specific tasks and had formed networks among monastic sites throughout the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

The second characteristic of institutionalization pertains to the architectural reconfiguration of monastic sites displayed by the function of pillar bases. It is still unclear exactly what structure these at least thirty-seven pillar bases supported; however, we can eliminate stūpas, caityas, or monastic cells, since none of these required pillars. The pillars that were intended to be placed on these bases indicates some type of roofed enclosure that created an open space for people to congregate. The exact function of this open space and who congregated there is unclear, perhaps a prayer hall for the monks or a more publicly oriented space for the laity to hear the dharma, but in either case the construction of this enclosure demarcates an innovation to this monastic complex not apparent at other sites in Mathurā. Although the exact layout of the Huviṣka vihāra will never be known, judging by the function of these pillar bases it appears that there must have been a large open space alongside the typical features of Buddhist monastic complexes consisting of cells to house the monks, stūpas for public worship, and niches to display religious images.

The next section will look more closely at the donors of these pillar bases in order to assess the composition of the donative sphere associated with this site. After establishing who these donors were, the remainder of this chapter will turn to external literary and archaeological evidence to assist in evaluating the monastic institutionalization that occurred in the Huviṣka vihāra and typified imperial Buddhism.

4.2.2. The Donors of the Thirty Pillar Bases.

The donors involved in sponsoring the pillar bases used in the construction project undertaken at the Huviṣka vihāra in year seventy-seven comprise nineteen monks, a cadre of at

least nine lay members called “Commissioners of the Community” (*saṅghaprakṛtas*),¹⁰⁰ a Nāga priest, and two officials who held the title of Viśvasika. Along with the nineteen primary monastic donors, an additional three monks are mentioned in the capacity of either a co-resident or a teacher, while the Viśvasika Vakamīhira made his donation in conjunction with his son Horamurṇḍaphara, bringing the total number of participants in the construction project to thirty-five. As a collective, these donors represent a good cross-section of the donors who formed a Buddhist public associated with this site. The following table (2) lists all the primary donors, their affiliation, titles, the beneficiaries of the donation, and the date when available:

Donor [corpus #]	Affiliation	Title	Beneficiary	Date
Jivaka [96]	Monk	From Odiyāna (<i>odiyānaka</i>)	For the happiness and welfare of all beings; to the community of the four quarters (<i>saṅgha cāturdiśa</i>)	Year 77, summer month 4, day 4: pillar base #25
(name lost) [97]	Monk			Year 77, summer month 4, day 20
Buddhiśreṣṭha [98]	Monk	Who knows the four-fold scripture (<i>cāturvidya</i>) and a preacher (<i>bhaṣaṇaka</i>)	To the community of the four quarters (<i>saṅgha cāturdiśa</i>)	Year 77, summer month 4, day 25
Devila [99]	Nāga	Priest of the Nāga Shrine (<i>devakulika</i>)		Year 77, summer month 4, day 29
Dharmadata [100 and 101]	Monk	Dharma-reciter (<i>dharma-kathika</i>)	[100] For the happiness and welfare of all beings; to the community of the four quarters (<i>saṅgha cāturdiśa</i>)	[100] Year 77, rainy month [1], day 5

¹⁰⁰ The four pillar base inscriptions donated by the *saṅghaprakṛtas* identify two heads of this collective, Bhadrāghoṣa and Bhadila, and one pillar base [109] contains a list of at least seven partially preserved names of other members of the commission.

Datta [102 and 103]	Monk		[103] To the community of the four quarters (<i>saṅgha cāturdiśa</i>)	[102] Year 77, rainy month 1, day 11: pillar base #37
Buddharakṣita [104 and 105]	Monk	From Vaṇḍakṣa (<i>vaḍakṣa</i> [104]/ <i>vaṇḍakṣa</i> [105])	To the community of the four quarters (<i>saṅgha cāturdiśa</i>)	[104] Year 77, month unknown, day 20
Buddharakṣ(i)ita [106]	Monk:	From Voṅyavasika	For the honor of (his) deceased parents; for the reward of health of the co-resident Dharmadeva	Undated
Buddhadāsa [107]	Monk		[With his] co-resident Saṅghamitra	Undated: pillar base #2
Śurīya and Buddharakṣita [108]	Monks	Meditation Practitioners (<i>prāhaṇika</i>)	For the reward of health for all the meditation practitioners	Undated
Bhadraghoṣa [109, 110, and 111]	Lay	Head of the Commissioners of the Community (<i>saṅghaprakṛta</i>)	[With] Saṅghadāsa, Buddhānānda, Saṅghadeva, Saṅgha-x, Dharmapriya, Saṅghamitra, x-pri-x	Undated
Bhadila [112 and 113]	Lay	Head of the Commissioners of the Community (<i>saṅghaprakṛta</i>)	[112] For the happiness and welfare of all beings	Undated
Bhadra and Bhadraghoṣa [114 and 115]	Monks			Undated
Saṅghavarma and Vṛddha [116]	Monks			Undated
Saṅghadeva [117]	Monk	Pupil of Vākuḍa		Undated
Budhaghoṣa and Phalaphala [118]	Monks			Undated
Phalaphala [119]	Monk			Undated
Buddhamitra [120]	Monk			Undated
(name lost) [121]	Monk	Elder of the Saṅgha (<i>saṅgha-sthavirya</i>)		Undated

Vakamīhīra and his son Horamurṇḍaphara [122, 123, and 124]	Imperial	Viśvasika	May the sovereignty be unshaken (<i>acalamaiśvaryaṃ bhavatu</i>)	Undated
Aśyala [125]	Imperial	Viśvasika	[With his] wife and son	Undated

Monks make up the largest body of donors, which is not surprising, as Gregory Schopen has pointed out on many occasions that monks and nuns were active donors (1997: 5-6; 30-2; 62-5). However, the significance of these monastic donors to this particular discussion of imperial Buddhism lies in their designations. In regard to their places of origin, as noted above three monks appear to have come from areas outside of Mathurā: Jivaka [96] stated he came from Oḍḍiyānaka (presumably Uḍḍiyāna in the Swat valley in Pakistan), Buddharakṣita [104 and 105] from Vaṇḍakṣa (maybe Badakhshan or Balkh), and Buddharakṣ(i)ta [106] from Vojyavaśika. Other than Jivika, it is not exactly clear where the other two monks came from, but if Lüders' (1961: 77) association of Vaṇḍakṣa with Badakhshan or Balkh is correct then at least two of these donors were from the far northwest; but, the toponym Vojyavaśika remains enigmatic. This would suggest that Buddhist religious networks extended throughout the Kuṣāṇa Empire and monks traveled between, or even settled at, monastic sites located throughout these far-ranging locations. A community of monastics from different regions within the Kuṣāṇa Empire present at Jamālpur might help to explain why the phrase “in the community of the four quarters” (*saṅghe cāturdiśe*) appears so prominently in these inscriptions. Perhaps this term does not just refer to the monastics inhabiting the Huviṣka vihāra or those living in and around Mathurā, but in fact speaks to the entire monastic community spanning northern India, greater Gandhāra, and Bactria. Interestingly, the only other occurrence of this term in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus is found in the inscription on one of the two pillar bases dated to year thirty-three of Huviṣka's rule

that were donated by the brothers from Taxila [59]. This correlation between the donors of pillar bases not native to Mathurā who explicitly mention their place of origin and reference the entire monastic community suggests that some type of larger Buddhist network did exist, and if, as has been argued, each monastic site had its own associated public, then the Kuṣāṇas could utilize these religious sites to propagate their authority.

In addition to identifying an individual monk's provenance, four monks who donated pillar bases stated their specific liturgical specialization. Although four out of the thirty monastic donors represent a rather small ratio of specialists, the fact that all these monks were associated with a single monastic site suggests that the Huviṣka vihāra had developed a high degree of internal institutionalization. At Jamālpur the monks and their specializations are as follows: Buddhiśreṣṭha [98] is a knower of the four-fold scripture (*cāturvedin*) and a preacher (*bhaṣanaka*, Skt *bhāṇaka*), Dharmadata [100 and 101] is a dharma reciter (*dharmakathika*), Śurīya and Buddharakṣita [108] are meditation practitioners (*prāhanika*, Skt *prādhānika*), and a monk whose name is lost is identified as an elder of the community [121] (*saṅghasthavirya*, Skt *saṅghasthāvira*). Among the duties performed by these monks Buddhiśreṣṭha and Dharmadata were both engaged in reciting and preaching the Dharma, and could have performed this task in the structure which these pillar bases supported. Buddhiśreṣṭha also knew the four-fold scriptures, a designation that will be discussed below in connection with monastic specialists mentioned in the *Ugraparipṛcchā-sūtra*. Also present at Jamālpur were the meditation practitioners Śurīya and Buddharakṣita, and this designation suggests that monks engaged in ascetic disciplines were also part of the monastic setting at Jamālpur. The distinction between domesticated monks and forest-dwelling ascetics is the main topic of *Raṣṭrapālapṛcchā-sūtra*, also discussed in the next section. Finally, the fact that one monk had attained the title of the

elder of the community indicates a hierarchical arrangement of the monks living within the confines of the monastery.

The second set of donors who sponsored the production of these pillar bases includes a group of presumably lay members, “the Commissioners of the Community” (*saṅghaprakṛta*). The meaning of the term *saṅghaprakṛta* is unclear. As noted previously, Lüders (1961: 84) provides a literal translation, “employed by the Saṅgha,” and suggests “they would therefore seem to have been a body of laymen who were charged by the Buddhist monks with the support of the monastery.” Since this term, as noted by Jonathan Silk (2008: 205), has no literary or epigraphic parallels, determining whether this group was composed of lay followers or monks, and what exactly they did, is difficult to determine with any precision. Because this term only occurs in this set of pillar bases and in the context of the Huiṣka vihāra, it might be the case that this cadre of commissioners were organized solely for carrying out this particular construction project. This would make some sense in view of the logistics required to carry out this project included not only petitioning donors to sponsor these pillar bases but also organizing laborers to hew these bases, quarry the pillars, and attach a roof to this structure. Upon completing this project this group might have disbanded, and its members returned to their normal lay or monastic life. If in fact the *saṅghaprakṛta* was composed primarily of lay followers, then this might also explain why there are no professions cited for the donors in the pillar base inscription. Seen in this way, the *saṅghaprakṛta* could very well have consisted of the merchants, guild leaders, caravan leaders, and cloak makers who made donations to other sites throughout the Kuṣāṇa period, but rather than mentioning their individual occupations they were incorporated into the collective responsible for coordinating the money, materials, and men need to build this structure.

Devila, the priest (*devakulika*) of the Nāga Dadhikarṇṇa shrine, is also a fascinating addition to the public associated with this monastic site [99]. The relationship between the Nāga cult and Buddhism goes back to the Buddha’s *parinirvāṇa*, when the Nāgas obtained a portion of the Buddha’s relics (Strong 1983: 111-4). The existence of a Nāga shrine either inside or in the vicinity of the Huviṣka vihāra is evident, as noted above, by the Cāndaka brothers’ stone slab inscription dedicated to Dadhikarṇṇa found at Jamālpur [185], and the date (one hundred) twenty-six in this text suggests that this close relationship persisted at least through Vāsiṣka’s rule.

The final donors are two imperial agents, the Viśvasikas Vakamīhīra [122-4] and Aśyala [125]. Their role within the Kuṣāṇa administrative hierarchy is uncertain, and as discussed in the last chapter (3.3.2) these two officials presumably governed simultaneously, either in Mathurā or in other regions of the empire, and came to Mathurā to sponsor these four pillar bases. The Viśvasika Vakamīhīra donated three pillar bases together with his son Horamurṇḍaphara, and each pillar base directed the reward of the gift to presumably Vāsudeva I, stating “by the donation of this pious gift let the sovereignty be unshaken (*deyadharmā-parityāgena acalamaiśvaryaṃ bhavatu*).”¹⁰¹

By sponsoring these pillar bases, Vakamīhīra and Aśyala served as a bridge between the Kuṣāṇas and the monastery, and interacted, at least on a donative level, with the monks inhabiting this site and the commissioners of the Community. It is this triangulation between Kuṣāṇa officials, social elites, and religious figures that enabled monastic centers to function as the fulcrum between political, social, and religious fields. Even if Vāsudeva I neither personally

¹⁰¹ The use of the term *deyadharmā-parityāgena* parallels the usage in the inscription on Buddhavarma’s Śākyamuni image dated to year fifty-one [77].

visited the vihāra named after his predecessor nor had any role in the construction of this structure, the names of the officials engraved in these pillar bases signify an imperial presence, one that would resonate with the monks inhabiting this site and the donors in the surrounding community. Through the medium of donations, monastic centers offered the Kuṣāṇas access to the Buddhist religious networks that extended throughout their empire and the donative sphere that congregated around them.

These thirty pillar bases, although a small sample of the entire Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus, reveal many relevant facets of imperial Buddhism. The donative sphere associated with this site in year seventy-seven included a wide array of donors all communing in a specifically Buddhist public orbiting the Huviṣka vihāra. This monastic center, through its association with the Kuṣāṇas, represents one important node within the larger Buddhist network that spanned the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and inscribed objects donated to each of these sites would consistently reaffirm the Kuṣāṇa's authority by recording the ruler's name, year of rule, and royal epithets in the dating formula. Imperial Buddhism arose in combination with the relationships made among imperial representatives, professionals, and monastics and the institutionalization that occurred at these monastic sites. The next two sections of this chapter will supplement the information gleaned from the thirty inscribed pillar bases inscriptions with literary and archaeological evidence in order to more clearly define imperial Buddhism.

4.3. Literary Evidence for the Institutionalization of Imperial Buddhism.

This section moves from the inscribed pillar bases found in the Huviṣka vihāra at Mathurā to Buddhist texts transmitted to China, and the two *sūtras* investigated here, namely the *Ugraparipṛcchā* (Nattier 2003) and the *Rāṣṭrapālaparipṛcchā* (Boucher 2008), share a similar theme of monastic institutionalization. Ugra and Rāṣṭrapāla, the protagonists of the respective

texts, each pose questions to the Buddha that pertain to intra-monastic organization, monastic codes of conduct, and the proper relationship between monastics and the lay community. As is the case with all Buddhist texts of the “middle” period, care must be taken in how much history one extracts from these sources due to the uncertain dates of their composition, their history of revision, and the various purposes that color these accounts. Nattier and Boucher both point out that their received texts represent a later stage of development when they were more or less complete, and determining a date, location, and religious environment for when these texts were originally produced “will forever be hidden from view,” according to Nattier (2003: 47) and “may very well put the proverbial cart before the proverbial horse” in the words of Boucher (2008: xv). However, the intent here is not to use the descriptions of monastic life expressed in these texts to speculate about the development of monastic institutionalization or to try to pinpoint the moment when monastics began to engage in specialized tasks; rather this study takes these texts at their word(s). This assumes that the issues discussed in these texts were not fabrications about an idealized monastic environment but were based in reality, resembling Buddhist monastic institutions in the second and third centuries CE when these texts were transmitted to China.¹⁰²

Unlike many Indian Buddhist texts, those that were translated into Chinese can be dated, providing *terminus ante quem* for the ideas expressed in the two texts. When concepts such as an ideal bodhisattva householder, a main topic of discussion in the *Ugra*, first appeared or a critique of domesticated monastic life, a core issue in the *Rāṣṭrapāla*, began to be seriously

¹⁰² For an overview of early Buddhist monasticism see Dutt 1962: 53-62. The introduction in Shayne Clarke’s *Family Matters in Indian Buddhist Monasticisms* (2014: 1-10) provides an insightful discussion about how the conception of the solitary Buddhist monk was influenced by European notions of medieval Christian monasticism and the ideal models of a wandering ascetic found in Theravāda traditions, especially the *Rhinoceros Horn sūtra*.

discussed, i.e. the *terminus post quem* for these ideas, is impossible to know. Yet, for Buddhist living in the second and third centuries CE these issues had matured to the point that a normative sūtra was composed to articulate these concerns. The recorded dates for the two texts under investigation here are 180-190 CE for the *Ugraparipṛcchā-sūtra*, translated into Chinese by An Xuan and Fotiao, and 270 CE for the *Rāṣṭrapālaparipṛcchā-sūtra*, translated by Dharmarakṣa. Both texts, in their own distinctive way, reflect characteristics of imperial Buddhism that were inscribed on the pillar bases installed at the Huviṣka vihāra in 204 CE.

The *Ugraparipṛcchā-sūtra* answers the question posed to the Buddha by the prominent householder Ugra of, “how should the householder bodhisattva and the renunciant bodhisattva live, and how should they practice?” (Nattier 2003: 216, §2D). In answering this question, the text covers a wide range of practices that bodhisattvas, both lay and renunciant, should follow, ultimately concluding that a bodhisattva householder, described in detail as man of means, should abandon the world and pursue a path towards enlightenment. In this investigation of Buddhist monastic institutions, the practices of the lay and renunciant bodhisattvas and the possible antecedents in this discourse to the Mahāyāna path are secondary to what this text states about the relationship between these two groups. From the outset, the *Ugra* describes a monastic center accessible to the lay community, in many ways “taking for granted” that these two groups intermingled (Nattier 2003: 76).¹⁰³ When this text was translated into Chinese towards the end of the second century CE, the monastic grounds are not presented as cloistered off from society, a space meant only for the preservation of the dharma or engaging in strict ascetic practices, but as

¹⁰³ Nattier terms one of her strategies for extracting historical data from a normative source the “principle of irrelevance.” Here she means that, if the text mentions something unrelated to the main message but does not provide any further explanation, then it can be interpreted as familiar to the audience (Nattier 2003: 66-7). In respect to a lay follower entering a monastery, it seems that this was common and did not warrant a discussion about why a lay follower would enter the monastery or provide any stipulations about their to access this religious space.

a public space oriented towards receiving donations and interacting with the laity. This type of accessibility seems to coincide with how monastic complexes functioned in Mathurā, where donors who sponsored religious images to a monastery could view them, and perhaps even attended a dharma lecture in an assembly hall they financed. There seems to be an alignment here between the textual and epigraphic evidence, one that indicates Buddhist monastic centers did serve as a public space accessible to a diverse donative sphere.

Within this *sūtra*, two additional sections stipulate how lay members should interact with the monks and the institutionalized monastic community they would encounter. The first section (§18) instructs the householder to pause at the door and reflect on the sacred space before entering, while the second (§20) describes the types of monks that live in the monastery.¹⁰⁴ It is the description of the monks residing at the monastery that, when compared with the duties cited in the pillar base inscriptions from the Huviṣka vihāra, shows that liturgical specialization had become part of monastic life in imperial Buddhism. In the *Ugra*, the monks the householder encounters consists of five specialists engaged in textual learning: 1) “greatly learned ones” (*bahuśruta*), 2) “dharma-preachers” (*dharmabhāṇaka*), 3) “vinaya-holders” (*vinayadhara*), 4) “abhidharma-holders” (*mātrkādhara*), and 5) “bodhisattva-piṭaka holders” (*bodhisattvapiṭakadhara*); five specialists of ascetic practices: 1) “wilderness-dwellers” (*āraṇyaka*), 2) “alms-receivers” (*paiṇḍapātika*), 3) “yoga-practitioners” (*yogācāra*), 4) “meditators” (*dhyānin*), and 5) “members of the bodhisattva vehicles” (*bodhisattvayānika*); and two monastic officials: 1) “supervisor of repairs” (*navakarmika*) and 2) an “administrator”

¹⁰⁴ These two sections on entering the monastery, numbered §18 and §20, are separated by a rather substantial section on the contrasts between household and renunciant life (§19). However, this section is interpolated in a later Tibetan translation, and the earliest version of this text translated by An Xuan and Yen Fotiao only included one line that states, “household life is harmful and dusty; the renunciant life is praised by the Buddhas and their disciples” (Nattier 2003: 266-72).

(*vaiyāpṛtyakara*) (Nattier 2003: 274, app. 3: 347-8).¹⁰⁵ Although not all of these terms appear in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphical corpus, there are enough parallels to suggest that many of these specializations were current at Buddhist monastic sites in South Asia during the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

Starting with the pillar bases from the Huviṣka vihāra, the designations accorded to Buddhīśreṣṭha [98], being both a *bhaṣaṇaka* and *caturvidya*, provide an interesting comparison with the types of monks depicted in the *Ugra*. The term *bhaṣaṇaka*, Skt *bhāṇaka*, found in his pillar base inscription aligns with *dharmabhāṇaka* mentioned in the *Ugraparipṛcchā*, both referring to a preacher. The term *caturvidya*, which Lüders (1961: 70) interprets according to its Brahmanical connotation of “one who knows the four Vedas,” might in fact correspond to the list of textual experts provided in the *Ugraparipṛcchā*, which identifies four baskets of knowledge – the traditional *Tripitaka* consisting of the *sūtra*, *vinaya*, and *abhidharma* along with a fourth *bodhisattva-piṭaka* (Nattier 2003: 80).¹⁰⁶ The texts that constituted the *bodhisattva-piṭaka* at this time are not known, but if Buddhīśreṣṭha did specialize in all four of these canons, the *Tripitaka* plus the *bodhisattva-piṭaka*, then this might be a more accurate rendering of the designation *caturvidya*. Dharmadata donated two pillar bases [100 and 101], holding the title of a *dharmakathika* “Dharma reciter,” and his duties would correspond to the *dharmabhāṇaka* mentioned in the *Ugra* as well as overlap with his fellow monk the *bhaṣaṇaka* Buddhīśreṣṭha. The final correspondence between the inscribed pillar bases and the *Ugra* is that of the meditation practitioners (*prāhanika*, Skt *prādhānika*) Śurīya and Buddharakṣita [108], who would have performed ascetic practices similar to the *dhyānins*. Beyond the inscribed pillar bases, another epigraphic and literary correspondence is found in the term *vinayadhara* “vinaya-

¹⁰⁵ Nattier (2003: 347) reconstructed the Sanskrit terms from the Chinese and Tibetan recensions.

¹⁰⁶ Nattier points out that the only Nikāya school that possesses a four-fold canon is the Dharmaguptakas, who are cited in the inscription of seated Maitreya donated in year twenty-nine during Huviṣka’s rule [51] found in Mathurā.

holder.” Two vinaya-holders made donations at Mathurā, an unnamed monk who sponsored a seated Buddha in year nineteen of Kaniṣka I [38] and the monk Sandhikasya, who donated a Bodhisattva image in year seventy-nine of Vāsudeva I [126]. These textual and epigraphic correlations suggest that the liturgical specializations described in the *Ugrapariṣṭchā-sūtra* were not idealized but actually existed, and were a feature of imperial Buddhism during the Kuṣāṇa period.

The purpose of the *Ugrapariṣṭchā* was to clarify the distinctions between lay and monastic life, and ultimately to convince lay followers to set out on the path to enlightenment by becoming ordained monks. The *Rāṣṭrapālapariṣṭchā*, on the other hand, deals primarily with intra-monastic debates concerning proper monastic conduct, and Rāṣṭrapāla’s question to the Buddha pertains to how one obtains the qualities necessary to become a bodhisattva (Boucher 2008: 119-20). The core issue in this text is the perceived corrupting force of sedentary monasticism, and the only remedy for this this internal corruption requires returning to the wilderness and focusing on strict ascetic practices (Boucher 2003: 64-7). In critiquing the features of domesticated monastic life that hinder the bodhisattva path, this text references the pitfall of “clinging to profit or honor,” a corrupting friend who “is covetous of worldly things,” and a fetter of “fraternizing with upper-class patrons for one whose mind is entangled [with them]” (Boucher 2003: 127-30). The forest-dwellers who focused on ascetic practice shared monastic venues with sedentary monks, and the situation documented in the *Rāṣṭrapāla* seems to relate to the presence of the meditation practitioners cited in the pillar base inscriptions. The epigraphic evidence provides no clues as to whether tensions between these different specialists existed, but an urban setting like Mathurā, where many monastic complexes existed in close proximity and most likely competed in attracting donations, would be an ideal breeding ground

for the types of critiques leveled against the comforts of monastic life found in the *Rāṣṭrapāla*. This text demonstrates is that by 270 CE Buddhist monasteries had become ingrained into their social, and in the Kuṣāṇa period political, networks and dissenting voices had, overtime, felt compelled to produce a *sūtra* to address these issues. This is not to say that this critique of sedentary monasticism began during the Kuṣāṇa Empire, but one can envision how imperial Buddhism, whose public was centered at the monastery and was composed of a spectrum of elite donors, might have prompted reactions by certain segments of the Buddhist monastic order.

These two texts provide a glimpse of Buddhist monastic life in the first centuries of the Common Era. The firm date for the transmission of these texts indicates that, by the Kuṣāṇa period, monastic specialists whom the bodhisattva householder Ugra encountered must have had some basis in reality, and similarly the response to Rāṣṭrapāla's questions by the Buddha must have reflected critiques lobbied against domesticated monastics. The *Ugraparipṛcchā* and the *Rāṣṭrapālaparipṛcchā* provide strong literary support for institutionalization of Buddhist monasteries that developed during the phase of imperial Buddhism and the close relationships between lay donors and monastic practitioners. In the next section, archaeological evidence will be used to examine the architectural changes to monasteries that accompanied this institutionalization.

4.4. Reconfiguration of Monastic Space in Imperial Buddhism.

Since there are no published archaeological reports for Buddhist sites in Mathurā, any conclusion as to what these complexes looked like or what structures were included in these religious spaces remain speculative.¹⁰⁷ With that said, there is substantial archaeological

¹⁰⁷ Härtel's (1993: 64-9, 413-69) excavations at Sonkh is the only archaeological study of a Kuṣāṇa period site in the vicinity of Mathurā, and, although two apsidal temples were found here, there is no definitive evidence that these were Buddhist or part of a larger monastic complex. In fact, apsidal temple 2, located about four hundred meters north of the site, seems to be a Nāga temple rather than part of a Buddhist vihāra.

evidence from other areas of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, namely Gandhāra, that assists in conceptualizing how these monastic complexes housed the various specialized monks, accommodated the influx of donated images, and created spaces accessible to members of the donative sphere. The approach taken to the archaeological evidence for Buddhist monastic centers in this section mirrors the one employed with the literary material; the main concern is not to determine when monastic centers developed in South Asia, but rather to examine these complexes as they existed in the first centuries of the Common Era.

This approach is qualified by the fact that in the earliest stages of Buddhism, from the life of the Buddha in the sixth to fifth century BCE to the Maurya Empire in the late-fourth to end of the third century BCE, there is almost no archaeological evidence that can be definitively identified as Buddhist (Fogelin 2015: 70).¹⁰⁸ In the post-Maurya period, Buddhist archaeological evidence becomes available with the advent of the major stūpa sites at Sāñcī (Shaw 2011), Bhārhut (Lüders 1963), Amarāvātī (Shimada 2013), and Kanaganahalli (Poonacha 2013). However, at all these sites the stūpa was the primary ritual structure and monasteries were secondary features. The earliest archaeological evidence for monastic sites in South Asia are the rock-cut caves in western Maharashtra; however wooden vihāras probably pre-date these more durable structures. The complex at Kondivita, located in the hills to the east of Mumbai, dates to the first century BCE and consists of cells for the resident monks and a single worship hall (*caitya*) with a stūpa for circumambulating carved from the cliff at the back of the *caitya* (Fogelin 2015: 89-90). Most of the Buddhist monastic sites in the Gangetic plain dateable to the first centuries of the Common Era were destroyed or dismantled for reuse, and therefore “from

¹⁰⁸ Excavations at Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha in southern Nepal near the Bihar border, and Vaiśālī, the Licchavi capital located in Bihar near Patna, have unearthed structures dateable to the life of the Buddha in the sixth century BCE or shortly thereafter, but their association with early Buddhism is not definitive (Fogelin 2015: 83).

an archaeological perspective, we are left knowing that monasteries were present, but ignorant of their form, organization, and style” (Fogelin 2015: 124). In order to work around this paucity of data, this section utilizes the monastic sites in Gandhāra models for the form, organization, and styles of monastic centers constructed in Mathurā in the phase of imperial Buddhism.

For monastic complexes that emerged in the phase of imperial Buddhist two developments need to be explored: the assimilation of the publicly oriented stūpa with the more privately centered vihāra, and the construction of spaces allotted for the installation of images. The argument made here is that these two features reconfigured religious spaces into a complex occupied by both monastics and the sphere of donors, thus providing a field in which the public operated. In order to reconstruct Buddhist monastics sites in northern India during the Kuṣāṇa period, where the archaeological evidence is almost nonexistent, this study will focus on two sites, Takht-i-bāhī and the monastic centers around Taxila. These were chosen in part because of their relatively good state of preservation and because they display the two features mentioned above that might have been replicated in Buddhist monastic complexes at Mathurā.

Before redirecting our attention to the northwest there is one Buddhist site closer to Mathurā that was active in the Kuṣāṇa period, namely Sanghol, which is located about 50 km west of Chandigarh. The Buddhist remains at this site consist of a stūpa and a vihāra, which were separate structures located about a half a kilometer apart. The spatial division between the stūpa and the vihāra resembles the pre-Kuṣāṇa layout of Buddhist sites when stūpas were the foci of the sacred space and monasteries were ancillary. The following pictures show the stūpa and separate vihāra at Sanghol:



Fig 19: The stūpa at Sanghol
Photo: ASI Sanghol, Punjab



Fig. 20: The vihāra at Sanghol
Photo: ASI Sanghol, Punjab

No images of the Buddha were found at this site, but during the 1984-5 excavation a cache of one hundred seventeen sculpted railings were found neatly stacked in a pit alongside stūpa (Michon 2010: 87-8). Just to the west of the stūpa lies the remains of a settlement datable to the Kuṣāṇa period that contains a citadel, administrative buildings, an assembly hall, residential quarters, and streets (Margabandhu 2010: 109-11). Sanghol most likely served as a waypoint

along the northern route (*uttarāpatha*) that linked Taxila with Mathurā, and the flat terrain of this area combined with rather small urban footprint of the town allowed for the stūpa and the vihāra to occupy two distinct spaces. The separation of the stūpa and the vihāra found at Sanghol is consistent with the arrangement of Buddhists sites before the imperial phase and can be contrasted with what they would become, namely a single complex that incorporated the public stūpa and private vihāra.

Like Sanghol, the monastic complex at Takht-i-bāhī and those surrounding Taxila existed prior to and remained in use throughout the Kuṣāṇa period, and during the subsequent phases were reconfigured to accommodate growing monastic communities, increasing numbers of donated images, and expanding spheres of donors.¹⁰⁹ Takht-i-bāhī is presumably the place where the inscription [1] dated to 56 CE at the beginning of Kujula Kadphises' career was found, indicating that it was active at this time and over the course of the Kuṣāṇa period shows successive phases of construction.¹¹⁰ At the beginning of phase II, around the mid-first century, the site consisted of a central stūpa (P1) and a quadrangular monastery. In phase III, which corresponds to the middle of the Kuṣāṇa period, a monastery was added on the north side of the central (lower) stūpa court, presumably to house the increasing in the number of monastics inhabiting this site. To the south of the central court another rectangular court was constructed with a stūpa (P2) in the middle surrounded by fifteen uniform image shrines (Behrendt 2004: 183-5). In the lower, earlier stūpa court, thirty-seven image shrines were also added in phase III presumably for the installation of religious images. Sometime later in phase III, fourteen image

¹⁰⁹ One specialized task not mentioned in epigraphic or literary accounts are the scribes producing Buddhist manuscripts in Gandhāra.

¹¹⁰ Behrendt (2004: 259-67) identifies four phases determined by numismatics, changes in masonry, and the development of structural types. This section will focus on phase II (mid-first century - ca. 200 CE) and phase III (ca. 200 - 500 CE).

shrines of monumental Buddhas were built at the lower court and four six-foot-tall Buddha images were installed at court XX (Behrendt 2004: 186). The following figure (21) provides a layout of the Takht-i-bāhī complex and the successive phases of construction:

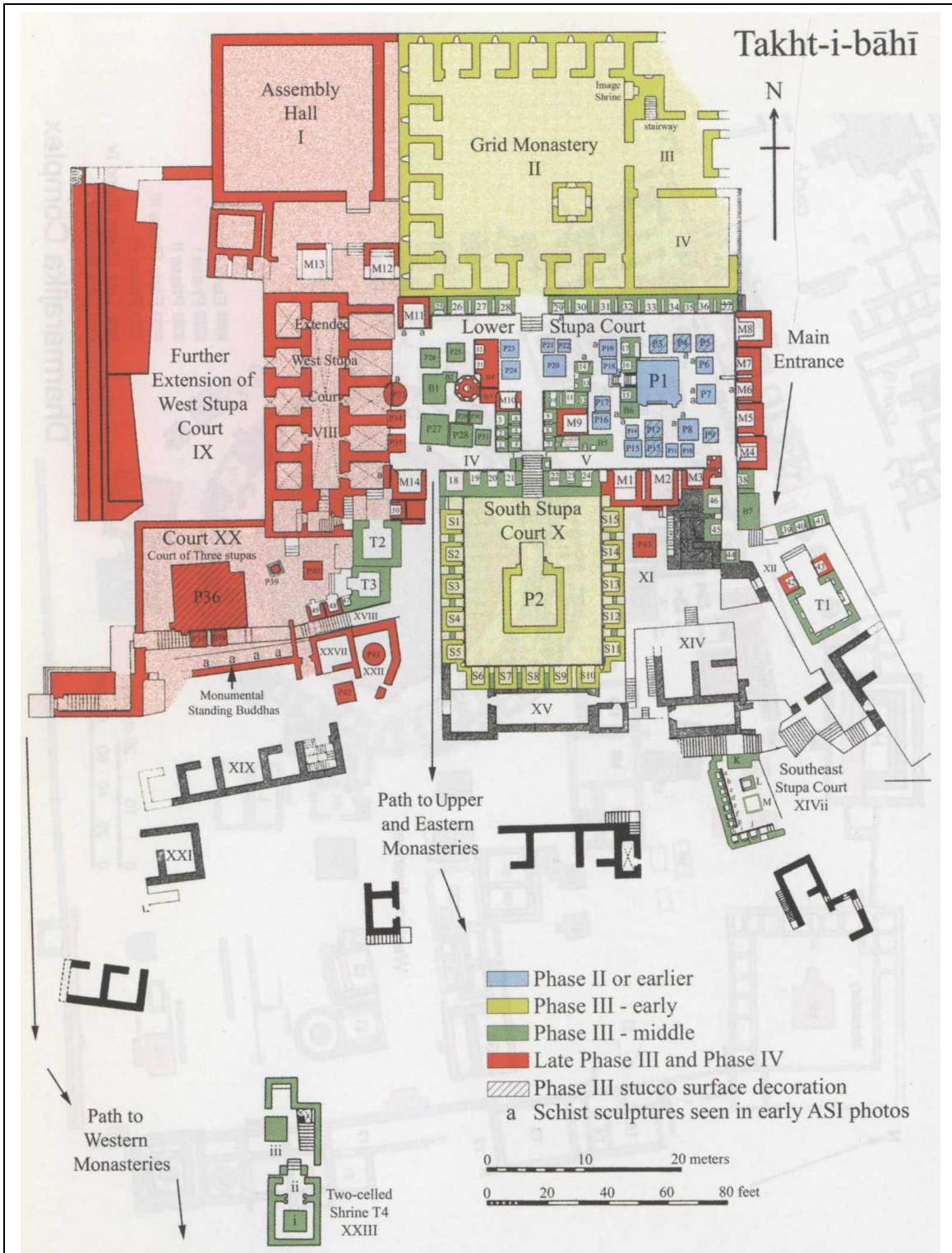


Fig. 21: Takht-i-bāhī Complex
(Behrendt 2004: Fig. 2)

The presence of two smaller stūpas rather than a single large stūpa might be due to the topographical constraints of this site, since it is situated on the side of a mountainous spur rather than on level ground. Even taking this into account, what becomes clear in layout of this complex is the incorporation of stūpa courts and monastic dormitories into the same sacred space. This configuration would put donors in direct contact with the monastic community living at Takht-i-bāhī, a community which seems to be growing as seen in the construction of a vihāra in the early stages of phase III. More pertinent to the reconfiguration of space is the proliferation of small image shrines constructed in phase III, both the early and middle parts. In this phase, an entire new wing was added to the south of the central court and lined by image niches, and within the central court the remaining open space was filled with images (Behrendt 2004: 189). These additions to the monastic complex were driven by the need to accommodate the increased patronage to this site. At Mathurā, a similar reconfiguration must have occurred to monastic complexes in the Kuṣāṇa period since religious images became the dominant type of donations sponsored by the donative sphere operating in this area. Without any tangible archaeological evidence for Buddhist complexes in the city of Mathurā it is impossible to trace the architectural developments occurring here, but the pressure to furnish monastic sites with spaces to display religious images and allow room for a viewing public must have required some type of structural change.

Takht-i-bāhī's configuration of vihāras, stūpas, and image shrines contracted into a single site is paralleled by the same type of reconfigurations occurring at Taxila. The urban setting of Taxila more closely resembles that of Mathurā than the elevated terrain of Takht-i-bāhī, and therefore types of Buddhist complexes found in the vicinity of Taxila serve as a better model for what might have existed in Mathurā. Taxila was extensively excavated by John Marshall over

the course of twenty-one years, 1913-34, and the archaeological record of this area displays a millennium, ca. 500 BCE - 500 CE, of continuous habitation. The remains in and around Taxila show the rise and fall of urban areas reflecting the many polities that controlled this city, and, starting in the second century BCE and continuing up to the fifth century CE, there is a consistent archaeological record for Buddhist sites (Marshall 1951: xv-xvii). In the initial phase of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, perhaps around the late-first century CE, Sirkap, the main urban center at Taxila, was abandoned and a new town, Sirsukh, was founded. Sirsukh was only partially surveyed by Marshall, leaving us with very little information about the layout of this urban site in the Kuṣāṇa period.¹¹¹ As for the numerous Buddhist monastic complexes, most were located on the outskirts of the urban area and the largest of these was the Dharmarājikā complex.

The Dharmarājikā complex is located about one kilometer due east from Sirkap and consists of a large main stūpa surrounded by monastic residences. On the basis of numismatic evidence and the masonry used in its construction, the main stūpa was most likely founded in the second century BCE, or in the early part of phase I according to Behrendt's classification system. In the later part of phase I, the main stūpa was ringed by twelve structures, perhaps small stūpas, and rows of monastic quarters were added to the north and west of the main stūpa (Behrendt 2004: 41-5). The layout of the Dharmarājikā complex, situated around a central main stūpa, was probably not replicated in Mathurā as no evidence for such structures are mentioned in the travel accounts of the Chinese monks Faxian, who visited Mathurā in the beginning of the fifth century,

¹¹¹ Marshall did not conduct a thorough excavation of Sirsukh because the area within the walls was low-lying and heavily irrigated and the mounds were being used as cemeteries. He suggests that the shift from Sirkap to Sirsukh might have been caused by an earthquake that destroyed Sirkap or a plague that swept through this city in the years prior to arrival of the Kuṣāṇas. In the brief remarks on Sirsukh provided by Marshall (1951: 214-21), he notes differences in the fortifications between Sirsukh and Sirkap, mainly in the masonry, the incorporation of loopholes, and the semi-circular bastions found at Sirsukh. Mark Kenoyer from the University of Wisconsin has recently been granted permission to conduct excavations at Sirsukh, and we look forward to what his discoveries will reveal about this Kuṣāṇa period urban settlement.

or of Xuanzang, who passed through this city in the second quarter of the seventh century.¹¹²

Therefore, focusing on smaller Buddhist complexes at Taxila, especially those constructed in phase II and more in line with the Kuṣāṇa period, might provide a better model for the types of structures built at Mathurā.

Two Buddhist complexes, namely Kālawān and Mohṛā Morādu, are dated to Behrendt's second archaeological phase and are suitable candidates from which to extrapolate possible architectural features of Buddhist sites at Mathurā. Most Buddhist sites created in phase II share similar features of a medium-sized main stūpa and an adjacent monastery, and as Behrendt (2004: 80) notes, "these two architectural components are consistently found together; public sacred areas were never established without housing a monastic community." Although Buddhist complexes at Mathurā might have developed from a different prototype than those at Taxila, this layout of a vihāra and a medium-sized stūpa would be more applicable to the urban setting of Mathurā than the sprawling Dharmarājikā complex. Furthermore, it is clear from the pillar base inscriptions of year thirty-three that donors from Taxila visited Mathurā, and this epigraphic evidence suggests that Buddhist communities from these two places were in contact with each other and could very well have influenced the architectural arrangements of Buddhist centers at Mathurā.

The first site, Kālawān, is situated two kilometers southeast of the Dharmarājikā complex and consists of a central stūpa court bordered by smaller relic shrines and a row of three

¹¹² Faxian records the presence of stūpas for the early disciples of the Buddha at Mathurā, namely Śāriputra, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, and Ānanda, as well as to stūpas in honor of the Abhidharma, Vinaya, and the sūtras (Legge 1886: chapter 16). All of these would seem to be smaller than the Dharmarājikā stūpa or even the one at Sanghol. Xuanzang is a little more specific, mentioning the presence in Mathurā of three stūpas built by Aśoka, stūpas containing the relics of Śāriputra, Maudgalyāyana, Pūrṇa Maitrāyaṇīputra, Upāli, Ānanda, and Rāhula, and stūpas for bodhisattvas, Mañjuśrī and others (Li 1996: 105). Xuanzang does not provide any information about the dimensions of the stūpas at Mathurā, and, since he typically remarks on prominent stūpas, this suggests that the ones in Mathurā were not very substantial. For example, in Sthāneśvara, the next city Xuanzang visited after Mathurā, he records a stūpa built by Aśoka near this city that was more than two hundred feet high (Li 1996: 108).

monastic residences situated on the southern side of the main court (Behrendt 2004: 81-4). The layout of this site is provided here:

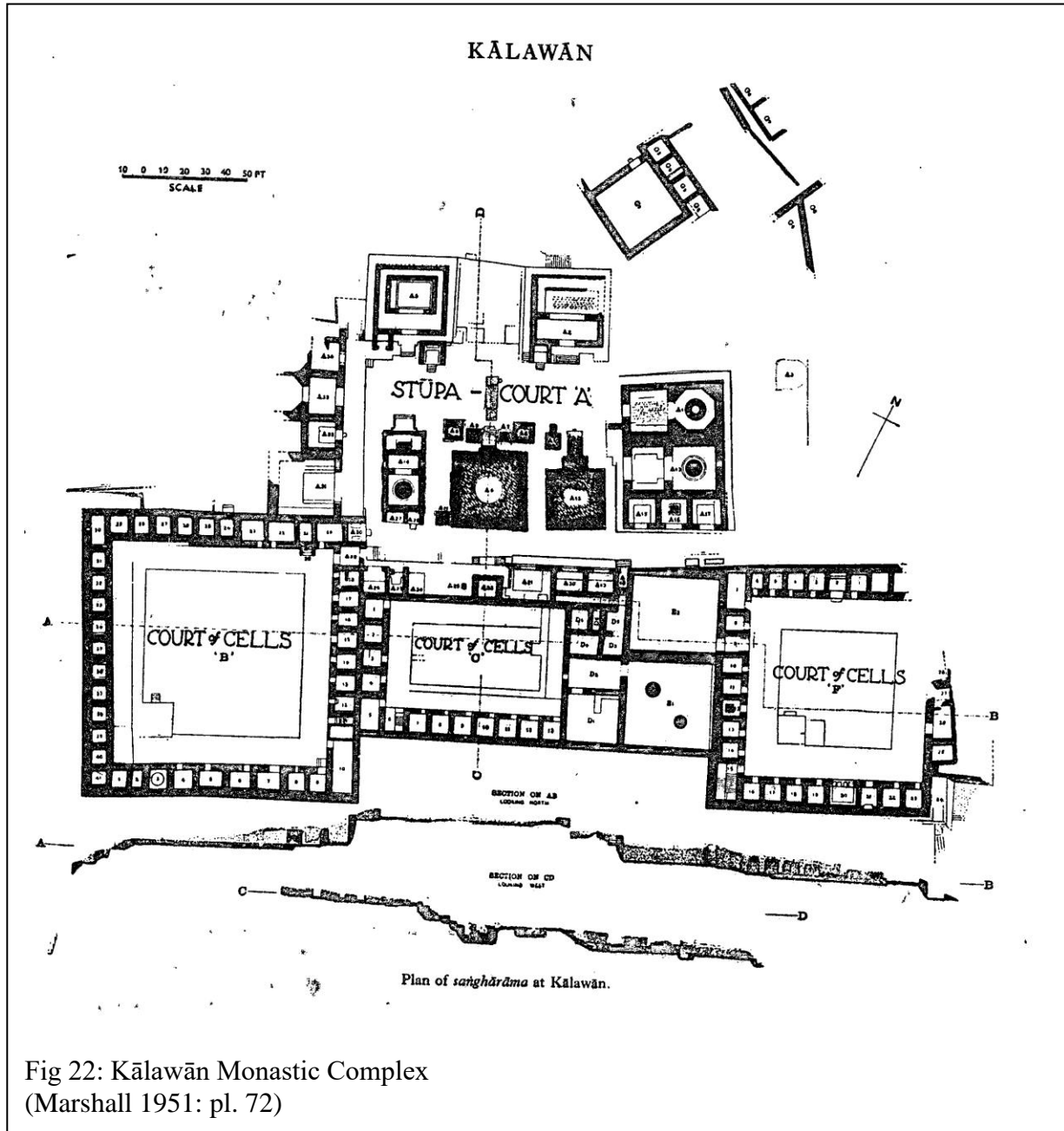
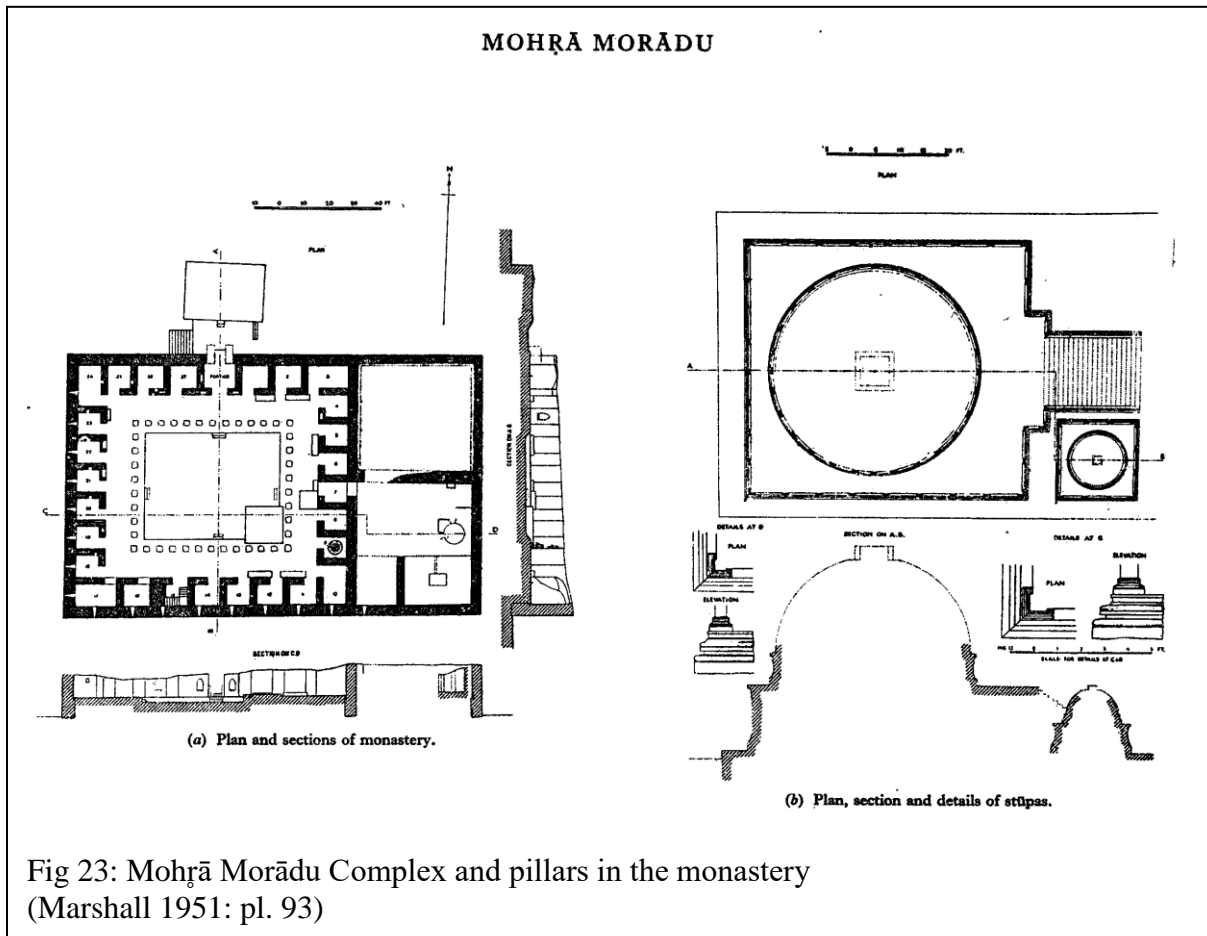


Fig 22: Kālawān Monastic Complex
(Marshall 1951: pl. 72)

Architecturally, the public stūpa court and the private monastery share the same space, facilitating interactions between elite donors and the resident monastics. It would be at these

points of intersection that a Buddhist public would develop, and the Buddhist complexes would serve as the fulcrum between political, social, and religious members of the donative sphere.

The site of Mohṛā Morādu, situated about two kilometers northeast of the Dharmarājikā complex, resembles other phase II Buddhist sites in design and scale. What is notable about this site is the monastic court that has cells along the exterior of the central courtyard. In the middle of the courtyard is a quadrilateral raised platform surrounded by forty-two pillar bases, shown here in the figure on the left:



This is one of the only examples I could find in Taxila of a Buddhist structure that included a set of pillar bases. Marshall (1951: 360) suggests that the pillars were made of wood based on charcoal and iron remnants found at this site. Although the structure shown here is in the private

monastic area and not a public assembly hall, it provides an architectural footprint for what might have been constructed at the Huvīṣka vihāra in Mathurā, which also required a large number of pillar bases. The only other examples of pillar bases found at Taxila were used in assembly halls, but for these structures there were only a few pillars situated in the middle of the building (Behrendt 2004: 76, and see *assembly hall* in his glossary).

This discussion of Gandhāran archaeology and the architectural layout of Buddhist complexes in this region does not necessarily mean that Buddhist sites in Mathurā were built parallel to these models. However, the donative forces exerting the need to reconfigure these spaces would be similar in both Gandhāra and northern India. During the phase of imperial Buddhism, the monastic quarters at Takht-i-bāhī were expanded and the area around the stūpa was accentuated with image shrines. Buddhist complexes in Mathurā would also need to devise architectural solutions to accommodate the transition to image-dominated donations. Mathurā has much in common with Taxila as both were urban centers, and the conflation of stūpas and vihāras in Buddhist complexes was most likely a feature that these two cities shared. Even with the archetypes provided by the archaeology of Gandhāra, the exact function of the structure at the Huvīṣka vihāra which required at least thirty-seven pillar bases remains uncertain. Donating a pillar base for a veranda within a monastic residence is a possibility, and, if this is the case then this structure might not have been accessible to the donors. However, the sockets on the pillar bases suggest that stone pillars were inserted into them, and these could have supported a sturdier structure, such as a covered assembly hall which would have provided a place for monastics, professionals, and government officials to congregate. This is precisely the congregation of donors around an institutionalized monastic complex that epitomizes imperial Buddhism.

4.5. Conclusion.

A couple of hours west of Kabul on the upper Wardak River lies a complex consisting of four large stūpas and monasteries where Vagamarega and his daughter made two relic donations to this site in year fifty-one [78 and 79]. In Fussman's survey of Buddhist sites north of the Khyber Pass, Wardak was one of the only sites where he could find an association between a Buddhist monastic complex and the Kuṣāṇas based on Vagamarega dedicating of the best lot the merit gained from his gift to the Great King, King of Kings Huviṣka [78] (Fussman 2015: 172-5). In this same year, Buddhavarma installed a Buddha image in the vihāra of the Great King, King of Kings (Huviṣka) at Jamālpur in Mathurā [77]. The correlation of the date between these two inscriptions might be coincidental, but in recalling the apparent challenges Huviṣka encountered early in his rule, a way to reaffirm his imperial standing would have been to forge a connection with Buddhist sites and their respective donors. This appears to have been done at both Wardak and Mathurā.

This chapter showed that the Kuṣāṇa Empire and Buddhist monastic complexes thrived concurrently. A major factor in the success of the Kuṣāṇa Empire during this period was imperial Buddhism, a phase when a Buddhist public comprised of a diverse donative sphere emerged around institutionalized monastic complexes throughout the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Although epigraphic evidence for Kuṣāṇa patronage of Buddhism is scarce, the congregation of political, social, and religious donors at all the sites in the religious network enabled the Kuṣāṇas to exert their influence and perpetuate their empire.

Part C: Imperial Diminution

Chapter five in this part of the dissertation narrates the conclusion of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Over the duration of Kaniṣka II, Vāsiṣka, and Kaniṣka III's rule, the epigraphic record diminishes with the final inscription associated with this empire composed in Kuṣāṇa year (one hundred) forty-one, corresponding to 268 CE. The possible causes for the imperial decline will be discussed in this chapter, with the major event being the Kuṣāṇa's loss of Bactria to the Sasanians in ca. 230 CE. The final section of chapter five examines the unnamed and undated inscriptions composed in this period in order to better assess the total number of inscribed objects and donors over this approximate two-hundred-year span. The sixth chapter shifts away from constructing a narrative of empire based on inscriptions, and instead inserts the Kuṣāṇas into the narrative of world history by looking at their place among their imperial contemporaries, i.e., the Romans, Arsacid/Sasanians, and Later Hans. This chapter uses the field of comparative empire to investigate the role of the Kuṣāṇa Empire in the first centuries of the Common Era when empires extended from the Mediterranean to China and India. Comparing the Kuṣāṇas with the Roman and Han empires helps to generate a better understanding about how this empire was structured and why it thrived.

Chapter 5: The Epigraphic Narrative of Imperial Diminution

The epigraphic record of Kaniška II, Vāsiška, and Kaniška III documents the narrative of imperial diminution. Over the course of these three rulers' reigns the number of inscriptions drastically contracts from twenty-nine inscriptions composed during Kaniška II's approximately eighteen years of rule to seven inscriptions composed during Vāsiška's eight reign, and one inscription associated with both Kaniška III. This phase of the Kuṣāṇa Empire began in 231 CE, based on the earliest text dated to year (one hundred) four of Kaniška II.¹¹³ The latest date for this period is year (one hundred) forty-one of Kaniška III's rule, corresponding to 268 CE. The four subsequent Kuṣāṇa rulers, namely Vāsudeva II, Mahi, Ṣaka and Kipunadha are only known through their coins (Jongeward et al. 2015: 149-77). The diminution of the Kuṣāṇa Empire was a gradual process, and at the start of this period there does not appear to any disruption to Kaniška II's authority, indicated by his relatively long rule and the relatively abundant amount of epigraphic evidence. However, after the Kaniška II's rule the number of inscribed objects diminishes significantly, marking, from an epigraphic perspective, a disruption to the political stability and economic security that facilitated conditions conducive to patronizing religious centers. The most conclusive evidence available that could account for the diminishing of Kuṣāṇa power is the emergence of the Sasanian Empire ca. 224 CE and their subsequent annexation of Bactria in ca. 230 CE.

The history of the rise of the Sasanians and their expansion into Bactria will be covered in more detail in the next chapter (6.2.3), but since these two events seem to be a catalyst for the eventual Kuṣāṇa downfall they will be summarized here. The Sasanians assumed power in Iran when Ardašīr I, the son of the Sasanian founder Pabag, defeated the Arsacid ruler Artabanus IV

¹¹³ In dated inscriptions where the hundreds are dropped that have the hundred is put in parentheses since the numeral does not appear in the text.

at the battle of Hormozgan in 224 CE (Daryaee 2010: 241-6). Upon taking control of the Iranian Plateau, he commemorated his victory by carving an investiture scene into the cliff face at Naqš-e Rostam, located near the ancient Achaemenid capital of Persepolis. His successor Šāpūr I (239-70) expanded the Sasanian Empire and waged a series of successful campaigns against the Romans Emperors Gordian III (238-44), Phillip (244-9), and Valerian (253-60) (Canepa 2009: 53-5). Šāpūr I, like his father, marked his victories on the same cliffs at Naqš-e Rostam to commemorate his victories both visually, in the form of a rock relief, and textually in an inscription. A text composed on the Ka‘ba-ye Zardošt at Naqš-e Rostam in 270 states that Šāpūr I had incorporated the Kušāna territory (*kušānšahr*) into his empire and invaded as far as Peshawar (*paškabūr*) (Falk 2015d: 131-2, §124).¹¹⁴ It is not entirely clear when Šāpūr I’s eastern campaign occurred or whether the Sasanians marched all the way to Peshawar, but it does appear that by around 230 CE a branch of the Sasanian rulers, the Kushano-Sasanians, assumed power in Bactria and started minting their own coins; first using the name of Vāsudeva (I) and Kaniška (II) and then issuing coins in their own names, beginning with Peroz I (Cribb 1990: 155-6; Jongeward et al. 2015: 4). The use of Vāsudeva I and Kaniška II names on the early Kushano-Sasanian issues helps to date the annexation of Bactria to around 230 CE, overlapping with the reigns of these two Kušānas.

It appears the ramifications of the Sasanian conquest of Bactria did not immediately disrupt the donative activity in taking place in Gandhāra and northern India during the reign of Kaniška II. However, the rapid decline in the Kušāna epigraphical record for the subsequent Kušāna rulers suggests that their imperial authority faltered. For example, in Mathurā, from the reign of Kaniška I to Kaniška II at least one hundred Buddhist and Jain inscribed objects were

¹¹⁴ For a full translation of this inscription see parthiansources.com/texts/skz/skz-translation.

donated, whereas in the eight-year reign of Vāsiṣka there is only a one inscription attributed to each of these religious communities that reference this ruler. From Kuṣāṇa year (one hundred) thirty-one to (one hundred) thirty-five there are an additional five unnamed Jain images [195-9], most likely produced in the second Kuṣāṇa century based on the forward-facing lions on their pedestals, but these cannot be definitively associated with Vāsiṣka. However, the single Buddhist and six Jain donations spanning thirteen years (Kuṣāṇa years (1)22-35 corresponding to 249-62 CE) is a drastic drop off from what was produced in the preceding period. After year (one hundred) thirty-five inscriptions in Mathurā associated with the Kuṣāṇas comes to an end, and the single Gāndhārī inscription for Kaniṣka III dated to year (one hundred) forty-one only records a well presumably donated to a Buddhist community in Āra, near the confluence of the Indus and Kabul rivers in Gandhāra.

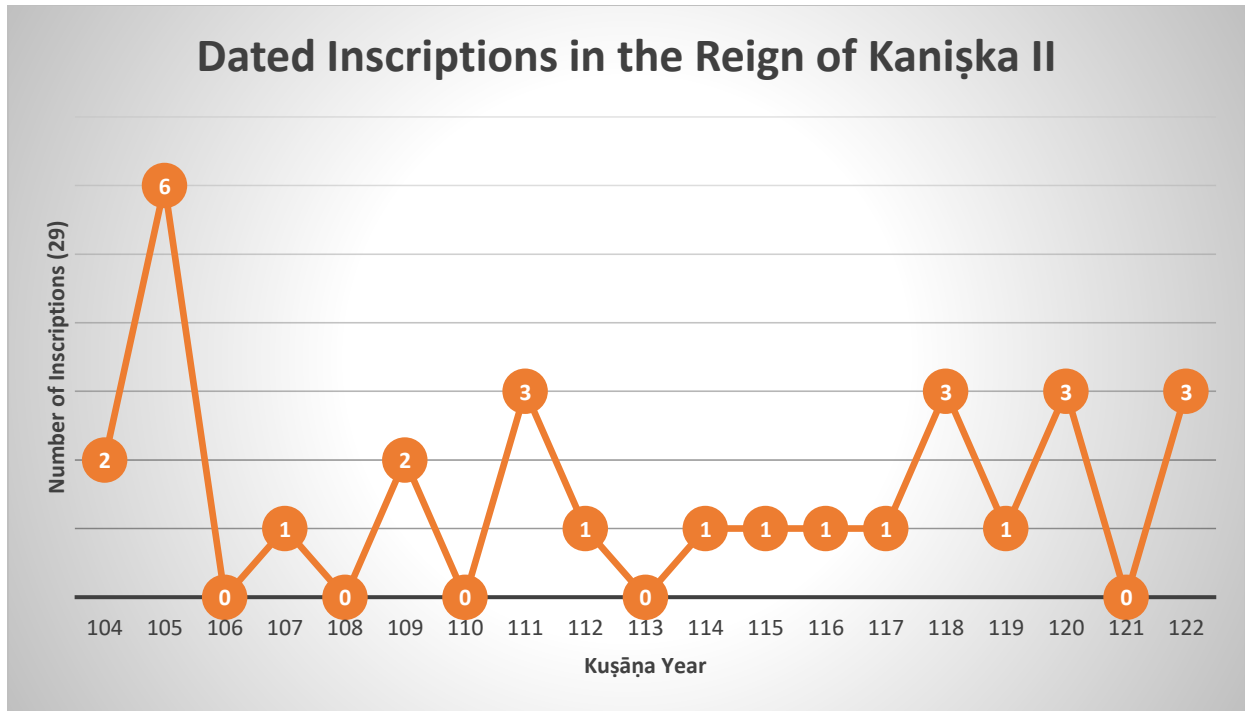
It is unclear what internal forces led to the diminishing number of inscribed objects being donated in this phase of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, especially in light of the fact that the four later Kuṣāṇa rulers continued to issue coins showing that they maintained, at the very least, control over their mints. But this period did witness the diminution of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, a gradual process that concluded a short time after the Gupta's assumed control of northern India starting in 320 CE.

5.1. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Kaniṣka II.

The epigraphic evidence for the reign of Kaniṣka II consist of twenty-nine inscriptions, the earliest dated to year (one hundred) four and the latest to (one hundred) twenty-two, meaning Kaniṣka II's eighteen-year reign presumably lasted from 231-249 CE. However, the end of Kaniṣka II's rule is not clear. The latest occurrence of the name of Kaniṣka II is in the Manikyala inscription [174] dated to year eighteen. The seven inscriptions that come after this

date, one in year nineteen [175], three in year twenty [176-8], and three in year twenty-two [179-81], do not contain the name of a Kuṣāṇa ruler since most are Jain images. The earliest date for Vāsiṣka is year twenty-two [181], although this attribution is disputed since the name of the Kuṣāṇa ruler in this text reads Vaskuṣāṇa. This means that determining the transition of power between Kaniṣka II and Vāsiṣka, or Vaskuṣāṇa, is not known. Because of this uncertainty, I have assigned all of inscribed object dated between year nineteen and twenty-two to Kaniṣka II, although this attribution is not definitive. Hopefully, new epigraphic evidence will come to light to help clarify the transition between Kaniṣka II and Vāsiṣka, at which point the duration of their reigns will be adjusted accordingly.

Among the twenty-nine inscriptions associated with the rule of Kaniṣka II, including those composed at the supposed end of his reign, six are Gāndhārī texts and twenty-three inscriptions are composed in both Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit and Sanskrit. In the Kuṣāṇa epigraphical corpus the six Gāndhārī inscriptions dated to Kaniṣka II's reign represent the largest amount of texts written in this language, even outnumbering those composed in the reign of Kujula Kadphises, whose entire epigraphic record is derived from Gāndhārī inscriptions. This might suggest that after losing control of Bactria to the Kuṣāṇo-Sassanians Kaniṣka II, or his officials, consolidated their power south of the Hindu Kush and these imperial efforts spurred donations in this region. The dated inscriptions composed in the reign of Kaniṣka II are graphed as follows (graph 13):



The breakdown of inscribed objects during the reign of Kaniṣka II shows a consistent donation pattern, with the only peak in inscribed objects occurring in the beginning of his reign when five Jain objects [155-9], four images and a tank, were donated to Kaṅkālī Ṭilā and a Buddha image was commissioned somewhere in Gandhāra [160]. What is interesting about this graph is that there is no apparent downturn in donations that would coincide with the loss of Bactria, which, based on the epigraphic and numismatic evidence, occurred around 230 CE, Kuṣāṇa year (1)03. Whatever imperial ramifications precipitated from the conflict in Bactria, donors in Gandhāra and Mathurā seem to have been unaffected.

As explained in the introduction, all of the dates in these texts have ‘dropped’ the hundreds, meaning that only the tens and ones are given, and epigraphic and stylistic features are employed to distinguish between inscribed objects produced in Kaniṣka II’s rule from those in the reign of his namesake Kaniṣka I. On the epigraphic side, one of the indicators of second Kuṣāṇa century texts is the increased use of Sanskrit, reflected the use of proper sandhi and

standard morphology. The earliest inscription from the reign of Kaniṣka II, found on the pedestal of a Bodhisattva dated to year (one hundred) four [154], provides clear example of this epigraphic sanskritization:

Text:

1. [siddham] mah[ā]rājasya kaṇ[iṣkas]ya saṃ 4 he 2 d[i] 1 etasyaṃ purrvāyaṃ bhikṣor=dha[r]mmanand[is]ya dha[r]mma-[kathi]kasya sādhyavihārisya [bh.] ///
2. pratiṣṭhāpayati mahādaṇḍan[ā]yaka hummiyaka vedyāṃ <sa>kka vihāre anenaṃ deyadharmma-parityāgena māta-piṭṛināṃ āca /// [Shr. #17]

Translation:

Success! Year 4, winter month 1, day 2 of the Great King Kaniṣka II – on this occasion – *x* ... the co-resident of the monk Dharmanandi, a dharma-preacher, installs (a bodhisattva image) in the Sakka vihara on the raised platform of Hummiyaka, the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka. By the donation of this pious gift (may it be) for (his) parents, teachers(?)...

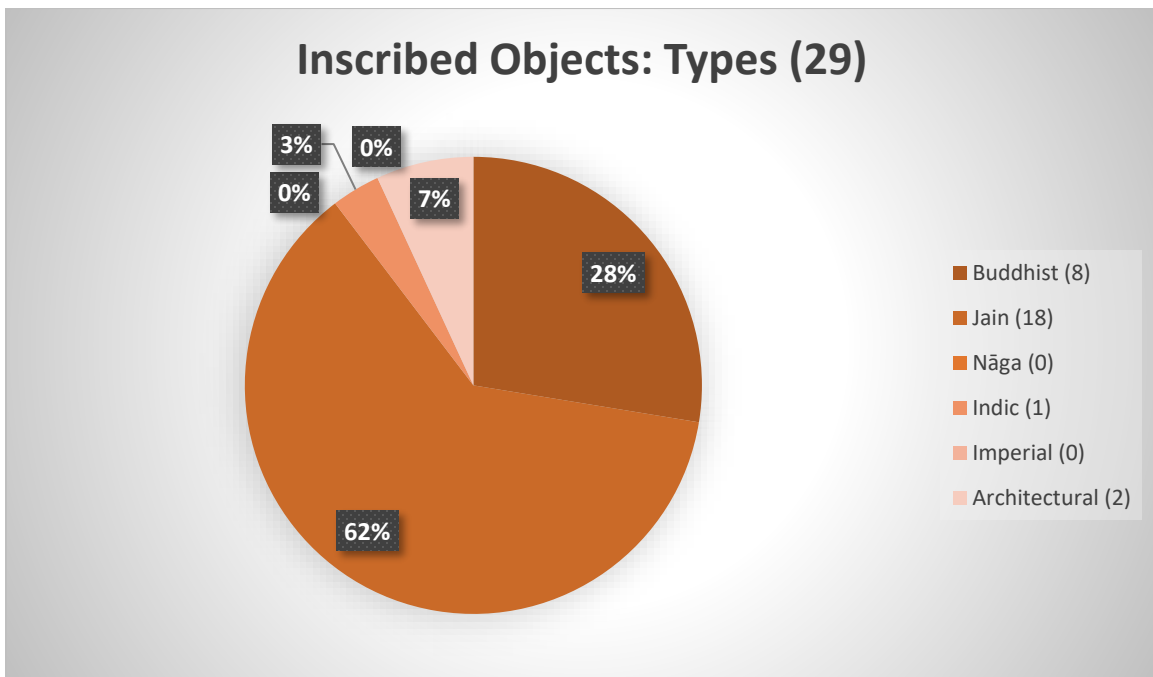
In the first line, the text maintains the Sanskrit genitive ending of *bhikṣu*, *bhikṣoḥ*, rather than the typical EHS *bhikṣusya* used almost exclusively in first century Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, and includes the sandhi between the *visarga* and voiced *dha*. Also, the verb, *pratiṣṭhāpayati*, is given in its full third person singular causative present indicative form, and *vedyāṃ*, “on the raised platform,” is written with the standard feminine locative ending for *vedi*. These linguistic features only appear with any regularity in later Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, and this transition has been used to distinguish between the first and second Kuṣāṇa centuries.¹¹⁵ The paleography of this inscription also shows later types, namely the appearance of the “so-called” eastern or Gupta *ha*, that has pivoted ninety degrees so that the curved right arm faces downwards rather than to the right. Jain inscribed objects also display features consistent with the second century date, not so much in their textual features although these do become more standardized and the list of donors is expanded, but mainly in their stylistic characteristics that almost exclusively display the

¹¹⁵ Damsteegt (1978: 221-3) discusses sanskritization in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, although he does not distinguish between the two Kuṣāṇa centuries.

forward-facing lions on the pedestal first devised during Vāsudeva I’s reign. The four-sided Jina images, also introduced in the reign of Vāsudeva I, are integrated by Jains in Mathurā in Kaniṣka II’s rule.

5.1.1. Types of Inscribed Objects in the Reign of Kaniṣka II.

Similar to the objects donated in the reign of Vāsudeva I, during Kaniṣka II’s rule Jain inscribed objects outnumber Buddhists types by a ratio of eighteen to eight. What might have caused this transfer from Buddhists communities receiving the majority of donations to Jains is a question not addressed in this study, but this pattern persisting over the span of two Kuṣāṇa rulers suggests that this donative shift was not an aberration. For the remainder of inscribed objects from this period there are no Nāga or imperial objects, one Indic image, and two architectural specimens. The graph of the types of inscribed objects donated in Kaniṣka II’s reign is given here (graph 14):



Among the eight Buddhist objects, four are images inscribed in Brāhmī [154, 168, 170, and 181] and four in Kharoṣṭhī [160, 166, 174, and 178], showing an equal distribution between the regions still in Kaniṣka II's control. The Buddhist images with Brāhmī texts written in both EHS and Sanskrit were probably all from Mathurā, although the provenance of one dated to year sixteen is uncertain [170]. What is interesting about this set of objects are the epithets of the Buddha found in two inscriptions. In a Buddha image dated to year (one hundred) fourteen the Buddha is referred to as the Pitāmaha [168], the same designation that occurs in image of the Buddha dated to year ninety-three in the reign of Vāsudeva I [147]. A second image dated to year sixteen, refers to the Buddha as “the Lord *Ditiya Puruṣa*” (*bhagavato ditiya [pu]r[u]ṣasya pratimā*) [170].¹¹⁶ There is a chip in the stone where the word *ditiya* is written, obscuring the exact reading of this word, but, as far as I am aware, there is no parallel for this enigmatic reference to the Buddha in the corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions. The remaining two Buddhist objects are a Bodhisattva installed on a platform (*vedi*) by the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Hummiyaka in the year (one hundred) four [154], and an image of the Buddha dated to year (one hundred) twenty-two installed in the cloak maker's vihāra (*prāvārika vihāre*) [181].

The objects with Gāndhārī texts have been placed in the second Kuṣāṇa century based on their stylistic, linguistic, or paleographic features. The Brussels Buddha [160], now in the Angonshū collection in Japan, is dated to year five and its provenance is unknown. This object shares similar features with the Mamane Dheri Buddha [142] dated to year eighty-nine, namely a seated the Buddha surrounded by a host of worshipers (fig. 14). Based on the common features

¹¹⁶ In the edition of this inscription cited by Shrava (1993: 37, #42) the editor translates *ditiya* as “second,” presumably for Skt *dvitīya*, and leaves *puruṣa* untranslated. I have not found any references to the Buddha that would correspond to “the second person.” The citation for *āditya* in Edgerton's (1953: 93) *BHSD* reads: 1) the gotra name of Śākyamuni's family (=Pali *ādicca*) [Mahāvastu ii.199.16, Pali Suttanipāta 423]; 2) name of a former Buddha [Mahāvastu iii.237.3, 4]. If the initial *a/ā* was originally written but is now missing due to the chip in the stone at the beginning of this word, then perhaps this phrase was intended to mean “the image of the Lord, who is the man from the Āditya (gotra).”

between these two objects, van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1986: 4-6) assigns the Brussels Buddha to the second Kuṣāṇa century in year (one hundred) five of Kaniṣka II rather than Kaniṣka I fifth year.

The remaining three inscribed objects are not images of the Buddha, and based on the paleographic features that resembles the Āra well inscription dated to year (one hundred) forty-one in the reign of Kaniṣka III [189] and their more sanskritized Gāndhārī texts, these objects have been placed in the second Kuṣāṇa century (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1986: 7-8). The three Gāndhārī inscribed objects are found in the southern, western, and eastern extent of what is considered greater Gandhāra, indicating that donors in these areas were, at the very least, aware of the Kuṣāṇa's imperial standing, if not directly under their control. The first object, dated to year (one hundred) eleven [166], is a copper plate from Sui Vihār near Bahāwalpur, Punjab (Pakistan) about 100 km south of Multan that records the donation of a staff (*yaṣṭi*) and an enclosure (*parivara*). Sui Vihār's location far to the south of Gandhāra proper, and the use of a Kuṣāṇa year in the reign of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Kaniṣka indicates that Kuṣāṇa influence, or at least their era, extended into this region in the reign of Kaniṣka II. This might indicate that after losing control of northern trade routes the Kuṣāṇas expanded south to access the lucrative Indian Ocean networks. The second Gāndhārī inscription [174] was discovered at Manikyala, a well-known site in the Rawalpindi district, Punjab (Pakistan) about 60 km southeast of Taxila that was one of the earliest 'excavated' Buddhist sites in South Asia (Cribb 2012: 10). This inscription is engraved on a stone reliquary and records the donation of the Buddha's relics sponsored by a triumvirate of individuals, one of whom constructed the monastery (*navakara[vha]*, Skt *navakarmika*) (Baums 2012: 241). The third Gāndhārī inscribed object from this period, dated to year (one hundred) twenty, is a copper reliquary [178] found in

the Kurram Valley located in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan south of the Khyber Pass. This is a two-part inscription, the first recording a relic donation made by Śveḍavarma and the second supplying a version of the *pratītyasamutpāda sūtra*, “treatise of dependent origination.” The inclusion of this fully articulated Buddhist teaching might indicate that this inscription was composed in year (one hundred) twenty rather than twenty. However, this dating is not definitive and a comparison of its paleographic features to other presumably second Kuṣāṇa century Gāndhārī texts in conjunction with Andrew Glass’ (2000) study of Kharoṣṭhī manuscript paleography is required to properly date these objects.

For the eighteen Jain inscriptions composed in the reign of Kaniṣka II, all are from Kaṅkāli Tīlā in Mathurā except for a seated Jina dated to year twelve found in Ahichchhatra [167]. It is in this period that the four-sided Jina, originally developed in Ahichchhatra, was incorporated into Jain art production in Mathurā, evidenced by three four-sided images installed at Kaṅkāli Tīlā in years (one hundred) five [159], (one hundred) fifteen [169], and (one hundred) eighteen [127]. The fourteen remaining Jina images are depicted standing, sitting, and squatting and all have pedestals with forward-facing lions. Why over the course of Vāsudeva I’s and Kaniṣka II’s rule Jains donated more images than Buddhists is unknown, but what is clear is that Kaṅkāli Tīlā must have housed an impressive sculptural collection by the first half of the third century CE.

There are no Nāga or imperial types of inscribed objects donated during the eighteen-year reign of Kaniṣka II, but there is one Indic object, a Kārttikeya statue donated in the year (one hundred) eleven by the Kṣatriya Viśvala and his four sons [164]. The exact provenance of this image is unknown, but it appears to have been hewn from the same type of stone used for the standing Nāga dated to year forty found at Chaṅgaon, suggesting that they were both produced in



Fig 24: Kārttikeya Image
Photo: Government
Museum, Mathurā

Mathurā, and perhaps in the same workshop. Kārttikeya, the son of Śiva, was a popular deity in the early centuries of the Common Era in South Asia, and his image appeared on Huviṣka’s coins and a temple to this deity was constructed at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa in modern Andhra Pradesh during the Ikṣvāku dynasty ca. 225-325 CE (Mann 2012: 117-8, 171). This image of Kārttikeya is one of the few inscribed objects that depict an “Indic” deity in the Kuṣāṇa period, the others being Kubera and Sarasvatī. Uninscribed images of deities datable to the Kuṣāṇa period still needs to be consulted to fully evaluate the apparent discrepancy between the number of Buddhist and Jain images produced in this period versus those that can be classified as Indic. The Kārttikeya shown here proves that some Kṣatriyas

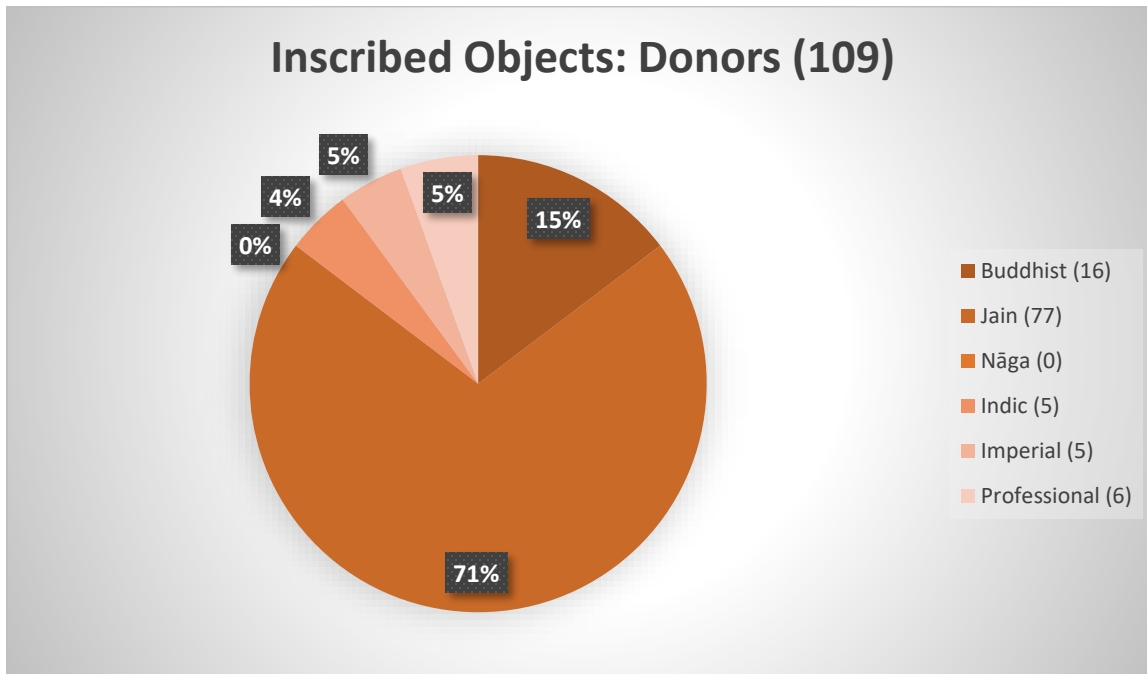
did sponsor the production of Indic images in the Kuṣāṇa period.

There are only two examples of architectural inscribed objects donated in Kaniṣka II’s rule, and both appear to be intended as infrastructural improvements to monastic complexes. The earlier of the two was a tank built at Kaṅkāli Tīlā in year (one hundred) five [156], and this donation would have helped support the increasing number of monastics residing at this complex. The second architectural object is well and a reservoir donated in year (one hundred) eleven [165] at Zeda in the Swabi District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan on the northern side of the Indus River. The Gāndhārī inscription states that this was a pious donation (*danamukho*) commissioned by Hiperecaa in the year of the Lord, the Marjhaka Kaniṣka (*[mu]r[o]ḍasa marjhakasa kaṇiṣka*) (Falk 2009b: 26-7). The reference to this well as a pious donation suggests

that it was constructed for the Buddhist community living at this site, serving a similar hydraulic purpose as the tank built at Kaṅkāli Tīlā for the Jain monastics.

5.1.2. Donors of Inscribed Objects in the Reign of Kaniṣka II.

Although there are only ten more Jain inscribed objects than there are Buddhists, seventy-five Jain donors are mentioned in these inscriptions whereas only sixteen Buddhists donors are identifiable. It seems that, as the number of Jain objects increased so too did the number of lay and monastic donors who participated in sponsoring these donations. In addition to Buddhist and Jain donors, Indic, imperial and professional donors were also active in this period, adding more support to the argument that even though the Kuṣāṇas lost control of Bactria at the beginning of Kaniṣka II's reign, the remaining regions of the empire, namely the areas south of the Hindu Kush continued to prosper. The complete list of all the donors referenced in inscriptions composed during the reign of Kaniṣka II are shown as follows (graph 15):



Since members of the Jain community comprise the largest section of donors we should begin by discussing this group. Among these seventy-seven donors thirty-five are monastics,

eighteen females and seventeen males, and forty-two are lay followers, twenty-three females and nineteen males. Among lay donors, much like the situation in the times of Vāsudeva I, the primary donors were female and males were only mentioned in regard to their relationship to the donor, i.e. husband, father, and father-in-law. It appears that the Jain donative formulas became standardized sometime toward the end of the second century CE, and this might indicate a similar process of monastic institutionalization that was occurring among Buddhists monastic communities identified in chapter four. Possibly, as donations to Jain monastic sites increased there was a need to manage this influx and systematize the process of receiving donations, and this was achieved by having the monk or nun request a donation only from female heads-of-household, who would in turn acknowledge her extended family. The organization required to standardize donative practices is indicative of institutionalization, and would be necessary at Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā where a multitude of images were installed.

The donative formulas in Buddhist inscriptions do not appear to change over the course of the Kuṣāṇa period, as the same structure of date, donor, object, and benediction remains stable. In the reign of Kaniṣka II there are sixteen Buddhist donors, six monastics and ten lay followers. In some sense, the donors mentioned in this set of inscriptions reverses the trend seen in Huviṣka's reign when monastic donations outnumbered those sponsored by the lay community. However, this discrepancy might just be due inscriptions that have survived from this period. It must also be noted that Buddhist donors cited in the reign of Kaniṣka II came from a much broader territorial expanse than the Jain community concentrated mainly in Mathurā. Therefore, although the Jains community in Mathurā flourished in this period, Buddhists casts a much wider religious shadow in the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

The next class of donors is Indic, as there are no Nāga donations made Kaniṣka II's reign. All five Indic donors are recorded in the Kārttikeya statue installed by Viśvila and his four sons Viśvadeva, Viśvasoma, Viśvabhava, and Viśvavasū. In the text, this family are identified Kṣatriyas, and their *varṇa* identification might explain why they sponsored an image of this martial deity (Mann 2011: 120). Father-son co-donations is an interesting feature the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic record, occurring in the pillar bases donated by Vakamīhīra and his son Horamurṇḍaphara in year seventy-seven [122-4], the sons of Sulakṣaka who co-sponsored a Nāga donation in year eighty [127], and the Cāndaka brothers who donated a Nāga image in the year (one hundred) twenty-six [185]. A more thorough study these father-son donations, and co-donations in the Kuṣāṇa period in general, is required to see if they reveal any insights into donative practices at this time.

For imperial donors, there are five officials cited in the reign of Kaniṣka II but four of these come from the Manikyala inscription. The two prominent officials named in this text are the Kṣatrapa Veśpaśi, who must have been ruling this region on behalf of Kaniṣka II, and a figure named Lala [174], who held numerous titles: the “increaser of the Kuṣāṇa family” (*guṣāṇa-vaśa-saṃvardhaka*, Skt *kuṣāṇa-vaṃśa-saṃvardhaka*), a judge (*daḍanaga*, Skt *daḍanāyaka*), and the donation master (*horamurta*) of the Kṣatrapa Veśpaśi (Baums 2012: 240-1). Two additional individuals, Khudacia and Burtia, are mentioned later in the text as comprising a donative triad together with Veśpaśi. One of these figures is identified as the builder of the monastery (*navakarmika*), which might not necessarily be an official position, but since these two individuals are associated with the Kṣatrapa Veśpaśi both have been classified as imperial.

The fifth imperial officer is the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Hummiyaka who installed a Bodhisattva image on a platform in the Sakka vihāra [154]. The fact that the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Hummiyaka's donation occurs first in Kaniṣka II's epigraphic record might not be coincidental, and could signify his appointment of this imperial officer. The title Mahādaṇḍanāyaka first occurs in the Kuṣāṇa period in Huviṣka's reign, and the one governing at this time repaired the royal gallery at Maṭ [45], and either he or another Mahādaṇḍanāyaka installed a Bodhisattva image in his own vihāra [68]. Vāsudeva I's Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Valāna recorded his donation on a stone slab in year seventy-four [94]. Therefore, it might be the case that each Kuṣāṇa ruler appointed their own Mahādaṇḍanāyaka, and perhaps Hummiyaka's donation was meant to announce his position as one of Kaniṣka II's prominent officials. Furthermore, his installation of a Bodhisattva image in a Buddhist monastery would reaffirm the connection between imperial officials and the donative sphere operating at this site.

The last group of donors referenced in the reign of Kaniṣka II are professionals and consist of six individuals. As with the all other ruling periods a caravan merchant [179] and a *śreṣṭhin* [169] made donations, indicating that members of these occupations remained active donors over the entire duration of the Kuṣāṇa Empire for which inscriptions are available. In addition to these prevalent professionals, in a Jain inscribed object dated in year (one hundred) twenty [177] the donor Mītrasiri's father-in-law is identified as an iron merchant (*lohavāṇiya*, Skt *lohavanija*) and her father is the jeweler (*mānikara*) Śrī Jayabhaddi. This is the first reference to either of these occupations in the Kuṣāṇa epigraphic record. The final group who sponsored donations in the reign of Kaniṣka II are often cited cloak makers (Skt *prāvārika*). In this period two cloak makers are mentioned, Hāstin, whose wife Saṃghita installed the Lord Pitāmaha Buddha image in year (one hundred) fourteen [168], and Virasena, whose son donated the Lord

Ditiya Puruṣa Buddha image in year (one hundred) sixteen [170]. It is unclear if these cloak makers are related, or why they included such uncommon epithets for the Buddha in their inscriptions, but cloak makers in Mathurā are the most well represented profession in the corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions.

Donors and the types of objects they sponsored during the eighteen years of Kaniṣka II's reign do not diminish even though it appears the Kuṣāṇa's territory did. Kaniṣka II must have devised ways to maintain Kuṣāṇa authority in his remaining realm, and the donors responded to this imperial stability by continuing to commission the production of images and architectural objects across the political, social, and religious donative sphere. However, this prosperity seems to be short lived, because by the time Vāsiṣka assumes power the diminution of the Kuṣāṇa empire becomes more pronounced.

5.2. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Vāsiṣka.

The epigraphical record of Vāsiṣka is the first tangible evidence for the diminution of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Unlike the relatively abundant epigraphical record of Kaniṣka II, there are only seven inscriptions composed in the reign of Vāsiṣka, ranging from year (one hundred) twenty-two to (one hundred) thirty, ca. 249-57 CE.¹¹⁷ Since there are so few inscriptions composed during Vāsiṣka's eight-year rule we can forego graphing them according to Kuṣāṇa year and charting the types of inscribed objects and number of donors, and instead just evaluate these texts as a whole. Between year (one hundred) twenty-two [182] and (one hundred) thirty [180] there are five inscriptions with Kuṣāṇa era dates: (one hundred) twenty-four [183], (one hundred) twenty-five [184], (one hundred) twenty-six [185], and (one hundred) twenty-eight [186 and 187]. In years (one hundred) twenty-three, twenty-seven, and twenty-nine there are no

¹¹⁷ The three inscriptions dated to year (one hundred) twenty-two could be assigned to either Kaniṣka II or Vāsiṣka, but I have assigned them to Kaniṣka II's rule due to the uncertainty between Vāsiṣka and Vaskuṣāṇa.

inscriptions, and year (one hundred) twenty-eight is the only year in which there is more than one inscribed object. The two donations made in this year consist of a Bodhisattva image found at Sāñcī [186] and a seated Buddha installed in the monastic complex at Jamālpur [187].

As noted previously, the name of the Kuṣāṇa ruler that appears in the inscription dated to year (one hundred) twenty-two [182] is given as Vaskuṣāṇa rather than Vāsiṣka, and this has led some scholars to argue that Vaskuṣāṇa and Vāsiṣka are two distinct Kuṣāṇa kings.¹¹⁸ If this interpretation is correct, then Vaskuṣāṇa inherited the throne from Kaniṣka II in year (one hundred) twenty-two, but quickly ceded control to Vāsiṣka in year (one hundred) twenty-four, when this king's name is mentioned in an inscription on a sacrificial pillar found at Īsāpur in Mathurā [183]. The inscription containing Vaskuṣāṇa's name is on a Śākyamuni image found at Sāñcī, an important Buddhist site about 600 km south of Mathurā in Madhya Pradesh. A second inscription dated to year (one hundred) twenty-eight is also found at Sāñcī [186], and in this inscription Vāsiṣka is cited as the Kuṣāṇa ruler. There are the only two inscribed objects in the entire Kuṣāṇa epigraphic corpus found at Sāñcī, and the fact they are both donated around the same time but reference two different Kuṣāṇa rulers, in my mind, presents two different possible scenarios. First, when Vaskuṣāṇa came to power donors in Sāñcī commissioned a Buddha image that acknowledged the Kuṣāṇa year of this ruler, and then after learning that a new Kuṣāṇa ruler, Vāsiṣka, assumed power sponsored a second donation citing his year of rule. In the second scenario, the donors in Sāñcī were aware that a new Kuṣāṇa ruler assumed power in year (one

¹¹⁸ Falk (2015b: 127, §118) argues that the Kuṣāṇa king named in this inscription, Vaskuṣāṇa, is not Vāsiṣka but rather an independent ruler who had a very short reign. To support his position, Falk cites gold coins with the Greek legend ΠΑΟΝΑΝΟ ΠΑΟ ΒΑΖΟΚΟΠΑΝΟ ΚΟΠΑΝ, which on stylistic grounds belong to a period after Kaniṣka III, and therefore would be the coins of Vaskuṣāṇa's descendent Vaskuṣāṇa II. However, the single piece of epigraphic and numismatic evidence for only Vaskuṣāṇa II and no record of Vaskuṣāṇa coinage casts some doubt on whether Vaskuṣāṇa I ruled between Kaniṣka II and Vāsiṣka.

Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1986: 3), the first person to correctly read the name Vaskuṣāṇa in the Sāñcī inscription, regards Vaskuṣāṇa and Vāsiṣka as one and the same.

hundred) twenty-two, but because Mathurā is quite far from Sāñcī they were unsure about the freshly christened king's name, and therefore Vaskuṣāṇa is either an orthographic variant of Vāsiṣka or a conflation of Vās, the beginning of his name, and Kuṣāṇa, his presumably well-known clan affiliation. The former scenario, that there are two distinct Kuṣāṇa rulers is plausible, but, I believe, the latter scenario, that Vāsiṣka and Vaskuṣāṇa are the same ruler, is equally plausible. In this corpus of inscriptions, rather than fragmenting the Kuṣāṇa dynasty, Vaskuṣāṇa is taken as an alternative name for Vāsiṣka who assumed power in (one hundred) twenty-two, however two distinct Kuṣāṇa Kings with a similar name ruling two years apart is still possible.

The types of inscribed objects composed during Vāsiṣka's eight-year reign consist of three Buddhist images, one Jain image, one Nāga stone slab, one Indic pillar, and one architectural object. As for the three Buddhist images, a standing Buddha and a Bodhisattva were found at Sāñcī [182 and 186], and a third was installed at Jamālpur [187]. All that remains of this last inscription is Vāsiṣka's name and the year twenty-eight, and the donor's name is missing. The single Jain inscribed object is dated to year (one hundred) twenty-five [184]. Only the pedestal with forward-facing lions is preserved, and the inscription does not specify what figure is depicted.

The two most interesting inscribed objects from the reign of Vāsiṣka are a stone slab dated to year (one hundred) twenty-six [185] that records a donation to the Nāga Lord Dadhikarṇṇa and an Indic sacrificial pillar donated in year (one hundred) twenty-four by the Brāhmaṇa Drona [183]. Both objects have been referenced before, but can now be described in more detail. Lord Dadhikarṇṇa appears in a couple of contexts, the first on the pillar base [99] donated by the priest of his shrine, Devila, and second on an undated Nāga image pulled from

the Yamuna River that only contains this Nāga Lord's name [253]. The provenance of this stone slab tells us that his shrine was located at Jamālpur, presumably near the Huviṣka vihāra, and the text shows that he was worshiped by the Cāndaka brothers, who were the sons of the actors of Mathurā. This inscribed stone slab is important because it shows a close connection between the Nāga cult and Buddhists as well as providing another segment of professionals who made donations in the Kuṣāṇa period.

The Indic inscribed object is also of particular interest. This object is a large sacrificial pillar (*yūpa*) installed in year (one hundred) twenty-four by Rudrila, the son of the Brāhmaṇa Droṇala at Īsāpura in Mathurā. The text is written in standard Sanskrit, making it datable to the second Kuṣāṇa century, and, in addition to recording the donation of the pillar, documents a sacrifice lasting twelve nights (*sattre[ṇ]a dvādaśar[ā]ttreṇa*) and in the conclusion of the text praises the (three) Fires (*priyantām=agnay[h]*) (Lüders 1961: 126, §94). The features contained in this text, from the language used to the ceremonies performed, provide some of the only information available for how Brahmins lived, what language they used, and the practices they performed in the Kuṣāṇa period. This pillar donation, together with the pillar inscription that records the establishment of the merit-hall in year twenty-eight of Huviṣka [50] shows that a Brahmanical community existed in Mathurā in the early centuries CE, even though these groups were not actively donating images to the same extent as their Buddhists and Jains counterparts.

The final inscribed object belongs to the architectural class, and is a well excavated at Kamra, near Cambellpur, Punjab (Pakistan) dated to year (one hundred) thirty [188], and is the last year attributable to Vāsiṣka's reign. The donor's name is missing from this text, but what is of more importance to the narrative of imperial diminution for this stage of the Kuṣāṇa Empire is the reference to Vāsiṣka that reads "...the Great King, King of Kings, the Great savior, the

Victorious, the detria?, he who is his own army..., who is honored by the army of the Great King, the Righteous, the Devaputra Vāsiṣka, the Kuṣāṇa, (who is honored? by) gods and men... (...maharajasa rajatirajasa ma[ha](tasa) tratarasa jayatasa detriatasa svayabalasa maharajasa śpala-sakari[ta](sa dhra-)mathidasa devaputrassa vazeṣkasa guṣanasa debamanuśasa(m)p(r)aḍi...)” (Falk 2009b: 27-8).¹¹⁹ This exceedingly inflated list of epithets seems to contradict the minimal amount of epigraphic evidence for this ruler, a situation that Falk (2009b: 27) argues results from “the number of titles used by the Kuṣāṇas and the magnitude increase in diametric opposition to their actual political power.” A similar inflation of epithets occurs in the single well inscription of Kaniṣka III dated to year (one hundred) forty-one [189], indicating that the Kuṣāṇas continued to project their imperial status even in the face of their diminishing power.

Most of the donors mentioned in the inscribed objects produced in the reign of Vāsiṣka have been discussed. The most striking fact is that although there is a relatively broad spectrum of donors represented in the reign of Vāsiṣka donors, there is no record of donations made by Buddhist monastics, imperial officials, and the typical professionals, such as caravan leaders, *śreṣṭhins*, and cloak makers. The donors who are mentioned include three lay Buddhists, seven Jains that are cited in one donative text (four lay followers and three monastics), two Indic donors, Rudrila and his father Droṇala, and sons of the actors of Mathurā.

The seven inscriptions composed in the Vāsiṣka’s reign reveal very little about what transpired over these eight years. The Kuṣāṇas apparently had some influence in Sāñcī, based on the two inscriptions from there that used the Kuṣāṇa era in their dating formula, but the inconsistent spelling of this ruler’s name might indicate that the donors in this region were not

¹¹⁹ The epithet *svayabala* also occurs in a Gāndhārī inscription on a stone slab found at Endere in Xinjiang, China (Salomon 1999b: 5-6).

very integrated into the empire. Focusing just on inscribed objects from Mathurā and removing the two Buddhist donations at Sāñcī and the well from Kamra, there are only four donations made over the Vāsiṣka's seven-year rule, one each from the Buddhist [187], Jain [184], Nāga [185], and Indic [183] communities. This suggests that, although all the religious communities received patronage in Vāsiṣka's rule, no single group appears to be thriving. The single Gāndhārī text that mentions Vāsiṣka shows that donors continued to acknowledge the Kuṣāṇa's authority, but the long list of royal epithets suggest that their actual power might not align with their royal-self representation. Overall, this minimal amount of epigraphic evidence for Vāsiṣka's rule points to the diminution of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

5.3. Inscription Composed in the Reign of Kaniṣka III.

The single inscription for Kaniṣka III is a Gāndhārī text composed on a stone at Āra (near Bagh Neelab, Attock District, Punjab (Pakistan)) that records the donation of a well in year (one hundred) forty-one [189]. Year (one hundred) forty-one of the Kuṣāṇa era equates to 268 CE, and this late date, along with the reference to his father Vāsiṣka means that Kaniṣka III can be easily differentiated from Kaniṣka I and Kaniṣka II. Since this is the only dated inscription for this Kuṣāṇa king, there is no way to determine when in the eleven years that elapsed from Vāsiṣka's last recorded year of rule in (one hundred) thirty to year (one hundred) forty-one Kaniṣka III assumed the Kuṣāṇa throne. Likewise, when his successor Vāsudeva II came to power is also unknown. The epigraphic evidence for what exactly transpired in this period is mostly silent, which signifies the ebbing of the Kuṣāṇa's authority.

The epithets associated with Kaniṣka III in this inscription suggest that the donor Samadavhara, one of Toṣapuriya's sons, was aware of Kaniṣka III's position as a Kuṣāṇa king. However, as seen in well inscription composed in Vāsiṣka's reign there might be a discrepancy

between how this ruler conceived of his power and his actual authority. The entire first line of inscription is dedicated to Kaniṣka III, who is referred to as “the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra, the Caesar, the son of Vāsiṣka, Kaniṣka (*maharajasa rajatirajasa devaputrasa kaiśarasa vazeṣkaputrasa kaniṣkasa*)” (Falk 2009b: 29, 2.4). In addition to the typical royal Kuṣāṇa epithets is the term *kaiśara*. The reading of this word and its interpretation as Caesar is uncertain, but if it was meant as a self-aggrandizement employed by Kaniṣka III to mimic his Mediterranean compatriots, then this would correlate well with the flattering string of titles adopted by his father. However, since this inscription is dated to 268 CE, a time when the Roman Empire was besieged by a succession of soldier emperors, perhaps Kaniṣka III’s inclusion of this term did inadvertently reflect his tenuous position.

Besides the well inscription providing a clear line of succession between Vāsiṣka and Kaniṣka III, this single text reveals very little about Kaniṣka III’s reign. Yet, the impetus to excavate this well in year (one hundred) forty-one might provide evidence for climatic changes in Gandhāra in the later half of the third century CE. In the collection of dated but unnamed Kuṣāṇa inscriptions three other wells donations might have been made around this time, one dated to year thirty-nine and two dated to year forty. The well inscription dated to year thirty-nine was found at Spinwam [201] in North Waziristan, while the two well inscriptions dated to year forty were found at Swabi [202], located about 80 km north of Āra up the Indus River and at Shakardarra [203], about 180 km to the southwest of Āra. None of the inscriptions contain the name of the either Huviṣka or Kaniṣka III, who would have been ruling at these dates, so it is uncertain if these wells were donated in the first or second Kuṣāṇa century. If the four wells were donated in the second Kuṣāṇa century, then they all would have been excavated two years apart at places that shared a similar climatic zone, namely one dependent on the seasonal

monsoon. Wells hold water, and if these four were dug in close succession and in relative proximity, then perhaps this is an indication of some sort of prolonged drought. Droughts, and other natural calamities, put certain stresses on political formations in the form of declining food production that leads to civil unrest. In looking for internal triggers for the diminution of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, then perhaps environmental factors need to be considered. In the future, as environmental studies on the climate of early historic Pakistan become available (or are already available but not consulted), this would provide an opportunity for epigraphists and environmental scientists to collaborate, and generate a better understating of the later period of the Kuṣāṇa empire, a time when it was apparently diminishing.

5.4. Unnamed and/or Undated Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions.

Including the unnamed and undated inscriptions composed in the Kuṣāṇa Empire provides a more accurate picture of the donative activity over the course of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. There are one hundred four inscribed objects in this category, eighteen that have dates but the name of the Kuṣāṇa rulers is missing and the remaining eighty-six are missing both a date and a name. For the eighteen dated inscriptions, twelve are written in Gāndhārī and six in EHS, and for the eighty-six unnamed and undated inscriptions one is a Gāndhārī text and eighty-five are in EHS. Obviously, there are certain constrains as to what information can be extracted from these texts, especially in the cases where only fragments remain. However, evaluating inscriptions that do contain dates, albeit without knowing if they were composed in the first or second Kuṣāṇa century, supplements data extracted from the dated and named inscriptions. Similarly, inscriptions in which a Kuṣāṇa ruler's names and date are missing should not be grounds to exclude them from Kuṣāṇa epigraphical corpus, especially when it is clear that they were composed in the Kuṣāṇa period. In the future, both the dated and undated inscribed objects can

be correlated with uninscribed objects of the Kuṣāṇa period to better assess the overall amount of donations made at this time and what communities received them. This section will first focus on the eighteen dated objects and then provide a survey of the types and donors of all of the unnamed and/or undated objects.

Among the dated but unnamed inscribed objects, the three well inscriptions [201-3] dated to years thirty-nine and forty have already been discussed. The remaining fifteen objects span the Kuṣāṇa years twelve to seventy-four, and could be in either the first or second Kuṣāṇa century. The earliest dated object is a pot [190] that contained a cache of Gāndhārī scrolls, referred to as the Senior collection named after its owner Robert Senior. The year twelve on this pot provides a date for when these manuscripts were buried, corresponding to 139 or 239 CE and proving that Buddhist Gāndhārī manuscripts were being composed in the Kuṣāṇa period (Salomon 2003: 77). There are also a series of dated but unnamed reliquaries, the Mitravarma Reliquary [192] dated to year twenty, the Saṃghmitra reliquary [194] dated to year twenty-eight, and a reliquary donated by Budhapriya [204] along with four other co-sponsors dated to year forty-four, all with Gāndhārī inscriptions presumably donated in the Kuṣāṇa period. These objects, in combination with an incense burner [193] dated to year twenty-four and the Buddha's begging bowl [205] dated to year fifty-one and both containing a Gāndhārī inscription, increases our understanding of the types and quantities of Buddhist donations made in Gandhāra during the Kuṣāṇa period.

Another set of inscribed objects that have dates but are unnamed consist of five Jain images dated from years thirty-one to thirty-five [195-9]. The features of these Jain images, namely the forward-facing lions on the pedestals of four images and one four-sided image, suggests a second Kuṣāṇa century date. However, since the last date for Vāsiṣka's rule is year

(one hundred) thirty and the only known date for Kaniṣka III is year (one hundred) forty-one there is no way to determine which Kuṣāṇa was ruling when these objects were donated. If they were from the first Kuṣāṇa century they would all belong in the reign of Huviṣka, and this would make us reconsider when forward-facing lions began to appear on the pedestals of Jain objects.

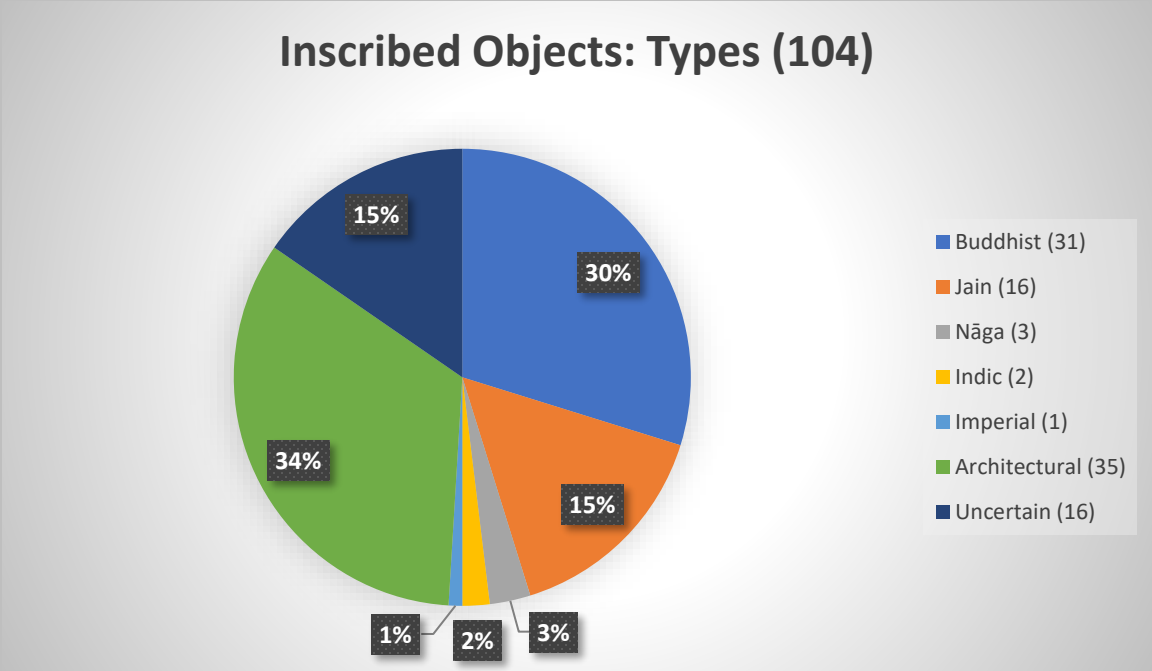
An inscription on a seated Buddha found at Mathurā dated to year thirty-six [200] is interesting in relation to Kuṣāṇa history. All that remains of this text is the date, year 36, winter month 2, day 10, followed by a name that appears to read “King Yasaga” (*rañ[i]n[o] yasagasa*). If year thirty-six falls in the first Kuṣāṇa century, then there would be an overlap between this king and Huviṣka. However, we do know that there was some type of political turmoil in the early stages of Huviṣka’s reign, so perhaps a local ruler emerged and installed this Buddha image at a monastic site in Mathurā. A similar situation could have transpired in the second Kuṣāṇa century, meaning that in the interim between Vāsiṣka and Kaniṣka II, a date that is unverified but could have occurred sometime around (one hundred) thirty-six, King Yasaga took control of Mathurā and made a donation to a Buddhist community to signify his rule.

The following three dated but unnamed inscriptions are all composed in Gāndhārī and could belong to either Kuṣāṇa century. The Ohind well inscription [206], found near Swabi in the same region as the cluster of wells dated between years forty and forty-one, is dated to year sixty-one, a date which would be at the end of Huviṣka’s reign in the first Kuṣāṇa century or between Kaniṣka III and Vāsudeva II’s reigns in the second. The latest object is the Kham Zakar panel [207], dated to year seventy-four and found at a monastic site near Begram, and this would be associated with Vāsudeva I in the first Kuṣāṇa century or one of the later Kuṣāṇa rulers in the second.

The discussion of these objects does not help to clarify when in the Kuṣāṇa period they were donated, but it does, at the very least, organize them chronologically. In the next two sections the dated but unnamed object will be combined with the unnamed and undated inscribed objects in order to analyze them by their types and donors.

5.4.1. Types of Unnamed and/or Undated Inscribed Objects.

The combined one hundred four objects surveyed here have been classified in the same manner as the dated and named Kuṣāṇa objects, with the addition of the uncertain category for objects too damaged to be securely classified with other types. The most common class of inscribed objects among the unnamed and undated inscriptions is architectural, consisting of twelve railing pillars, five wells, eight figures (five male and three female), three vessels, two pillar fragments, one coping stone, one detached head, and one stone ball. The objects used for construction, the railings, pillars and coping stone, are of particular interest because these types of objects, with the exception of the thirty pillar bases, are almost completely absent from the epigraphic record associated with the Kuṣāṇa rulers. Many of these objects contain only a monogram, most likely the donor's name, and their underrepresentation gives the impression that the majority of donations in the Kuṣāṇa period were religious images. It is true that religious figures depicted in human form became a dominant donative medium in the Kuṣāṇa period, but donations of smaller, and probably less expensive objects, like railing pillars, still occurred. All one hundred one unnamed or undated inscribed objects are provided in this graph (16):

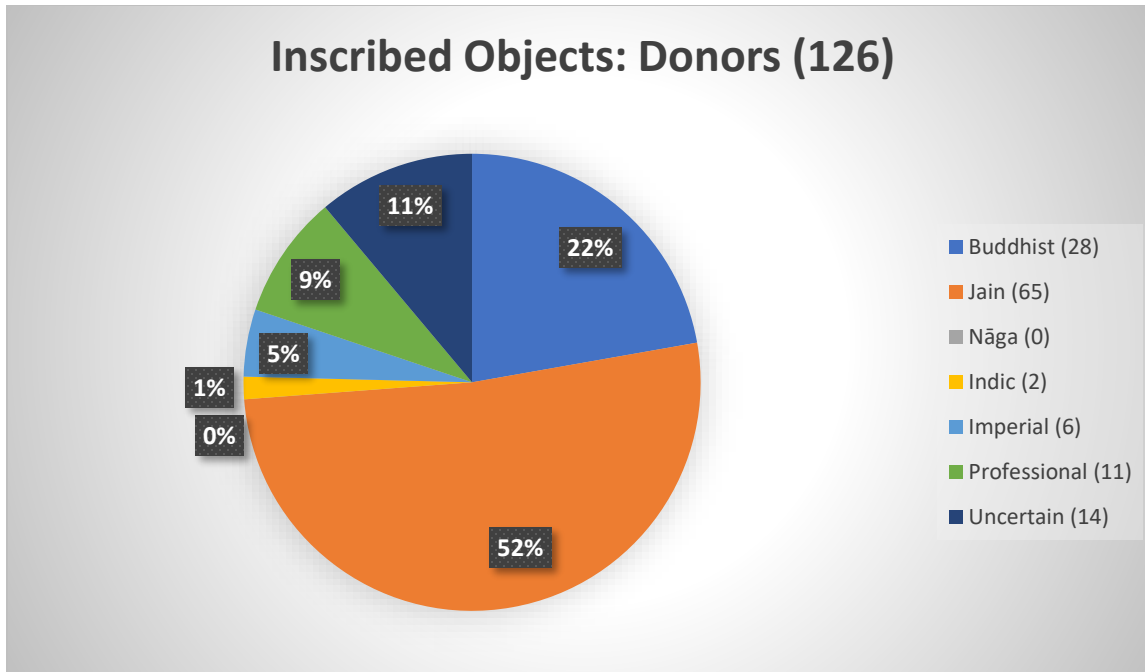


A complete analysis of every unnamed and undated inscribed objects donated during this period would probably entail an entire second dissertation, so the discussion here will serve as a more general survey of the objects with interesting specimens highlighted. The Buddhist types of inscribed objects are comprised of the usual standing and seated images, but two less common donative items are included in these thirty-one objects: a miniature stūpa [237] and a parasol fragment [290]. These objects indicate that not all Buddhist donations were religious figures, namely the Buddha or a Bodhisattvas, and that devotional objects, such as a stūpa were also produced in this period. The parasol would have most likely been placed over a standing Buddhist, as is the case at Sarnath where the parasol shaft is inscribed [20a]. Jain objects, on the other hand, remain very consistent with standing, sitting, squatting, and four-sided figures being the only medium of religious donation and represent a small, but not insignificant amount of these unnamed or undated objects. Among the three Nāga images, one was the image containing the name of Dadhikarṇṇa [253] found in the Yamuna River, a second was found at Chargaon [271], the same location as the large standing Nāga installed in year forty, and the third was

donated by a cloak maker [262], indicating that members of this profession donated to Buddhist and Nāga communities alike. The two Indic statues are Kubera [272-3] images found at Parkham, a site located about 25 km south of Mathurā, and a large Yakṣa figure was also discovered at this location (Lüders 1961: 175-7). The single imperial object is the pedestal that contains the names of the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Yamasahakasa and the Viśvasika Ulāna [260], and has been discussed at many points in this study.

5.4.2. Donors of Unnamed and/or Undated Inscribed Objects.

Jain donors, by the nature of their more elaborate donative inscriptions, represent the largest number of donors during this period, and among the sixty-five Jain donors twenty-seven were monastics (seventeen male and eight female) and thirty-eight were lay followers (twenty-six males and twelve females). The second largest class of donors are Buddhists, and among the twenty-eight recorded on the inscribed objects eight are monastic (seven monks and one nun) and twenty are lay followers (sixteen males and four females). The remainder of the donors are provided in the following chart (graph 17):



The two Indic donors are found, somewhat surprisingly, in an undated Gāndhārī well inscription from Peshawar [121]. This text records the donation of the Brahmin Vasudeva and his son Indradeva, and this is the only example of a Brahmin appearing in Gāndhārī inscriptions. There are six imperial donors found in this body of material, two of whom are familiar, the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Yamasahakasa and the Viśvasika Ulāna. The remaining four imperial donors consist of two Kṣatrapas, one referenced in the Spinwam well inscription [201] and the other on a seated Bodhisattva from Mathurā [223]. The Kṣatrapa Anacpahaka, who donated the well at Spinwam, is further described as the general of the Kuṣāṇa Bhaṭṭāraka [Svāmi?] (*bhaṭarakaṣami[yo?] kuṣaṇasa daḍaṇayadaṣa*), who is the fifth imperial figure (Falk 2009b: 29). The Kuṣāṇa Bhaṭṭāraka [Svāmi?] was either a local official or an actual Kuṣāṇa, but he is not known from any other epigraphic or numismatic evidence, so determining when he governed Spinwam or placing him in the Kuṣāṇa dynastic chronology is difficult. The inscription is dated to year thirty-nine, and if this a first century date he would have been associated with Huviṣka and if in the second century he would have governed in reign of either Vāsiṣka or Kanīṣka III.

The sixth imperial donor is the King Yasaga, about whom we know nothing except that he donated a Buddha image in year thirty-six, or a century after.

Professionals represent the last class of donors, and among the unnamed and undated inscribed objects eleven are identified. The most prolific professional donors in this category, as well as in the entire Kuṣāṇa corpus, are the cloak makers, who account for four [196, 228, 262, and 296] of the eleven donations and these were made to both Buddhist and Nāga communities. A caravan leader [213] and two guild-leaders (*śreṣṭhin*) [210 and 216] are identified in these inscriptions, and members of these two occupations sponsored donations in almost every ruling period of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. The two new professionals cited are an elephant dealer (*hastikara*) dealer named Senaka [210] from Sindh who donated a seated Bodhisattva at Mathurā and a group of Tredevaḍa business partners [203] who sponsored a well at Shakardarra in the Attock district, Punjab (Pakistan).

5.5. Conclusion.

The Allahabad posthumous pillar inscription of Samudragupta (ca. 335-75) composed in the reign of his son Chandragupta II (ca. 375-415) records a list of territories and people Samudragupta conquered and subdued (Fleet 1888: 1-18). One group Samudragupta conquered are called the Daivaputras, and they might be the Kuṣāṇas based on the royal epithet “devaputra” found in many dating formulas (Falk 2010c: 79). This Gupta mark of empire intended to record Samudragupta’s conquest suggests that the Kuṣāṇa’s rule in northern India came to an end around 350 CE, sometime in the reign of Samudragupta. In the narrative of imperial diminution, the epigraphic record demonstrates the trajectory of the Kuṣāṇa’s diminishing influence, with a relatively sustained number of inscriptions composed in the reign of Kaniṣka II, a sharp decline in the reign of Vāsiṣka, and then only a single inscription associated with Kaniṣka III.

This text, dated to 268 CE, is the final mark of empire for the Kuṣāṇas and concludes the narrative of this empire extracted from their inscriptions. With the rise and fall of the Kuṣāṇa Empire outlined and the information from inscriptions composed in this period extracted, the next chapter will zoom out from South Asia and examine the significance of this empire from a world historical perspective.

Chapter 6: Setting the Kuṣāṇa Empire in the World Historical Stage

In 100 CE, a Macedonian merchant named Maes Titianus organized a trading caravan that traveled from Ctesiphon, a city on the Tigris near present-day Baghdad, to a silk market called the ‘Stone Tower’ in the Scythian territory, most likely located at Tashkurgan in the Pamir Mountains between Sogdia and Kashgar. Over the course of this almost 3000 km journey these traders traversed the Iranian Plateau, visited the trading oasis of Merv, and passed through the Kuṣāṇa territory of Bactria. Roman geographers used accounts from Maes’ expedition to document nodes of trade, record geographical features, and trace the overland networks that connected Central Asia to the greater Mediterranean world (McLaughlin 2010: 107-8). This eastern trading expedition occurred at the same time that the Later Han Empire was expanding to the west. In the latter half of the first century CE Emperor Zhang (75-88 CE) sent his general Ban Chao to subdue the nomadic Xiongnu tribes who were threatening China’s borders and in the process annex the entire western region, which consisted of Hexi corridor in the Gansu province and the trading centers on the rim of the Taklamakan Desert in the Tarim Basin located in what is today the Xinjiang province.¹²⁰

The extension of the Later Han authority into the Tarim Basin marked the largest extent of this empire and, more importantly, served to unify the Silk Road from Kashgar to Chang’an.

¹²⁰ The *Hou Hanshu* states that Ban Chao recruited the Yuezhi in his campaigns in the Tarim basin, and after helping to conquer Yarkand, the Yuezhi offered precious stones, antelopes, and lions in return for a Han princess. This request was denied and caused discord between the Han and the Yuezhi. It is unclear if the Yuezhi mentioned in this account were the “Great” Yuezhi who had settled in Bactria and later became the Kuṣāṇas, or were the “Little” Yuezhi, a branch of the Yuezhi who remained in the Tian Shan mountains on the northern rim of the Tarim Basin when the Yuezhi were defeated by the Xiongnu in the early second century BCE. If the Yuezhi cited in this account were in fact the “Great” Yuezhi, this would mean that Kujula Kadphises lent troops to assist in the Han campaign and requested tribute from this Empire (Zürcher 1968: 369-71; Falk 2015b: 95-6, §68-70).

The Han Dynasty is divided between the Former (Western) Han (206 BCE-9 CE) and the Later (Eastern) Han (23-220 CE), and the interlude between these two imperial phases was caused by the usurpation of the Han throne by Wang Mang (Bielenstein 1986: 224-40). Since this chapter focuses specifically on the first through third centuries CE, only the imperial features of the Later Han will be discussed.

With the eastern portion of the Silk Road stabilized by the Later Han, commercial connections with western markets beyond China spurred merchant activity, as attested by Maes' actual caravan journey to the "Stone Tower" and the hypothetical journey from Mathurā to Balkh described in the opening of chapter one. Moreover, the military campaigns conducted by Ban Chao and the trading expedition initiated by Maes Titianus represent the political and economic developments that defined the early centuries of the Common Era, namely the coalescence of empires and the expansion of interregional trade networks.

From the first to third centuries CE, large empires enveloped most of Eurasia and these political formations facilitated the transmission of peoples, products, and ideas from Rome to Mathurā and Chang'an. The Roman Empire in the Mediterranean world, the Arsacid and Sasanian Empires in Mesopotamian and the Iranian Plateau, the Kuṣāṇa Empire in Bactria and northern South Asia, and the Later Han Empire in China were the main polities that emerged during this period, signifying a period of imperial congruency that integrated these geographically expansive regions and culturally diverse landscapes. In economic terms, these interlocking segments of political cohesion provided security for merchants, stimulated production of localized resources, and increased exports to foreign markets that flowed along these commercial networks. This confluence of political consolidation and enhanced commercial enterprise resulted in the formation of the Silk Road. Rather than a continuous highway, the Silk Road consisted of numerous intra-territorial networks maintained by these empires, and the mercantile fluidity between regions was facilitated by these stable entities.¹²¹

¹²¹ For a more extensive discussion on the Silk Road see Liu 2010 and Hansen 2012.

This map shows routes of the Silk Road from the Mediterranean to western China, and a route should be added to this map that connected northern Afghanistan to Pakistan:



Map 6: Trading Routes of the Silk Road
(archive.silkroadproject.org)

The Kuṣāṇa Empire was positioned at the center of these networks of transmission and served as a conduit between the Mediterranean world, South Asia, and China. This chapter investigates the political and economic forces that brought about this period of imperial congruency, and in so doing situates the Kuṣāṇa Empire within this world historical stage. The previous five chapters have focused mainly on the Kuṣāṇa Empire in its South Asian context, with the first chapter laying the historical groundwork of this empire, the second, third, and fifth chapters tracing its phases of initiation, perpetuation, and diminution, and the fourth chapter examining the role of imperial Buddhism. In zooming out beyond the confines of South Asia, the intention of this chapter is to provide a more comprehensive narrative of the Kuṣāṇa Empire and to highlight its significance to both South Asian and world history. The theoretical framework utilized in this chapter that focuses on imperial congruencies is comparative empire.

6.1. Field of Comparative Empire.

Comparative Empire combines the study of empire and situates it within a world historical context. In the relatively recent field of comparative empire, Rome and China have received the most scholarly attention, a situation attributable to historiographical traditions that considered the British Empire as an heir to the Romans and prioritized Chinese dynastic history due to its vast corpus of historical records.¹²² The emphasis on Rome and China at the expense of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and to the same extent the Arsacid and Sasanian Empires, is reflected in *Stanford Ancient Chinese and Mediterranean Empires Comparative History Project*, initiated by Walter Scheidel in 2005. The collaborative project brought together Roman and Han specialists whose stated goal was “to contribute to our understanding of state formation in the ancient Mediterranean and in China” (Scheidel 2009: 8).¹²³ This project devised useful models from which to compare these two early historic empires, but there have been few attempts to apply these concepts outside of their Roman and Han context. This chapter addresses this lacuna.

The comparative approach utilized here will supplement the limited evidence available for reconstructing Kuṣāṇa history by identifying features inherent in all empires and seeing how these features apply to the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Section 6.2 will focus on the concomitant development of the five imperial formations over the course of the first three centuries of the Common Era. I refer to this synchronic comparison as inter-imperial. The subsequent section, 6.3, looks specifically at how the Roman and Later Han empires have been compared, and turns this intra-imperial lens on the Kuṣāṇa Empire. To help structure these intra-imperial

¹²² The association between modern European empires and their Roman antecedents is discussed in Ludden (2011: 132). The predominance of Chinese historical sources in relation to Indian sources on the ancient period is well attested, evident in Chinese sources providing most of what we know about the history of the Kuṣāṇas.

¹²³ A more detailed explanation of goals of this collaborative research project can be found on their website, www.stanford.edu/~scheidel/acme.htm.

congruencies this last section will be divided between the following five themes of empire formulated by Burbank and Copper in their work *Empires in World History* (2010: 11-17):

- 1) 'difference within empires' (managing the diverse cultures through inclusionary or exclusionary techniques).
- 2) 'imperial intermediaries' (networks of allegiances constructed through governmental agents).
- 3) 'imperial intersections' (interactions between competing empires or adjacent powers and the legacy of these relationships).
- 4) 'imperial imaginaries' (concepts and ideologies that shape empires).
- 5) 'repertoires of power' (strategies implemented to build a durable empire).

These themes encompass the multiple internal and external challenges each empire had to navigate over its duration, consisting of the tensions between a centralized polity and peripheral power bases, the struggle to craft heterogeneous societies into an organized imperial conglomerate, and the efforts of balancing imperial agendas with competing social and economic forces. The following section will focus on the big picture of imperial congruencies, and then return to these five themes to narrow the scope of this comparative project.

6.2. Comparative Empire: Inter-Imperial Congruency.

The rubrics of imperial initiation, perpetuation, and diminution used to trace the contours of the Kuṣāṇa Empire fits surprisingly well with the trajectory of their imperial contemporaries over the course of the first three centuries of the Common Era. With the exception of the Arsacid and Sasanian Empire, the first century CE can be characterized as period of imperial coalescence, evident in the Romans transitioning from a republic to an empire, the Later Han recovering from the usurpation of Wang Mang, and Kujula Kadphises crossing the Hindu Kush and beginning his imperial expansion into Gandhāra. During, the second century CE all four imperial polities thrived, and it seems safe to say that the long-distance trading networks that connected these empires played an integral role in the simultaneous prosperity experienced by these empires. After this span of imperial stability, the third century CE witnessed the

dissolutions of empires, with the Later Hans succumbing to internal unrest, the Arsacids being replaced by the Sasanians, the Romans experiencing a tumult of imperial claimants, and the Kuṣāṇas losing control of Bactria. Again, the Eurasian wide imperial diminution transpiring in the third century CE cannot be overlooked, and the resulting decline in external connections between these regions could very well have exacerbated the internal challenges these empires faced. The follow table (3) provides the chronological correspondence for the contemporary empires over the course of these three centuries:

Century (CE)	Roman Empire ¹²⁴	Kuṣāṇa Empire ¹²⁵	Later Han Empire ¹²⁶	Arsacid/Sasanian/Kushano-Sasanian ¹²⁷
1 st	<p>Julio-Claudian Dynasty (27 BCE-69 CE): Augustus (27 BCE -14) Tiberius (14-37) Caligula (37-41) Claudius (41-54) Nero (54-68) Galba (68-9)</p> <p>Flavian Dynasty (69-96): Otho and Vitellius (69) Vespasian (69-79) Titus (79-81) Domitian (81-96)</p>	<p>Kujula Kadphises (ca. 50-90) Vima Takto (ca. 90-113)</p>	<p>Guangwu (25-57) Ming (57-75) Zhang (75-88) He (88-106)</p>	<p>Arsacid Empire (247 BCE-224 CE): Phraates IV (38-3/2 BCE) Phraataces (Phraates V) (3/2 BCE – 2 CE) Orodes III (4-6) Vonones (6-11/2) Artabanus II (11/2-39) Vardanes I (ca. 39-45) Meherdates (ca. 48-51) Vologases I (51-78/9) Pacorus II (ca. 78-110)</p>
2 nd	<p>Nerva-Antonine Dynasty (96-192): Nerva (96-98) Trajan (98-117) Hadrian (117-138) Antoninus Pius (138-61) Marcus Aurelius (161-80) & Lucius Verus (161-69)</p>	<p>Vima Kadphises (ca. 113-127) Kaniṣka I (ca.127-50) Huviṣka (ca.153-89)</p>	<p>Shang (106) An (106-25) Shun (125-44) Chong (144-5) Zhi (145-6) Huan (146-68) Ling (168-89)</p>	<p>Vologases III (ca. 110-47) Vologases IV (147-191/2) Vologases V (ca. 191/2-208)</p>

¹²⁴ Roman dynastic chronology is compiled from www.roman-empire.net.

¹²⁵ For the duration of rule for Kuṣāṇa kings without epigraphic evidence I have used the chronology provided in Jongeward et al. 2015: 4.

¹²⁶ The Han dynastic chronology is found in De Crespigny 2016: 7. The division between the Western (early) Han and the Eastern (later) Han occurred when Wang Mang usurped the Han Dynasty and founded the short-lived Xin dynasty from 9-23 CE.

¹²⁷ For the Arsacid chronology see Dąbrowa 2012: 168-79; for the Sasanian chronology see Daryaee 2012: 188-94, and for the Kushano-Sasanian chronology see Jongeward et al. 2015: 4.

	Commodus (180-92)			
3 rd	<p>Severan Dynasty (193-235): Septimius Severus (193-211) Caracalla (211-7) & Geta (209-11) Macrinus (217-8) Elagabalus (218-220) Alexander Severus (222-35)</p> <p>Period of the Soldier Emperors (235-84): (21 different rulers)</p> <p>Diocletian and the Tetrarchy (284-313): When Diocletian came to power he reunified the Roman Empire after the previous fifty years of instability. In 286 he appointed Maximian as co-emperor, and then in 293 appointed Galerius and Constantius as additional co-emperors, thus establishing the Tetrarchy, or “rule of four.”</p>	<p>Vāsudeva I (ca.191/4-226) Kaniṣka II (ca. 231-49) Vāsiṣka (ca. 249-67) Kaniṣka III (ca. 267-70) Vasudeva II (ca. 270-300) Mahi (ca. 300-5) Ṣaka (ca. 305-335) Kipunadha (ca. 335-50)</p>	<p>Xian (189-234) Xian abdicated his throne in 220, ushering in the Three Kingdoms Period (220-264) that divided China between the Wei, Wu, and Shu-Han dynasties.</p> <p>China was reunited under the Jin Dynasty [Western Jin (265-316) and Eastern Jin (317-418)].</p>	<p>Vologases VI and Artabanus IV (ca. 208-221/2) Artabanus (Ardawan) V (ca. 224)</p> <p>Sasanian Empire (224-651): Pabag (ca. 205/6-220) Ardašīr (224-240) Šāpūr I (244-270) Hormizd I (270-71) Bahram I (271-74) Bahram II (274-93) Bahram III (293) Narseh (293-302) Hormizd II (302-9) Adur-Narseh (309) Šāpūr II (309-79)</p> <p>Kushano-Sasanians (ca. 230-390): Unidentified king (ca. 230) Ardašīr (ca.230-245) Peroz I (ca. 245-70) Hormizd I (ca. 270-300) Hormizd II (ca. 300-3) Peroz II (ca. 303-330)</p>

It is important to note that in many cases the reign of a particular ruler crosses the temporal boundary of a century, so for the following section that compares inter-imperial progression the term ‘century’ can be interpreted as both short and long. For example, Octavian became emperor of Rome in 27 BCE after defeating Marc Antony, but the ramifications of this event carried over into the first century CE, making this a long century. However, the first century CE for the Kuṣāṇa Empire appears short, because Kujula Kadphises did not rise to prominence until almost half of the century had elapsed. With the malleable length of each ‘century’ in mind, the next three sections will use these periods as a template to map inter-imperial congruencies.

6.2.1. Inter-Imperial Congruency: First Century CE.

For the Roman and Kuṣāṇa empires the first century represents a period of imperial initiation, although the Romans had the advantage of almost five centuries of previous state formation that greatly facilitated their imperial transition, while the Kuṣāṇas had to forge their own empire. The Roman Republic (509-27 BCE) transitioned into the Roman Empire (27 BCE-395 CE) with Octavian's defeat of Mark Antony, which both ended the Roman civil war and granted Rome control over Egypt – two events that had profound political and economic impacts on the societies inhabiting the Mediterranean world and northern Europe. Politically, with the conclusion of the Roman civil war Octavian assumed of the title Augustus in 27 BCE and was granted power over both the Roman Senate and the legions stationed in the Roman provinces. These dual civilian and military powers established the centralized structure of the Roman Empire. From an economic perspective, the annexation of Egypt enabled the Roman Empire to regulate the grain market and provided them access to Red Sea ports that were connected with the Indian Ocean trading networks leading to peninsular India. In 14 CE, Augustus' step-son Tiberius was appointed emperor, and this transition of power signifies the ratification of the imperial system that would remain in place for the duration of the Roman Empire (Burbank and Cooper 2010: 25-30). Over the course of the first century CE the succession of Roman emperors, some like Caligula and Nero more (in)famous than others, instituted the *Pax Romana* that encompassed the entire Mediterranean world.

As discussed in part A of this study, the first century CE was the time when Kujula Kadphises initiated the Kuṣāṇa Empire. Kujula's successors, Vima Takto and Vima Kadphises, could be included in this first century extending it up to 127 CE, since all three rulers were responsible for expanding and consolidating Kuṣāṇa power over Gandhāra and northern India.

Since the processes of territorial expansion and political consolidation were covered in part A of this study they will not be repeated in detail here. One point, that in this early phase of empire the Kuṣāṇas reformed their imperial currency, is important as standardizing exchange rates within their empire created a commercial zone that facilitated the movement of goods along the Silk Road.

The historical progression in China during the first century CE unfolded differently from what occurred in the Mediterranean and South Asia, since this region had already experiencing a prolonged period of rule under the Former Han dynasty (206 BCE-9 CE), which formed after the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE) unified China and instituted a totalitarian regime. Rather than founding an empire, the Later Han had to reestablish their control in the beginning of the first century when Wang Mang, a Han general, briefly usurped the throne, establishing the short-lived Xin dynasty (9-23 CE) (Scheidel 2009a: 15-6).¹²⁸ This political interlude represents the division between the Former and Later Han dynasties, and the campaigns in the western regions lead by Ban Chao to subdue the Xiongnu and expand Han influence signifies the reassertion of Later Han power in the late first century CE.

The history of the Arsacid Empire, ruling over the Iranian Plateau and Mesopotamia, does not exactly align with the model of imperial formation or restoration that occurred during the first century CE in Mediterranean, South Asia, and China. The Arsacids emerged in 247 BCE when Arsaces, the head of the Parni tribe, consolidated his rule over the Parthian satrapy located in the northeastern quadrant of the Seleucid Empire near the Caspian Sea (Dąbrowa 2012: 169). For the next two and a half centuries the Arsacids expanded their control over Iran, subdued the

¹²⁸ For a more detailed overview of Wang Mang's career and the history of the Xin dynasty, see Bielenstein 1986.

Elamites and Characenes located on the Persian Gulf, conducted numerous campaigns to annex Armenia, and engaged with the Romans and Greeks for control of Mesopotamia. In 1 CE, after many years of conflict over influence in Armenia, Phraataces (Phraates V) met with Gaius Caesar to work out a truce between these two powers. Phraataces died one year later, and after Orodes III was assassinated in 6 CE Augustus released Vonones, the son of Phraates, from Rome to rule the Arsacid Empire. Many influential figures in the Arsacid Empire resented Vonones' Roman lifestyle and he was deposed in 11/2 CE in favor of Artabanus II (Dąbrowa 2012: 170-5). During his rule a peace deal with the Romans was once more achieved, and Artabanus II implemented a neo-Iranian program that "had as its guiding idea a claim of the Arsacids on the legal heritage of the Achaemenids and their consequent right to lands once belonging to the Persian Empire" (Dąbrowa 2012: 175).

The reign of Artabanus II (11/2-39) and his attempts to draw legitimacy from the Achaemenid past in some ways reflects Guangwu's restoration of the Later Han authority after the Wang Mang usurpation, Augustus' imperial transition in the Roman world, and Kujula Kadphises' establishment of the Kuṣāṇa Empire. In all four cases these rulers asserted, or reasserted, their claims to rule an empire. The fruits of these efforts would ripen in the second century CE across all of these interconnected polities.

6.2.2. Inter-Imperial Congruency: Second Century CE.

Over the course of the second century CE the Romans, Arsacids, Later Hans, and Kuṣāṇas reached an equilibrium between political stability and economic prosperity that perpetuated their respective empires (Goldstone and Haldon 2009: 17-8). For the Kuṣāṇa Empire, this period extended through the successive reigns of Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I, as discussed in chapter three. During this period donations to religious sites proliferated, spurred in part by the

gold and copper coins that circulated in abundance throughout their empire. Kuṣāṇa coins minted by these three rulers are found from as far north as Samarkand and Kashgar and as far east as Bengal and Orissa, indicating that their economic imprint extended beyond their political borders (Mitchiner 2012: 115-7; Sharma 2012: 71-5). Looking at the conditions in the other empires in this century reveals a ubiquitous trend of political stability and economic prosperity.

Throughout most of the second century CE the Roman Empire was governed by the emperors in the Nerva-Antonine dynasty (96-192). This century is referred to as the “Five-Good Emperors” period, during which these emperors instituted administrative reforms to balance power between the emperor and the senate and undertook a series of campaigns to expand their territory. Nerva was appointed emperor in 96 CE after the assassination of the tyrannical and self-styled “master and god” (*dominus et deus*) Domitian, and during his brief rule (96-8) restored order in the empire by pardoning senators accused of treason (*maiestas*) by Domitian (Griffin 2008: 87-9). In addition to granting clemency, Nerva addressed the deteriorating economic conditions resulting from imperial overindulgence by selling imperial possessions and restructuring the oppressive amount of tribute collected from the provinces. These actions earned Nerva the epithet of ‘Mitissimus’, glossed as ‘most gentle’, and his style of governance was emulated by his successors Trajan (98-117) and Hadrian (117-38). With the empire stabilized, Trajan and Hadrian expanded the Roman Empire. Trajan’s notable accomplishment was conquering Dacia, the region north of the Danube River, in 107 (Griffin 2008: 123-8). Hadrian conducted two provincial tours (121-5, 128-32) serving to assert Roman rule in Britain, where he constructed a wall, quelled an uprising in Judaea, and made peace with the Arsacids (Birley 2008: 136-46). The Nerva line ended with Hadrian, and his successor Antoninus Pius initiated the Antonine line and ruled for twenty-three peaceful years, 138-61, when the Roman

Empire did not engage in any large-scale military campaigns (Birley 2008: 149-56). The last great emperor of the Nerva-Antonine Dynasty was Marcus Aurelius, and although the Roman Empire continued to prosper, during his reign wars resumed between the Romans and both the Arsacids and Germanic groups, and Rome experienced internal rebellions that ultimately led to the rise of the Severan Dynasty in 193 (Birley 2008: 165-76).

In China, through the expeditions of Ban Chao in the western regions, the start of the second century saw the Later Han Empire reach its greatest extent. The prosperous economic conditions brought about from this territorial expansion and subsequent control of trade routes are reflected in an essay by Wang Fu (ca. 90-165 CE) that chastised the opulent lifestyle of people living in the Han capital of Luoyang:

nowadays people are extravagant in clothing, excessive in food and drink... at present, the clothing, food and drink, carriages, adornments, and houses of the noble relatives in the capital all exceed even what is prescribed for kings... their attendants, slaves, coachmen, and concubines all wear fine hemp, the thinnest cloth from Yueh, sheer fabrics, fine open-work silk, silk broadcloth, brocaded and embroideries, rhinoceros horn, pearls, and jade, amber and tortoise... being arrogantly extravagant, not only do they usurp the privileges of their rulers, but they brag to each other about it (Ebrey 1986: 610).

This critique of elite extravagance echoes Pliny the Elder's lamentation made a century earlier about the state of the Roman Empire, remarking, "by the smallest computation, India, the Seres and the Arabian Peninsula take 100 million sesterces from our empire every year – so much do our luxuries and our women cost us" (McLaughlin 2010: 160). Wang Fu's observation reveals both the high level of wealth that existed in the Later Han capital and the trade goods, both local and foreign, that circulated in Chinese markets. The transitions of power between Later Han emperors were not nearly as orderly as the Roman lines of succession, but this situation was assuaged by a bureaucracy that could manage state affairs in times of imperial crisis (Loewe 1986: 297-316). For example, upon the death of Huan in 168 CE, the twelve-year-old Ling (168-

89) was named emperor and power struggle occurred between the empress dowager's father Dou Wu and the court eunuchs, culminating with the eunuchs assuming power and ruling on behalf of the child-emperor while Dou Wu and his immediate family committed suicide (Beck 1986: 317-23). Ultimately, this political crisis signaled the waning of the Han dynasty, and in the third century CE after the rule of Xian (189-220) competing warlords usurped control and divided China into three kingdoms: the Wei in the north, the Wu in the southeast, and the Shu-Han in the southwest (Mittag and Min 2008: 348-50).

In the Arsacid Empire, three rulers Vologases III (ca. 110-47), Vologases IV (ca 147-191/2), and Vologases V (ca. 191/2-208) maintained power throughout most of the second century CE. Over the course of these successive reigns, the Arsacid Empire remained relatively stable, especially after Vologases III incorporated the usurper Orodes I (ca. 110) into the Arsacid Empire by allowing him to remain in control of his territory in southern Iran and parts of Mesopotamia (Dąbrowa 2012: 177). This is not to say that the conflicts between the Romans and the Arsacids subsided during this period, and in fact Trajan led a campaign to conquer Mesopotamia in 113 that was followed by another *détente* between the two powers during the reigns of Hadrian and Vologases III (McLaughlin 2010: 97-8). Vologases IV, early in his reign, solidified Arsacid control in Characene and then in 161 renewed tensions with the Romans by attempting again to annex Armenia, sparking yet another conflict with the Romans that concluded in 166 when the Roman army was decimated by a plague and had to retreat (Dąbrowa 2012: 178; McLaughlin 2010: 103-4). Despite these ongoing confrontations with the Romans and efforts to exert their influence in Armenia, the second century CE remained a time of relative stability for the Arsacid Empire.

6.2.3. Inter-Imperial Congruency: Third Century CE.

Almost universally, the third century CE can be considered a period of decline for these congruent empires. This century signaled the end of the Han and the Arsacid empires resulting from internal challenges to their authority. The downfall of the Han was discussed above, and for the Arsacid Empire, its end came when Ardašīr I defeated Artabanus (Ardawan) IV at the battle of Hormozgan in 224 CE. Ardašīr I was the son of Pabag, who founded the Sasanian Empire at Fars in ca. 205-6, and after defeating Artabanus (Ardawan) IV he assumed the title King of Kings (*shāhān shah*) and began his conquest of Iran, “the land of the Aryans” (*ērānshahr*). The emergence of the Sasanians in Iran impacted the fortunes of both the Romans and Kušāṇas. To the west, Ardašīr expanded his empire and by 240 had full control of Mesopotamia and large parts of the Levant (Daryae 2012: 187-9). In Rome, the death of Alexander Severan in 235 ended the Severan line and ushered in the phase of the “Solider Emperors” (235-85), a fifty-year period when twenty-one different figures laid claim to the Roman Empire (Campbell 2008). Šāpūr I maintained Sasanian control in the west by killing the Roman Emperor Gordian III in 243/4, forcing the general Phillip the Arab to pay tribute to the Sasanians, and taking Valerian prisoner, events depicted in Šāpūr I’s rock relief on the cliffs at Naqš-e Rostam near the ancient Achaemenid capital of Persepolis (Daryae 2012; 190; Falk 2015b: 128-9, §119).

Another inscription from the time of Šāpūr I, in this case engraved on the side of the Ka‘ba-ye Zardošt at Naqš-e Rostam in 270, lists the territories that paid tribute to the Sasanians. The Kušāṇa Empire (*kušānšahr*) is mentioned as one of the areas Šāpūr I conquered, and the text states that he invaded as far as Peshawar (*pāškabūr*) (Falk 2015b: 131-2, §124). When the Sasanians conquered Bactria, probably around year 230, they appointed Sasanian princes to administer this newly acquired territory, and these rulers assumed the title Kushan Shah

(KOBANO PAYO) as attested in the Bactrian legends on their coins. From 230 until the Kidarites invaded South Asia from Central Asia in 379, the Kushano-Sasanians controlled Bactria, effectively cutting off the Kuṣāṇas access to the lucrative Silk Road north of the Hindu Kush (Jongeward et al. 2015: 197-8, 227-8). The loss of Bactria put into motion the phase of Kuṣāṇa diminution, and in 320 the Gupta Empire emerged in Pāṭaliputra signaling the end of Kuṣāṇa authority in northern India.

This inter-imperial perspective shows clear parallels between the Roman, Arsacid/Sasanian, Kuṣāṇa, and Later Han empires during the first three centuries of the Common Era. For approximately three hundred years these empires unified vast areas into distinct political, economic, and cultural units, with the second century CE being a time of sustained political stability and economic prosperity. Although each empire occupied specific geographical regions, their congruent imperial trajectories suggests that the rise and demise of these empires was contingent on large-scale political and economic trends. This relationship implies that, from a world history perspective, the empires that emerged in the Mediterranean, Iran, China, and Central and South Asia were not isolated, but rather were affected by historical developments that reverberated across the interconnected regions of Eurasia. With these broad imperial congruencies established, the next section will compare the Roman, Later Han, and Kuṣāṇa empires on an intra-imperial level. The Arsacid/Sasanians will be omitted from this part of this study, but hopefully a scholar more knowledgeable about these two empires can apply my findings to these two imperial formations.

6.3. Comparative Empire: Intra-Imperial Congruency

In this section, the comparative model turns inward to look at how studies on the Roman and Later Han empires can be applied to the Kuṣāṇa Empire. This approach to the history of the

Kuṣāṇa Empire is important because it allows us to look at two empires that are well documented and then compare them with an empire that, due to a dearth of evidence, we know much less about. Section 6.1 introduced two frameworks in which to view empires, namely Scheidel's comparative history project and Burbank and Cooper's five imperial themes. This section will focus on each of Burbank and Cooper's themes individually and utilize the scholarship produced in Scheidel's project and related studies to conduct an intra-imperial comparison of the Roman, Later Han, and Kuṣāṇa empires. Before comparing these empires, it is important to keep in mind that because the evidence for the Kuṣāṇa Empire is limited some of the inferences will be more hypothetical than definitive, and since this is, to my knowledge, the first attempt to compare these three empires much more research will be needed to adequately explain these intra-imperial congruencies.

6.3.1. Difference Within Empires.

This theme refers to the internal organization of empires and how these entities managed the different populations within their borders through processes of inclusion and exclusion (Burbank and Cooper 2010: 11-13). Comparing how the Roman and Han empires included different populations is of vital importance to the study of the Kuṣāṇa Empire since it was composed of Hellenistic Bactrians, Śaka groups in Gandhāra, and sedentary societies in northern India. The Roman Empire, like the Kuṣāṇa Empire, was extremely diverse due to the fact that the Romans controlled regions spanning Britain, North Africa, and Mesopotamia in addition to the multicultural societies inhabiting the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The Romans negotiated these differences by including newly conquered peoples into their empire through citizenship. Becoming a Roman citizen meant enjoying the benefits of Roman law and partaking in the *humanitas*, or “civilized behaviors,” that defined Roman life (Burbank and Cooper 2010:

36-7). Those who rejected, or rebelled against, Roman authority were excluded from the social and cultural benefits of the Roman Empire and subject to military reprisals. Thus, the Romans incentivized inclusivity by mitigating differences. In the Later Han, difference was more binary, divided between those accustomed to imperial life and unified around shared Confucian values and the nomadic peoples living on the western borderlands. This is not to say that the population in China was completely homogenous, but rather that in China there was an imperial precedent dating back almost a millennium when the Zhou rulers (1054-771 BCE) first introduced the concept of the heavenly mandate (*tianming*) (Weizheng 2008: 30). For the Later Han, managing difference simply required including those who accepted the emperor's divine right to rule and excluding those that did not, namely nomadic groups outside of China's traditional borders.

The major difference for the Kuṣāṇas is that they were “foreign” to the regions they incorporated into their empire, thus forced to devise ways to include people into their empire as exclusionary policies were impractical. The Kuṣāṇas fostered inclusivity through toleration, and one indication of this toleration for difference within the Kuṣāṇa Empire was the inscriptions composed in regional languages. It appears the ‘imperial’ language used by the Kuṣāṇas was Bactrian, based on the Rabatak inscription stating it was issued in Greek then put into Bactrian, and Kaniṣka I's substitution of Greek with Bactrian in legends on the obverse of his coins, while still using Gāndhārī on the reverse (Sims-Williams 2004: 56, line 3; Jongeward et al. 2015: 6). There was no attempt to make Bactrian an empire-wide language and exclude these regional languages. In fact, linguistic zones remained differentiated with inscriptions composed in Bactrian, Gāndhārī, and EHS and Sanskrit relegated to the areas in which these languages were used. Furthermore, Kuṣāṇa coinage displays signs of inclusion, most evidently in the limited Buddha and Maitreya coins issued by Kaniṣka I, but this might also be attributable to the

conflation of Wesho/Śiva iconography introduced in Vima Kadphises coinage and the appearance of Kārttikeya, represented as Skanda, Bizago, Kumara, and Mahasena, in a limited number of Huviška's coins (Cribb 1999-2000: 151-89; Bracey 2012: 201-2). By maintaining, or at the very least tolerating, different religious and linguistic traditions the Kuṣāṇas included these diverse cultural groups into their empire.

6.3.2. Imperial Intermediaries.

Imperial intermediaries are the numerous agents who acted as liaisons between the state and society and assisted in connecting the imperial center with its periphery. As empires expand, they grow increasingly reliant on subordinated local intermediaries in order to firmly assemble the vertical links of imperial architecture between rulers and ruled (Burbank and Cooper 2010: 14). Both the Romans and the Han had a relatively centralized empire that employed intermediaries to act on their behalf, but these intermediaries came from different segments of society. For the Romans, the vertical links between the emperor and the people resided in the military. The emperor directly appointed civilian aristocrats as military officials, called *legati*, “who were drawn from the ranks of those senators who had been allowed to hold the higher public magistracies... what secured these positions was, first, loyalty to the reigning emperor and, second, the patronage of those with influence with the emperor or the personal friendship of the emperor himself” (Rosenstein 2009: 39-40). Bonds of loyalty between the landed aristocracy and the emperor ensured, at least ideally, that these elites acted in ways beneficial to the state. Furthermore, the legions were constituted of Roman citizens, meaning people who wanted to enjoy the privileges of citizenship especially those residing in recently conquered regions, could join the military and serve as intermediaries who maintained Roman authority (Burbank and Cooper 2010: 39). By integrating civilians into the military apparatus, the Roman emperors had

a vast host of imperial intermediaries at their disposal. In China, mass armies composed of conscripted soldiers were disbanded after the Qin rulers unified China in 221 BCE and, especially in the Later Han Empire, were replaced by small garrisons that protected the north border against Xiongnu raiders and a corps of elite soldiers to protect the emperor (Rosenstein 2009: 44). The vertical rungs between the emperor and empire were instead filled with highly-trained officials that functioned as intermediaries. These bureaucrats, drawn mainly from landed elites from all areas of the Han Empire, were responsible for maintaining order (Burbank and Cooper 2010: 51).

In the Kuṣāṇa Empire there is no evidence for a large standing army or complex bureaucracy, leaving the question of who served as intermediaries between these rulers and the diverse populations they ruled unresolved. Titles of Kuṣāṇa officials are found in inscriptions as early as the reign of Vima Takto [7], showing that the Kuṣāṇas did have an imperial administration. Some of these titles, such as Kṣatrapa and Mahākṣatrapa, even suggest that the Kuṣāṇa allowed local rulers to remain in power to serve as imperial intermediaries. However, in the entire corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions there are only six references to these local rulers, seemingly too small a number to adequately manage such an expansive empire.¹²⁹ To locate imperial intermediaries in the Kuṣāṇa Empire, it might be more advantageous to look at all the donative sphere and consider this as a conglomerate of people whose personal or business interests aligned vertically with the efforts of the Kuṣāṇas to construct a viable state. The

¹²⁹ The Mahākṣatrapa Kharapallāna and Kṣatrapa Vanaṣpara donated a standing Bodhisattva at Sarnath in year 3 [20a/b], a seated Kapardin Buddha was donated in the property, most likely in Mathurā, of a Mahākṣatrapa [39], the Kṣatrapa Vaśpaśi donated a reliquary at Manikyala in year (1)18 [174], the Kṣatrapa Anacapahaka donated a well at Spinwam [201], and an unnamed Kṣatrapa donated a seated Bodhisattva at the Kaṭrā Mound at Mathurā [223] at an unspecified date.

following table (4) provides the total number of donors mentioned in the corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions:

Donor Affiliation	Kuṣṭhulā Kadphises	Vīma Takto	Vīma Kadphises	Kaniška I	Huviška	Vāsudeva I	Kaniška II	Vasiška	Kaniška III	Total
Buddhist	3			22	28	47	16	3	1	120
Jain					39	47	77	7		170
Nāga					2	1				3
Indic	1				2		5	2		10
Imperial	1	1		8	5	6	5			26
Professional				2	11	5	6	3		27

In this table, the imbalance of imperial donors to those of other classes is apparent. In chapter four, I argued that the Kuṣāṇas utilized a Buddhist public orbiting monastic sites to exert their influence, and if this is the case then the members of this donative sphere could have acted as imperial intermediaries. Although not serving in the Roman military or administrating the Han Empire, this conglomerate of donors were invested in the Kuṣāṇa Empire by being dependent on its political and economic stability. In the context of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, it appears that the vertical architecture, the links that connected the core with the periphery, was occupied by donors and the religious centers that they patronized. Since all members of this imperial conglomerate, from monks to merchants, were intertwined and interacted, then these intermediaries, although not directly employed by the Kuṣāṇa, would still serve the purpose of perpetuating the empire.¹³⁰

6.3.3. Imperial Intersections.

Burbank and Cooper use the theme of imperial intersections to look at how empires related with neighboring powers and the legacy of these empires in subsequent imperial

¹³⁰ Evidence for the type of military apparatus employed in the Kuṣāṇa Empire has yet to surface.

formations (2010: 14-5). In the first centuries of the Common Era, the main imperial intersections occurred between the Romans and Arsacids/Sasanians, the Sasanians and Kuṣāṇas, and the Chinese and Xiongnu on their northwestern borders. However, due to the vast distances involved, direct interactions between all the empires examined in this chapter remained minimal, but nevertheless left a lasting legacy. Merchant, monks, and ministers definitely travelled between regions and exchanged both products and ideas. The Kuṣāṇa Empire sat at the middle of these east-west networks of exchange, and therefore functioned as a conduit between China to the west and the Mediterranean and Iranian worlds to the east. As is often the case, direct evidence Kuṣāṇa interregional connections is almost nonexistent, limited to the imitation Roman coins minted by Kujula Kadphises and possibly his request for a Han bride from Ban Chao. To better evaluate the imperial intersections that shaped this period, this section will focus on trade among regions, external evidence for connections between the Romans and Kuṣāṇa, and the transmission of Buddhism from South Asia to China.

The western trade between the Kuṣāṇa and Roman Empires consisted of silks from China and easily transported luxury goods such as aromatics, spices, and precious jewels from South Asia that were exchanged for Roman gold and silver.¹³¹ Of the two main overland routes between the South Asia and the Mediterranean the first, traveled by Maes' caravan, went from Bactria to the Mediterranean by way of Iran and Mesopotamia, while the second headed north through the Caspian and Black Seas and into Anatolia (McLaughlin 2010: 106-7). However, the bulk of trade between these two regions was conducted in the Indian Ocean, using the cargo capacities of ships and the annual oscillation of monsoon winds that enabled merchants to travel

¹³¹ A more complete list of items imported by Rome is found in the *Alexander Tariff*, a second century CE text that lists fifty-six goods subject to tax, thirty of which are clearly of Indian origin. For a more expansive discussion of items traded between Rome and India, see McLaughlin 2010: 141-55.

between the Red Sea and South Asian ports within a year. The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, a guidebook for Indian Ocean sea-traders composed in the mid-first century CE, states that the port of Barbaricum was situated at the mouth of the Indus river, but the main trading *entrepôt*, Minnagara, was much further inland.¹³² The trade items available at Minnagara were bdellium, lyceum, nard, turquoise, lapis lazuli, seric skins, cotton cloth, silk yarn, and indigo, and traders imported Roman cloth, linens, topaz, coral, storax, frankincense, glass, silver and gold plates, and some wine. The exact location of Minnagara is not known, but reference to it being up the Indus River and its description as “subject to Parthian princes who are constantly driving each other out,” would suggest a place in the vicinity of Gandhāra (Casson 1989: 80-3). Even if Minnagara was situated to the south of Gandhāra rather than being one of the main cities such as Taxila, this important trading center would still have been a major node that connected the Kuṣāṇa Empire to the Indian Ocean trading network.

To the east, the main product driving trade between South Asia and China was silk, but additional commodities imported by China were coral, pearls, glass beads and aromatics, all of which, according to the essay penned by Wang Fu, were readily available in Chinese markets. One product in particular, red coral harvested in the Mediterranean, was extremely prized in China, and the most convenient way for this item to travel from west to east was through South Asia, or more specifically Kuṣāṇa territory (Liu 1988: 54-7). The interregional connections established by these trade networks led to diplomatic relations between the Romans and Kuṣāṇas and the spread of Buddhism into China.

The earliest evidence for a meeting between Romans and Indian ambassadors is found in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, a posthumous inscription that details the life and deeds of the first

¹³² The mid-first century CE date for the composition of the *Periplus* is based on references to the Nabataean king Malichus II who ruled between ca. 40-70 CE (Casson 1989: 7).

Roman Emperor Augustus. Chapter 30 of this 35-chapter text states that, “embassies of kings were dispatched to me from India many times; these had never before this time been seen in the presence of a Roman leader” (Cooley 2009: 97). Augustus ruled from 27 BCE-14 CE, too early for these Indian visitors to be associated with the Kuṣāṇas, but this reference does indicate a connection between Rome and India, although the exact point of origin for these envoys is not specified. A second Indian embassy visited Rome in 107, supposedly invited to attend Trajan’s victory celebration in the Dacia Wars. As in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, the meeting recounted by Dio Cassius does not specify where these Indians originated, meaning they could have been dispatched from the Kuṣāṇas court or some other South Asian kingdom (McLaughlin 2010: 128-9). Year 107 aligns with the rule of Vima Takto, a period when the Kuṣāṇas were expanding their authority into northern South Asia, and perhaps part of this imperial expansion included sending envoys to Rome. Two other rulers from Nerva-Antonine dynasty, Hadrian (117-138) and Antonius Pius (138-61), are also stated to have met with emissaries from the India, and in both cases these envoys are referred to as the “kings of Bactria” (McLaughlin 2010: 128-31). These envoys were likely Kuṣāṇa officials since Bactria was part of the Kuṣāṇa Empire and Hadrian and Antonius Pius’ respective reigns and coincide with the reigns of Kaniṣka I and Huviṣka, when the Kuṣāṇa Empire was at its peak.

Shifting to the east, the traders from South Asia who travelled and settled in China brought more than just goods, but also Buddhism. The initial expansion of Buddhism into China is difficult to pinpoint, but Chinese literary references suggest that Buddhist concepts disseminated into China by the first century CE, presumably brought by merchants from India, Gandhāra, and Central Asia who formed permanent trading enclaves in Chinese urban centers.¹³³

¹³³ The *Houhan ji*, written in the 4th century CE, quotes an edict dated to 65 CE that allowed the imperial Prince Liu Ying to voluntarily redeem himself from punishment. In this passage, one of Liu Ying’s virtuous actions

The first direct evidence available for the transmission of Buddhism into China comes from the Buddhist texts translated into Chinese by the Parthian (Anxi) An Shigao, who settled in Luoyang in 148.¹³⁴ Approximately twenty years after the arrival of An Shigao, the Yuezhi monk Lokakṣema arrived in Luoyang, and from 168 to 188 he, along with a cadre of local and foreign collaborators, translated eleven Buddhist texts into Chinese (Harrison 1987: 68-72; Nattier 2008: 73-89). A third notable foreign transmitter of Buddhist texts in the second century CE was An Xuan, also referred to as a Parthian (Anxi), who arrived in Luoyang towards the end of Emperor Ling's reign, 168-190 (Nattier 2008: 89-94). His co-translator was Yan Fotiao, a disciple of An Shigao, and this teacher-student relationship indicates that Buddhist monasteries had become established in China by the end of the second century CE, a development that had a profound affect on Chinese history and culture.

In comparing the types of encounters occurring between the Roman, Han, and Kuṣāṇa empires during the second century CE, there appears to be a correlation between increased interactions and imperial prosperity. In the west, Kuṣāṇa envoys met with Roman emperors and in the east Buddhist monks introduced this religion into China. These interconnections directly resulted from the interregional trade networks that each respective empire maintained.

6.3.4. Imperial Imaginaries.

The theme of imperial imaginaries takes into account previous political manifestations to “understand the kinds of social relations and institutions that were conceivable or plausible in

is his Buddhist faith (Zürcher 1972: 19). The *Sūtra in Forty-Two Sections* was thought to be the first Buddhist text translated into Chinese in 67 CE, but recent scholarship has shown that the recension of this text was most likely later than the first century (Zürcher 1972: 28-31; Nattier 2008: 35-7).

¹³⁴ The two main biographical compendia of early Buddhist texts are the *Chu sanzang ji ji* by Seng-you published in 515 CE and the *Gao-seng zhuan* by Hui-jiao compiled around 530 CE. Although both works were composed well after these events transpired, the dates given in these biographies of Buddhist translators are based on the colophons found in the texts (Zürcher 1972: 10; Nattier 2008: 11-13). For a detailed examination of the texts associated with An Shigao, see Nattier 2008: 44-72.

specific situations” (Burbank and Cooper 2010: 16). Both the Roman and Later Han empires were modifications of previous political models, and the concurrent formation of these empires is what Scheidel (2009a: 13) terms the “Great Convergence.” As laid out by Scheidel, the Roman and Han empires developed from opposite ends of the imperial spectrum and converged on a model of empire that shared many common features. For the Romans, the imperial trajectory converged from the decentralized Roman Republic, reliant on aristocratic families to maintain order through the Senate but lacking a single central unifying figure, to the more centralized Roman Empire in which political and military power was invested in the emperor. The Han empire developed in the opposite direction, converging from the highly-centralized Qin dynasty where all political and military power was granted to a single emperor (Shi Huang) to a more decentralized state that returned power to the landed elites and implemented an organized bureaucratic structure (Scheidel 2009: 13-20). These imperial dynamics of decentralized to centralized in the Roman world and centralized to decentralized in China converged into a ‘normalization’ of state control in which, “both empires were divided into around 100 provinces with separate civilian and military leadership that were in turn supervised by about a dozen inspectors... the central administration was organized around a number of ministries; the ‘inner court’ and its agents... [and] gradually gained influence relative to formal state institutions...” (Scheidel 2009: 18). Scheidel suggests that this normalization is the imperial mean that large-scale polities naturally drift towards, predicated on an equilibrium between the pull of the center and the push of the periphery.¹³⁵ These opposing trajectories converging on a normalized imperial structure are an effective way to reexamine the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

¹³⁵ Scheidel’s theory of imperial ‘normalization’ is similar to Goldstone and Haldon’s (2009: 17-8) concept of an imperial equilibrium that perpetuates empires discussed in the beginning of chapter 3.

In applying the concept of ‘normalization’ to the Kuṣāṇa imperial context the first question is, “what is normal?” To begin to answer this question requires distinguishing between a normal state of affairs in the South Asian context and what the Kuṣāṇas might have considered a normalized balance of power. Looking specifically at Gandhāra and northern India, it could be argued that empires are an anomaly, and that the trend in these regions leans towards numerous localized polities. Prior to the emergence of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, the only imperial model available is the Maurya Empire, which dissolved around 186 BCE, approximately two hundred years before the arrival of the Kuṣāṇas (Thapar 1961). In northern India in the post-Maurya period the Śuṅgas appear to have maintained order for brief period before fractionalized polities emerged around urban centers. A similar situation existed in Gandhāra, where the Indo-Greeks followed by Śaka migrants achieved brief periods of political consolidation, but for the most part their power remained fragmentary and was constantly challenged by incoming groups (Chakravarti 2016: 181-8). These conditions in South Asia reflect the decentralized state of the Roman Republic more so than the centralized Qin dynasty that preceded the Former Han Empire, and would lead to the hypothesis that the Kuṣāṇas implemented a degree of centralization to achieve a normalized empire.

However, by examining what the Kuṣāṇas themselves might have considered a normal state might lead to a new perspective of the mechanics of this empire. The Romans and the Hans both modified previous manifestations of state organization in constructing their empires; the Romans centralizing the republican model and the Han decentralizing the Qin. For the Kuṣāṇas, their conceptions of statecraft would most likely reside in their nomadic past. It is difficult to say with any accuracy how “nomadic” the Kuṣāṇas were after their Yuezhi ancestors had been inhabiting Bactria for about two centuries and presumably had become more accustomed to a

sedentary lifestyle. However, Kaniṣka I certainly dressed the part of a nomadic chief (fig. 1). If the concept of a pastoral nomadic state still existed within the Kuṣāṇa worldview, then perhaps they applied this political outlook to their empire.

Scholarship on pastoral nomadic states has greatly advanced from presenting them as ambiguous groups inhabiting the fringe of civilized societies to appreciating the complex political, social, and economical bonds that unified these groups. William Honeychurch (2014) has laid out the theoretical frameworks and analytical categories that have traditionally segregated nomadic communities from their more settled neighbors, and suggests that these societies were organized around flexible polities rather than rigid states. Because of the inherent mobility of pastoral societies they developed more flexible, but no less complex, organizational structures that oscillate “between centralized and decentralized forms of authority,” serve as an “exceedingly realistic approach to integrating a large-scale complex polity,” and employ “strategic methods of control that required limited expenditure and act as deterrents or incentives (i.e. probabilistic control) rather than as directives enforced by constant monitoring (i.e. determinative control)” (Honeychurch 2014: 295). Recognizing that this flexible type of statecraft was normal for the Kuṣāṇas allows for an alternative interpretation for their imperial structure outside of the centralized/decentralized model applied to the Roman and Han empires.

In a flexible political environment, a nomadic state was more comfortable in utilizing alternative arenas in which to impart their authority, and could therefore employ not only political agents but also social and religious actors as components of their imperial architecture. Buddhist monastic centers, along with their accompanying donative spheres, were pervasive throughout Gandhāra and northern India, and could perform the same intermediary services that the military and bureaucracy did for the Roman and Han empires. The Kuṣāṇas, rather than

requiring religious institutions and social elites to submit to their rule, could harness them in order to craft an organized and stable empire. Religious and trade networks that existed in Gandhāra and northern India prior to the arrival of the Kuṣāṇas offered a wider range of vertical relationships than either local rulers or their small cadre of imperial officials. Through a more fluid organization of political, social, and religious intermediaries, the Kuṣāṇa Empire would be both centralized, in so far as these agents were integrated into the empire, and decentralized, in so far as these agents remained independent of the state. What the Kuṣāṇas considered normal in regard to how they structured their empire is still uncertain, and more definitive answers will require further research, but employing a more flexible model of nomadic state organization will get us closer to understanding how these rulers were able to initiate and perpetuate their empire.

6.3.5. Repertoires of Power.

Repertoires of power relates to the “variable political forms” empires implemented to manage differences, utilize intermediaries, interact with other empires, and enact their imaginaries (Burbank and Cooper 2010: 16). This concept embodies the four previous imperial themes identified by Burbank and Cooper and is a fitting way to conclude this chapter on imperial congruencies. Each empire that we have encountered employed distinct repertoires of power to confront, and overcome, internal and external obstacles to their rule. The Roman Empire maximized its control over the Mediterranean Sea, integrated civilian and military systems, and centralized power around a single emperor. The Later Han Empire inherited an imperial system from their Zhou and Qin predecessors, had defined geographical boundaries that distinguished them from their nomadic neighbors, and employed a large contingent of scholar-bureaucrats to manage state affairs. The Arsacids and Sasanians both maintained control over their Iranian homeland and used their Achaemenid pedigree to legitimize their rule (Shayegan

2011). The Kuṣāṇas, on the other hand, had no previous political model from which to base their empire, controlled a territory that spanned three distinct geographical and cultural regions, and seemed to have operated with a minimal administrative apparatus. To overcome these challenges, the Kuṣāṇas had to devise new repertoires of power to include the diverse populations within their empire, generate loyal intermediaries, and balance their flexible nomadic past with the more rigid requirements of empire building. What this study has shown is that the Kuṣāṇas succeeded in meeting these challenges and constructed a thriving empire.

The three centuries of imperial congruency demonstrate that all of these empires effectively employed repertoires of power. From the Mediterranean Sea to the Iranian plateau and the plains of the Yellow and Ganges rivers, these four imperial formations developed ways to organize themselves internally that in turn facilitated external interactions. Conversely, as people, products, and ideas flowed among these empires they all prospered domestically. This relationship between internal and external forces shaped the early centuries of the Common Era, and the Kuṣāṇa Empire played an integral role in this period of imperial congruence.

Conclusion

The marks of empire associated with the Kuṣāṇa Empire in this study are not nearly as grand as Augusta's thirty-five-chapter *Res Gestae divi Augusti* displayed outside his Mausoleum on the Field of Mars (*Campus Martius*) in Rome or Ardašīr and Šāpūr I's rock reliefs carved at Naqš-e Rostam near ancient Persepolis (Cooley 2009: 3-5; Canepa 2009: 53-78). Instead, the most definitive evidence available for the Kuṣāṇas is a partially preserved text on a boulder at Dasht-e Nāwūr in southern Afghanistan and a stone slab found in the small village of Rabatak located north of the Hindu Kush. Therefore, to understand what the two hundred ninety-five inscriptions can tell us about these rulers, the mechanics of their empire, and the conglomerate of people who inhabited these regions requires extracting information from these texts and evaluating their public attributes. Through these two approaches this study has presented a narrative of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, an imperial polity that lasted almost three centuries from Kujula Kadphises' initial emergence in the mid-first century to the gradual diminution of Kuṣāṇa authority in the late third early to mid-fourth centuries CE. Each imperial phase of empire, and its accordant epigraphic record, has been used to evaluate the significance of the Kuṣāṇa Empire in both a South Asian and world historical setting.

In the chapters of this dissertation that focused on the inscriptions composed in the reigns of the respective Kuṣāṇa rulers, this study has provided a more detailed investigation into what types of objects were being donated and by whom. This data has shown that Buddhist donors and religious images were, during the reign of Kaniṣka I, the most prolific, but as the empire continued to prosper Jain communities in Mathurā adapted this new donative medium. By the reigns of Vāsudeva I and Kaniṣka II the number of Jain inscribed objects begin to outnumber Buddhist, and Jain sculpture innovated with the development of the four-sided figures and

forward-facing lions on the pedestals. Donations made to Nāga communities, although less frequent, can be found in every Kuṣāṇa ruler's reign in which there is sufficient epigraphical data, indicating that this community remained active throughout the Kuṣāṇa period. Indic inscribed objects remain relatively minimal in the corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, but uninscribed Indic objects might present a different picture of the donative activity of this loosely affiliated class. As noted there is very little direct evidence for the Kuṣāṇas and their patronage to religious communities, Buddhist or otherwise. However, imperial officials sponsored donations and became part of the donative spheres that comprised a Buddhist public centered at monastic sites. Another important group of donors in this sphere were professionals, whose occupations allowed them to funnel the wealth they accrued during this flourishing period into their affiliated religious communities. And, as shown in this study, not all of these donations were religious images, but donors also sponsored the production of architectural features such as wells, railings, and pillar bases that enhanced the infrastructure of these sites.

This epigraphic study was made possible by assembling an updated corpus of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions, and all two hundred ninety-five are provided in appendix 1. In this study, the information contained in these texts were classified by types of inscribed objects and donors. The model used in this study can be applied to inscriptional evidence for other imperial formations in South Asia in order to assess the communities receiving donations in a given period or region, evaluate the level of donative activity, and determine what types of donors were patronizing these sites. This approach helps to shift the information provided in these texts from correlating names and dates needed in building dynastic chronologies to evaluating the interplay between political, social, economic, and religious fields. There is much more information contained in this corpus than I was able to effectively evaluate in this study, and there are

numerous ways the data can be arranged. My intention in compiling this corpus was to make this collection of inscriptions accessible, and it is my hope this searchable corpus will assist in my and other scholars' future research on the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

The three chapters that supplement the epigraphically oriented chapters assist in filling in the history of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, starting with a regional investigation of Bactria, Gandhāra, and northern India in the pre-Kuṣāṇa centuries and ending with comparing the Kuṣāṇa Empire to its imperial contemporaries. Chapter one and chapter six function as bookends of this dissertation and situate the Kuṣāṇa Empire in its South Asian and world historical context. The first chapter showed that the path to empire was contingent on the political, economic, and religious conditions within these regions, and that the Kuṣāṇas utilized local power bases, economic systems, and commercial and religious networks to build their empire. The last chapter demonstrated the significance of the Kuṣāṇa Empire to the Eurasian networks of transmission that facilitated the rise of congruent empires spanning from the Mediterranean to China and South Asia. These connections, and the people, products, and ideas that moved among regions, shaped not only the early centuries of the Common Era but also the course of human history, most notably with the transmission of Buddhism from South Asia to China.

The fourth chapter on Imperial Buddhism addressed some of the issues related to the structure of the Kuṣāṇa Empire, and used the theory of a Buddhist public as the rubric to explain how the Kuṣāṇas exerted their influence through interfacing with institutionalized Buddhist monastic centers and the donative spheres associated with these sites. One area that needs to be more fully developed is welding the flexible organization of nomadic pastoral states described by Honeychurch (2014) with the formation of a Buddhist public. The theory proposed in this study, that the Kuṣāṇas employed non-political imperial intermediaries, specifically social elites and

Buddhist monastics, to exert their influence aligns with the more accommodating political organization of nomadic states. These two topics were discussed in different chapters in this study, but will be brought into a more harmonized dialogue in the future version of this imperial narrative. Another way to look more closely at the structure of the Kuṣāṇa Empire is through a diachronic comparison of the Kuṣāṇas with later nomadic groups that established polities in places like South Asia and China in order to see if they adopted similar strategies of rule or devised different repertoires of power. Answering these questions will be one of my future pursuits.

This dissertation covered a lot of ground, literally in its examination of different regions, and figuratively in its multidisciplinary approach drawing from the fields of epigraphy, art history, archeology, and comparative empire. Even with casting such a broad net, there are still topics pertinent to the history of the Kuṣāṇa Empire that fell outside the purview of this study. Regarding inscribed objects, this study did not include Kuṣāṇa seals, and this information could provide a more comprehensive list of individuals who played an active role in initiating, perpetuating, or diminishing this empire. Uninscribed objects are another major lacuna due to the fact that inscriptions were the focus of this study. Identifying these objects and classifying them into the groups employed here will help provide a more comprehensive picture of the donative practices of this time. One final topic that is missing from this study is the literary works attributable to this period. Influential Buddhist philosophers such as Nāgārjuna and literary masters such as Aśvaghōṣa are believed to have lived in this period, and Gāndhārī Buddhist manuscripts were being produced during the Kuṣāṇa Empire. These philosophical and literary advancements will need to be included in a more refined narrative of the Kuṣāṇa period.

Although much work still needs to be done, I hope that this study has contributed to our understanding of the Kuṣāṇa Empire and the inscriptions composed in this period.

Appendix 1: Corpus of Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions

This appendix provides a transcription, translation, and epigraphic notes on all the two hundred ninety-five extant Kuṣāṇa inscriptions that I have been able to locate. There are two hundred and ninety-three inscribed objects due to the Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription [6] containing both a Bactrian and Gāndhārī text and an inscription dated to year fourth-six of Huviṣka [68] that is composed in both Gāndhārī and EHS. All the inscriptions are numbered and the numbers correlation to references in the dissertation. There are some repetitions between the notes in this appendix and in the dissertation, this is intentional so the appendix can be consulted as a stand-alone text for those who want to just consult this body of material. The following corpus is divided between one hundred ninety-one inscriptions that can be assign to a specific Kuṣāṇa ruler based on their name or date of rule given in the inscription and one hundred four inscriptions where their name, date, or both are missing. Those inscriptions that can be assigned to a specific ruler are divided between three imperial phases: imperial initiation (Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and Vima Kadphises), imperial perpetuation (Kaniṣka I, Huviṣka, and Vāsudeva I), and imperial diminution (Kaniṣka II, Vāsiṣka, and Kaniṣka III). My reason for dividing these rulers into these phases is explained in the dissertation. The total number of inscriptions for each ruler is summarized at the beginning of each section, and the inscriptions are also tallied according to Bactrian, Gāndhārī, and Epigraphical Hybrid Sanskrit [hereafter EHS] texts. The inscriptions composed in the reigns of each ruler are arranged first by undated inscriptions and then chronologically by year, with the Kuṣāṇa year beginning in the first month of summer.

Each inscription is presented with a short description of the object and the most recent edition of the inscription. This information is given in bold, and the transcription and

translation provided for each inscription is based on the referenced edition. A majority of the EHS Kuṣāṇa inscriptions can either be found in Heinrich Lüders' *Mathurā Inscriptions* (1961) or Satya Shrava's *Dated Kushāṇa Inscriptions* (1993), and entries from these sources are given according to Lüders' sections [e.g. Lüders §1] or Shrava's numbering system [e.g. Shr. #1]. For space considerations, I have not included every edition of each inscription, and in most cases these can be found in Lüders or Shrava's works. Inscriptions not found in either of these two sources have been cited by their publication reference, and previous editions are given in these articles. Gāndhārī inscriptions are cited by their CGI [Catalogue of Gāndhārī Inscriptions] number which can be referenced on the gandhari.org website. All Bactrian inscriptions use the editions produced by Nicholas Sims-Williams.

The description and reference for the edition is followed by the provenance and date for each inscription, when available. After this, the inscriptions are categorized by object, meaning the medium on which the text was composed; type, referring to the purpose of the object; donor, identifying their affiliation; and language and script. The types and donor terms correlate with the classes used to assemble the graphs for the ruling periods in the chapters of the dissertation, and have been included to function as key words when searching this corpus.

Most of the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions in this corpus have already been edited either by Lüders, those cited by Shrava, or by the author of the reference cited in bold, and few require any changes to the transcription or translation. Any emendations to the transcriptions are given in the footnotes. I have slightly altered the translations by incorporating some editorial choices for common words and phrases in order to bring some uniformity to this corpus. Most of these changes do not drastically alter the meaning of the text so they are not cited, however the few cases where I have changed the reading and offered a new translation have been noted and

explained. The most significant change from previous editors is my reading of the dating formula; I translate the year, month, and day using cardinal numbers instead of ordinals as was done in most previous editions, e.g. [my translation] year 1, summer month 1, day 1, rather than the first day of the first summer month in the first year. Ordinal numbers used in the text to express the date have been retained and translated accordingly. Expressing the date in this way more accurately reflects what was written in the inscription. The other major editorial decisions in my translations are: “install” for the commonly used verb Skt *prati √sthā*, “on this occasion” for *etasyaṃ purvāyaṃ*, “at this moment” for *īse kṣuṇe*, “for the welfare and happiness” for *hitasukhārtha*, “pupil” for *antevāsin* (Buddhist) and *śiṣya* (Jain), “teacher” for *upādhyāya*, “co-resident” for *sārdhavihārin*, and “at the request” for *nirvartanā*. Since previous editors have translated these terms in many different ways, standardizing the terminology in these inscriptions helps make this corpus more uniform.

I have also employed modern transcriptional conventions for these inscriptions to bring them up-to-date. These conventions used are given on page vii.

1. Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions from the Period of Imperial Initiation.

There are only nine inscriptions from this period: five for Kujula Kadphises, three for Vima Takto, and one for Vima Takto. All five of the inscriptions composed in the time of Kujula Kadphises are in Gāndhārī and are dated from Azes year 103-136, ca. 56-89 CE. For the three inscriptions associated with Vima Takto, a Bactrian and a Gāndhārī (plus a presumably Śaka language) inscription were found at Dasht-e Nāwūr dated to Yavana year 279 (=104/5 CE) and the third, from Maṭ, is in EHS and undated. The single inscription associated with Vima Kadphises is written in Gāndhārī and is dated to Yavana year 287, (=112/3 CE).

1.1. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Kujula Kadphises [1-5].

1) So-called Takht-i-bāhī inscription [CGI 53]: Takht-i-bāhī, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan; Gondophares regnal year 26/AE 103 (=56 CE); object: stone slab; type: Buddhist(?) (enclosure); donor: Buddhist(?) (Balasami Boyaṇa); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. maharayasa guduvharasa¹³⁶ vaṣa 20 4 1 1
2. sa[m]ba[tsarae ti]śatimae 1 100 1 1 1 veśakhasa masasa divase
3. [pra]ṭham[e di 1 atra puṇapakṣe] b[alasa]misa [bo]yaṇasa
4. par[i]vara¹³⁷ [ṣa]dhadāṇa sapu[tradhitarasa] mira boyāṇasa¹³⁸
5. erjhuṇa kapasa¹³⁹ puyae madu
6. pidu puya[e]

*Translation:*¹⁴⁰

In year 26 of the Great King Gondophares, in the one hundred third year - 103 - on the first - 1 - day of the month Vaiśākha, at this auspicious moment (*pakṣa*) (this) chapel (is) the religious gift of the Savior Balasami,¹⁴¹ together with his son and daughter, in honor of the Savior Mira (and) Prince Kapa, (and) in honor of (his) mother and father.

2) Panjtar inscription [CGI 59]: Panjtar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan; AE 122 (=75 CE); object: stone slab; type: Indic; donor: Indic(?) (Moika); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 1 100 20 1 1 śravaṇasa masasa di praḍhame 1 maharayasa guṣaṇasa raja[mi]
2. [ka]suasa praca [deśo] moike urumujaputre karavide śivathale tatra [ca] me
3. daṇami tar[u]ka 1 1 p(*u)ñakareṇeva amata śivathala rama ? ? ma¹⁴²

¹³⁶ There is a gap between *du* and *vha* caused by a chip in the stone that must have been present before the engraving process because no *akṣaras* appear to be missing.

¹³⁷ The word *parivara* could also mean retinue and not enclosure, making this line a benediction to the donor's family. If this is the case, then the statement about the donation would be omitted. It does appear that this text omitted the verbal element for the donation.

¹³⁸ I am inclined to see a parallel between these names, both as ending in *-mi* with the genitive *sa* ending, but the reading of *mira* in this line looks correct.

¹³⁹ There is a large gap between the *ka* and *sa*, which looks intentional due to a large crack in the stone.

¹⁴⁰ Konow 1929: 62.

¹⁴¹ Konow (1929: 60) derives the title *boyaṇa* from the *āna* adjectival suffix and the Iranian root \sqrt{baug} or \sqrt{bauj} , both meaning to “to save,” and associates this with Greek *soter* and Gāndhārī *tratarā*.

¹⁴² Ghosal (1981b: 83) translates this passage as, “*pañakare ṇeva amata śivathala rama ? ? ma*, this divine temple of the lord Śiva is holy (lit. helping one to acquire merit) and new. May the (temple of the lord Śiva) (i.e. the god residing in the temple) remain pleased with the village.”

*Translation:*¹⁴³

Year 122, on the first – 1 – day of the month of Śrāvaṇa, in the reign of the Great King,¹⁴⁴ the Kuṣāṇa, in the eastern region of Kasua, a Śivathala (Śiva temple)¹⁴⁵ was made by Moika, the son of Urumuja. And there in my gift (are) two trees. Through this meritorious deed... immortal places of bliss.

3) Priavaśa inscription [CGI 331]: find-spot unknown; AE 126 (=79 CE);¹⁴⁶ object: stone reliquary box; type: Buddhist (vihāra and relics); donor: Buddhist (monastic); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

*Text:*¹⁴⁷

- A1. savatsaraye ṣaviśavaṣāsatimae
A2. maharayasa mahatasa ayasa kalagada-
A3. sa Aṣaḍasa masasa divasami
A4. treviśami iśa divasami
A5. yaūasa ra[j]ami i
A6. maharayasa ṇai[mi]tra
A7. [vha]jao
B8. tre[haṇi]a[y]ao puyae
B9. yeṇa io vihare pratīṭha-
B10. vide
C11. i śarira aḍi pradethavida
C12. Priavaśara ṣamaṇasa
C13. ime ya śarira pradethavi-
C14. da i daṇamuhe Priava-
D18. śasa ṣamaṇasa

¹⁴³ Konow 1929: 70.

¹⁴⁴ This translation of *maharayasa guṣaṇasa raja[mi]* follows Baums' interpretation (2012: 235, cf. 79).

¹⁴⁵ Konow (1929: 69) chooses to translate *sivathala* as "an auspicious ground," but does note that the Skt *śivasthalam* could mean "a Śiva sanctuary." A Śiva sanctuary being erected in Gandhāra is not out of the question, and Martha Carter (1995: 143) has written about large terracotta panels, purported to have come from Afghanistan, that depict figures dressed in Kuṣāṇa attire worshipping a god that resembles Śiva. In her article, Carter also emphasizes the connection between Wesho and Śiva found on Kuṣāṇa coins and provides a survey of Śiva images found at Gandhāran sites. Based on these facts, the establishment of a Śiva temple should not be discounted, and this assumption is correct, then this text suggests that a community of Śiva adherents were present in this area of Gandhāra in the latter half of the first century CE.

¹⁴⁶ Salomon (1995: 128-30) revised Fussman's (1985: 48) reading of this date from twenty-six to one hundred twenty-six.

¹⁴⁷ I think this text needs to be rearranged, especially lines A6, A7, and B8. I have tried, but thus far have not been able to render a coherent translation. The main information inscribed on the A side of the reliquary box was the dating formula and the letters in the bottom line, A6 (*maharayasa ṇai[mi]tra*), are shorter than the rest of the text, and A7 (*[vha]jao*) is written vertically on the left margin. Line B8 (*tre[haṇi]a[y]ao puyae*) is the first line on the B side of the box, but the placement of a honorific phrase seems out of place here and would, more typically, be connected with the benedictions on the D side. The D side of the box is the best clue that the scribe, for some reason, moved around when engraving this text. Line C14, the last line on this side concludes with the name of the donor *priava-*, and one would assume the remainder of his name would be in the first line of side D. However, his name is written at the bottom of this side, D18, that reads *-śasa ṣamaṇasa*, and in between the donor's name is the section that honors his parents and states that this was for the acceptance of the noble Mahiṣadagaṇa. If it is possible to rearrange the lines in this text, perhaps a solution for the enigmatic words would come into focus.

- D15. madapida puyāida
 D16. Mahiṣadagaṇa āri-
 D17. aṇa parigrahami

*Translation:*¹⁴⁸

In the one hundred twenty-sixth year of the Great King, the Great Azes, who has died, on the twenty-third day of the month Āṣāḍha, on this day, in the reign of the yabghu (*yaiia*) this... in honor... of the Great King... relatives and friends, *vhajao trehaṇiayao*, who established this monastery, these relics are established there. The monk Priavaśa also establishes these relics. This is the donation of the monk Priavaśa. Mother and father are honored. In the possession of the Mahiśāsaka teachers.

4) Taxila silver scroll [CGI 60]: Taxila, Punjab, Pakistan; AE 136 (= 89 CE); object: silver scroll; type: Buddhist (relics); donor: Buddhist (lay); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. sa 1 100 20 10 4 1 1 ayasa aṣaḍasa masasa divase 10 4 1 iśa diva[se pradi]stavita bhagavato dhatu[o] ura[sa]-
2. keṇa [im]tavhriaputraṇa bahaliēṇa noacae ṇagare vastaveṇa teṇa ime pradistavita bhagavato dhatuo dhamara-
3. ie takṣaśi(*la)e taṇuvae bosisatvagahami maharajasa rajatirajasa devaputrasa khuṣaṇasa arogadakṣiṇae
4. sarva[bu]dhaṇa puyae pracagabudhaṇa puyae araha(*ta)ṇa pu[ya]e sarvasa(*tva)ṇa puyae matapitu puyae mitramacañātisa-
5. lohi(*ta)ṇa [pu]yae atvaṇo arogadakṣiṇae ṇivaṇae hotu a[ya] desamaparicago
 (Baums 2012, 237)

*Translation:*¹⁴⁹

Year 136 of Azes, on day 15 of the month of Āṣāḍha – on this day – relics of the Lord are established by Urasaka, (one) of the sons of Imtavhria, a Bactrian and resident in the town of Noaca. He establishes these relics of the Lord in the Dharmarajika (stūpa) in Takṣaśilā in (his) personal bodhisattva-womb (stūpa) for the reward of health of the Great King, Kings of Kings, the Devaputra, the Kuṣāṇa, in honor all buddhas, in honor of solitary buddhas, in honor of saints, in honor of all beings, in honor of (his) mother and father, in honor of (his) friends, intimates, kinsmen, and blood-relatives. May this giving of a donation be for (his) own reward of health and nirvāṇa.

5) Seṇavarma gold leaf inscription [CGI 249]: Swat Valley, Pakistan; Seṇavarma regnal year 14; object: gold leaf; type: Buddhist (relics); donor: Imperial (Seṇavarma, Oḍi king); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭh

Text:

[1] aryagaṇatavagaṇabramacaryagaṇasa ubhayatasamṅhasa saṇivāitasa pria[dir]asa [ta]thuvavalasa śīrasa pada vadati seṇavarme iśpare oḍiraya ṇavhapati viṇaveti io ekaūḍe thuve

¹⁴⁸ Baums 2012: 235-6.

¹⁴⁹ Baums 2012: 237.

yeṇa rayaneṇa pratīthavite tasa dayateṇa me kadamasa deyasame yava me [bhra]ta varmaseneṇa
 ṇama adikramami yada io ekaūde dadhe tatra aṃṇa pi [2] mahia pidarapidamaṇa mahamte
 adu[ra] gahathuva dadha te ma[ye] seṇavarneṇa kiḍa hovati io ca ekaūde mahamteṇa
 arohapaṇameṇa niṭhite ta same niṭhita parakramami iśa ekakuḍami vijuvapati tae dahiasa
 thuvasa vipariṇame kiḍe se me sarve upaḍa vitate mulaśa[1]e ukṣivita avaśita tatra
 pratīthava[3]ṇia lihitia utaraseṇaputre vasuseṇe oḍiraya iśmahokulade se imo ekaūdo
 pratīthaveti tedaṇi mulaśale raaṇade bhagavado śarira aho seṇavarme ayidasenaputre ate ceva
 iśmahorajakulasabhavade oḍiraja sarva bhavene sarva cedyasa samuṇaharita aṇe vivaveṇa aṃṇe
 abhi[4]praṇe vivula vestario mulavato karita te tasa bhagavato abhutapurusaṇaravarakujarasa
 mahasarthavahosa savatra dhamehi paramavaśipratipratāṇirdhadamalakasa dasa
 aṇegakapaśatasahasakuśalamulasamudaṇidasa vadhitavadhidasa hadaragadośamohasa [5]
 sarvasa zaṇaṇuśaśamalakhilaṇaṅagratha[v]ipraṇiṇasa sarvehi kuśalehi dhamehi abhiṇehi
 jaṇavalavimohasamasamavatisapratipurasa dhatu pra[ti]ṭhavemi ye tada tadiśate atmabhavate
 vayirasaghaṇade aṇdimaśarirate visayuyeṇa pacimaṇe śarireṇa niśaye[6]ta aṇutaravosi
 apisavudha apisavuḍita te dhama tatha driṭha yasa ke aṇe paśeati aṇoma aṇasia te dhama
 apisavuḍit savasaṅgharaṇakṣaye sarvajatiḍaramaraṇabhayaviṇavatasa avayidrogaṭikṣayapayosaṇe
 kiḍe niśane sarvajadiḍaramaraṇasa tasa daṇi aṇuvatae [7] pariṇivudasa ima dhadu śilaparibhavita
 samasipraṇa(*vimuti)ṇāṇadraśa(*ṇa)paribhavita2 ime śarireṇa tadagadapravadiśaṇivaṇa-
 dhatugade ta pratīthavemi prasamu ce vata bhagavataḥasamasamvudho dhataragadośamokha
 daśavalavalasamuṇagata catvariveśarayaḍprata [8] agrodakṣiṇeṇa puyita praceasavudharahaṇta-
 śavakaṇaṅagami(*yi)dagami[so]davaṇisarvaaryapugala puyita matapita dukaracara[a]the
 uzaṇda jivaputra tiṭhata pida ca adhvadida ayidaseṇo oḍiraya puyita **maharajarayatiraya-**
kuyulakataph[śp]aputro sadaśkaṇo devaputra [9] sadha aṇakaṇe suhasomeṇa aśmaṇakareṇa
 sayugasavalavaḥ(*e)ṇa sadha guśurakehi sturakehi ca puyita bhraḍa adhvadido varmaseneṇo
 oḍiraya tiṭhata ca aḍidavarm[o] ayaseṇo ca kumara puyita bhadaṇeṇa raya upadae yava
 pravidamaḥa me diśaseṇo oḍiraya sarva i(*śma)horayakulasabhavo [10] puyita sarva pari(*va)ro
 puyita bramo sahaṇpati śakro devaṇidro catvari maharaya aṭhaviśati yakṣaseṇapati hariti
 saparivara puyita sakṣiteṇa aviyamaṇireṇa payato karita utvareṇa [a] bhavagro atraturo yavada
 satva uvavaṇa apada va dupada va catupada va vahupada va [11] ruvi aruvi samṇe asaṇṇe
 sarvasatvaṇa hidasuhadae hoto ayam edaṇe devasame aya ca śadha ye ca prasade se kimatraye
 hoto ye teṇa śakamuṇiṇa rahato samasavudheṇa dhama abhisavudho madaṇimadaṇo
 pivasaviṇayo alayasamughaso vatovacheto taśokṣayo aśeṇo [12] virago ṇir(*o)so śato praṇito
 advara sa aṇijo aroga acata(*ṇ)iṭhu acadavramaṇo acatapayosaṇo tatra amudae dhatue niṇvatato
 yatra imasa aṇavatagraṇa sasaraṇa kṣaye payosaṇe haḍṣati yatra imana vedaṇdaṇa sarve
 śidalibhaviśati ye [va]ṇa imo ekaūdo thuvo niṭhidao viṇiṭhi[13]tao daḥeati ite udhu deve va
 maṇuśe va yakṣe va ṇage va suvaṇi va gadharve va kuvhaḍe va se aviyamaṇiraṇa padeati
 saśarire ye vaṇa aṇumotiśati teṇu ideṇi puṇakriae aṇubhvae sia[t]i likhita ya śarirapraṇiṭhavaṇia
 saṅghamitreṇa laliaputreṇa aṇakaṇe karavita ya ṣaḍi[14]eṇa sacakaputreṇa meriakheṇa ukede
 ya baṭasareṇa preaputreṇa tirat(*e)ṇa vaśaye catudaśaye 10 4 iśparasa seṇavarmasa varśasahaṇa
 parayamaṇasa śravaṇata masasa divase aṭhame 4 4 io ca suane solite valieṇa makaḍakaputreṇa
 ga[m]hapatiaṇa

*Translation:*¹⁵⁰

[1] He greets with his head the feet of the noble flock, the ascetic flock, the chaste flock, of the twofold community that has assembled, of the guardian of the *priadirasata* stūpa. Seṇavarma, the lord, King of Oḍi, *ṇavha* master, announces: this stūpa Ekaūḍa is the donation of me, the *kadama*, as the heir to the prince that established it, as I transcend the name of my brother Varmaseṇa. When this Ekaūḍa burnt down, then also other [2] great nearby womb stūpas of my fathers and grandfathers burnt down. These have been made (whole) by me, Seṇavarma, and this Ekaūḍa is completed with a great change of height. Having completed these properly, I continue my efforts. There was a lightning strike in this Ekaūḍa. A change was made of the stūpa that had been burnt by it. This whole devastation was laid open by me. The root enclosure was thrown out and entered(?). [3] An inscription about the establishment was there: ‘Vasuseṇa, son of Utaraseṇa, king of Oḍi from the Ikṣvāku family, he establishes this Ekaūḍa.’ Back then there was in the root enclosure by order of the king a relic of the Lord. I, Seṇavarma, son of Ajidaseṇa, and then, because of (my) birth in the Ikṣvāku royal family, King of Oḍi, having considered everything with (my) heart, everything with (my) mind, having spread some (relics?) because of the ripening (of action), some [4] on purpose widely from the root (*a*)*va*, establish this relic of that Lord, the miraculous man, excellent man, elephant; the great caravan leader; who in all respects has reached the attainment of highest control over the factors (of existence) and whose impurities are blown away; *dasa*; who over many hundreds of thousands of world ages has assembled the roots of good; who has gradually grown; who has destroyed lust, hate, and delusion; [5] who in all respects through meditation has abandoned inclinations, impurities, obstructions, blemishes, and fetters; who through all good factors (of existence) that one should be acquainted with has fulfilled meditation, powers, liberation, concentration, and attainments. He who at that time supporting himself with his last body – which is separate from his final body, the corporeality that is of that kind (just described), the thunderbolt of agglomeration – [6] attained the highest enlightenment and, having attained enlightenment, saw these factors (of existence) in such a way that anybody else can see them without subtraction or addition and, having been enlightened to these factors, make exhaustion of all impulses, exhaustion and conclusion of all birth, aging, death, fear, and falling apart and of wrong and bad rebirth, and end of all birth, aging, and death – of that one, [7] who has gone to nirvana without remainder, I now establish this relic, pervaded by virtue, pervaded by concentration, understanding, liberation, and he seeing and knowledge (*of liberation), this (relic) which has bodily gone to the nirvana element that is *pravadiśa* of the Tathāgata. And first indeed is honored the Lord, the saint, the completely enlightened one, who has destroyed lust, hate, and delusion, who is endowed with the power of the ten powers, who has attained the four confidences, [8] who deserves the best reward. The solitary buddhas, saints, disciples, nonreturners, once-returners, those who have entered the stream, and all noble persons are honored. Mother and father, who undertake a difficult practice – Uzaṃda, who has a living son and who is still alive, and (my) father who passed on, Ajidaseṇa, king of Oḍi – are honored. **Sadaṣkaṇa, son of the Great King, King of Kings, Kujula Kadphises, the Devaputra,** [9] together with the *anankaio*s Suhasoma, the *aṣmaṇakara*, with his yoke animals and with his army and carriages, together with the *guśurakas* and the *sturakas*, is honored. The brother who passed on, Varmaseṇa, King of Oḍi, and the princes Ajidavarma and Ayaseṇa, who are still alive, are honored. Beginning with King Bhadasēṇa and up to my great-grandfather Diśaseṇa, all kings of Oḍi, born in the royal family of Ikṣvāku, [10] are honored. The whole retinue is honored. Brahman Saḥampati, Śakra, ruler of

¹⁵⁰ Baums 2012: 229-32.

the gods, the four great kings, the twenty-eight yakṣa generals, (and) Hārītī with her retinue are honored. In brief, starting from the Avīcī great hell at one end and upward until the top of existence, whichever beings exist here in between, footless or two-footed or four-footed or many-footed, [11] with form or formless, conscious or unconscious, may it be for the benefit and happiness of all beings. This donation now and this faith and the tranquility that there is, for what purpose should that be? The teaching to which the Śākya sage, the saint, the completely enlightened one, became enlightened – (which is) the crushing of conceit, the removal of thirst, the destruction of attachment, the cutting of the course (of rebirth), exhaustion of craving, complete [12] fading (of lust), cessation, (which is) calm, advanced, without fever, unshakable, (which is) health, complete perfection, complete chastity, complete conclusion – in that immortal element may they come to rest, where there will be exhaustion and conclusion of this round (of rebirth) without end or beginning, where all of these feelings will be cool. Who, however, when this stūpa Ekaūḍa [13] is perfectly completed, later burns it, that one – god or human or yakṣa or nāga or suparṇin or gandharva or kumbhāṇḍa – shall fall into the Avīcī great hell with his body. Who, on the other hand, applauds it, may that(?) be for the merit-making and glory of those. The (inscription) about the establishment of the relic was written by Saṃghamitra, son of Lalia, the *anankaios*, and (it) was manufactured [14] by Ṣaḍia, son of Sacaka, the meridarch, and (it) *ukede* by Baṭasara, son of Preaputra, the *tirata*. In the fourteenth – 14th – year of the lord Seṇavarma, lasting a thousand years, on the eighth – 8th – day of the month of Śrāvaṇa. And this gold was weighed by Valia, son of Makaḍaka, the householder.

1.2. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Vima Takto [6-7].

6) Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription [DN1: Fussman 1974: 18, 22; Sims-Williams 1995-6: 95 and DN4: CGI 231].¹⁵¹ Dasht-e Nāwūr, near Ghazni, Afghanistan; YE 279 (=104/5 CE); object: boulder; type: Imperial; donor: Imperial (Vima Takto); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī, Bactrian/Greek

*Text:*¹⁵²

DN1 [Bactrian]:

1. σοθ' γορπιαου ιε' [date in Greek]
2. βαονανδε βαι ι βωγο
3. ι στοργο οσημο τακτοο
4. κοβανο ι ραητογο ι λαδει-

¹⁵¹ The third text that accompanies the Bactrian and Gāndhārī texts is apparently in a Śaka language, a transcription and translation of which has been produced by János Harmatta. In his edition, the first line states a name of a Kuṣāṇa ruler although his reading seems to correspond more with Vima Kadphises than Vima Takto, “Behold! [We] King of Kings, the noble, great Katvisa, the Kuṣāṇa, *ye rva-da-ti ri a-[ja]-ti vi(m)-ja-rka ka-tvi-sa' [ku]-ṣa-ṇa*” (Harmatta 1994: 408-10). The veracity of this reading is uncertain and only the Bactrian and Gāndhārī versions are included in this study.

¹⁵² The italic letters in the Bactrian text indicate uncertain readings and I have only included the first seven lines of the Bactrian text reedited in Sims-Williams (1996: 95) due to the remainder of this text being “largely illegible and/or incomprehensible, apart from the very last word of the inscription... was proclaimed” (Sims-Williams 2012: 77). For the most comprehensive study of this inscription and its historical significance, see Fussman 1974: 2-50.

5. γο ι βαγο ι ηζνογο κιδι πιδο ι
6. χοβε ιανε βαοδανε λφαχ
7. το...

DN4 [Kharoṣṭhī]:¹⁵³

1. saṃ 1 1 100 20 20 20 10 4 4 1 gapiu na ? mana [ma] sa[sa di] ///
2. rajatirajasa + + + [dhrami] ///
3. vhamakuśasa pi ? gadapiṇa ? śea + + + sa ///
4. . . .
5. . . .
6. iha dhaḍarya ///

*Translation:*¹⁵⁴

DN1: [Greek, line 1] (Year) 279, (day) 15 of Gorpaios. [Bactrian, lines 2-7] The King of Kings, the Great salvation, Vima Taktu the Kushan, the righteous, the just, the god worthy of worship, who has gained(?) the kingship by his own will...

DN4: [Kharoṣṭhī] Year 279, month of Gorpaios, day (15), of the King of kings, the great... of the lawful Vhema Kuśa...

7) Maṭ royal statue [Lüders §98]: Maṭ, near Mathurā; undated; object: stone image; type: Imperial; donor: Imperial (bakanapati); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*¹⁵⁵

1. mahārājo rājātirājo devaputro
2. kuśānaputr[o śā]hi [vema] ta[kṣu]masya
3. bakanapatina hu[maṣpal.na] devakula[m] kārītā
4. ārāmo puṣkariṇi udapān[aṃ] ca sa[bh]ā dārakoṭhako

¹⁵³ Fussman 1974: 22.

¹⁵⁴ DN1 (Sims-Williams 2012: 76-7); DN4 (Falk 2015b: 109).

¹⁵⁵ The identification of this ruler has only recently been confirmed through the discovery of the Rabatak inscription that cites Vima Takto is Kaniška I's grandfather. In Lüders' (1961: 135) edition of this inscription he notes that the reading of the name *vema* "cannot be called certain" and for *taksumasa* says, "the meaning of the word is perfectly obscure, I consider it unnecessary to enlarge upon the reading which, as the matters stand, can be only tentative." We can now more confidently associate this inscription with Vima Takto, however the *ma* after the name of this ruler remains enigmatic.

Harry Falk (2015b: 107-8, §88) has recently revised the reading of this name and suggested that the *ma* could be an erroneous corrupt writing of an initial *a* for new clause beginning with *asya*, stating that "the scribe drew a horizontal stroke closing the bottom of the *ma* rather than a longer vertical stroke of a Brāhmī *a*." However, after a close inspection of this text at the Mathurā Museum the *ma* is quite clear, and looks exactly like the *ma* in *mahārāja* at the beginning of line 1, which seems to contradict Falk's argument for a scribal error. I would retain the genitive *sya* ending of *taksuma*, to agree syntactically with the donor, and suggest that the scribe simply wrote an alternative name of this ruler, perhaps reduplicating the *ma* of *vima* on the end of *takṣu*. It is important to keep in mind that the name of Kujula Kadphises also shows many variations on both his coins and inscriptions, and Falk (2009a: 105-116) notes that the spelling of Vima Takto on some Soter Megas coins contain his name also show similar inconsistencies. So perhaps Taksuma is simply a variant of Takto.

Translation:

A royal statue gallery was caused to be built by Humaṣpala, the banakapati of the Great King, King of Kings, Devaputra, son of the Kuṣāṇa, ṣāhi Vema Taṣkuma, along with a grove, tank, well, an assembly hall, and gateway.

1.3. Inscription Composed in the Reign of Vima Kadphises [8].¹⁵⁶

8) Khalatse rock inscription [CGI 62]: Khalatse, near Leh, India; 287 (=112/3CE); object: boulder; type: Imperial; donor: unknown

Text:

1. saṃ 2 100 20 20 20 20 4 [1 1 1]
2. maharajasa uvima kavthisasa

Translation:

Year 287¹⁵⁷ of the Great King Vima Kadphises

¹⁵⁶ Shrava's list of dated Kuṣāṇa inscriptions includes an inscribed seal found in Ganwāriā, near the Piprāhwā stūpa in what was ancient Kapilavastu, that has been associated with Vima Kadphises. This seal was edited by Srivastava and Prasad (1980: 98-103) who read "Vima the son of Kaphu" (*kaphu-putra-vimasa*) and attribute this to Vima Kadphises, citing Kaphu as an alternative name for Kujula Kadphises found on his coins. However, a close inspection of this seal casts doubt about its attribution to Vima Kadphises. First, if this reading is correct the figure named in the seal as the son of Kujula Kadphises should be Vima Takto and not Vima Kadphises. Second, there are issues in the reading itself. The first two akṣaras *ka* and *phu* are relatively clear, although both have what appears to be an ornamental flourish extending down and to the left from the letters that resembles a *u* mātra. The third akṣara, which the author's read as *puto*, is not two distinct letters but one, a *pa* with either another flourish, a long *ū* vowel, or a *pra/pta* conjunct, making the possible readings of the first word *kaphupū*, *kaphupra* *kaphupta*, but not *putra*. The reading of *vima* is also problematic. Srivastava and Prasad conclude that the *i* mātra in *vi* extends to the right to make room for the image of a two-armed deity that sits above the text, however it looks more likely that the *i* mātra is connected to the head of the *ma* and not the *va*, and should therefore be read as *vami*. The genitive *sa* at the end of the name is correct, indicating the owner of the seal, but the reading of the owner's name is inconclusive. Only by comparing this seal with other Kuṣāṇa seals, a project that I will undertake in the future, can their reading of this name be verified. Due to the uncertainty surrounding this object I have excluded it from this corpus.

¹⁵⁷ This date was originally read as 184 or 187 by Konow (1929: 81). However, Richard Salomon (2005: 376) notes that the date of this inscription is "another one of the thorns in the side of scholars trying to unravel the history and chronology of the Kuṣāṇa period," because the date of 184/7 is inconsistent with what we know about Vima Kadphises' place in the Kuṣāṇa dynastic chronology and dating systems used in Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions. If 184/7 corresponded to the Azes era that commenced in 47/6 BCE, then the date of this inscription would be 137/40 CE, falling well past the probable time for Vima Kadphises' reign. A similarly late date would also arise if the year 184/7 was aligned with the Vikrama era (58/7 BCE, =126/7 or 129/30 CE), and even more so if this was in the Śaka era (78 CE, = 262/5 CE). A more logical conclusion would be to correlate this date with an earlier calendrical system, the obvious candidate being the Yavana era which started in 175/4 BCE. However, aligning 184/7 with the Yavana era posits this year to 9 and 12 CE, again producing a ruling period for Vima Kadphises at odds with our understanding of Kuṣāṇa chronology.

Joe Cribb (1997: 230) offered a convincing solution to this dating problem for the Khalatse inscription when he noticed two vertical lines above the hundreds figure at the beginning of the first line, strokes which indicated two hundred rather than one hundred. Salomon (2005: 376) agrees with this read but cautions that "the readings of graphic symbols for hundreds – which can be difficult to distinguish in Indian scripts – sometimes seem

2. Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions from the Period of Imperial Perpetuation [9-152].

There are one hundred forty-five inscriptions from this period: thirty-five associated with the reign of Kaniṣka I, forty-five with Huviṣka's reign, and sixty-five in Vāsudeva I's reign.

Among the inscriptions composed in the reign of Kaniṣka I, eight are undated and twenty-seven are dated, spanning the Kuṣāṇa years 3-23, ca. 130-50 CE.¹⁵⁸ Three of these are in Bactrian, two in Gāndhārī, and thirty in EHS. For the inscriptions from Huviṣka's rule, five are undated and the forty dated inscriptions range from Kuṣāṇa years 26-62, ca. 153-89 CE. One of these texts is written in Bactrian, four in Gāndhārī, and forty in EHS.¹⁵⁹ All sixty-five inscriptions associated with Vāsudeva I's reign have dates; four are composed in Gāndhārī and sixty-one in EHS. The duration of Vāsudeva I's rule taken from inscriptions spans 64/7-99, ca. 191/4-226 CE.

2.1. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Kaniṣka I [9-43].

Undated (8)

9) Kaniṣka royal statue [Lüders §97]: Mathurā (Maṭ); undated; object: stone image; type: Imperial; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

mahārājā rājātirājā devaputro kāniṣko

Translation:

The Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Kaniṣka I

10) Headless seated Kapardin Buddha [Lüders §26]: Mathurā (Jamālpur mound); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donors: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

to be used as *deus ex machina* solutions for various chronological problems of early Indian history." Furthermore, Salomon (2005: 376) points out that in more recent photographs of this inscription three vertical strokes at the end of the first line are visible, and these two revised readings make year 287 a probable, but not conclusive, date for composition of the Khalatse inscription. By shifting the date of this inscription forward a century and correlating it with the new reckoning of the Yavana era, the date 112/3 CE emerges, falling after the year 279 given in Vima Takto's Dasht-e Nāwūr inscription and more readily aligning with the Kuṣāṇa's dynastic chronology.

¹⁵⁸ Kaniṣka I's reign most likely began in 127 CE.

¹⁵⁹ Inscription [68] is bi-lingual written in both EHS and Gāndhārī. I have counted this as two inscriptions but one inscribed object.

Text:


1. /// + tra + + ____ [mi]traśarmo ____¹⁶⁰ ghoṣako parohaśāliko
cikkakasa pitā m[ā]tā idrad[a]tā + + + + + + + rṣa
idrabu + .ika[t.] + b[im.]///
2. (*mahārā)///jasya rājātirājasya ka[niṣkasya]¹⁶¹ saṃvatsare ///

Translation:

Determining a precise reading for this inscription is difficult. The first line appears to contain a list of donors and the second supplies the name of the ruler, Kaniṣka I. Unfortunately, both the upper and lower rims of the pedestal are damaged, and the text following *saṃvatsare* “in the year” on the lower rim is completely gone, which makes it impossible to date this object. In addition, the donative formula in this inscription is inverted, with the names of the donors stated first, on the upper rim, and the name of the ruler and date inscribed on the lower rim.

11) Kaniṣka Seal [Shr. #3]: Kosam (ancient Kausāmbī); undated; object; clay seal; type: Imperial; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. maharajasya rājāti
2. rajāsyā devaputrasya
3. kan[i]ṣkasya prayo
4. ga ¹⁶²

Translation:

For the use of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Kaniṣka I.

12) Female statue [Lüders §114]: Mathurā (Morā); undated; object: stone statue; type: Architectural; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. (mahārāja)sya kan(i)[ṣ]ka[sya] (saṃvatsa)r. + + + + (gṛṣma)[m](āse) ///
2. /// ? ? etasyaṃ purvaye m[āth]uri kalavaḍā o[ḍakh]i ///
3. /// ye tośāye patimā (pratis)t(āpitā)///

Translation:

In the year *x*, summer month *x*, day *x* of the Great King Kaniṣka I – on this occasion – odakhi(?), the wife of the Kalavaḍa of Mathurā, had the Tośa image installed.¹⁶³

13) Broken pedestal [Shr. #7]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); undated; object; stone image; type: Jain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

¹⁶⁰ There is a space of about three *akṣaras* that separates these names.

¹⁶¹ Only the tops of these letters are visible, but Lüders (1961: 61) reconstructs Kaniṣka I’s name based on Cunningham’s rubbings.

¹⁶² This sign represents what appears to be a *tamgha* located in the right corner of the seal.

¹⁶³ Lüders (1961: 154, §113; 1937-8: 201-2) suggests that this image was installed at the Tośā shrine, presumably connected with Tośā, a deity referenced in the Morā well inscription composed during the reign of Śoḍaśa, the Mahākṣatrpa of Mathurā who ruled about a century prior to Kaniṣka I.

*Text:*¹⁶⁴

1. (*mahā)//rājasya kanaṣka[s]ya ///
2. /// sya ni///(*rvartana)

Translation:

... of the king Kaniṣka I... (*at the request) of...

14) Rabatak inscription [Sims-Williams 2004: 53-68]: Rabatak, Baghlān Province, Afghanistan; year 6(?); object: stone slab; type: Imperial; donor: Imperial; Bactrian/Greek

Translation:

[lines 1-7]: ... of the great salvation, Kaniṣka I the Kushan, the righteous, the just, the autocrat, the god worthy of worship, who has obtained the kingship from Nana and from all the gods, who inaugurated the year one as the gods pleased. And he issued(?) a Greek edict(?) (and) then he put it into the Aryan (language) (i.e. Bactrian). In the year one there was proclaimed to India, to the cities of the *kṣatriyas* (or *kṣatrapas*?), the capture(?) of [...] *adra(g)o* and *ōzopo* and Sāketa and Kauśāmbī and Pāṭaliputra, as far as Śrī-Campā; whatever (cities) he and the other generals(?) reached(?), (he) submitted (them) to (his) will, and he submitted all India to (his) will.

[line 7-19]: Then King Kaniṣka I ordered Shafar, the lord of the marches to make in this place the temple which is called “God’s water,” in the Kasig plains, for these gods who have come hither into the presence of the glorious Umma, that(?) (is), the above-mentioned Nana and the above-mentioned Umma, Aurmuzd, the Gracious one, Sroshard, Narasa, (and) Mihir. [*In smaller letters above the line:* ‘who in the Indian (language) is called Mahāsenā and is called Viśākha.’] And he gave orders to make images of the same, (namely) of these gods who are inscribed hereupon, and he gave orders to make (images of) these kings: King Kujula Kadphises (his) great grandfather and King Vima Taktu (his) grandfather and King Vima Kadphises (his) father, and himself, King Kaniṣka I. Then, as the King of Kings, the Devaputra Kaniṣka I had given orders to do, so Shafar the lord of the marches made this sanctuary, and Pyash the lord of the marches, and Shafar the lord of the marches, and Nukunzuk the *aṣṭo-wa(Igo)* carried out) the king’s command. May these gods who are inscribed here (keep) the (King) of Kings, Kaniṣka I the Kushan, for ever healthy, fortunate (and) victorious!

[lines 19-22]:... And the King, the Devaputra, was pacifying(?) all India from the year one to year six(?). (So) the temple was founded(?) in the year one; then in the third(?) year also... according to the King’s command, many rites(?) were endowed, many attendants were endowed, many... (were endowed. And) King (Kaniṣka I) gave the fortress to the gods, and for these freemen (who)... in ‘God’s water’...

¹⁶⁴ The reading of the text given in Shrava provides only the first line. Shrava (1993: 8) sees a faint *sandhasya ni* in the second line, but the only discernible letters are *sya ni*. I suggest that the *sya* is the genitive ending of name of a Jain Ārya who requested the image, and *ni* is the beginning of *nivartanā* “at the request.” This reconstruction is based on the typical phrasing of Jain donative inscriptions. The photo of the pedestal fragment provided in Shrava’s appendix (1993: 224) shows that the image is completely detached, making the exact religious affiliation of this image is uncertain. If my reconstruction is correct, then this would most likely be a Jain image.

15) Palamedes inscription (SK 3) [Sims-Williams 2012: 78]: Surkh Kotal, Baghlān Province, Afghanistan; undated; object: stone slab; type: Imperial; donor: Imperial (chief of the armory, *aštowalgo*[?]); Bactrian/Greek

Translation [Lines 1-3]:

... the chief [...], the chief of the armory, the *ašto(-walgo*(?) ...) made this temple [...].
(Written)(?) by Palamedes.

16) Bactrian silver plate [Sims-Williams 2015: 257]: provenance unknown; year 10(?); object: silver plate; type: Imperial; donor: Imperial; Bactrian/Greek

Translation:

“(At) the court(?) of the King of Kings, [in] the year [one, Nana] gave the lordship to the King of Kings, Kanishka I the Kushan. I, Nukunzik, his father’s servant, was then *amboukao*. Then the Devaputra, on account of his own good[ness] and on account of my service – he established me (as) equal(?) with (his) father’s and with (his) grandfather’s servants, with the foremost (people). Then (in) year one [...] was proclaimed to India: then he conquered(?) India, and I was a trusted(?) servant in his work. Then I performed there this work [...] which (has been) written in the records(?). Then when the (King) of Kings, the Devaputra, [returned] from India to Tokhwarstan in the tenth year with the spoils(?) of victory(?), (he) presented(?) (this plate)(?) at the court(?) of Wesh, (as) an offering(?) to the god; when King Kanishka I brought it to Wesh (it was) in the year ten, the month Nisan, the tenth day. We(ight:) 270 (staters)(?)”

Year 3 (7)

17) Standing Bodhisattva [Shr. #10]: Kosam (Kauśāmbī); year 3; object; stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [ma]h[ā]rājasya kan[i]ṣkasa saṃva[tsa]r[e] 3¹⁶⁵ h[e] 2 di 8 bodhisatvo pra[ti-
2. ṣṭhā]payati bhikhuṇi buddhamitrā trepiṭ[i]kā bhagavato buddhasa ca[m]kame

¹⁶⁵ This numeral was originally read as two in Goswami’s edition (1937-8: 210-2). Fussman (1988: 17), in his article on the Kimbell Art Museum and Russek collection Buddhas, provides a table that includes this inscription dated to year three but does not mention when the reading of this number was changed from two to three. In the rubbing provided by Shrava (1993: 225, pl. XV) the bottom stroke of the numeral is legible, the middle stroke is faint but visible, and the top stroke is missing. However, there is room for an upper stroke and it is difficult to determine if this stroke was not written, meaning is the year two, or this part of the stone has peeled away, meaning year three is possible. The position of the bottom horizontal line of the numeral is written noticeably below the base of the following *ha* and seems to leave room for an upper stroke. There is a strong possibility that all of the standing Bodhisattvas sponsored by Bala and Buddhamitrā and exported to Kosam, Sarnath, and Śrāvastī were produced simultaneously, namely in Kaniṣka’s third year. For an image of this numeral see table 1.

Translation:

In year 3, winter month 2, day 8 of the Great King Kaniṣka I the nun Buddhāmitrā, who is versed in the *Tripitaka*, had the bodhisattva installed on the Lord Buddha's promenade.¹⁶⁶

18) Standing Bodhisattva [Shr. #28]: Kosam (Kauśāmbī), Ghoṣitārāma Monastery; year 3; object; stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [ma]hārājasya¹⁶⁷ + + + + + + + 3¹⁶⁸ h[e] 3 ///
2. buddhamitrāy[e]¹⁶⁹ bhikṣu[ṇiye]¹⁷⁰ trepiṭikāye bodh[i]satv[o]¹⁷¹ [p]ra[tiṣṭhā]-¹⁷²
3. pito bhagavato buddhasya ca[m]kam[e]¹⁷³

Translation:

In year 3, winter month 3... of the Great King (Kaniṣka I) a Bodhisattva (image) was installed by the nun Buddhāmitrā, who is versed in the *Tripitaka*, on the Lord Buddha's promenade.

19) Standing Bodhisattva [Shr. #19]: Kosam (Kauśāmbī); Year 3(?); object; stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mah[ā]rājasa¹⁷⁴ kan[i]ṣka[sa] + + + + + + + (5)¹⁷⁵ bodhisatvo pra[ti>(*ṣṭhā)-¹⁷⁶
2. pa)yati bhikhuni buddhami[trā] (trepiṭikā bhaga)[va]to¹⁷⁷ budhasa caṃkkama¹⁷⁸

¹⁶⁶ The promenade (Skt. *caṅkrama*) was a feature of Buddhist vihāras that monks climbed or mounted while meditating. Based on the locative case, *caṃkame*, it appears images were placed on this walkway. For a more detailed definition of *caṅkrama* see this entry for this word in Edgerton's *BHSD* (1953: 221-2).

¹⁶⁷ Only the bottom corner of the *ma* remains.

¹⁶⁸ Sharma (1968: 44) originally read this as year six but the photograph of this image clearly shows three horizontal lines, indicating the numeral three. The uppermost horizontal stroke is smaller than the middle and bottom strokes, but this could be due to the lighting and angle of the photograph. Sharma might have interpreted this shorter stroke for the head of the numeral six, however six is much more rounded and a clear example is found in day twenty-six given in the Kimbell Art Museum Buddha inscription [25] (fig. 7). As mentioned above, it seems that all the standing Bodhisattvas were donated together, so the reading of three seems correct.

¹⁶⁹ The *e* vowel is not clear but expected.

¹⁷⁰ The top of the *ni* and the *ye* are missing but should agree with *buddhamitrāye* in the instrumental.

¹⁷¹ Sharma (1968: 44) reads the conjunct as *ttv[o]* but there only seems to be a single *t* with a *va* sub-script. The head of the *akṣara* is missing and the *o* vowel has been reconstructed.

¹⁷² The face of the stone has peeled away and all that remains at the end of the line is the *ra* conjunct, descending from the bottom of the *pa* and what appears to be the subscript *ṭha*.

¹⁷³ Only a faint outline of the *ma* remains and the *e* vowel diacritic is not visible my photograph.

¹⁷⁴ The long *ā* vowel diacritic in *hā* is not visible.

¹⁷⁵ Sharma (1968: 44) reads this as the numeral 5, but only a long vertical stroke is visible, which, if it is a numeral could be the tail of a four, five, seven or eight.

¹⁷⁶ The left leg of the *ta* is visible but the *i* vowel and following *ṣṭhā* are lost.

¹⁷⁷ The entire middle of both the first and second lines has flaked off, obscuring the date in line one, the qualifier *trepiṭika* for Buddhāmitrā, and the beginning of *bhagavato*. Based on the Kosam inscriptions [17, 18, and 19] this reconstruction is quite certain.

¹⁷⁸ Sharma (1968: 45) reads *caṃkkame*, but the *e* diacritic is not visible.

Translation:

... of the Great King Kaṇiṣka I... the nun Buddhāmitrā, who is versed in the *Tripitāka*, had a Bodhisattva (image) installed on the Lord Buddha's promenade.

20a)¹⁷⁹ Parasol Shaft of a Standing Bodhisattva [Shr. #13]: Sarnath; Year 3; object: stone shaft; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*¹⁸⁰

1. mahārajasya kaṇiṣkasya saṃ 3 he 3 di 20 2
2. etāye purvaye bhikṣusya puṣyavuddhisya saddhyevi-
3. hārisya bhikṣusya balasya trepiṭakasya
4. bodhisatvo chatra-yaṣṭi [ca] pratiṣṭhāpito
5. bārānasiye bhagavato ca[m]kame sahā māt[ā]-
6. pitihi sahā upaddhyāyācaryehi saddhyevihāri-
7. hi antevāsikehi ca sahā buddhamitraye trepiṭika-
8. ye sahā kṣatrapena vanasparena kharapallā-
9. nena ca sahā ca ca[tu]hi pariṣāhi¹⁸¹ sarvasatvanam
10. hitasukārtha[m]

Translation:

In year 3, winter month 3, day 22 of the Great King Kaṇiṣka I – on this occasion – the monk Bala, who is versed in the *Tripitāka*, the co-resident of the monk Puṣyavuddhi had a Bodhisattva and an umbrella with a pole installed in Bārānasi on the Lord's promenade,¹⁸² together with (his) parents, with (his) masters and teachers, co-residents, and pupils, together with Buddhāmitrā, who is versed in the *Tripitāka*, with the Kṣatrapa Vanaspara and Kharapallāna, together with the four classes; for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

20b) Standing Bodhisattva Pedestal [Shr. #14]: Sarnath; Year 3; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

(Front)

1. bhikṣusya balasya trepiṭakasya bodhisatvo prat[i]ṣṭhāpito
2. mahākṣatrapena kharapallānena sahā kṣatrapena vanasparena

(Back)

1. mahārajasya kaṇi[ṣkasya] saṃ 3 he 3 di 20 [2]
2. etāye purvaye bhikṣusya balasya trepiṭa(kasya)

¹⁷⁹ These two inscriptions [20a and 20b] record the same information given on two related objects, the parasol shaft and image pedestal, and are not counted as two separate texts. This also applies to the standing Bodhisattva and accompanying parasol shaft [21a and 21b] found at Śrāvastī.

¹⁸⁰ The reading is from the Sircar (1965: 132).

¹⁸¹ Vogel (1905-6: 176) suggests an alternative reading of *sahā ca sarvāhi pariṣāhi* “and together with all the assemblies” rather than “with the four classes.” Gregory Schopen (1997: 246) notes that *sahā*, “together with,” should not be interpreted literally, meaning that the assembly of monks, nuns, lay-men, and lay-women were not directly engaged in installing this image, but rather shared together in the merit resulting from this act.

¹⁸² Vogel (1905-6: 177) translates *bhagavato caṃkrame* as “at the place where the Lord used to walk.”

Translation:

... of the Devaputra... of the vihāra... (this) gift, a Bodhisattva, a parasol, and a staff of the Monk Bala, who is versed in the *Tripitaka*, (was installed) in Śrāvastī, on the Lord's promenade, in the Kosamba-kuṭi, for the acceptance of the Sarvāstivādin teachers.

22) Small Buddha [Shr. #11]: Mathurā; Year 3; object: stone image; type: Buddhist, donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*¹⁸⁶

siddhaṃ saṃ 3 ... arya vasumitreṇa

Translation:

Success! The year 3 ... by the noble Vasumitra

23) Standing Bodhisattva [Lüders §143]: Mathurā; Year 3; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// ti[n]iya ///¹⁸⁷
2. /// 3 g[r]i 1 [d.] ///

Translation:

... of the first wife(?)... year 3, summer month 1, day ...

Year 4 (3)

24) Broken pedestal with foot [Shr. #16]: Mathurā (Mahā Vidyā); Year 4; object: stone image; type: unknown; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

sa 4 va 3 di 5 deva ///

Translation:

In year 4, rainy month 3, day 5 – deva(?)

25) Kimbell Art Museum Buddha [Fussman 1988: 6]: provenance unknown; Year 4; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

- 1) mahārājasya kāniṣkasya saṃ 4 varṣā 3 di 20 6 bhikṣusya bodhisenasya sadhyevihārisya bhadattasya dharmanadisya
- 2) boshisa[tv.] pratisthāpito svakāyaṃ cetiyākuṭīyaṃ¹⁸⁸ sahā mātāpitahi sahā pitasikāye bhadraṃ

¹⁸⁶ Shrava does not include a facsimile of this inscriptions in his plates, leaving the reading uncertain.

¹⁸⁷ Lüders (1961: 183) suggests restoring the first line to (*dharmapa*)ti[n]iya.

¹⁸⁸ Fussman (1988: 6, 27) reads *cetiyākuṭeyam*, but there are two lines curving back to the left from the top of the *ṭ* that usually indicate a long *ī* vowel diacritic.

3) saḥā sa[rva]satvehi

Translation:

In year 4, rainy month 4, day 26 of the Great King Kanīṣka I, a bodhisattva was installed by the honorable Dhamanandin, the co-resident of the monk Bodhisena in his own sanctuary, together with (his) mother and father, together with (his) paternal aunt Bhadrā, together with all beings.

26) Seated Bodhisattva [Lüders §172]: Mathurā; Year 4; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. maharājāsya deva[p](utrasya) [ka](ni)[ṣka]sa [sa]ṃ 4 h[e 4] di [10 4] (etasām) p[u]rv[ā]yaṃ s[ā]rthavahāsa bha-
2. vaśir[isa] ? ? ? ? .i [n]isa [k](u)t[u]bin[iye] dha[ṇya]bhavaye ? ? ? ? ? ttadhaṇya ///

Translation:

In year 4, winter month 4, day 14 of the Great King, the Devaputra Kanīṣka I (?) – on this occasion – by Dhaṇyabhavā ... of the caravan merchant Bhavaśīri, the house wife of ... ni...

Year 5 (1)

27) Buddhist statue [Shr. #23]: Mathurā; Year 5; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. (kani)///ṣkasya sa 5 varṣamāse 2 d[i 8] eta(sya)///¹⁸⁹
2. (mā)///t[ā]pitṛṇa¹⁹⁰ pujārtha[m] sarvasatvāna[m] pujārtha[m]///¹⁹¹

Translation:

In year 5, rainy month 2, day 8 – on this occasion – ... for the purpose to honor the parents and for the purpose to honor all beings.

Year 8 (4)

28) Nāga statue [Lüders §102]: Mathurā (Rāl-Bhaḍār mound); Year 8; object: stone image; type: Nāga; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahar[ā]jasya rājatirājasya ṣahi kaṇikkhasya sa 8 gṛi 4 di 5
2. asya purv[v]āyaṃ bhagavat[o] bh[u]mo nāgasya puṣīriṇi aramo ca pra[t]i-

¹⁸⁹ The number eight and the *eta* are clear in my photograph.

¹⁹⁰ The subscript *ra* angles sharply down and to the left off the bottom right leg of the *ta*, resembling a *r* more than a *r* (Damsteegt 1978: 23).

¹⁹¹ The *anusvāras* in this line are difficult to see, but there is a faint dot to the right of both the superscript *r* in *rtha* and in *na*.

3. [g](ra)ho + + + pa + + + [t]ra[sya m̄athu]rasya¹⁹² niyavaḍ[a]kisya sa(rv)[va]satahida[s](u)-
4. (khaye)

Translation:

In year 8, summer month 4, day 5 of the Great King, King of Kings, the Śāhi Kaniṣka I – on this occasion – a tank and a grove (were caused to be made) for the Lord Bhumo Nāga as the donation of *x-tra*, the *niyavaḍaki* of Mathurā, for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

29) Bodhisattva pedestal [Lüders §128]: Mathurā (Pālīkheṛā); Year 8; object: stone image; type Buddhist; donor: Buddhist(?); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// [ma] + + + + + + + [savatsa]re 8 va[r̄ṣa]m[ās]e 2 + + + [pra] sihakasya dānaṃ b[odhi]///
2. /// + + + + + pa pa + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + na sukhā[ye] ///

Translation:

In the year 8, rainy month 2, of (the Great King Kaniṣka I ?), the (bodhisattva?) (was set up as) the gift of Sihaka... for the happiness (of all beings).

30) Seated Buddha [Lüders §154]: Mathurā(?); Year 8; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sa[m] 8 va 4 d[i] 20 3 buddhadāsiye bhikṣuṇiye ?¹⁹³ ///
2.¹⁹⁴ /// .u ? hak[i]ye [vihāra] + + + (sar)[vasa]tvā[naṃ h](i)[tasu](khā)-
3. [y](e)

Translation:

In year 8, rainy month 4, day 23, the nun Buddhadasī ... (in the hakiya vihāra?)... for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

31) Russek Collection Buddha [Fussman 1988: 6-7]:¹⁹⁵ provenance unknown; Year 8; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [maha]rajasya kāniṣkasya savācharā 8 etaye purvaya bhikṣasa sihakasa sajhivi[hā]-
2. ()¹⁹⁶ renā [b]udharakhutāna bhagava () to śākyamunisya āsāne bo- ()
3. () dhisāto patithapito () saha matāpitehi ()
4. () saha up () jhavana ()

¹⁹² There seems to be about seven illegible *akṣaras* between *ho* and *[t]ra* with what looks like a *pa* in the middle. I put *[mathu]rā* in brackets because the letters are not very distinct.

¹⁹³ An *akṣara* is visible but the reading is not clear. Agrawala (1937: 5) read this as *dā* for *dānaṃ*, but Lüders (1961: 190) sees an *i* vowel on top of the letter and reads *dī*.

¹⁹⁴ The last two lines on the lower rim of the pedestal are now completely missing.

¹⁹⁵ Also see Härtel 1995.

¹⁹⁶ These shapes indicate the three lions between which the text was composed.

5. saha sarvasatehi saha sabamacarehi¹⁹⁷ ājariyāna mahasa[ghikā]na parigahe

Translation:

Year 8 of the Great King Kaniṣka I – on this occasion – a Bodhisattva was installed by Budharakṣita, the disciple of the monk Sihaka, in the seat of the Lord Śākyamuni, together with (his) mother and father, together with (his) masters, together with all beings, together with those who live a life of continence, for the acceptance of the Mahāsaṅghika teachers.

Year 10 (1)

32) Stone slab [Lüders §182]: Mathurā(?); Year 10; object: stone slab; type: Indic; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddha[m] maharājasya¹⁹⁸ deva[pu](trasya)
2. kaniṣkasya savatsare [10]
3. gri 2 di 9 etaye purvey[e]¹⁹⁹
4. [u]tarāyaṃ na[va]mikāyaṃ hā-
5. [rmya]n=[d]ata[m] priyatām devi gram[eṇa]²⁰⁰

Translation:

Success! In year (10), summer month 2, day 9 of the Great King, the Devaputra, Kaniṣka I – on this occasion – the temple was presented in the northern Navamikā(?).²⁰¹ May the goddess be pleased with the village.

Year 12 (1)

33) Pillar [Shr. #39]: Mathurā (Govind Nagar); Year 12; object: stone pillar; type: Architectural, donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārājasya devaputrasya
2. kaṇiṣkasya sa[m]vacyare²⁰² 10 2

¹⁹⁷ Skt. *sa-brahmacarya* or *sad-bramhacarya*, “cette expression se rapporte aux moines qui doivent mener une vie de chasteté ou, plus généralement, une vie de religieux” (Fussman 1988: 15).

¹⁹⁸ The *ma* in *mahārāja* has a distinct shape and looks like a hybrid of the early and later types composed from a square base of the later style and the left arm extending up at a 45° angle similar to the early type.

¹⁹⁹ Sircar (1965: 138) reads *pū[rva]ye*, but the long *u* vowel is not clear in either the rubbing or the image (fig. 10).

²⁰⁰ Sircar (1965: 138) reads this as *grāmasya* and Lüders (1961: 209) originally reads this the same way but then revises it to *gram[eṇa]*. The rubbing and image do not assist in clarifying this reading, so I have retained Lüders’ interpretation. If the genitive ending is correct the translation would change to “may the goddess of the village be pleased.”

²⁰¹ Sircar (1965: 139) glosses this as “in the northern Navamikā village (*uttara-navamikā-grāme*)” or “in the northern part of the Navamikā village (*navamikāgrāmasya uttarāṃśe*).”

²⁰² The *anusvara* above the *sa* is clear. What Sharma (1989: 313) reads as *tsa* looks more like a *cya*, however this is an unusual spelling. Throughout this text, the scribe engraves the conjunct *sya* with a semi-circle rather than either the tripartite *ya* or the *ya* with an elongated tail arching up and to the right. In this instance, what would be the *sa* in *tsa* looks more like the *ya* in *sya*. The intervocalic *t < c* alternation occurs in three other Mathurā

3. hemanta māsa

Translation:

In the year 12, winter month *x*... of the Great King, the Devaputra, Kaṇiṣka I

Year 16 (2)

34) Seated Kapardin Bodhisattva [Lüders §157]: provenance unknown, Year 16(?); object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [siddhaṃ mahārājas(y)a kaniṣka]sya [saṃvatsa]re 10 [6 va 1 di] ? etasyaṃ p(ūrvā)[yaṃ] viharisya bh[i]kṣusya nāgadattasya ///
2. dān[a] bodhisattv[o] kaṣṭi[k]īy[e v]ihāre svakā[yaṃ ce]ti[ya]kuṭiyam + + + + + + + + + + [h](i)[ta]s[ya] viharih[i sa]rvabudhapūjāye [sa]rva[sa]-
3. [tva]nā hitas[u]khāye [aca]riyanā mahā[saghi]yan[ā pra]tig(rahe)

Translation:

Success! In year 16, rainy month 1, day *x* of the Great King Kaṇiṣka I – on this occasion – a Bodhisattva (was installed as) a gift the monk Nāgadatta, a resident of the vihāra, in the Kaṣṭikīya (Kāṣṭhikīya) vihāra in his own *caityakuṭī* ... together with the residents of the vihāra, for the worship of all Buddhas (and) for the welfare and happiness of all beings, for the acceptance of the Mahāsāṅghika teachers.

35) [Shr. #43]: Dura (near Agra); Year 16; object: stone pillar; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. ma[hā]rajasya²⁰³ kaniṣkasya
2. [saṃva]chare²⁰⁴ 10 6 eta[ye pu
3. rvve] bhikunā prati[ṭhitā]
4. [thabho ri]ṣṭiṣeṇa [sa]gotreṇa
5. /// [pratama] + + ? bhikuya
6. /// ? ? bhiku + + + [khattiya]²⁰⁵
7. /// [thabho] ///
8. ///

inscriptions: *savacarā* in a text dated to year forty-eight of Huiṣka [70], *[saṃ]vachare* in a stone pillar inscription date to year sixteen of Kaṇiṣka I [35], and *savachare* in a text dated to year twenty of Kaṇiṣka I [40]. Even with the other attested cases of *ca* for *cha* of *ta*, *cya* is still a peculiar conjunct, but that is what appears to be written.

²⁰³ The long *ā* of *raja* is not visible.

²⁰⁴ Shrava (1993: 38) transcribes *[saṃ]vacharāē*, but the long *ā* is most likely a misprint.

²⁰⁵ Perhaps this is meant to be *dharmakathika*(?), “a dharma-reciter,” a monastic title that appears on a pillar base donated in the year seventy-seven by the monk Dharmadatta, the dharma-reciter (*bh[i]kṣusya dharmmadattasya dharmakathikasya*) [100].

Translation:

In the year 16 of the Great King Kaniška I – on this occasion – a pillar was installed by *x* of the Riṣṭiṣa gotra, the first(?)... [by the] monk the monk, a dharma-reciter (?)... a pillar

Year 17 (1)

36) Seated Bodhisattva [Lüders §150]: provenance unknown; Year 17; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [sa 10] 7 v[a 4 di] ? etasa purvāyā dharm[a]k[a]sa sovaṇik[a]sa kūṭubiniye
2. upaśikā n[a]gapiyā bodhisvatva pratihāpeti svakāyā cet[i]-
3. yākat[i]y[ā] acāryana dharmagutakāna pratigrahe

Translation:

In year 17, rainy month 4, day *x* – at this moment – the lay follower Nagapiyā, the wife of the goldsmith Dharmaka has this bodhisattva installed in her own sanctuary, for the acceptance of the Dharmaguptaka teachers.

Year 18 (1)

37) Box-lid inscription [CGI 152]: provenance unknown; Year 18; object: brass box; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 10 4 4 maṣe arthamisiya sastehi 10 iś[e] kṣunaṃmi gotamaṣamaṇasa śarira paristavida

*Translation:*²⁰⁶

Year 18, month Artemisios, day 10 – at this moment – the relics of the monk Gotama are established.

Year 19 (1)

38) Seated Buddha [Mukherjee 2001: 117-8]: provenance unknown; Year 19; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārājasya kaṇiṣkas[ya] sa[m] 10 9 he 1 dina 8 bh[i]k[ṣ]u[ṇ]ā vinayadhareṇa ///

Translation:

In year 19, winter month 1, day 8 of the Great King Kaniška I, (this image was installed) by the monk, a Vinaya-holder...

²⁰⁶ Baums 2012: 241.

Year 20 (4)

39) London Kapardin Buddha [Falk 2002-3: 38]: Mathurā (Kaṭrā?); Year 20; object; stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. – maharajasya devaputrasya kāṇiṣkasya saṃvatsare 20 varṣāmāse 2 divase 20 6 etasya pūrvāye bhikh(u)-
2. sya aśvadatasya dānaṃ tathāgata-pratimā mahākṣatrapa-varḍhamāne acariyānaṃ mahāsaṃghiyānaṃ
3. (par)i(gra)he sarvasatvanaṃ anutarasya budhajñānasya prātipuriye bhavatu

Translation:

In year 20, rainy month 2, day 26 of the Great King, the Devaputra Kaniṣka I – on this occasion – the monk Aśvadatta (gave) as a present (this) statue of the Tathāgata in the area of the Mahākṣatrapa for the acceptance of the Mahāsaṅghika teachers. May it be for the full acquisition of the Buddha-knowledge for all beings.

40) Seated Bodhisattva [Lüders §73]: Mathurā; Year 20; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [ma]harājasya kān[i]kṣasya²⁰⁷ savachare 20 hemaṃtam[ā]śe 4 divaśe ? ///
2. [de]va[la]ye²⁰⁸ bo[dhi]sat[v]o pratith[ā]pi _to²⁰⁹ goṭi ///
3. /// [mā]tap[i]t[i]na[m] saha tapi [pata]²¹⁰ ///

Translation:

In the year 20, winter month 4, day x of the Great King Kaniṣka I... the Bodhisattva was set up at temple (?) (*or by Devalā) ... of (her) parents together with...

41) Kubera statue [Shr. #52]: Mathurā (Pālikhera); Year 20; object: stone image; type: Indic; donor: unknown; EHS/Brāhmī

²⁰⁷ The metathesis of *śka* < *kṣa* in names of Kuṣāṇa rulers occurs in a standing Jina of year twenty-nine [53] and a seated Jina of year fifty-eight [84].

²⁰⁸ Only the *va* and final *ye* are clear. The *ye* would suggest the instrumental ending of a feminine noun, and in this position the word would most likely be the name of the donor in agreement with the past passive participle *pratithāpito* (Skt *pratiṣṭhāpita*). However, the letter prior to the *ye*, which has been read as *ca*, *la*, and *bha* does not appear to have a long *ā* vowel that would indicate a female donor. Also, it seems that Lüders (1961: 109-10) interpreted *devalaye* as a locative and offered a tentative translation of “at the temple (?)”. However, the typical formula states the name of donor before the verb and the location where the object was donated after it, e.g. Buddhamitrā’s donation of a Bodhisattva in the Lord’s promenade *buddhamitrāy[e] bhikṣu[niye] trepiṭikāye bodh[i]sattv[o] [p]rati[ṣṭhā]pito bhagavato buddha[sya] ca[m]ka[me]* [18]. I would be inclined to read this as the name Devalā, or alternatively Uvabhā, since the initial letter looks more like a *u* vowel than a *de*, and if this is a *u* in the word-initial position then this would further suggest a name.

²⁰⁹ There is a gap between *pi* and *to* due to an abrasion on the stone.

²¹⁰ These last two *aḥṣaras* are illegible, and neither Lüders nor I could derive a coherent meaning.

Text:

1. /// tra iya ///
2. /// sa 20 mā ///

Translation:

? ... year 20 month x

42) Stone slab [CGI 246]: Garhi Matani (near Campbellpore, Pakistan); Year 20; object: stone slab; type: Buddhist(?); donor: Buddhist (monastic); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 20 maharayasa rayatirayasa devaputrasa kaṇiṣkasa
2. jeṭhamasa divase prathame buḥavarumasa ṣamanasa bosavala-pu
3. trasa majjilakasa kimaṇoṣa putrasa rovimasa [dānamukhe]

Translation:

Year 20 of the Great King, King of Kings, Devaputra Kaṇiṣka I, on the first day of the month of Jyeṣṭha, (this is the gift) of the monk Buḥavaruma, son of Bosavala, Majjilaka, son of Kimaṇoṣa, (and) and Rovima

Year 23 (1)

43) Seated Kapardin Buddha [Lüders §136]: Sonkh (near Mathurā); Year 23; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. maharasya kāṇi 20 3 gr 1 etasya[m] purvayaṃ v[i]hārasv[ā]m[i]sya gun[d]asya dhitā puśyada
2. bodhisattvaṃ prat[i]ṣṭa[p]ay[ati]
3. svake vihāre [sarvasatvanaṃ hi]///(*tasukhārtham)

Translation:

In year 23, summer month 1, of the Great King Kani(ṣka) I, on this day Puśyada(tā), the daughter of Gunda, the Lord of the vihāra, installs a Bodhisattva in her own vihāra (for the welfare and happiness) of all beings.

2.2. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Huviṣka [44-87].²¹¹

Undated (5)

44) Standing Jina [Lüders §16]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); undated; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: unknown; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// (de)[va]putrasya huviṣkasya sa[m] ///

Translation:

In the year ... of the Devaputra Huviṣka...

45) Kuṣāṇa Ruler [Lüders §99]: Mathurā (Maṭ); undated; object: stone pedestal; type: Imperial; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// mak[a]ra[s]ya satyadha(r)[m]asthitasya=nanayat=sarva-śca[m]ḍavirātisṣṭar[ā]jya[sya] ///
2. /// ? (de)[va]kulam mahāraja-rājātirāja-devaputrasya huvi[ṣ]ka[s](y)[a] [p]itāmaha(sya) ///
3. /// (ta)[ā]gaś=c[a] (da)[tta]ḥ [ta]taś=ca devakal[am bha]gnapatitaviśirṇa[m] d[ṛ]śya ma[h.]///
4. /// m[ah](ā)raja-[rāj]ātirā[ja-d]eva[pu](trasya) huviṣkasya āyuba[lav](ṛ)d(dhy)artha cakkra
? ?///
5. (mahāda)///ṇḍanā[yaka-ma]²¹² ? [kṣ]²¹³ ? [n.] (ma)na[pāka]patina śāu.e ? + + + + + p[u]kasya
///
6. ///[ṣ]y[a]ti [nai]ty[a]k[ā]tith[i]bhyaś=ca brā[hma]ṇebhyaḥ kārīṣya(ti) + + + + + + + [m.]///

*Translation:*²¹⁴

1. ... of the... maker, who is steadfast in the true Law, on whom, on account of his devotion, the kingdom was conferred by Sarva and Ścaṇḍavira (Caṇḍavīra)...
2. ... the temple, the ... of the grandfather²¹⁵ of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Huviṣka...

²¹¹ There is a Bactrian inscription from Aytrām, near modern Termez on the Amu Darya, possibly dated to year thirty of King Huviṣka [Oesko] (Harmatta 1986). However, Sims-Williams (2012: 76) states that this reading is speculative, and therefore it is omitted from this corpus.

²¹² There are two protruding marks after *ka* that look like the top of a *sa* and might be the genitive *sya* ending of *mahādaṇḍanāyaka[sya]*. The stone is broken here and the entire bottom of this *akṣara* is missing.

²¹³ The top of the *ka* is visible directly to the left of the break in the stone.

²¹⁴ I have retained Lüders' (1961: 140) translation in this corpus, but Harry Falk (2015a: 288) has recently proposed an alternative translation for the first three lines of this text by interpreting *nanayat* as *nanayotsave* "at the festival of Nanaya" and reads, "(this is?) the family sanctuary of the... maker, who is steadfast in the true Law, on whom the kingdom was conferred by Caṇḍavīra at the festival of Nanaya. (*A statue) of the grandfather of the *mahārāja rājātirāja devaputra* Huviṣka... and a tank were given (*by me?). And later on, having seen that the family sanctuary was broken, fallen down and in a ruinous state..." The head of the *ya* is missing in the facsimile so it is difficult to determine if Falk's reading of *yo* is correct, but what Lüders read as *rva* could be the locative *ve* as Falk suggests. Falk's impetus for this interpretation is to associate the goddess Nana with conferring royal authority, a divine function she performs for Kaniṣka I as attested in the Rabatak inscription (Sims-Williams 2012: 77). A conclusive interpretation for this text has proven difficult due the pedestal being broken into fourteen pieces and its overall degraded condition, so Falk's new reading could in fact be correct, but by no means definitive.

²¹⁵ This would be Vima Kadphises.

3. ... and a tank was given. And later on, having seen that the temple was broken, fallen down and in a ruinous state...
4. ...and for the increase of the life and strength of the Great King, King of Kings, Devaputra Huviṣka...
5. ... by the great-general, the ... lord of ..., Śau.e...
6. ... and for the Brāhmaṇas, who are regular guests, will be made...

46) Inscribed Slab [Falk 2000: 32-5]: Mathurā; undated; object: stone slab; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. s(i)ddam maharājasya rajātirajasya deva[pu](tra)sya huv[i/e]ṣkasya sa(m)vatsa ///
2. bhikṣusya śramaṇasya saddhyeviharisya bhi(kṣu)[s]ya dharmmapriyasya dānaṃ b(o)dhi ///
3. tyago²¹⁶ sahā upaddhyayāca(r)yyehi sahā (ā)[cār]yyeṇa dharmmadattena sahā ///
4. hi sahā im(e)na kuśalamūlena sarvasa(t)[va a]nuttarasya nirantarasya j(ñā) ///

Translation:

Success! In year... of the Great King, the King of Kings, the Devaputra Huviṣka... (this) Bodhi[sattva] is the gift, the (complete?) surrender, of the monk Dharmapriya, the co-resident of the monk Śramaṇa... (a gift) together with (his) preceptors and teachers, together with his teacher Dharmmadatta... together with x, in order to let all beings attain the highest, uninterrupted knowledge through this source of bliss.

47) Kaniṣka Casket [CGI 145]: Peshawar (Shāh-jī-kī-Dherī); undated; object: gilded bronze reliquary; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

2. kaniṣ[kapu]re ṇagare [a]yaṃ gaṃdha[ka]raṃḍe + t. (*mahara)jasa kaṇi-
4. ṣkasa vihare mahasenasa saṃgharakṣitasa aḡiśala-navakarmiana
3. deydharṃe sarvasatvana hitasuhartha bhavatu
1. acaryana sarvastivatina pratigrahe

*Translation:*²¹⁷

In the city of Kaniṣkapura, this incense box... in the vihāra of the Great King Kaniṣka I by Mahasena (and) Saṃgharakṣita (?) May this pious gift be for the welfare and happiness of all beings. For the acceptance of the Sarvāstivādin teachers.

²¹⁶ Falk (2000: 34) suggest reconstructing this as *samyakparityāgo*, “a perfect surrender,” based on *samaparicago* found in the Taxila silver scroll [4]. Baums (2012: 237), however, emended the reading of *samaparicago* in the Taxila silver scroll to *desamaparicago*, which corresponds to the Sanskrit phrase *deyadharmaparityāgena* “by the bestowal of this pious gift.” This phrase is commonly situated in donative formulas after the verb and before the list of beneficiaries, as it is found in this text. However, in the other instances where this phrase occurs [77, 108, and 122-4] it is always given in the instrumental case and not the nominative, which would make reconstructing this phrase at this point in the text a tentative proposition. I have retained Falk’s initial reading as I have no alternative suggestion for how to interpret *-tyago*.

²¹⁷ Baums 2012: 246

48) Surkh Kotal Inscription [Sims-Williams 2012: 78-9]: Surkh Kotal, Baghlān Province, Afghanistan; undated (after year 31); object: stone wall; type: imperial; donor: Nukunzuk (lord of the marches); Bactrian/Greek

Translation:

[Lines 1-6]: This citadel (is) the temple of Kaniška I, the victorious, which was named (?) by the lord King Kaniška. When the citadel was first completed, it did not require (?) an internal water (supply), but the citadel was waterless, and when there was an attack (?) by enemies, then the gods were displaced from (their) seat, then they were taken to the stronghold (of) Lraf and the citadel was abandoned.

[Lines 6-20]: When Nukunzuk the lord of the marches, the lord's favorite, who is most dear to the King, the Devaputra, the second-in-command (?), the beneficent, the compassionate, who is pure-minded towards all living creatures, came here to the temple in the year thirty-one, (in) the month of Nisan, then he surveyed (?) the citadel, he dug this well, and he brought out the water, and he fitted it with stones, so that water should not be laCGIng to the people in the citadel, and when there might be an attack (?) by enemies the gods might not be displaced from (their) seat and the citadel might not be abandoned. And above the well he made a winch (?) (and) he installed a beam (?), so that by means of this well (and) by means of this winch (?) the whole citadel fared (?) well.

[lines 20-25]: And this well and *mašto xirgo* were made by me, Burzmihr the son of Kuzgashk, the inhabitant of Astilgan, the servant of Nukunzuk the lord of the marches, according to the lord's command. And this (inscription) was written by me, Mihraman the son of Burzmihr: [monogram 1]. Mihraman: [monogram 2].

Year 26 (1)

49) Amitābha Buddha [Schopen 1987: 101-10]: Mathurā (Govind Nagar); Year 26; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Professional (caravan leader/merchant); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*²¹⁸

1. mah(ā)rajasya _____ huveṣkas[y]a (sam) 20 6²¹⁹ va 2 _____ di 20 6

²¹⁸ The first line is engraved on the top of the pedestal and is clear in the plates provided in Schopen's article (1987: 102-3). However, the photographs used by Schopen, provided by John Huntington, were taken at a downward angle that obscures the reading of the fainter strokes on the front of the pedestal. My photographs are taken from a frontal view and can be used to supplement, and clarify, Schopen's transcription.

²¹⁹ The year twenty-six is very clear, making this the earliest attested Kuṣāṇa year for Huviṣka, a point not fully acknowledged by Schopen or other scholars of the Kuṣāṇa period.

2. etaye purvay.²²⁰ satcakasya²²¹ satthavaha[s]ya p[au]t[r.]ṇa²²² balakattasya śreṣṭh[i]sya nāttikena²²³
3. buddhapāleṇa²²⁴ putrena nāgarakṣitena²²⁵ bhagavato buddhasya amitābhasya pratimā pratiṣṭh[ā]pi[tā]
4. (sa)[rva]buddha-pujāye im[e]na k[u]śalam[ū]leṇa sa(rva)[satv]ā anut[t]ara[m] bud[dha]j[ṇ]ānaṃ prā(pnva)ṃ(tu)...²²⁶

Translation:

Year 26, rainy month 2, day 26 of the Great King Huiṣka – on this occasion – an image of the Lord Buddha Amitābha was installed by Nāgarakṣita, (paternal) grandson of the caravan merchant Satcaka, (maternal) grandson of the śreṣṭhin Balakatta, son of Buddhapāla for the honor of all Buddhas. Through this root of bliss (may) all living things (obtain) the supreme Buddha-knowledge.

Year 28 (1)

50) Pillar Inscription [Falk 2015: 121-2]: Mathurā (near Chaurāsī Jaina Temple, two-hundred yards south of the Govardhan road); Year 28; object: stone pillar; type: Indic; donor: Imperial (bakanapati); EHS/Brāhmī

²²⁰ Schopen (1987: 101-2) puts the entire phrase in brackets but the reading is certain, however the heads of most of these *akṣaras* are missing because the top edge of the pedestal has been rounded off. I see a stroke on the middle prong of the *ya* in *etaya* that looks like an *e* vowel and would therefore read *etaye*, but the top of the *ya* in *purvaya* is illegible.

²²¹ Shrava's edition (1993: 58-9) reads *sattvakasya*, but the conjunct is not a double *tta*, and this seems to be an example of silent corrections and emendations made by Mukherjee (1977-8: 82-4) and Sharma (1979: 25-6) that and Schopen (1987: 100) notes. Schopen (1987: 101) does not transcribe the first consonant and states that it could be a *ṇ*, *t*, or *n*, but he does read the second consonant as a *ca*, which appears correct. Comparing this conjunct with *ttha* in *satthavahasya* and *tta* in *nāttikena* makes the reading of the name *satcaka* highly probable.

²²² Schopen (1987: 101) reads this as *p[i]t[-x](ṇ)[-x]* whereas Shrava's edition (1993: 58-9) cites *pautreṇa*. All the vowel diacritics are missing in the first line making *pau* or *pi* possible. There appears to be a stroke off the left arm of the *pa* that would resemble an *au*, but this could just be a flaw in the stone. There is a crack in the stone below the *ta*, but what looks like a faint vertical mark extends down from the right leg of the *ta* that could indicate postconsonantal *ra*. I read this as *t[r.]*, and the vowel sign is uncertain.

²²³ The scribe seems to distinguish between a rounded bottom *ṇa* and a flat bottom *na*, and here the bottom is round indicating a *ṇa*.

²²⁴ Shrava's edition (1993: 58-9) cites *buddhabalena* and Schopen (1987: 101) reads *buddha(pi)la(na)*. The top of the *pa* is not closed, as it would be with a *ba*, and there is a stroke slanting up to the right from the top of the left arm of the *pa*, which I take as the long *ā* mātra. The *e* vowel on the *la* is not visible in Schopen's photograph due to the angle, but from the frontal view there is a clear stroke to the left from the top of the *la*. The *ṇa* has a rounded bottom.

²²⁵ The initial *na* is the flat-bottomed type and so is the *na* of the instrumental ending, where we would instead expect a retroflex *ṇa*.

²²⁶ The final word is almost completely missing but I agree with Schopen (1987: 101, 103) that the first *akṣara* is *prā* rather than *bha*. The next letter could be a *pa* but only the left half of the base and arm remain, and it is not clear that this is a conjunct because the bottom edge of the pedestal is rounded off. The *anusvāra* is clear but nothing is legible after this point. Schopen (1987: 109-10) suggests that this is an imperative form of Skt *pra* √*āp* based on literary parallels for the occurrence of *anuttarajñāna* with this verb.

Text:

1. siddha[m] ɔ²²⁷ saṃvatsare 20 8 gurppiya divase 1 ayaṃ puṇya-
2. śālā prācīnī kanasarukamāna-putreṇa kharāsale-
3. ra-patin[ā] vakana-patinā akṣayanīvi dinn[ā]²²⁸ tuto vṛ[ddhi]-
4. to māsānumāsaṃ śuddhasya catrudeśe²²⁹ puṇyaśālā
5. yaṃ brāhmaṇa-śataṃ pariviśitāvyaṃ divase-diva[se]
6. ca puṇyaśālāye dvāramūle dhāriye sādyaṃ saktanā²³⁰ ā-
7. dhakā 3 lavṛṇa-prastho²³¹ 1 śaku-prastho 1 harita-kalāpaka-
8. ghaṭak[ā] 3 mallakā 5 etaṃ anādh[ā]nāṃ kṛtena dātavya[m]
9. babhākṣitāna pibasit[ā]nam ya c[ā]tra puṇya[m] taṃ devaputrasya²³²
10. śāhisya huviṣkasya yeśā[m] ca devaputro priyaḥ teśāmapī²³³ p[u]ṇya[m]
11. bhavatu sarvāyi ca pṛthivīye puṇya[m] bhavatu akṣayanīvi dinn[ā]
12. + + ? [r]āka-śreṇīye²³⁴ purāṇa-śata 500 50 samitakara-śreṇī-
13. (*ye ca) [pu]rāṇa-śata 500 50

Translation:

Success! In year 28, (month of) Gorpiaios, day 1 – this eastern merit-hall was given a perpetual endowment by the son of Kanasarukamāna, the *kharāsalerapati*, the *vakanapati*.²³⁵ From the interest therefrom month to month on the fourteenth (day) on the bright (half of the moon), one hundred Brāhmaṇas should be served in the open merit-hall, and day for day having kept it at the entrance to the merit-hall, on the same day 3 *ādhaka* groats, 1 *prastha* salt, 1 *prastha* sour curd, 3

²²⁷ The symbol following *siddham* is a semi-circle opened to the left with a horizontal line in the middle and resembles a reversed Euro sign. This sign appears in other Kuṣāṇa period inscriptions and will hereafter be rendered with by this symbol.

²²⁸ The reading is clearly short *a*, but both Konow (1931-2: 61) and Sircar (1965: 152) emend this to *ā* to agree with the feminine subject *puṇyaśālā*.

²²⁹ This is the only word emended by Falk from Konow's original edition (1931-2: 55-61).

²³⁰ Sircar (1965: 152-3) suggest reading *svādya*, “savory, salty” instead of *sadyas* (ind.) “on the same day, daily.” The *ka* conjunct is also unusual, written with a stroke slanting to the left of the stem of the *ka*. Konow reads this as *ktu* and Sircar reads this as *ka* but notes that it looks like the *kṛ* found in *kṛteṇa* in line 8. Also, in the following line there is another *ka* with a more rounded stroke extending from the stem of the *ka* to the right that Konow transcribes as *ku* for *śaku*. Sircar transcribes *ka* for *śakta* and then reads *śukta* that he glosses with *āmlarasa*, “astringent, sour, sour curds.”

²³¹ Sircar (1965: 152-3) glosses this as Skt *lavaṇa*, “salt.”

²³² In my photographs of this inscription the long *ā* in *pibasitānam* is clear and there appears to be short stroke to the right of the *ca* that makes the reading of *cātra* probable.

²³³ Falk (2015b: 121) transcribes this as two words *teśāmapī*, but it is written as one word *teśāmapī* in the inscription.

²³⁴ The beginning of the next two lines are damaged by a chip in the pedestal on the left edge. Based on the *akṣara* count in the previous lines, all of which are very uniform, there appears to be two *akṣara* completely missing and one that has a faint outline but is illegible with maybe an *i* or *e* vowel extending upwards. Sircar (1965: 152) reads *śreṇīye* with a long *ī* vowel, and this seems correct as there are two rather broad lines extending up and to the left from the head of the *ṇa*. This same broad-stroke *i* looks to extend from top of the illegible *akṣara* at the beginning of the line, but this could also be cracks in the stone and not an engraver's mark.

²³⁵ Sircar (1965: 152) suggests that *prācīnī* is not an adjective describing the merit-hall but either the donor's name, thus the line should read “the merit-hall was given by Prācīnīka, the son of Sarukamāna (*prācīnīkena sarukamānā*),” or *prācīnī* is an adjective describing the donor as an easterner (*pūrvvodigvartinī*) or an elder (*purātani*). Falk (2015b: 121) interprets the titles of the donor as lord of Kharāsalerā, the lord of Vakana. I prefer to leave these untranslated since their precise meaning is uncertain.

jars of a preparation of different green vegetables, and 5 drinking vessels,²³⁶ this should be given for the sake of destitute people, hungry and thirsty, and what merit is herein, may that merit be for the Devaputra, Śāhi Huviṣka, and also to those to whom the Devaputra is dear, and may that merit accrue to the whole earth. The perpetual endowment was given to the *x-rāka* guild, 550 *purāṇas*, and the flour-making guild, 550 *purāṇas*.

Year 29 (3)

51) Seated Maitreya [Shr. #68]: unknown provenance; year 29; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*²³⁷

1. mahārājasya huviṣkasya saṃ 20 9²³⁸ va 4 [di] 1 etaya pu[r]vaya²³⁹
bh[i]khuṇ[i](ye)²⁴⁰ ? ? ? ? ? + + ? vihāre dhar[ma]gupatikānaṃ parigrahe²⁴¹
2. sarvasarvānaṃ hitasukhāya bhavatu

Translation:

Year 29, rainy month 4, day 1 of the Great King Huviṣka – on this occasion – ... (this is the gift) of the nun(?)... in the vihāra for the acceptance of the Dharmaguptakas. May it be for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

²³⁶ Sircar (1965: 152-3) interprets *svādya* “savory/salty” to mean groats, and I have chosen Sircar’s translation of these items over Konow’s (1931-2: 55-61) and Falk’s (2015b: 121). For the measurements mentioned Sircar (1965: 152-3) notes that an “*āḍhaka* is usually 256 handfuls (about 16 or 20 Bengal seers; 1 seer = 80 *tolās* = a little above two pounds) and a *prastha* is usually ¼ of an *āḍhaka*. However, he also warns these designations indicate different measurements in different areas.

²³⁷ The pedestal is very eroded and the text is not very legible, the transcription and translation cited by Shrava (1993: 61) was made by the then-Director of the Government Museum in Mathurā, Dr. Puṣpa Thakurail and it is a testament to her ability as an epigraphist to decipher this inscription. I only have made a few suggestions for the reading of this text based on my photographs.

²³⁸ This is read as year twenty-nine by Rosenfield (1967: 266) and year twenty-eight by Dr. Thakurail (1993: 61). In comparing the numeral nine in this text with that of the nine on other the Jina pedestal cited below [52], this numeral is clearly a nine and not an eight.

²³⁹ Dr. Thakurail (1993: 61) reads *etarya purvāyya*. The *e* and *ta* are clear but there is no sign of the preconsonantal *r* over the *ya*. The *pu* and *va* are clear and there might be the remnants of a *r* over the *va*. The final *ya* in both words are worn; only the angular right and middle strokes can be seen with the rounded left arm barely visible. There is no way to determine if a *ye* or *yaṃ* is intended.

²⁴⁰ In Dr. Thakurail’s (1993: 61) reads *ārkihāto* and is left untranslated, but this word looks similar to *bhikhuṇiye* found on a Bodhisattva image dated to year thirty-nine of Huviṣka [63]. In both cases the *bha* is boxy like a *ba*, and the left foot turns back to the right to seemingly close the bottom of the box. There appears to be a slight stroke of an *i* vowel turning back the left above the head of the *bha*. The second *akṣara* is not completely clear but resembles a *kha* with a vertical line extending downward to indicate the *u* vowel. The third *akṣara* looks like *na* with a slight stroke above the head that resembles an *anusvāra*, but is, I think, the remains of the *i* vowel. The *ye* is admittedly hypothetical, but there seems to be some faint remnants of the horizontal strokes of the base of the *ya* and maybe its vertical left arm.

²⁴¹ The *akṣaras* in the second half of this line are very faint and the surface is heavily eroded. After what I read as *bh[i]khuṇ[i](ye)* we would expect the name of the donor and most likely the word *dānaṃ*, to complete the phrase “this is the gift of the nun x”. Dr. Thakurail (1993:61) reads *karahito ... tya...* but I cannot make out any definitive letters. It is also difficult to read the last part of this donative formula, and I defer to Dr. Takurail’s interpretation. The third line on the bottom of the pedestal is now covered by the wooden display case.

52) Jina [Shr. #69]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 29; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārāja(*sya huvi)ṣkasa²⁴² sa 20 9 he 2 di 30 asma kṣune²⁴³ bhagavato vardhamānasa prat[i]m[ā] pratiṣṭhāpitā grahahathasya dhītara sukhitāye bodhinadi[ye]
2. kuṭubiniye vāraṇe gaṇe puśyamitrīye kule gaṇisa arya d[ātasa śiśyasa] gaha[pra]kivasa nirvartanā arahata puḷāye

Translation:

In year 29, winter month 2, day 30 of the Great King Huviṣka – at this moment – an image of the Lord Vardhamān was installed by the married woman Bodhinadi, the beloved daughter of Grahahatha (Grahahastin); at the request of Gahaprakiva, the pupil of the *ganin* Arya Data, (who is from) the Vāraṇa *gaṇa* and Puśyamitrīya *kula*. For the honor of the Arhats.

53) Standing Jina [Shr. #70]: provenance unknown; Year 29(?); object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

- d.
1. sdha²⁴⁴ ma[hā]rajasya devaputrasya huṣasya ? ? ? ///
 2. masika nagadnatasya śiṣo migaka bha ? saya ///
- (a1) ekunati[śa] (b1) araha[to] (c1) ///
- (a2) vā ? ? (b2) [ha]rabala (c2) pratisa

*Translation:*²⁴⁵

Success! Of the Great King, the Devaputra Hu(vi)ṣka ... Migaka, pupil of Nagadnata masika... twenty-nine (?)... the arhats...

Year 31 (2)

54) Kapardin Bodhisattva in the Langen Collection [Falk 2012a: 501]: Mathurā; Year 31; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*²⁴⁶

1. huveṣkasya sa 30 1 gr 2 di 5 etasya purvāye bhikṣusya mamasya sajjhavihārasya bhikṣusya būddhiśarmasya dānaṃ

²⁴² The beginning of the Kuṣāṇa ruler's name is lost, but based on the paleographic features, namely the orthography of genitive in *sa* instead of *sya*, and the outward-facing lions on the pedestal this image appears to be from the first Kuṣāṇa century. Therefore, Huviṣka's name can confidently be reconstructed.

²⁴³ This is the first instance of this term used in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions written in Brāhmī, and is more typically found in Gāndhārī texts.

²⁴⁴ This is an abbreviation for *siddham* and occurs in other inscriptions.

²⁴⁵ It is difficult to generate a coherent meaning from this text; apparently the date twenty-nine is spelled out in line a1 rather than given in a numerical form.

²⁴⁶ The reading of this text presented in Shrava (1993: 63-4) is quite inaccurate and this is the revised reading by Falk (2012a: 501).

2. bodhisattva-pratimā pr(a)t(i)ṣṭhāpitā saha mātāpitṛiḥi saha upajhyaya-ācāryeyehi sarvabudha
pujāye bhavatu

Translation:

In year 31, summer month 2, day 5 of Huviṣka– on this occasion – this gift of the monk
Būddhiśarma, the co-resident of the monk Mama, a Bodhisattva image, was installed together
with (his) parents, together with (his) teachers and supervisors. May it be for the honor of all
Buddhas.

55) Seated Buddha [Lüders §103]: Mathurā (Rāl-Bhaḍār Mound); Year 31; object: stone
image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. huviṣkasya [sa](m) 30 1 [he 4] d[i] 20 dana bh(i)[k](ṣu)ṇiye dinnaye ant(e)vāsinīn[am]
khuḍāye [gra] ///

Translation:

In year 31, winter month 4, day 20, this gift of Khuḍā (and) the female pupils of the monk
Dinnā...

Year 32 (1)

56) Seated Kapardin Buddha [Shr. #75]: Ahichchhatra (Ram Nagar, Uttar Pradesh); Year 32;
object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*²⁴⁷

1. sa[m]va 30 2 hema 4 diva 8 etasa p[ū]rvaye bh[i]khusa viraṇasa²⁴⁸
3. dānaṃ saha m[ā]tāpitṛiḥi apaja ca acāriya[na]ṃ savā-
2. naṃ hasuṭhaṃ²⁴⁹ sahā samana-a(pa)jahi²⁵⁰ sahe ata _ vā[śinahi]²⁵¹

²⁴⁷ There are three lines, the first and second on the upper rim of the pedestal and the third on the lower rim. The text starts with the first line on the upper rim, skips to the third line on the lower rim, and then returns to the second line on the upper rim [read line 1, 3, then 2]. Perhaps the scribe ran out of space on the lower rim and had to complete the dedication section below the first line on the upper rim.

²⁴⁸ The scribe forms the genitive ending with *sa* rather than *sya*. Also, the *ma* in *hema* is of the later, or “Gupta,” style which is written with a horizontal base and vertical right arm that meets at a right angle and a diagonal line running from upper left to the bottom right corner.

²⁴⁹ Mitra (1955: 56-7) reads *h[ita] sū[kha]thaṃ*, but he appears to have heavily emended his reading. The *ha* is clear but there is no *i* vowel and no room for *ta*. The next *akṣara*, read correctly, must be a looped *sa*, and is a typically later form of this letter. The vowel sign is missing and there is no room for the *kha*. The engraver might have intended to write *hitasukhārthaṃ*, which would be appropriate in this section of the donative formula, but if this is the case then this must be an abbreviated version of this phrase.

²⁵⁰ This word appears to be the same as found in the bottom line, but the second *akṣara* is illegible and, in this instance, has an instrumental plural *hi* ending. Mitra (1955: 56-7) reads *aba[ga]jahi*, but there is a flaw in the stone obscuring the letters.

²⁵¹ There is a gap between *ata* and *vā* due to the tail of the *ra* in the donor’s name, *Viraṇa*, extending down into this line. Only the barest outlines of the *akṣaras* for the last part of this word are visible.

Translation:

Year 32, winter month 4, day 8 – at this occasion – (this is) a gift of the monk Virāṇa, together with (his) parents and the *apaja*²⁵² teachers, for the welfare and happiness (?) of all beings, together with the *śramaṇa-apajas*, together with the pupils.

Year 33 (3)

57) Seated Bodhisattva [Lüders §24]: Mathurā (Caubārā Mounds); Year 33; stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārajasya devaputrasya huviṣkasya²⁵³ saṃ 30 3 gr 1 di 8 bhikṣusya balasya treṭṭakasya antevāsin[ī]ye [bhi]kṣun[ī]ye tre(*piṭi)[kā]ye buddha[mi]trāy[e]²⁵⁴

2. bhāgineyīye bhikṣiṇīye dhanava[t]īye bodhisatvo p(r)atiṭhāpi(to)²⁵⁵ [ma]dh(u)ravaṇake²⁵⁶ sahā māṭāpitihi + + + + ha + + + +²⁵⁷

Translation:

In year 33, summer month 1, day 8, of the Great King, the Devaputra Huviṣka, a bodhisattva was installed by the nun Dhanavatī, the sister's daughter (niece) of the nun Buddhāmitrā, who is versed in the *Tripitaka*, the female disciple of the monk Bala, who is versed in *Tripitaka*, in the Madhura grove (at Mathurā) together with (her) mother and mother...

58) Pillar Base [Falk 1998: 109-121]: Vāsanā (Mathurā); Year 33; object: stone pillar base; type: architectural; donors: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*²⁵⁸

1. maharajasya devapūtrasya huveṣkasya saṃvatsare 30 3 hemaṃtamāse 1 divase 2 etasya pūrvayaṃ upāsakaṇaṃ buddharaṣṭitaddharmarakaṣitanāṃ bhraṭṭṇaṃ somaputraṇaṃ

²⁵² Mitra (1955: 56-7) translates this word as “elder” but I am unsure of his reasoning. Perhaps this is another instance of the engraver abbreviating a word, and he meant to write a Prakrit version of *upādhyāya* found in the more common phrase *upādhyāya-ācariya* (Falk 2012: 502). However, the phonological changes from Skt *upādhyāya* to EHS *apaja* are doubtful.

²⁵³ Lüders (1961: 55) reads *v[e]* and Sircar (1965: 153) reads *vi*. There is a white spot in the photograph above the *va* making it difficult to determine what is written, but if there is an *e* vowel attached to the head of this letter the backwards slanting stroke should still be visible. Since there is no evidence of this vowel, I am inclined to follow Sircar's reading *vi*.

²⁵⁴ In my photograph the pedestal has broken after *tre*, presumably after the rubbing was taken.

²⁵⁵ The *pi* is legible; however, Lüders (1961: 55) notes the right arm is faint. The *to* is lost due to a chip in the stone.

²⁵⁶ The space where the *ma* should be also looks like it has chipped away, and both Sircar (1965: 153) and Lüders (1961: 54-5) follow the reading of Bloch (1905-6: 181-2). Sircar (1965: 153) equates the location of Madhuravana with the city of Mathurā.

²⁵⁷ The pedestal is broken after *māṭāpitihi*.

²⁵⁸ At the beginning of the text is what looks like a *tamgha* symbol engraved on the pillar base.

brahmaṇānām²⁵⁹ opavaṇṣagotraṇam takhaśīlakanam dānam kubhakaṃ svake²⁶⁰ vihare toyīyam
ācaryyaṇam sarvastivādīnaṃ parigrahe
2. ā[tma]²⁶¹ ārogadakṣiṇaya m[ā]tapitṛṇam²⁶² pūjarttham²⁶³ darakanam darikanam ca
dīrghāyūkataya sarvasatvan[ā]m²⁶⁴ hitasūkhartham

Translation:

In year 33, winter month 1, day 2 of the Great King, the Devaputra Huveṣka – on this occasion – (this) pillar-base is a gift of the brothers Buddharakṣita and Dharmarakṣita, sons of Soma, Brahmaṇs of the Opavaṇṣa gotra, from Taxila (installed) in their own vihāra (at) Toyī, for the acceptance of the Sarvastivādā teachers. For benefit of their own health, for the honor of (their) parents, for the longevity of (their) sons and daughters, (and) for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

59) Pillar Base [Falk 2000: 29-32]: Maholī (Mathurā); Year 33; object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*²⁶⁵

1. maharajasa devaputrasya hūveṣkasya saṃ 30 3 he 1 di 2 etasya purvaya
buddharakṣitaddhamarakṣitanam bhraṭṛṇā somaputraṇam brahmaṇānām²⁶⁶ opavaṇṣa-sagotraṇam
takhaśīlakanam dānam kubhakaṃ svake vihare toyīyam saṃṅhe catudīśe ācaryyaṇam
sarvastivadinam parigrāha
2. atmanasya ārogadakṣiṇaya mātapitṛṇam pujartha sarvasyeva parīvarasya dīrghāyūkataya
sarvasatvanam hitasukhartha

Translation:

In year 33, winter month 1, day 2 of the Great King, the Devaputra – on this occasion – (this) pillar-base is a gift of the brothers Buddharakṣita and Dharmarakṣita, the sons of Soma, Brahmaṇs of the Opavaṇṣa gotra, from Taxila, (installed) in their own vihāra (at) Toyī, for the acceptance of the Sarvastivādīn teachers in the Saṅgha (Buddhist) community in the four quarters. For the benefit of their own health, for the honor of (their) parents, for the longevity of (their) entire retinue, (and) for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

²⁵⁹ The long *ā* vowel for the genitive plural ending is clear. There is also a stroke that angles up from the head of the *hma* that looks like an *e* vowel, but this might just be a flaw in the stone.

²⁶⁰ There is a stroke extending straight down from the left corner of the *va* that looks like a *u* vowel, but *svuke* is not an expected reading for this word.

²⁶¹ The stone has chipped off after the *tma*, and there does not seem to be enough space between this *akṣara* and *āroga* to reconstruct **nasya*. Furthermore, if the *sya* was written the conjunct *ya* should be visible below the chip, therefore it seems only *atma* was written. The intention, however, of this phrase is clear based on the parallel text on the accompanying pillar base.

²⁶² The long *ā* of *ma* is not fully visible but expected.

²⁶³ The long *ū* vowel in *pū* is clear, but not transcribed by Falk (1998: 110).

²⁶⁴ The vertical stroke of the *na* slants to the left and it appears that an *ā* vowel diacritic extends to the left.

²⁶⁵ There is no design on the pillar base before the text, as there is in the accompanying pillar base.

²⁶⁶ The final *na* is dental and not retroflex, as was transcribed by Falk (2000: 30).

Year 34 (1)

60) Standing Bodhisattva [Falk 2012b: 13]: provenance unknown; Year 34; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. (*mahārājasya huviṣkas)///ya sa 30 4 va 4 di 10 etasya pūrvvayaṃ bhikṣusya āśvadattasya sa//(*dheyavihāriṇaḥ)
2. /// satva pratiṣṭhapiṭaḥ dharmmarajike āca[r]yyaṇā mahās//(*aṃghiyānām parigrahe)
3. /// sahā [mā]tapi[tribhi sa]hā²⁶⁷ śirikena nandikena sarvvina ca mitra-suhṛjjanena²⁶⁸ sarv[v]a [b]//(*uddha pujāye)

Translation:

In the year 34, rainy month 4, day 10 of the (Great King Huviṣka) – on this occasion – (this) Bodhisattva was installed by *x*, the co-resident(?) of the monk Aśvadatta at the Dharmarājika, for the acceptance of the (Mahāsaṅghika) teachers, together with (his) parents, together with Śirika, Nandika, and all (his) friends and comrades. For the (honor of) all Buddhas.

Year 35 (2)

61) Buddha Image [Falk 2004: 139-40]: Peshawar; year 35; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: unknown; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. (*sam) /// 30 5 vā 1 di 20 5
2. /// upajhāyena saṃghila
3. /// [ta]sukhārtha ācāryana mahasa-
4. ghyāna parigrah(e)

Translation:

In the year 35, rainy season 1, day 25, (this... was installed) by/together with the teacher Saṅghila... for the welfare and happiness (of all beings). For the acceptance of the Mahāsaṅghika teachers.

62) Standing Bodhisattva [Shr. #82]. Lakhnu (Hathras, Aligarh district); Year 35; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

siddhaṃ maharajasya devaputrasya huviṣkasya sa[m] 35 hemata ///

²⁶⁷ There is a large notch in the pedestal that has destroyed two or three *akṣaras* after *pi*, so Falk's (2012b: 13) reading is plausible but not certain.

²⁶⁸ Falk (2012b: 15-6) suggests a Gāndhārī influence in *sarvviṇa* for Skt. *sarvānaṃ*, citing a similar form of *sarviṇaṇa* in the Wardak vase [79]. The phrase *mitra-suhṛjjana* is comparable to *ñati-mitra-salohida* (Skt *jñati-mitra-salohita*) in the Dharmarājikā inscription from Taxila [CGI 69], *mitra-ñadi-salohida* in the Schist miniature stupa from Charsadda [CGI 178], and *ṇatigo-mitra-saṃbhatiga* (Skt. *jñati-mitra-saṃbhrātṛka*) in the Wardak vase [79].

Translation:

Success! Year 35, winter month x, of the Great King, Devaputra Huviṣka...

Year 39 (2)

63) Seated Kapardin Bodhisattva [Lüders §126]: Mathurā (Pālīkheṛā); Year 39; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. (*mahārājasya)/// [de]vaputrasa huv[i]škasya sa[m] 30 9 va 3 di 5 etasya[m] purva[yaṃ] bh[i]khuṇiye puśaha[th]iniye<ni[y](e) > [a]///(*mtevāsi)²⁶⁹
2. bh[i]kuniye budhadevāye bodhisat[v]o pratihāpito sahā mātāpītīhi sarvasat[v]a-hitasukh[a]///

Translation:

Year 39, rainy month 3, day 5 of the Great King, the Devaputra Huviṣka – on this occasion – a Bodhisattva was installed by the nun Budhadevā, the female pupil of the nun Puśahathini²⁷⁰ together with (her) parents, for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

64) Elephant Capital [Shr. #84]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Ṭīlā); Year 38; object: stone; type: Architectural, donor: Professional (*śreṣṭhin*); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mah[ā]rājasya devaputrasya huv[i]škasya saṃ 30 9²⁷¹
2. he 3 di 11 etaya purvāye²⁷² namdiviśāla
3. pratiṣṭhāpito śivadāsa śreṣṭa-putreṇa śreṣṭinā²⁷³
4. aryanaḥ rudradāsenā arahatana pujāye

Translation:

In year 38, winter month 3, day 11 of the Great King, the Devaputra Huviṣka – on this occasion – the Nandiviśāla (elephant) was installed by the *śreṣṭhin*, the Noble(?) Rudrasena, the son of the *śreṣṭhin* Śivadāsa. For the honor of the Arhats.

Year 40 (1)

65a) Standing Nāga [Lüders §137]: Mathurā (Chargāon); Year 40; object; stone image; type: Nāga; donor: Nāga; EHS/Brāhmī

²⁶⁹ The right corner of the pedestal's rim has broken off after the *a* and the *niye* appears to be written under the *ye*; Lüders (1961: 166) states that he has “no doubt that the word is to be restored as [*a*](*mtevāsi*)/*ni*[*y*](*e*).”

²⁷⁰ On page 166 in the margin of his copy of Lüders (1961), Richard Salomon notes that Puśahathini is the Gāndhārī spelling for Puśyahastinī.

²⁷¹ The number in Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 272, pl. LXII) resembles the number nine rather than 8, especially when compared to the nine in twenty-nine on a Jain pedestal [52] and a seated Maitreya [51], and thirty-nine on a Kapardin Buddha [63].

²⁷² There is no double *va* in Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 272, pl. LXII) and the long *ā* is clear.

²⁷³ In Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 272, pl. LXII) he writes *ṣṭ* rather than *ṣṭh*.

Text:

1. maharajasya rajāttirājasya huviṣkasya savatsare ca[ta]riśa 40
2. hemattamase 2 divase 20 3 etta purvāyyā
3. senahasti²⁷⁴ [ca]²⁷⁵ piṇḍapayyaputro bhonḍake [ca]
4. virāvṛddhiputro etti vayyasyā ubhayye
5. nātā pra[tsisyā]penti²⁷⁶ puṣkaraṇiyya
6. svakā[yyām]²⁷⁷ priyya[nti]²⁷⁸ bhagavā nāgo

Translation:

In year 40, winter month 2, day 23 of the Great King, King of Kings, Huviṣka – on this occasion – Senahasti, the son of Piṇḍapayya, and Bhoṇḍaka, the son of Virāvṛddhi, both these comrades, installed a Nāga (and) tanks, (in accordance with) their own duty. These two please the Lord Nāga.

65b) Stone slab [Lüders §138]: Mathurā (Chargāon); Year 40(?); object; stone slab; type: Nāga(?); donor: Nāga(?); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. ++ [ra]jati[raja] + + + [putra] ///
2. + + + + + + + + [pu]rvāyyā ///
3. + + + + + + + + [k]āsas[v]avah[a]darava ///
4. + + + + + + + + payati ///

Translation: This stone slab was found together with the Nāga statue at Chargāon, and the beginning of line one that appears to contain the word *rājātirāja* suggests that this slab was

²⁷⁴ The *ha* in *hasti* is the later type that has a short vertical head and semi-circular curve off the bottom of the *akṣara* bending to the right.

²⁷⁵ As noted by Lüders (1961: 173), this character is composed of two horizontal strokes which resemble a *visarga* more than the letter *ca*.

²⁷⁶ It appears that the verb *pratiṣṭhāpenti* was meant to be written here but the *akṣaras* that make up the middle two consonant conjuncts are unusual. The stone is a little damaged at the first conjunct which obscures the right side of the letters, but the left loop of the *sa* suggests that the scribe wrote *tsi* rather than *tī*. In the second ligature, the *sa* is clear but the letter below has two loops on either side of the tail of the *sa* and does not resemble a *ta*. Lüders (1961: 174) suggest that the scribe meant to write a circular *tha* but did not complete the lower half of the letter. The *syā* here resembles the one written in *huviṣkasya* in line 1, but the reason for this orthographic alteration of *sthā* to *syā* is uncertain. Also, the vowel diacritics of *ā* in *syā* and *e* in *pe* are written as detached strokes above the letters rather than connected to their respective heads.

²⁷⁷ This reading looks more like *svakāryyā*, and perhaps is not the adjective *svaka*, one's own, but rather *sva-kārya*, "one's own duty." In other examples *svaka* typically precedes the word it modifies, e.g. *svakāyam cetiyakuṭiyam* [34 and 36] or *svake vihāre* [59]. But in this instance, it comes after *puṣkaraṇiyya*, which appears to be the feminine locative ending added to the neuter plural accusative *puṣkarāṇi*. I take this word to refer to *vayyasyā*, comrades, in line 4, and interpret it as "their own duty."

²⁷⁸ The last consonant cluster looks like the *nti* that is found at the end of *pra[tsisyā]penti* in the line above and the scribe might have been influenced by that plural ending. However, for *priyyanti* to be an active verb whose subject is the two donors we would expect *bhagavā nāgo* to be in the accusative instead of the nominative. I interpret this as "these two please the Lord Nāga," with the plural ending substituted for the dual. The scribe might also have attempted to write *prīyatām*, "may he be pleased," as is found in on a Jain image dated to Huviṣka's year sixty, "may the lord Rṣabhaśrī be pleased" (*prīyatām=bhagavān=ṛṣabhaśrīh*) [85].

donated together with the standing Nāga in Huviṣka's fortieth year. The face of the slab has peeled off, making any attempt at a translation impossible.

Year 45 (2)

66) Standing Buddha [Lüders §180]: provenance unknown; Year 45; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor, Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mah[ārāja]sya hūveṣkasya devaputrasya sa 40 5 va 3 [di] 10 5 etasyā purvayā upāsikāye
2. khvasicāye bhag[ā]vato śakyamune apratimasya pratimā pratisthāpitā ālikāyāṃ rośika-vihāre
3. ātmanasya ārogyadakhīṇa²⁷⁹ mātapitina bhaṭārikāye śamaṇikamātare śamanikāye jīvakasya jīvakamatu
4. sarvasatvānaṃ ca hitas[u]khārtha

Translation:

In year 45, rainy month 3, day 15 of the Great King, Huviṣka, the Devaputra – on this occasion – an image of the incomparable Lord Śakyamuni was installed by the female lay-follower Khvasicā at Ālikā in the Rośika vihāra for the benefit of her own health (and) for the welfare and happiness of (her) parents, of Śamaṇika's mother Bhaṭārikā,²⁸⁰ of Śamaṇika, of Jīvaka, of the mother of Jīvaka, and all beings.

67) Squatting Jina [Shr. #90]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 45; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

siddha[m] sa 40 5 va 3 di 10 7 etasya purvvaye ? + + + + + ? ye buddhisya vadhuye dharmmavṛddhasya

Translation:

Success! Year 45, rainy month 3, day 17 – on this occasion – ... (the gift) of Dharmmavṛddhā, the daughter-in-law of Buddhi...

Year 46 (1)

68) Bodhisattva image [Falk 2002-3: 35-6]: Mathurā; Year 46; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī (lines 1-3); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī (line 4)

Text:

1. savaschare 40 6 va 3 di 6 [e]///(*tasyaṃ purvvayaṃ)

²⁷⁹ The gift to benefit one's own health is also found in the two pillar bases dated to Huviṣka's thirty-third year [58 and 59].

²⁸⁰ Lüders (1961: 206) translates *bhaṭārika* (Skt *bhaṭṭārikā*) as “mistress,” but this title does not appear in any other Kuṣāṇa inscription. Monier-Williams (1899: 745) offers a translation of “Noble lady” for this word, which might be more fitting than mistress. However, I interpret this as Śamaṇikā's mother name.

2. (*saṃ)///ghadāsa-dāna[m]²⁸¹ bodhisattva mathur///(*āyaṃ mahādaṇḍanāyaka-)
3. sa vihare savasatva hitasukh///(*ārthaṃ)
4. (*bodhi)///[sa]casa²⁸² pratime mahadaṇḍanayakasa vihare

Translation:

In year 46, rainy month 3, day 6 – (on this occasion) – this Bodhisattva is the gift of (*Saṃ)ghadāsa (in the) vihāra of the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka of Mathurā for the welfare and happiness of all beings...the image of the Bodhisattva in the vihāra of the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka

Year 47 (1)

69) Jina [Shr. #92]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 47; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sa 40 7 ḡ 2 di 20 etasya purvayaṃ varaṇae gaṇe p[e]tivamik[e] kule vācakasya ohanadisyā śisasya senasya nivatanā savakasya
2. puṣasya vadhuye giha(*sya) k[u]ṭibini + +²⁸³ [pūṣyadi]nasya matu
3. /// ? ? namo arahanata²⁸⁴ ///

Translation:

Year 47, summer month 2, day 20 – on this occasion – (the gift of) *x* the mother of Puṣyadina, wife of Giha(?), the daughter-in-law of the śravaka Puṣa; at the request of Sena, the pupil of the preacher Ohanadi (who is) from the Varaṇa *gana*, the Petivamika *kula*... Homage to the Arhats.

Year 48 (2)

70) Seated Jina [Lüders §14]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 48; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārājasya huveṣ[a]sya sav[a]carā 40 8 v[a] 2 d[i] 10 7 etasya puvāyaṃ k[o]ḷ[i]ye gaṇā [ba]ma(dā)-
2. [si]ye k[u]l[e] [u]cenāgariya śi[kh]āya dh[a]ñiv[a]lasya śiśin[i]ya dh[a]ñīśiriya nirvat[a]na
3. b(u)dh[i]kasya vādhuye śavātrātapotr[i]ya yaśāya dānā sa(m)bh[a]vasya prodima pra-
4. t[a]s[th]apitā

²⁸¹ Falk (2002-3: 35) suggests reconstructing (*saṃ) prior to the name, making the donor's name Saṃghadāsa, and takes this as a compound. The teacher Saghadāsa (*upadhy[ā]ya saghadāsa*) is honored in an inscription dated to year fifty-one of Huvīṣka [77], and he or someone with a similar name might be the donor mentioned in this text.

²⁸² Falk (2002-3: 36) reads these three partially preserved *akṣaras* as [sa]casa and supplies the missing (*bodhi) to make the type of image donated parallel in both the EHS and Gāndhārī texts.

²⁸³ There is a space that looks like a depression in the stone and it is not clear if anything was written here or was intentionally left blank.

²⁸⁴ On the bottom-right rim of the pedestal is a section of the inscription not included in Bühler's edition (1892b: 396). The bottom of the pedestal quite damaged and there is no trace of any other text other than this short phrase praising the Arhats.

Translation:

In the year 48, rainy month 2, day 17 of the Great King Huviṣka – on this occasion – an image of Saṃbhava was installed (as a) gift of Yaśā, the granddaughter of Śavatrāta, the daughter-in-law of Budhika; at the request of Dhañīśiri, the female pupil Dhañivala (who is from) the Koḷiya *gaṇa*, the Brahmādāsika *kula*, the Ucenāgarī *śākhā*.

71) Jina [Shr. #109]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 48; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. maharajasya huviṣkasa 40 8 he 4 d[i] 5 ///
2. bramādāsaya k[u]la ukonaśaya²⁸⁵ śākhaya dha ? ///

Translation:

In the year 48, winter month 4, day 5... from the Brahmādāsika *kula*, the Ucenāgarī *śākhā* dha (?) ...

Year 49 (1)

72) Standing Jina [Shr. #110]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 49; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// saṃ 40 9 vā²⁸⁶ 4 di 20 etasyāṃ purvvāyaṃ koḷiye²⁸⁷ gaṇe vakārāyā śākhāyā ///
2. (*vacā)///ko²⁸⁸ a[r]ya vṛdhahasi arahato manisuvrartasya²⁸⁹ pratimaṃ nirvartayati ///
3. /// ? bhāryyaye śrāvīkāye [dinā]ye²⁹⁰ dānāṃ pratimā vodve thupe deva-ni[r]mite pra ///

Translation:

In year 49, rainy month 4, day 20 – on this occasion – Arya Vṛdhahasi, a preacher from the Koṭṭiya *gaṇa*, the Vakārā *śākhā* made a request for an image of the Arhat Manisuvrata. The image (is) a gift of the śrāvīkā Dinā(?), the wife of *x* (was installed in) the Vodva stūpa²⁹¹ that was built by the gods.

²⁸⁵ This reading is from Cunningham's eye-copy (Shrava 1993: 286, pl. LXXVI) and seems incorrect. Since the Brahmādāsika *kula* is usually associated with the Ucenāgarī *śākhā* I have changed this in my translation.

²⁸⁶ The long *ā* vowel is a straight line extending upwards that resembles a preconsonantal *r*.

²⁸⁷ Bühler (1894: 204) reads *ṭṭi* but it is clearly *ḷi*.

²⁸⁸ Vacaka, meaning preacher, is a common title of Jain monastics found in inscriptions.

²⁸⁹ Bühler (1894: 204) reads this name as *ṇandiāvarta* and equates it to Ara, the eighteenth Jain Tīrthaṅkara. I think this reading should be emended to *manisuvarta* and correspond with Manisuvrata, the twentieth Tīrthaṅkara. The first *akṣara* resembles a *ma* more than *na* and the second is *ni* with no evidence of a *da* conjunct. Bühler interprets the intervocalic *a* as representing *ya* for *nandyāvarta*, however this type of vowel hiatus is not a common feature in EHS inscriptions. I take this letter as *su*, which similar in form with Brāhmī *a*, but in this case the lower left arm curls inwards more than the arm of the *a* in *arhato*. The next letter is certainly *va* and there appears to be a downward vertical stroke coming off the right corner that would represent a postconsonantal *r*, but this is not certain and could just be a flaw in the stone. The next letter is *rta* followed by the genitive *sya* ending.

²⁹⁰ The reading of *dinā* is uncertain.

²⁹¹ Bühler (1894: 204) suggests interpreting *vodve* as *vṛddhe*, “ancient”, and takes this to allude to the stūpa being constructed in the distant past. I interpret this word as the name of the stūpa.

Year 50 (3)

73) Stone Slab [Shr. #115]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 50; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: Professional (caravan leader); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*²⁹²

1. maharājāsya²⁹³ devaputrasya²⁹⁴ huveṣ[k]asya saṃvat[s]are²⁹⁵ 50 [va]
2. 4²⁹⁶ di 5 etāsya pūrvayaṃ²⁹⁷ sarthavaha[s]ya i[m]drabalaputraṇaṃ²⁹⁸ bhavadina[s]ya
3. bhatṛṇ[am]²⁹⁹ purohaśalaka³⁰⁰ ? + sāhi ? + + d. ///³⁰¹
4. ? nicalākaroddhanyavarm[ā]ni³⁰² + ? ? ā(car)[y]ya³⁰³ ///
5. /// parigrahe saha [mātā]pitṛbhya[m] sarvasatvānaṃ [hi] ///

Translation:

In the year 50, rainy month 4, day 5 – on this occasion – Purohaśalaka, the son of the caravan leader Indrabala, the brother of Bhavadina... . . . *ni calākaroddhanyavarmāni*... for the

²⁹² Shrava (1993: 93) bases his reading of this text on Iyer's (1983: 71-2) edition of this inscription, but also adds his own corrections. I offer a few emendations.

²⁹³ Iyer (1983: 71-2) reads *hā* but there is no evidence of a long *ā*.

²⁹⁴ Shrava (1993: 93) reconstructs *pu*, but the *u* vowel extending down from the *pa* is legible.

²⁹⁵ Both the subscript *k* in *ṣka* and the *s* in *tsa* are damaged but the reading is certain.

²⁹⁶ Shrava (1993: 93) reads *kṣe* but Iyer (1983: 71-2) correctly notes the numeral four, which is expected following *va*, an abbreviation of *varṣa*, the rainy season.

²⁹⁷ The *tā* and *pū* are not accounted for by Iyer but clear; Shrava transcribes them both with short vowels.

²⁹⁸ Shrava (1993: 93) reads *ndra* and Iyer reads *nra*, but there appears to be a *anusvāra* above the *i* and even though the left corner of the *da* is missing the *dra* is clear, especially when compared to other *dra* conjuncts, e.g. *bhadrasya bhadraghoṣa* [114].

²⁹⁹ Iyer (1983: 71-2) reads *bhrātṛiṇā* and Shrava (1993: 93) reads *bh[rā]triṇaṃ*. I do not see the *r* connected to the lower part of the *bha* or the long *ā* vowel. The stroke below the *t* angles sharply down and to the left like a *ṛ* rather than a *r*. Only the left side of the last *akṣara* is visible and looks like a *ṇ*, but the vowel cannot be determined.

³⁰⁰ Iyer (1983: 71-2) reads *purōhaśalāka(ke)na* and Shrava (1993: 93) reads *purehaśalaka*. I see *purohaśalaka* and because of its position following *bhatṛṇ[am]* we might expect a name, either of the donor or the donor's relative.

³⁰¹ The face of the stone in the remainder of this line has almost completely peeled away. Iyer (1983: 71-2) transcribes *sihi su [sa]* and Shrava (1993: 93) supplies *thāra[?] ha*. There is an indecipherable *akṣara* after the *śalaka*, then a space big enough for a letter before *sāhi*. After *sāhi* only the top left stroke of a letter is visible and the rest of the line is lost, save for what looks like a *da*.

³⁰² I am not sure what to make of this phrase. Iyer (1983: 71-2) transcribes this as *[na] nichalākarōd=dhānyavarma-vi[hare]*, and proposes “did the nicala in the Dhanyavarma vihāra”. His reading of *vihāra* is uncertain. An alternative interpretation is to separate the *ni* from the beginning of the compound and construe it as a plural neuter ending of the preceding word, so that the ending of *calākarod=dhanyavarmāni* would agree in gender and number with whatever precedes it. If this was proper Sanskrit we might expect sandhi here, rendering *cala=ākarod=dhanyavarmāni*, but then we are left with a finite verb (*ā √kṛ* - third person, singular, imperfect) and a *cala*. Dhanyavarman might be a name, but the neuter plural ending suggests it is some type of object. I cannot offer a coherent interpretation. The phrase *acalam=aiśvarya* “unshaken sovereignty” occurs in three pillar-base inscriptions made by the Viśvasika Vakamīhira [122-4]. If the scribe intended to write *niścala*, “immovable,” instead of *nicala* then perhaps there is some connection between these two phrases in the context of immovability.

³⁰³ Iyer's (1983: 71-2) reading of *ācārya* seems more likely than Shrava's (1993: 93) *putrasya*, although the *cā* and prenasal *r* are missing.

acceptance... (of the) teachers... together with (his) parents (for the welfare and happiness) of all beings.

74) Squatting Jina [Shr. #111]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 50; object: stone image; type, Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*³⁰⁴

1. /// pana 50 heva[m]tamāse pra
2. /// āryya [cera]sya³⁰⁵
3. /// ye yudhadinasya
4. /// dhita[m]³⁰⁶
5. /// pūṣabudhisya

Translation:

... year 50, in the (first) month of winter... of Arya Cera... of x, of Yudhadina ... the daughter ... of Pūṣabudhi...

75) Seated Buddha [Shr. #113]: provenance unknown; Year 50; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārājasya devaputrasya huveṣkasya rajya sa 50 he 3 di 6 ? + + + ? ? ? [ma] ? + ? ? ? [vapā] ? //³⁰⁷
2. vaha[.e] + + + + ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? [.ā.āvakamā] + + [sa] ? [.i] ? [r.] + ni ? bo[dha]sagha[ni]³⁰⁸

Translation:

In regnal year 50, winter month 3, day 6 of the Great King, the Devaputra Huviṣka... *bodhisāṅghani*...

Year 51 (4)

76) Seated Bodhisattva [Lüders §134]: Mathurā (Anyor); year 51; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: unknown; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃ 50 1 gr 3 di [4] asya puvayā + + ma + [hāth.grasa] ///
2. + [sya] ? ? bo ? ? t. a ? rya ma ? ? [ṅhika]na par[i] ? h.

³⁰⁴ The entire face of the stone has flaked away and all that remains are these five lines and an outward facing lion on right side of the pedestal.

³⁰⁵ The first *akṣara* could be *kha* and the reading of the second *akṣara* is not certain.

³⁰⁶ There appears to be an *anusvāra* above the *ta*. Also, the *ta* that Bühler (1894: 203) reads in *dhita* looks exactly like the *na* in the name *yudhadina*, so perhaps the name should be emended to *yudhadita*.

³⁰⁷ The long *ā* vowels in *mahārāja*, the *e* in *huveṣka*, and the numeral six are clear in my photograph of this image.

³⁰⁸ The *dha* in *bodhi* is very circular and resembles a *ṭha*, but *boṭha* is a highly unlikely reading. The reading of the *ni* is also uncertain.

Translation:

Year 51, summer month 3, day 4 – on this occasion –... the Bodhisattva(?), the gift of *x* ... for the acceptance of the Mahāsaṅghikas teachers(?)

77) Standing Buddha [Lüders §29]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 51; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārājasya³⁰⁹ devaputrasya³¹⁰ huveṣkasya savatsare 50 1 hemantamāse³¹¹ 1 d[i]va[s.] ++ [a]sya [p]u[rva]yā [bhi]kṣu[nā] [b]uddh[a]varmaṇā [bhagava]taḥ [śāk]y[am]u(ni)
2. pratimā pratiṣṭhāpita sarva[b]uddhapūjārt[th]a[m] anena³¹² d[e]yadharmā-parityāgen[a] upadhy[ā]yasya saghadāsasya [n]irvā[n]ā[vā]ptaye=[s]t[u] mātāp[it.] + + + + + + + +
3. buddha[a]varmas[y]a sarvad(u)khopāśamāya sarvasatva-hitasukh[ā]r[th]a mahārāja-d[e](v)a(putrav)ihāre

Translation:

In year 51, winter month 1, day *x* of the Great King, the Devaputra Huviṣka – on this occasion – an image of the lord Śākyamu(ni) was installed by the monk Buddhavarma for the worship of all Buddhas. Through this bestowal of the pious gift let there be attainment of nirvāṇa by the teacher Saghadāsa, (his) parents... for the cessation of all unhappiness of Buddhavarma, for the welfare and happiness of all beings. In the vihāra of the Great King, the Devaputra (Huviṣka).

78) Wardak Vase [CGI 159]: Khawat, Maidan, Wardak, Afghanistan; Year 51; object: bronze vase; type: Buddhist; donor: Imperial; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. (A) saṃ 20 20 10 1 maṣa Arthamisiya sastehi 10 4 1 imeṇa gaḍiḡeṇa (B) kamagulyaputra vagamarega ṣa iśa khavadami (C) kadalayiga-vagamariḡa-viharammi thu[ba]mmi (F) bhagavada Śākyamuṇe śarira pariṭhaveti
2. (G) imeṇa kuśalamuleṇa (H) maharaja-rajatiraja-hoveṣkaṣa agrabhagae bhavatu (I) madapidara me puyae bhavatu (J) bhradara me Haṣṭhunaḥ-maregaṣa puyae bhavatu (K) yo ca me bhuya ṇatiga-mitra-sambhatigaṇa puyae bhavatu (L) mahiya ca Vagamaregaṣa agrabhaga-paḍiyamaṣae
3. bhavatu (M) sarvasatvaṇa arogadaḡṣiṇae bhavatu (O) Aviyaṇaragaparyata yava bhavagra (P) yo atra aṃtara a[m]ḍajo jalayuga śaśvetiga arupyata (Q) sarviṇa puyae bhavatu (R) mahiya ca rohaṇa (S) sada sarviṇa avaṣatrigaṇa saparivara ca (T) agrabhagapaḍiyamaṣae bhavatu (U) mithyagaṣa ca agrabhaga bhavatu
4. (W) eṣa vihara acaryaṇa Mahasaṃghigaṇa parigraha

³⁰⁹ The long *ā* in *rā* is clear in my photograph.

³¹⁰ Lüders (1961: 64) questions Banerji's (1909-10: 113) reading of the *e* in *deva*, but there appears to be a short stroke to the left off the top of the *da*.

³¹¹ There is a short back-stroke *e* vowel diacritic on the top of the left arm of the *sa*.

³¹² The *e* vowel on medial *ne* is clear, and it was read by Banerji (1909-10: 113) but questioned by Lüders (1961: 64).

*Translation:*³¹³

Year 51, in the month of Artemisios, after 15 (days) – at this time – Vagamarega, son of Kamagulya establishes here in Khavada, in the *kadalayiga* Vagamarega Monastery, in a stūpa relics of the Lord, the Śākya sage. Through this root of good may it be for the best lot of the Great King, King of Kings, Huiṣka; may it be in the honor of my mother and father; may it be in honor of my brother Haṣṭhunaḥmarega; and may it be in honor of my further relatives, friends, and associates; and may it be for the best share and lot for me, Vagamarega; may it be for the reward of health of all beings; and may it also be in honor of all, whoever there is here in between, from the Avīci hell at one end to the top of existence, (whether) egg-born, womb-born, moisture-born, (or) formless; and may it always be for the best lot and share of my horsemen, with all umbrella-bearers and with the retinue; and may there be a best lot for the one who is wrong. This monastery is in the possession of the Mahāsāṃghika teachers.

79) Second Wardak Vase [CGI 509]: Khawat, Maidan, Wardak, Afghanistan; Year 51; object: bronze vase; type: Buddhist; donor: Imperial; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. (A) saṃ 20 20 10 1 maṣe Arthamisiya sastehi 10 4 1 (B) iśa khavadami kamagulyaputra - vagamarega-vihara-[thu]ba (C) kadalyage viha(*ra)mi (D) ṣamaṇaṇa Mahasaṃgigaṇa parigraha (E) khoḍadhida dhidae (*thu)bae pratīhaviti
2. (F) igagamigami bhagavada Śakyamuṇaṣa śarira pariṭhida (G) imeṇa kuśalamuleṇa (I) madapiteṇa puyaye bhavadu (J) haṣṭhunaḥ-maregaṣa puyaye bhavatu (L)vagamariḡaṣa agrabhagadae bhavadu (M) maheya ca dhidae arogadaḡiṇae bhavatu agrabhaga sarvasatvaṇa ca
3. (N) (*a)[gra]bhagadae bhavatu ṇ(*i)rvanaparayana ca (O) Aviyāniragaparyata yava bhavagra (P) yo atra aṃtara aḡaja jalayuga śaśv(*e)tiga aru[v]i ova(*va)tiga saha (Q) sarviṇaṇa ṇirvaṇaeda nirvaṇadae naye bhavatu (R) mahiya ca rohaṇa (T) agrabhagadae bhavatu (U) bahulamithyagaṣa ca agrabhagadae bhavatu

*Translation:*³¹⁴

Year 51, in the month of Artemisios, after 15 (days), here at Khavada, at the stūpa of the Vagamarega Son-of-Kamagulya Monastery, in the *kadalyaga* monastery, in the possession of the Mahāsāṃghika monks, the little (?) daughter establishes the daughter's stūpas (?). In each of them relics of the Lord, the Śākya sage, are established. By this root of good may it be in honor of mother and father; may it be in honor of Haṣṭhunaḥmarega; may it be for the best lot of Vagamarega, and may it be for the reward of health of me the daughter (and for) the best lot; may it also be for the best lot of all beings and conducive to (their) nirvana; and may it be for the attainment of nirvana of all, whoever there is here in between, from the Avīci hell at one end to the top of existence, (whether) egg-born, womb-born, moisture-born, formless, (or) spontaneously arising; and may it be for the best lot of my horsemen (?); and may it be for the best lot of the one who holds many wrong views.

³¹³ Baums 2012: 243-4.

³¹⁴ Baums 2012: 245-6.

Year 52 (2)

80) Standing Nāga [Lüders §12]: Mathurā (Bhuteswar); Year 52; object: stone image; type: Nāga; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

? sa[m̄] 50 2 v[ā] 3 d[i] 20 5 bhagava[to]³¹⁵

Translation:

Year 52, rainy month 3, day 25, of the Lord...

81) Female Figure [Shr. #119]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 52; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: Jain (monastic/professional); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddha[m̄] sa[m̄]vatsare dvāpanā 50 2 hemanta[mā]sa pratha(*ma 1)³¹⁶ divase pacaviṃśa 20 5 asma kṣuṅ[e] k[o]ṭṭiy[ā]to gaṇ[ā]to
2. verāto śakhato [sthā]nikiy[ā]to³¹⁷ kulāt[o] śrīgrhato saṃbhogāto vācakasyāryya ghashtuhāstisya³¹⁸
3. śiśyo g[ā]ṇisyaāryya maṅguhastisya ṣaḍhacaro vācako ariya devetasya³¹⁹ nirvartanā śūrasya śrama-
4. ṇa-kaputrasya goṭṭikasya lohikā-kārakasya dānaṃ sarvvasatvānaṃ hitasukhāyāstu [-]

Translation:

Success! In year fifty-two 52, the first winter month (1), on the twenty-fifth day 25 – at this moment – the gift of the ironsmith Goṭṭika, the son of the Śūra Śramaṇaka; at the request of the preacher Ārya Deveta, the fellow student of the *gaṇin* Ārya Maṅguhasti, the male pupil of the preacher Ārya Ghashtuhasti (who is) from the Kōṭṭiya *gaṇa*, the Verā (Vajra) *śākhā*, the Stānikiya *kula*, and the Śrīgrha *saṃbhoga*. May it be for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

Year 53 (1)

82) Buddha Pedestal [Shr. #120]: Mathurā (Naroli); Year 53; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic?); EHS/Brāhmī

³¹⁵ There appears to be a stroke before the *sa[m̄]* and the *anusvāra* is not clear in my photograph of this image. There is a forward stroke on the top of the *va* that appears to be a long *ā* vowel. Only the left half of the last *akṣara* is visible and it resembles the bottom foot of the *ta* and the left vowel marker of the *o*.

³¹⁶ There is a notch in the stone after *pratha*, but a *ma* and the numeral 1 could feasibly fit in this space, yet neither are visible.

³¹⁷ What Bühler (1894: 203) reads as *sthā* looks more like *ṣṭa*, but the meaning is clear.

³¹⁸ Shrava (1993: 96) writes *ghastuharitasya*, which must be a misprint for Bühler's (1894: 203) transcription of *ghastuhastisya*.

³¹⁹ Bühler (1894: 203) reads *divitasya*, but the vowel diacritics have a more pronounced angle than the scribe's curved *i*, so the name should read *deveta* or *devita*. I read this name as Deveta.

Text:

1. mah(ā)r(ā)jasya³²⁰ devaputrasya huviṣkasya sa 50 3 va 4 di 10 etasyā puvayaṃ
[saṃ]ṅghasenasya³²¹ dānaṃ

2.

/// s[va]-vihāre acaryya [ma]///³²²

Translation:

In year 53, rainy month 4, day 10 of the Great King, the Devaputra Huveṣka – on this occasion – this is the gift of Saṅghasena... in his own vihārā (*for the acceptance of the Mahāsaṅghika) teachers.

Year 54 (1)

83) Sarasvatī [Shr. #121]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Tīlā); Year 54; object: stone image; type: Indic; donor: Jain (monastic/professional); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [s]dhma sava 50 4 hema[m]tamāse catu(rtthe)³²³ 4 divase 10 a-

2. sya purvvāyāṃ koṭṭiyāto gaṇāto sthāniyāto kulāto

3. verāto śakhāto śrīgrhāto saṃbhogāto vācakasyāryya

4. (*gha)[stu]hast[i]sya³²⁴ śiṣyo gaṇisya aryya māghahastisya śraddhacaro vācakasya [a]-

5. ryya devasya nirvarttanā³²⁵ govasya sīhaputrasya³²⁶ lohika-kārukasya dānaṃ

6. sarvvasatvānāṃ hitasukhā eka-sarasvatī pratīṣṭhāvitā stavatale [deva-nirmīto]³²⁷

7. ? ?

³²⁰ The heads of both the *ha* and *ra* are missing making it impossible to determine the vowel length, so I have reconstructed them.

³²¹ The first letter of the donor's name is almost completely eroded. Bajpai (1955: 136-7) reads this name as [si]ṅghas[ē]na but the first part of the name looks more like the *saṃgha* found in *saṃṅghaprakṛtāṇam*, where the *anusvāra* is written above the *sa* as a short horizontal line rather than a dot and the *ṅgha* is composed as a conjunct [111].

³²² This line is not included in Bajpai's (1955: 136-7) edition of this inscription.

³²³ The surface has flaked off here and the reading is not certain, although the meaning is clear.

³²⁴ The *gha* can be safely reconstructed based on the Ārya Ghastuhasti mentioned in the inscription of the year fifty-two [81] cited above.

³²⁵ Bühler (1892a: 391) reads *nivvarttane* but the last *akṣara* looks like *nā*.

³²⁶ Bühler (1892a: 391) reads *soha*, but the long *ī* appears correct.

³²⁷ Bühler (1892a: 392) reads *āvatale raṅgāna[rttan]o* and translates this as “in the *avatala*, my stage dancer (?)” My reading of *stavatale deva-nirmīto* is based on the corresponding phrase “in the Vodva stūpa built by the gods” (*vodve thupe deva-ni[r]mīti*) in a Jina inscription of the year forty-nine [72]. These phrases seem to designate the space where the image was donated, “in a place built by the gods,” and both are positioned at the end of the text. The only revision I suggest for the first word is changing *ā* to *sta*, which is clear when this *akṣara* is compared to the *sta* in *hasti* that occurs twice in line 4. If the reading is *stavatala*, then perhaps this denotes a “place for giving praise.” The second word, *deva-nirmīto*, is not quite clear, and this could be because the engraver ran out of room on the pedestal. The head of the *da* is longer than usual and not as curved as the *da* in *divase*. The *e* vowel is indistinct. Only the left half of the *va* is legible and what Bühler sees as the long *ā*, I interpret as the head of the *va*. Bühler (1892a: 392) reads the next two *akṣaras* as *na[rtta]*, but this could be *nirma* and the *tta* has an angular base like a *ma*. The vowel of the final *akṣara*, *to*, resembles the *to* at the end of *kulato* and *śrīgrhāto*. This reading is tentative, but the similarities between the phrases in these two inscriptions, I feel, produces a more accurate translation than a reference to a stage dancer.

Translation:

Success! In year 54, the fourth winter month 4, day 10 – at this occasion – this is a gift of the ironsmith Gova, the son of Sīha; at the request of the preacher Ārya Deva, a companion of the gaṇin Ārya Māghahasti, a male pupil of the preacher Ārya Ghastuhasti (who is) from the Kottīya *gaṇa*, the Sthāniya *kula*, the Vera *śakhā*, and the Śrīgrha *saṃbhoga*. For the welfare and happiness of all beings, this single Sarasvatī was installed in the place for giving praise built by the gods.

Year 58 (1)

84) Seated Jina [Shr. #123]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 58; type: Jain, donor: Jain (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A. sdha ३³²⁸ nama [a]ra[ha]tana³²⁹ maharajasya huvakṣasya savasare aṣṭapana³³⁰ gṛṣyamase 3 divisa 2 e[ta]-

B. ya purvaya ___³³¹ gane aryaceṭiyiga-kule haritamāla-kaḍhi[yaka-śakhaya]³³² + + (*vā)cakasya hagamḍisya śiso gana ___ nāgaseno³³³ danam

Translation:

Success! Homage to the Arhats. In year fifty-eight, summer month 3, day 2 – on this occasion – (this is) the gift of the *gaṇin* Nāgasena, the male pupil of the preacher Haganandi (who is) from the Vāraṇa (?) *gaṇa*, the Āryaceṭiyaka *kula*, and the Haritamāla-kaḍhīyaka *śākhā*.

Year 60 (1)

85) Jain Image [Lüders §15]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 60; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

³²⁸ Both the symbol and abbreviation for *siddham* are written.

³²⁹ This is Sircar's (1965: 156) reading, emended from *śara[sa]tama* read by Bühler (1892a: 387) and Banerji (1909-10: 114). Sircar suggests the scribe meant to write *na* rather than *ma*. Although the initial *a* is uncertain, the corresponding phrases *namo arahanata* in the Jain inscription of year forty-seven [69], *arahatana puḷāye* in the elephant capital inscription [64], and *namo arāhamṭanaṃ* in the Jain statue of year sixty-two [87] suggest that this is the intended reading.

³³⁰ Bühler (1892a: 387) and Sircar (1965: 156) read the number forty-four while Banerji (1909-10: 114) reads this as *aṣṭapana*, fifty-eight, and relates it to *pana* used for the year fifty [74] and *dvāpanā* for year fifty-two [81]. Banerji further suggests that *pana* is an abbreviation for the number fifty in Pāli *paññāsa* [Skt *pañcaśat*]. I am inclined to agree with Banerji's reading of this number, otherwise we are left with an unaccounted for *pana* in the dating formula, which Sircar glosses as *punaḥ*.

³³¹ The first and last sections of this line are on a protrusion on the bottom rim of the pedestal, represented here by the underline.

³³² The letters in this line are very eroded, so I have used Sircar's reading (1965: 156).

³³³ Sircar (1965: 156) transcribes this as *śisagana takāseṇa*, but Bühler (1892a: 387) and Banerji's (1909-10: 114) reading of *nagasena* appears correct. I also prefer to transcribe *śiso* and *gana* as two separate words meaning "the *gaṇin* Nagasena a pupil of *x*," which is a common phrase in Jain donative formulas.

Text:

1. – s[i]ddhm³³⁴ maharājasya rājatirājasya devaputrasya huv[i]ṣkasya saṃ 60 hemantamāse 4 di 10 etasyāṃ pūrvvāyāṃ koḷiye gaṇe sthānikīye kule āryya-v(ai)r[i]yāṇaṃ śākhāyā vācakasya āryya vṛddhahasti[sya]
2. śisyasya gaṇīsyā āryya-kharṇ[ṇ]asya a[r]yya-m.n.+ (s)[y](a) + + + + + + + + + + sy[a] vr.[dh]u[m](i)t[a]kasya k[ār]ppās[i]kasya k(u)t(u)m[b]inīye dattāye danadharm[o] mahābhogatāya prīyatām=bhagavān=rṣabhaśrīḥ

Translation:

Success! In year 60, winter month 4, day 10 of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Huviṣka – on this occasion – this pious gift (was installed[?]) by Dattā the wife of the cotton-dealer Vr.dhum[i]taka; (at the request) of x... of the Ārya M.n., the *gaṇin* Ārya Kharṇa, the pupil of preacher Ārya Vṛddhahasti, from the Koḷiya *gaṇa*, the Sthānikīya *kula*, the Āryavairiya *śākhā*. For the sake of great happiness. May the lord Rṣabhaśrī be pleased.

Year 62 (2)

86) Seated Jina [Shr. #126]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭilā); Year 62; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddha sa 60 2 va 2 di 5 etasya puvaya vācakasya āya-kukuhasti[sya]³³⁵
2. varaṇa-gaṇiyasa śiṣ[y]o grahabalo ātapiko tasa nivartana

Translation:

Success! Year 62, rainy month 2, day 5 – on this occasion – at the request of Grahabala the *ātapika*, the male pupil of the preacher Ārya Kukuhastin, from the Vāraṇa *gaṇa*.

87) Jina Statue [Shr. #125]: Mathurā (Arjunapura in Rani-ki-Maṇḍī); Year 62; object: stone image; type: Jain, donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. namo arāhatanam namo siddhāna[m] saṃ 60 2
2. gr 3 di 5 etaye purvaye vācakasya ārya-kukusahastisya³³⁶
3. śiṣya atapiko grahabalasya³³⁷ nivartana catuvarṇasya saṃghasya
4. yā[thā] dinnāpaṭi bhāga[vā] vihiḱāye deti³³⁸

³³⁴ This appears to be the conjunct *ddhm*.

³³⁵ Bühler (1892a: 204) reads the name of this Ārya as *karkuhastha*. The two *kus* in the beginning of this name are certain, with both having identical hooks curving to the right from the stem of the *ka*. The preconsonantal *r* is not visible in the estampage or my photograph. Many Jain Āryas have *hastin* as the second member of their name, and in this instance what Bühler reads as *hastha* is most likely *hasti*. The *ha* and *sa* are clear, but the stone is damaged where the *ta* is written giving the impression in the rubbing of *tha*. On the top of the left arm of the *sa*, curving over the edge of the pedestal, is what looks like the *i* vowel diacritic.

³³⁶ I have emended this reading based on the name of this Jain Ārya in the above inscription [86].

³³⁷ Lüders (1904: 105-6).

³³⁸ An accurate reading of this text is difficult since the only source is Alexander Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 294, pl. LXXXIV). In typical Jain donative formulas the information after the request being made

Translation:

Homage to the Arhats. Homage to the Siddhas. In year 62, summer month 3, day 5 – on this occasion – (this gift) was given by Vihikā (?)... at the request of atapiko Grahabala, the male pupil of the preacher Ārya Kukusahastin.

2.3. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Vāsudeva I [88-152].

Year 64/7 (1)

88) Śākyaṃuni image [Shr. #127]: Mathurā (Pālīkherā); Year 64/7; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Professional (householder); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. ///trasya vāsudevasya sa[m] 60 [4/7] varṣ[ā]-māse dviti 2 divasi
2. /// nam sa[rva]ṣa ya[m]tr=opanāna³³⁹ p[ū]jārtha
3. /// na pariḡrahā acariyana mahāsaghikā
4. /// [ni]sya³⁴⁰ prat[i]m[ā] sa-g[i]gh[ā]³⁴¹ mātā-pitreṇa abha[s]i[ta]nam³⁴² ? ///
5. /// ? ? k[u]t[ub]ikānam [guha]sen[ena] ? ?³⁴³

*Translation:*³⁴⁴

In year 64/7, the second - 2 - rainy month, day *x* of the [Devapu]tra Vāsudeva I... for the purpose of honoring all (creatures) wherever (they) were born... for the acceptance of the Mahāsāṅghika teachers... this image of (the Śākyaṃuni) together with a shrine, (with her) mother and father, *abhasitanām*... (installed by) Gunaseṇa, the wife of *x*.

(*nīrvartanā*) relates to the donor, and I would suggest that these terms denote relationships with the female donor Vihikā, such as sister (*bhāginī*) or wife (*kuṭumbinī*).

³³⁹ Sircar (1953-4: 183) does not transcribe the *anusvāra* over the *ya* but it looks clear. He suggests connecting the relative *yatra* with *puṇyam* and reconstructs, [2](**puṇyam satvā*)*nam sarvaṣa yatr=opanāna pūjārtha [sarva-3]buddhā*)*na pariḡrahā*(**ya*) *acariyana mahāsaghi*(**kānam*), Skt *puṇyam sattvānām sarveṣām yatr=otpannānām pūjārtham sarva-buddhānām pariḡrahāya ācāryānām mahāsāṅghikānām*, “for the acceptance of the teachers of the Mahāsāṅghika community, which was done with a view to honoring all the Buddhas, and for which the merit was intended to go to all the creatures born [up till then].” Sircar does admit that this is a rather “poetic arrangement,” and due to the missing sections of the text I cannot offer any alternative explanation.

³⁴⁰ Sircar (1953-4: 183) reconstructs **śākyaṃuni*.

³⁴¹ Sircar (1953-4: 183) equates *sag[i]h[ā]* with Skt *sa-gṛhā* meaning “together with a shrine.”

³⁴² Sircar (1953-4: 183) equates *abha[s]i[ta]nam* with Skt *abhāṣitānām*, “not addressed”, and suggests this term indicates a “person who is referred to in the following words but not specifically mentioned.” There is a somewhat similar phrase on a pillar base that Lüders (1961: 70-8) reads as “[*mātap*]i[*tṛī*]ṇ [*abhyati*]i^{ta}kalaga[*tā*]nām” and translates “of the deceased parents” [106]. Unfortunately, the texts in both inscriptions are damaged so it is impossible to verify the exact meaning of this phrase, but a parallel between them might exist. The Sanskrit expression *kālagata*, “time has gone, deceased,” occurs in the dating formulas of Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions referencing the departed Śāka ruler Azes, “*ayasa kalagadasa*,” and are found in the Priavaśa reliquary [3] and the Gunyar relic-chamber slab [CGI 544].

³⁴³ Sircar (1953-4: 183) suggests that the verb is a variant of Skt *pratiṣṭhāpita* and is followed by the name of the donor that is now missing.

³⁴⁴ My translation only includes what is contained in the inscription and not Sircar’s (1953-4: 183) reconstructed sections.

Year 71 (1)

89) Jain Image [Shr. #128]: Ahichchhatra (near Ram Nagar, Uttar Pradesh); Year 71; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay?); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃ 70 1³⁴⁵ va 1 di 10 5
2. e[ta]ye puvaye ha-
3. ṭiya muṇaśimi[tāye]
4. minirava suṣoti dhitu
5. h[emad]eva [saya] ///

Translation:

Year 71, rainy month 1, day 15 – on this occasion – by Muṇaśimitā(?)... the daughter of Suṣotī(?)...

Year 72 (2)

90) Jain Image [Shr. #129]: provenance unknown; Year 72; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// sa[m] 70 2 h[e]m.s.³⁴⁶ 1³⁴⁷ d[i]vase 10 1 e///(*tasya purvayam)
2. /// ? niye jayadev[i]ye bhagavato vardham.///

Translation:

In year 72, winter month 1, day 10 – (on this occasion)... the Lord Vardhamāna (the gift of) Jayadevi..

91) Standing Śaka figure [Lüders §107]: Mathurā (Brindāban Road); Year 72; object: stone image; type: Imperial; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*³⁴⁸

1. sa[va]tsarā 70 2 h(*emantamā)s. pratha(*me)
2. /// ṛṇasya pra(*timā) ///

³⁴⁵ Shrava (1993: 104) miscopied Banerji's (1909-10: 115) transcription where the numeral one is noted.

³⁴⁶ Any vowel signs on *ma* and *sa* are missing due to notch on the edge of the pedestal above these *akṣaras*.

³⁴⁷ Shrava (1993: 105) reads the number two but only one horizontal stroke is visible.

³⁴⁸ This inscription is found on the pedestal of a figure in Śaka attire that includes a tunic clasp with a belt and high felt boots. Lüders (1937-8: 207-8) notes that producing portrait statues seems to have been popular with foreign figures based on at least six heads wearing conical hats found at Mathurā. In addition to these heads and the royal Kuṣāṇa statutes found at Maṭ, there is an undated inscription on an image donated by Ulānā that was composed between the figure's felt boots [260]. In this inscription Ulānā is identified as a Mahādaṇḍanāyaka and a Mahādaṇḍanāyaka named Valāna is found in an inscription of year seventy-four [94] that Lüders (1961: 67) suggests is the same person. From these three inscriptions, it appears that between the years of seventy-two and seventy-four there were at least two prominent foreign figures in Mathurā – Ulānā and the donor of this image.

Translation:

In the year 72, first month of winter... the image of *x-rṇa*

Year 74 (3)

92) Four-sided Jina [Shr. #130]: Ahichchhatra (Ram Nagar, Uttar Pradesh); Year 74; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A.

1. [saṃ 70] 4 gra 1 di 5 aya varanato gaṇa[to] ///
2. [ku]lato vajanakarito śākha[to] aya-śirik[āto] ///

B.

1. /// nadhanasya vācakasya śiśiniye a[ryya] ///
2. /// sasa ///

C.

1. gahavalāya paṇatidhariye³⁴⁹ śiśiniye arya-dāsiye ///
2. /// ///

D.

1. /// deva[sya] kuṭu[m]biniye dharavalāye dati ///
2. /// saśuye ///

Translation:

In year 74, summer month 1, day 5... (this gift) was given by Dharavalā, the wife of *x-deva*... (at the request of) the Ārya Dāsi, the female pupil who upholds the teachings of Gahavalā... of the Ārya *x-sa* the female pupil of the preacher *x-nadhana*... (who is) from the Varana *gaṇa*, the *x-kula*, the Vajanakara *śākha*, the Ārya-śirikāta (*saṃbhoga).

93) Seated Buddha [Shr. #131]: provenance unknown; Year 74; object; stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddhaṃ ɛ saṃ 70 4 gr̥³⁵⁰ 1 di 10 5 asmi kṣuṇe bhikṣusya naṃdikasya³⁵¹ dānaṃ bhagavato śakyamuninā pratimā mihira-vihāre ac[ār]yyaṇāṃ sarvvastivādīnāṃ³⁵² parigrahe mātāpitr̥nāṃ sa-
2. rvasat[v]anā ca hitasukhārtthā³⁵³

³⁴⁹ This same term occurs in a Vardhamāna Jina image dated sometime in the fifties [221], where Bühler (1894: 209) interprets Skt *prajñāpti-dhārīta* as “obeys the command.”

³⁵⁰ Bühler (1894: 212) correctly reads *gr̥*, but Shrava (1993: 106) transcribes this as *gri*.

³⁵¹ There is a dot above the *na* that looks like an *anusvāra*.

³⁵² Shrava (1993: 106) transcribes *sarvvastivādīnam*, but Bühler’s (1894: 212) reading, given here is correct.

³⁵³ The second line begins in the last quarter of the pedestal and there does not appear to be any writing before this, therefore the *sa* at the end of the first line should connect with the *rva* in the second. There is no *anusvāra* at the end of *sarvvasatvanā* or the *rtthā*. The short horizontal stroke at the end of the second line might be a punctuation mark.

Translation:

Success! In year 74, summer month 1, day 15 – at this moment – the gift of the monk Namndika, the image of the Lord Śākyamuni (installed in) the Mihira vihāra, for the acceptance of the Sarvāstivādin teachers and for the welfare and happiness of his parents and all beings.

94) Stone Slab [Lüders §30]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 74; object: stone slab; type: Buddhist(?); donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārajāsya rā(*///(*jatirāja)-
2. sya devaputrasya vāsu(*///(*deva)
3. [sa]vatsara 70 4 varṣaṃ.-
4. se prathame divase
5. tri[śe] 30 asya purvvayaṃ
6. talakiy[e] mahādānda
7. ? ? nayakasya va
8. lānas[y]a k[ṣ]aṇḍamihi(*ra)
9. + + + + + + + + +
10. + + + + + [mahādāṇḍa]

Translation:

In the year 74, the first month of the rainy season, on the thirtieth - 30 - day of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Vasudeva I – on this occasion – in Talakiya (or Talakī) of the Mahādāṇḍanāyaka Valāna...³⁵⁴ of the Mahādāṇḍanāyaka (?) K[ṣ]aṇḍamihi(ra)

Year 75 (1)

95) Śākyamuni image [Shr. #133]: Mathurā (Caubārā Mounds); Year 75; object; stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃ 70 5 he 1 di 1 asmi kṣune vihāra-svāmisyā hitakasya dh[i]t[u]³⁵⁵///
2. balāye dānaṃ bhagavato śak[y]amunisya pratimā pratiṣ[ṭh]āpi///(*tā)

Translation:

Year 75, winter month 1, day 1 – at this moment – the gift, an image of the Lord Śākyamuni, was installed by Balā... the daughter of Hitaka, the lord of the vihāra.

³⁵⁴ The Mahādāṇḍanāyaka Valāna in this inscription is most likely the same person as the Mahādāṇḍanāyaka Ulāna who had a statue, possibly of himself, commissioned [260]. The other figure that appears to be named in this inscription, K[ṣ]aṇḍamihi, shares a similar Iranian suffix of *mihī(ra)* with the Viśvasika Vakamīhīra who donated three pillar bases together with his son Horamurṇḍaphara [122-4].

³⁵⁵ Thakurail (Shrava 1993: 109) reads this as *dhata*, but the *i* vowel and the *u* vowel are visible. The word *dhitu*, meaning “daughter” from Skt *duhitṛ*, occurs frequently in Jain inscriptions composed during the Kuṣāṇa period.

Year 77: Jamālpur Mound Pillar-bases (30 = 8 dated, 22 undated)

96) Pillar base [Lüders §31]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77; object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [torus]:

saṃ 70 7 gr̥ 4 di 4 mahārājasya rājātīrājasya devapūtrasya hūv[i]ṣkasya v[i]hāre³⁵⁶ dānaṃ
bh[i]kṣusya jivakasya oḍīyanakasya kuṃbhako 20 5 sarvvasatva-hitasukha bhavatu ◡³⁵⁷ saghe
c[ā]turdiṣe.

Translation:

Year 77, summer month 4, day 4 – in the vihāra of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra Huviṣka (this is) the gift, pillar base twenty-five, of the monk Jivaka, the Oḍīyanaka.³⁵⁸ May it be (for) the welfare and happiness of all beings. To the community of the four quarters.

97) Pillar base [Lüders §32]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77; object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. [saṃ] 70 7 gr̥ 4 [d]i 20 [a]syam [p]urvavayam [bh]ikṣu[s]y[ā] + + + + [s]ya ///
2. ///

Translation:

Year 77, summer month 4, day 20 – on this occasion – (the gift) of the monk...

98) Pillar-base [Lüders §33]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77; object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A [torus]: danam bhikṣusya buddhiśreṣṭhasya caturvvi(d)yasya bhaṣa(ṇa)[k]āsyā³⁵⁹ saṃṅhe
caturdd[i]śe] saṃ 70 7 gr̥ 4 di 20 5³⁶⁰

B [base]: dan[a]ṃ buddh[i]śreṣṭhasya bhaṣana[kas]ya

Translation:

A. The gift of the monk Buddhiśreṣṭha, a preacher and one who knows the four-fold scripture. To the community of the four quarters. Year 77, summer month 4, day 25...

³⁵⁶ A Śākyamuni image found at Jamālpur was donated in year fifty-one of Huviṣka year [77] at the vihāra of the Great king, Devaputra “mahārajad[a](v)p(putra)ihāra.” This is presumably the same monastic site where the donors are sponsoring these pillar bases in year seventy-seven.

³⁵⁷ The words *bhavatu* and *saghe* are separated by a decorative motif engraved on the torus.

³⁵⁸ The term *oḍīyanaka* probably refers to a person from Uḍḍiyāna, in what is now the Swat District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, which is where the Oḍi King Seṇavarman ruled.

³⁵⁹ Lüders (1961: 70) equates *bhaṣaṇaka* to *bhāṇaka*, a term that occurs in other Brāhmī inscriptions from Sāncī, Bhārhut, and Kārle. For *caturvidya*, Lüders suggests this means that the monk knew the four *Āgamas* (Dīrgha-, Madhyama-, Saṃyukta-, Ekottara-) and is parallel to the Brahmanical terms *caturvidya*, *cāturvidya*, *cāturvaidya*, *caturveda*, and *caturvedin* “one who knows the four Vedas.” I have suggested in chapter 4 (4.3) that this might be the three books of the *Tripiṭaka* plus the *Bodhisattva-Piṭaka*.

³⁶⁰ The date comes at the end of the inscription, which is not the typical order for dating formulas, but does occur with some regularity in these pillar base inscriptions.

B. The gift of Buddhiśreṣṭha, the preacher ...

99) Pillar base [Lüders §34]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77; object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Nāga; EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. dānaṃ devilasya dadhikarṇṇa-devakulikasya sa 70 7 gr̥ 4 divase 20 9³⁶¹

Translation:

The gift of Devila, the priest of the Dadhikarṇṇa³⁶² shrine. Year 77, summer month 4, day 29.

100) Pillar base [Lüders §35]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77; object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

A. saṃvatsare 70 7 va [1] divase 5 asya purvvāy[e] dā[na]ṃ bhikṣ[u]sya dharmmadata[s]ya
B.

1. d[i]nnaṃ bh[i]kṣusya dharmmadattasya dharmakathikasya saṃṅghe c[a]turdiśe savat.a
2. [re 70] + + [r.] + .ā[nā hi]tasukhaye bhavatu

Translation:

A. In Year 77, rainy month, day 5 - on this occasion – the gift of the monk Dharmmadata.

B. The gift of the monk Dharmmadatta, the dharma reciter. To the community of the four quarters. May it be for the welfare and happiness (of all beings).

101) Pillar base [Lüders §36]:³⁶³ Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77(?); stone pillar base type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

[dānaṃ bhikṣu]sya [dha]r[madatas]y[a] + + + + sya

Translation:

The gift of the monk Dharmadata...

102) Pillar base [Lüders §37]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77; object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. dattasya [:]³⁶⁴ 20 6 [sa]ṃ 70 7 va 1 d[i] 10 1

³⁶¹ Lüders (1961: 70) states that the reading of the numeral nine is probable but not certain.

³⁶² The Nāga Dadhikarṇṇa shrine appears to be located in the same complex as the Buddhist vihāra at Jamālpur. This Nāga lord is mentioned in two other Mathurā inscriptions; the first is dated to year twenty-six of Vāsiṣka that records the donation of a stone slab by the Cāndaka brothers [185]; and the second object is an undated headless Nāga statue found in the Yamuna which conations a label inscription that reads the *dadhika[r]ṇṇo* [253].

³⁶³ There is no date on this pillar base, but the monk Dharmadatta appears to be the same donor for both this and the preceding pillar base [100], and these would have been conceivably donated around the same time.

³⁶⁴ Lüders (1961: 74-5) discusses the two dots after *sya* and before the numeral twenty that had been read as *sta* for *stambh* and the numeral one hundred and states that “they are a mark of insertion and that the word to be inserted, *kumbhako*, stood below.” He dismisses these previous interpretations on the assumption that the donated

Translation:

(The gift) of Datta: (pillar base number) twenty-six. Year 77, rainy month 1, day 11.

103) Pillar base [Lüders §38]:³⁶⁵ Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77; object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. danaṃ bhikṣusya dattasa 30 7 saṅghe cātu
2. (rd)[i](śe) saṃ [70 7]

Translation:

The gift of the monk Datta, (pillar base number) 37. For the community of the four quarters. Year [77]

104) Pillar-base [Lüders §39]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77: object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A [torus]: dānaṃ - () - buddha - () - rakṣi - () - tasy[ā] - () - vaḍa - () - kṣasya³⁶⁶

B [base]:

1. danaṃ bhikṣusya buddha[ra]k[ṣ]itasya va[ḍa]kṣas[y]a s[a]ṅghe cāturdīśe sa 70 7
2. + + di 20

Translation:

A. The gift of Buddharakṣita, the Vaḍakṣa³⁶⁷

B. The gift of the monk Buddharakṣita, a native of Vaḍakṣa. To the community of the four quarters. Year 77... day 20.

105) Pillar base [Lüders §40]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A [torus]: danaṃ - () - buddharakṣi - --- tasya - () - vaḍakṣasya

B [base]:

items are pillar bases, *kumbhakas*, and not pillars, *stambhas*, and the highest number recorded on the pillar bases is 37. Thus, if this pillar base is number one hundred twenty-six then seventy-nine pillar bases are unaccounted for. There are two other examples of these dots inserted in the beginning of the text on pillar-bases, *danaṃ bhikṣ[u]sya* [:] and *(dā)na[m :]* [105 and 125].

³⁶⁵ The month is missing from this inscription but the monk Datta presumably donated both this and the preceding pillar base [102] around the same time.

³⁶⁶ The text in line 1 is written between decorative motifs engraved on the torus.

³⁶⁷ This and the following pillar base [105] were donated by the monk Buddharakṣita, the Vaḍakṣa. Lüders (1961: 137) suggests that the enigmatic epithet, also spelled Vaḍakṣa and Vaṃḍakṣa, could be a toponym referring the native place of this donor, similar to the monk Jivaka who is identified as a native of Uḍḍiyana. Two possible locations that could correspond with Vaḍakṣa are hesitantly proposed by Lüders. The first is Badakhshan in northern Afghanistan, based on the etymological correspondence between *vaḍakṣa* and *Baḍaḥṣān*, Afghan *Balaḥṣān*, and, although not stated in his discussion, possibly influenced by Konow's theory that the term *bakanapati* refers to the "Lord of the Wakhān," a valley due east of Badakhshan. The second suggested location is Vālukṣa, a town mentioned in the Mahāvastu where Trapura and Bhallika built the Nail-Stūpa (*nakhastūpaṃ kārāpitam*), and according to Xuanzang was located near Balkh in northern Afghanistan (Lüders 1961: 77).

1. danam bhikṣ[u]sya [:] buddhararakṣitasya vaṇḍakṣasya sam[ṅh](e)
2. cāturdis[e]

Translation:

- A. The gift of Buddharakṣita, the Vaṇḍakṣa.
- B. The gift of the monk Buddharakṣita, the Vaṇḍakṣa. To the community of the four quarters.

106) Pillar base [Lüders §44]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [torus]:

[d]ā[na]m bh[ik]ṣus[y]a b[uddha] -rakṣ.tasya³⁶⁸ the v[o]jya -[vaśi]kasya -[mātap]i -[tṛṣ]na [abhyat]itaka -laga[tā]nām³⁶⁹ pujāy[e] -bhavatu sa[dh]yivi -harīsyā dharma[d]ev[a]s[y]a -ar[o]g[a]dākṣiṇ[ā]y[e] [bha]vat[u]

Translation:

The gift of the monk Buddharakṣ(i)ta, a native of Vojyavaśika (?). May it be for the honor of (his) deceased parents. Let it be for the blessing of health of (his) co-resident Dhramadeva.

107) Pillar base [Lüders §45]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. [ku] 2 dānam bhikṣusya buddhadāsasya saṅghamītra-sadevih[ā]rīsa paṃcatrīśasya³⁷⁰
2. ? ? ? ? ?m ? dā. ? .e[t]ai[v]ast[avya]sya

Translation:

Pillar base 2, the gift of the monk Buddhadāsa, the co-resident of Saṅghamitra, of the thirty-five...

108) Pillar base [Lüders §46]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. ayam ku[m]bhako dānam bhikṣuṇam śūrīyasya buddharakṣitasya ca prāhaṇīk[ā]n[am]³⁷¹ an[e]na

³⁶⁸ Lüders (1961: 80) reads *m[i]trasya* but does not translate the first part of the donor's name. The *ba* preceding the decorative motif is relatively clear and there does seem to be a faint *u* vowel attached to the base of the *akṣara*, making the reading of *bu* possible. The next *akṣara*, very blurry in the facsimile, appears to be a conjunct, and *ddha* would be appropriate in this context. For the second part of the name Lüders only reads three syllables, but four are visible. The genitive *syā* is clear and before that appears to be a *ta*. Before the *ta* is another sign that looks like a ligature, possibly *kṣ*, and there does appear to be a square base of the *ṣa* attached to the lower half of the *ka*. Any sign of a vowel diacritic is lost. The first *akṣara* after the motif is the most damaged, but there appears to be a top half of a vertical *ra*, which would align nicely with the *-kṣatasya* to produce *rakṣ.tasya*.

³⁶⁹ This might be related to the phrase *mātā-pitreṇa abha[s]i[ta]nam* found in the Śākyamuni statue inscription dated to year sixty-four or seven Vāsudeva I [88].

³⁷⁰ The *anusvāra* on *pa* is legible, although it is not directly above *pa* but positioned a little to the right between the *pa* and *ca*. The *anusvāra* could stand for the nasal *ñ* for Skt *pañcatrīśat* "thirty-five."

³⁷¹ Skt *prādhānika*, P *padhānika*, BHS *pradhāna*, *prahāna* (Lüders 1961: 83; Edgerton 1953: 380, 389).

2. deryadharmmaparītyāgena sarvveṣ[a]ṃ pr[ā]haṇīkānaṃ arogyadaḥsin[ā]ye bhavatu³⁷²

Translation:

This pillar base (is) the gift the monks Śurīya and Buddharakṣita, the meditation practitioners. Through the donation of this pious gift, may it be for the blessing of health of all meditation practitioners.

109) Pillar base [Lüders §47]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text [base]:*³⁷³

A. ayaṃ kubh[a]k[o] dān[a]ṃ saṅghapraḥṭ[ā]n[ām] bhadrāghoṣa-pra[mu]khā[nāṃ]

B.

1. saṅ[gha]d[ā]s[ā]sya buddhānānd[a]sya s[a]ṅghadevas[ya saṅgha] + + [sya]

2. dharmap[r]iyas[y]a saṅ(gham)[it](r)[as](ya) + + pri ///

Translation:

This pillar base (is) a gift of the commissioners of the community³⁷⁴ headed by Bhadrāghoṣa, (along with) Saṅghadāsa, Buddhānānda, Saṅghadeva, Saṅgha-x, Dharmapriya, Saṅghamitra, ... x-pri...

110) Pillar base [Lüders §48]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. aya[m kuṃ]bh[ako dā]naṃ saṅghapraḥṭānāṃ bh(ad)raḥghoṣa-pramukhā(nāṃ)

Translation:

This pillar-base (is) the gift of the commissioners of the community headed by Bhadrāghoṣa.

111) Pillar base [Lüders §49]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

ayaṃ [kuṃbha]k[o] dānaṃ saṅghapraḥṭ[ā]nāṃ bhadrāghoṣ.//>(*pramukhānāṃ)

Translation:

This pillar-base (is) the gift of the commissioners of the community (headed) by Bhadrāghoṣa.

³⁷² Lüders (1961: 82) reads *bhavat[ām]*, but the *u* vowel on the right leg of the *ta* looks distinct.

³⁷³ Salomon's margin notes on pages 83-4 of Lüders (1961) draws attention to the fact that the pillar base inscriptions of the *saṅghapraḥṭas* are more Sanskrit than the other inscriptions in this series.

³⁷⁴ Lüders (1961: 84) interprets *saṅghapraḥṭas*, "employed by the *saṅgha*," as "laymen who were charged by the Buddhist monks with the support of the monastery. In Jonathan Silk's thorough study of monastic administration, *Managing Monks*, he is unable to locate any literary references to these officials outside of the Mathurā pillar base inscriptions. He also questions Lüders' interpretation of this term, especially the concept that these were lay 'employees' of the *saṅgha* when the line between monastic duties and lay volunteers had yet to be firmly established (Silk 2008: 205). Until further evidence emerges that helps to clarify this term, I will retain Lüders' translation.

112) Pillar base [Lüders §50]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. [siddham] dā[naṃ] s[aṅghaprakṛtā]naṃ bhaddila-pramukhānaṃ sarv[a]sa[tvānaṃ hita]-
2. [sukhāye] ///

Translation:

Success! The gift of the commissioners of the community headed by Bhaddila, for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

113) Pillar base [Lüders §51]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [torus]:

1. /// d[ā]na saṅghaprakṛt[ā]naṃ bh[a]d[i]la-pramukhana

Translation:

...the gift of the commissioners of the community headed by Bhadila...

114) Pillar base [Lüders §52]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. siddham da[nāṃ] bhikṣuṇo bhadrasya bhadrakhoṣasya ca

Translation:

Success! The gift of the monk Bhadra and Bhadrakhoṣa.³⁷⁵

115) Pillar base [Lüders §53]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. dānaṃ bhikṣo[ḥ n.]³⁷⁶ bhadras[y]a bhadrakhoṣas[y]a [ca]

Translation:

The gift of the monks Bhadra and Bhadrakhoṣa.

116) Pillar base [Lüders §54]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

³⁷⁵ Lüders (1961: 84) suggests that the “Commissioners of the Community” were lay individuals, however it appears that Bhadrakhoṣa was both a monk and the head of the *saṅghaprakṛtas*. Perhaps the commissioners were monks, or at least headed the commissions. An equally plausible explanation is that there are two individuals named Bhadrakhoṣa who each donated a pillar base.

³⁷⁶ Lüders (1961: 87) suggests that the scribe first wrote *bhikṣuno* then corrects this to *bhikṣoḥ*.

Text [base]:

[dā]naṃ³⁷⁷ ayaṃ kubhako dānaṃ bhikṣusya saṅghavarm[m]a[sya] vṛddhasya ca

Translation:

This gift, a pillar-base, (is) the gift of the monks Saṅghavarma and Vṛdda.

117) Pillar base [Lüders § 55]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

1. dānaṃ bhikṣo[h] sanghadevasyā vākuḍ=ātev[ā]sikasyā
2. siddhaṃ

Translation:

Success! The gift of the monk Saṅghadeva, the pupil of Vākuḍa.

118) Pillar base [Lüders §56]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

dānaṃ bhikṣusya budhaghoṣasya phala[pha] ///

Translation:

The gift of the monks Budhaghoṣa (and) Phalapha(*la).

119) Pillar base [Lüders §57]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

///laphalasya [ca]³⁷⁸

Translation:

...and (Pha)laphala...

³⁷⁷ The *naṃ* has an unusual shape that makes it look like a *ja*, but is likely a *na* with an *anusvāra* written as a short horizontal stroke to the right in the middle of the *akṣara* rather than as a dot above it. This type of *naṃ* is also found in the *dānaṃ* on pillar-base [114] and [115]. In this inscription, it appears the scribe wrote *dānaṃ* twice, once at the beginning of the text using the *ja*-like *naṃ* and again after the object *kubhak[o]*. Lüders (1961: 88) dismisses the possibility of this sign being a *naṃ* due to the repetition of *dānaṃ* in this text and the apparent lack of a letter before this symbol. In the facsimile of this text there seems to be a mark before the *naṃ*, and I see a conflation on the scribe's part of the two formulas *dānaṃ bhikṣu* and *ayaṃ kumbhako dānaṃ* into *dānaṃ ayaṃ kumbhako dānaṃ*.

³⁷⁸ Lüders (1961: 90) reads this as *[bh]i*, but *ca* is also a possible since the graphemes look similar in Brāhmī of this period. The *ca* "and" would correspond to the previous pillar base inscription [118] that appears to contain the names of two monks Budhaghoṣa and Phala[pha]. In the former inscription, the first part of this monk's name is legible and in the latter the remainder of his name is written. Two monks co-sponsoring a single pillar base is not uncommon in this series of donations made at Jamālpur, as in the case of the monks, Bhadra and Bhadrageṣa, who donated two pillar bases [114 and 115] and Saṅghavarma and Vṛdda who donated one [116]. By combining these two partial inscriptions [118 and 119], we can reconstruct these as "the gift of the monks Budhaghoṣa and Phalaphala (*dānaṃ bhikṣusya budhaghoṣasya phalaphalasya ca*)."

120) Pillar base [Lüders §58]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

[dā]naṃ bhikṣ(u)s[y]a buddhamītras[y]a ///

Translation:

The gift of the monk Buddhamītra...

121) Pillar base [Lüders §59]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77(?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

dānam saṅghasthaviryasyā bhadam[nta] ? ///

Translation:

The gift of the elder of the community, the honorable...

122) Pillar base [Lüders §60]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77(?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A [base]:

1. [dānam] viśv[a]sik[a]sya v[akamīh]īr[as]y[a] s[ahā p]utre[ṇa] horamurṇḍa[g]e[na] im[e]

2. [na] devadharm[m]apa[r]it[y]āgena [a]cala[m=ai]ś[var]y[y]am bhav[a]t[u]

B [torus]: d[a]naṃ Vakamīhīraputrasya horamu[r]d[d]apharasya

Translation:

A. This is the gift of the *viśvasika*³⁷⁹ Vakamīhīra, together with his son Horamurṇḍaphara.³⁸⁰ By this donation of a pious gift let the sovereignty be unshaken.

B. The gift of Horamurṇḍaphara, the son of Vakamīhīra.

123) Pillar base [Lüders §61]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A [base]:

1. ? [d]ānaṃ v[i]śvaśikasya vv[a]gamīhīrāsya sahā putreṇa horamu[r]dvagena]

2. [ime]n[a d]evvadharmapa(r)ī(tyāg)e[na]m acalam=aiśvaryatayam bh[a]vvatu

³⁷⁹ Like many titles of the Kuṣāṇa officials, the exact function of the Viśvasika is unclear (Lüders 1961: 98). Among the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions there are three figures who hold the position of Viśvasika: Vakamīhīra [122-4], Aśyala [125], and Ulāna [260]. If Ulāna, as suggested by Lüders, is the same person as Valāna whose donation is dated to year 74, then he was both a Mahādaṇḍanāyaka and Viśvasika. The transfers of titles suggests that Ulāna was promoted from a Viśvasika to a Mahādaṇḍanāyaka, and might reveal the administrative hierarchy within the Kuṣāṇa Empire. What does seem clear is that Vakamīhīra and Aśyala both served as a Viśvasika in the year seventy-seven (while Ulāna was the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka), and the employment of two officials with the same title suggests that either the Kuṣāṇas required more than one Viśvasika to administer Mathurā or these were regional ministers governing different areas of the empire.

³⁸⁰ For the etymology of these names see Lüders 1961: 95-8.

B [torus]: danam Vakamīhīraputrasya horamurddapharasya

Translation:

A. The gift of the Viśvasika Vakamhira together with (his) son Horamurṇḍaphara. By this donation of a pious gift let the sovereignty be unshaken.

B. The gift of Horamurṇḍaphara, the son of Vakamīhīra.

124) Pillar base [Lüders §62]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77 (?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A [base]:

1. (ku) d[ā]nam v[ai]śvasikasya v[a]kamihirasya saha putrena h[o]ra[mūṇḍh]va[re]na

2. imena dev[ā]ddharmaparityā[k]ena ac[a]lam=[i]ś[u]r[y]ata[ya] bhav[a]t[u]

B [torus]: d[a]nam Vakamīhīraputrasya h[ar]amarddaphara[s]y[a]

Translation:

A. The gift of the Viśvasika Vakamīhīra together with (his) son Horamurṇḍaphara. By this donation of a pious gift let the sovereignty be unshaken.

B. The gift of Horamurṇḍaphara, the son of Vakamīhīra.

125) Pillar base [Lüders §63]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 77(?); object: stone pillar base; type: Architectural; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text [base]:

(dā)na[m :] viś[v]asikasya [a]śyalasya kubhako (?)³⁸¹ sabharyyak[a]sya sa[pu>(*trakasya)

Translation:

The gift of the *Viśvasika* Aśyala, the pillar-base (#?), together with (his) wife and sons (?).

Year 79 (1)

126) Bodhisattva image [Shr. #134]: Mathurā (Caubārā Mounds); Year 79; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monk); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sa 70 9 he 4 di 20 5 etasyāṃ purvvāyaṃ bhikṣusya vinayadharasya sandhikasya dā[n](aṃ)

2. bodhi satva pratimā pra-

3. tiṣṭhā pitā maja-vihare³⁸²

Translation:

In year 79, winter month 4, day 25 – on this occasion – the gift, a Bodhisattva image, was installed by the monk Sandhika, a *Vinaya*-holder, in the Maja vihāra.

³⁸¹ Lüders (1961: 98) states that this was probably a number, perhaps twenty.

³⁸² Lines 2 and 3 are written on the pedestal between the lions on either end and the two worshipers clad in patchwork robes standing on either side of a *dharmacakra* in the center.

Year 80 (3)

127) Nāga [Falk 2002-3: 43-4]:³⁸³ Mathurā(?); Year 80; object: stone image; type: Nāga; donor: imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. (mahārāja-rājā)[t]irājasya devaputrasya śāhe(r) vvāsudevasya rājya (saṃ)vatsara³⁸⁴
a[ṣṭa>śi][ti]
2. [80] va(r)ṣ(ā)[m]āsa dv(i)tīya 2 divasa tri(tī)[ya] etas[y](ām pūrvā)[yā](m) daṇa a(r)yya
3. nakrasya pratīmā pratiṣṭha[pi]tā mahadaṇḍanā[ya]kasya [ṭṛvahana]sya gaṃja-hāmāraka(r)
4. [su?]lakṣaka-putraṇa yāllaraḥ p[r]i(ya)ta bha(ga)[va] nagarāja[h]

Translation:

In the regnal year eighty - 80 - the second - 2 - rainy month, the third day of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra, the Śāhi Vāsudeva I – on this occasion – this image of the Ārya Nakra was installed as the gift of the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Trivāhana (?) (and) the sons of the Account Keeper of the Treasury, Sulakṣaka; *yāllaraḥ* may the Lord Nāgarāja be pleased.

128) Jain image [Shr. #136]: Mathura (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 80; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sdhi³⁸⁵ maharajasya vāsudevasya sa[m] 80 hamava³⁸⁶ 1 di 10 2 etasa pu[rv]v[āy[ām] ? ///etasa
pu[rv]v[āyām] [dasakadasasa]³⁸⁷
2. dhit[u] sa[m]ghanadhāye vadhuye balāsya ///2.
dhi[tra] sa[m]ghatidhisa³⁸⁸ vadhuye balasya ///

Translation:

Success! Year 80, winter month 1, day 12 of the Great King Vasudeva I – on this occasion – (this is the gift) of Bala, the daughter-in-law of Saṅghanadhā (and) Saṅghatidhi, the daughter of Dasakadasa (?).

³⁸³ The date in this inscription was read as one hundred seventy by Mukherjee (1987) who places this image in the reign of Vāsudeva II.

³⁸⁴ This is the first occurrence in Kuṣāṇa Brāhmī inscriptions of the adjective *rājya* modifying *saṃvatsara* meaning “regnal year.” This phrase occurs five additional times in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions: in year eighty-four of Vāsudeva I [133], years (one hundred) nine [163] and year (one hundred) seventeen [171] of Kaṇiṣka II, and years (one hundred) twenty-four [183] and (one hundred) twenty-eight [187] of Vāsiṣka. The specification of a “regnal year” in the dating formula appearing only in the inscriptions of Vāsudeva I, Kaṇiṣka II, and Vāsiṣka supports two distinct Kuṣāṇa centuries with the hundreds dropped.

³⁸⁵ This is another abbreviated *siddham* in the form of a single ligature *sdhi*.

³⁸⁶ These three *akṣaras* are quite clear but they are not the expected *hemanta*.

³⁸⁷ Sircar (1965: 162) reads the three letters at the end of the first line, but they are very faint in my photograph of this image.

³⁸⁸ I have used Sircar’s (1965: 162) reading of this name, but the *sa* is unclear and the *akṣara* more closely resembles the *ye*, as seen in the following *vadhuye*.

129) Jain image [Shr. #135]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 80; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// 80 niva[r]tana dh.n. ? ///

Translation:

Year 80... at the request of... Dhana (?).

Year 81 (1)

130) Jain image [Shr. #137]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 81; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sa 80 1 va 1 di 6 etasya puvāya arya-kāj[ī]vāye³⁸⁹ a[ṃte]-
2. vāsikiniye³⁹⁰ datāye nivatanā gṛhaśiriy[e]³⁹¹ ///

Translation:

Year 81, rainy month 1, day 6 – on this occasion –... of Grahaśiri; at the request of Datā, the female pupil³⁹² of Arya Kājīvā.

Year 83 (2)

131) Seated Jina [Shr. #139]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 83; object: stone image; type: Jina; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*³⁹³

1. [- nam] siddham mahārājasya v[ā]sudevasya saṃ 80 3 gr 2 di 10 6 etasya purvv[ā]aye senasya
2. ? [dhi]tu dattasya [vadhuye kuṭubhaṭanya] gan[dh]ikasya pū?va[ma]khamiye natadasaṃgha pratimā [dha]

Translation:

Success! Year 83, summer month 2, day 16 of the Great King Vasudeva – on this occasion – the image of Natadasaṃgha(?)... (this is the gift)... of the gandhika Pū(?)vakhamī... the wife... the daughter-in-law of Datta... the daughter of Sena...³⁹⁴

132) Seated Jina [Shr. #140]: provenance unknown; Year 83; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

³⁸⁹ Bühler (1894: 204) reads *ayi*, but *arya* makes more sense as a Jain honorific. What looks like an *i* vowel curving up from the center prong of the *ya* is most likely an preconsonantal *r*.

³⁹⁰ Shrava (1993: 111) transcribes this as *vāsikīghī[ni]ye*, but Bühler's (1894: 204) reading is correct.

³⁹¹ The stroke on the right leg of the *ga* angles back sharply and to the left, resembling a *gr* more than a *gra*.

³⁹² The designation *antevasin* is predominately Buddhist while the more typical Jain term is *śiśini*. Perhaps this is a sign of donations being made between religious communities.

³⁹³ The only facsimile of this inscription is Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 302, pl. XCII).

³⁹⁴ This translation is not certain; an inspection of the actual image would help clarify this reading.

Text:

siddham saṃ 80 3 gr̥ 2 di 20 5 etaye purvvaye ///

Translation:

Success! Year 83, summer month 2, day 25 – on this occasion – ...

Year 84 (2)

133) Ṛṣabhanāth Jina image [Shr. #141]: Mathurā (bank of the Balabhadra Kuṇḍa); Year 84; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*³⁹⁵

1. siddha[ṃ] mahār[ā]jasya r[ājā]tirājasya devaputrasya [śāhi] v[ā]sudevasya rājya sa[ṃ]vatsare
80 4 gr̥ṣmamāse dvi 2
2. di 5 etasya pur[vā]yām bhaṭṭadattasya ugabhinakasya vadhue aindrasya kuṭubinie kotabhauka
koṭābhavāe
3. bhagavato arhato ṛṣabhasya pratimā pratiṣṭhāpitā dharasahasya kuṭubinie migutta
kumāra[da]ttasya nirvarttana

Translation:

Success! In regnal year 84, the second - 2 - summer month, day 5 of the Great King, the King of Kings, the Devaputra Śāhi Vāsudeva I – on this occasion – the image of the Lord, the Arhat Ṛṣabha was installed by the *kotabhauka* Koṭābhavā, the wife of Aindra, the daughter-in-law of Ugabhinaka (and) Bhaṭṭadattā, at the request of the *migutta* Kumāradatta, the wife of Dharasaha.

134) Vardhamāna Jina image [Shr. #142]: provenance unknown; Year 84; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddha[ṃ] sa[ṃ] 80 4 va 3 di 20 5 etasm[i]³⁹⁶ purv[v]ayaṃ damitrasya dhit[u] o[kh.]³⁹⁷
2. rik[ā]ye k[u]ṭubīniye datāye dānaṃ vardhamāna pratimā pratiṣṭhāpit[ā]
- 3.³⁹⁸ /// gaṇāto koṭṭiyato [ba]/// ///a[rya] satyasenas[ya] śi[ṣya] dharavṛdhisya ni(*rvartanā)

³⁹⁵ I have yet to acquire a photograph of this image to assist in clarifying this reading.

³⁹⁶ This looks like a conflation of *asmi* and *etasya*.

³⁹⁷ Only the left half of this *akṣara* is legible, but another donor by the name of Okhārika is referenced in the inscription dated to year two hundred ninety-nine in the Yavana era [in section 4.3 Yavana or Uncertain Era].

³⁹⁸ This line is not visible in plate XCIV provided in Shrava's appendix (1993: 304), but he must have had access to a facsimile of this image because he emends Sahni's (1927-8a: 67) reading of this line. After *koṭṭiyota* Shrava (1992: 114) reads [ba], which might be the beginning of the Jain lineage *brahamadāsika kula*. Shrava also adds *śivā* after the name *satyasenas[ya]*, but I have emended this to *śi[ṣya]* based on Jain donative formulas that state the name of the Ārya who requested the donation before the name of their teacher. In adhering to this inscriptional pattern, I have also emended the reading of *s[ya]* before *satyasenas[ya]* to *a[rya]*.

Translation:

Success! Year 84, rainy month 3, day 25 – on this occasion – the Vardhamāna image was installed (as a) gift of Datā, the wife of Okhārika, the daughter of Damitra; at the request of Dharavṛdhi (the pupil of) the Ārya (?) Satyasena.

Year 85 (3)

135) Jain image [Shr. #143]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 85; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

saṃ 80 5 gr 3 di [8] ? ? ? ? vacakasya ditā si[hila]³⁹⁹

Translation:

Year 85, summer month 3, day 8 (?).... the *si[hila]* (?) was given by the preacher...

136) Gandhāran well [CGI 461]: provenance unknown; Year 85; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: status uncertain; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 20 20 20 20 4 1 (85) arsami
2. asa masasa di 1 nribhratriśama
3. putra danamukho ekha (=khae) [k](ue)

*Translation:*⁴⁰⁰

In the year 85, in the month of Artemisios, day 1, the son of Nṛbhatṛśarman had this well dug as a meritorious gift.

137) Stone slab [CGI 336]: Rānigāt, Buner, Pakistan; Year 85; object: stone (lintel?); type: Architectural; donor: unknown; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

1. /// dhi⁴⁰¹ ॐ saṃ[tsa]re 20 20 20 20 4 1 maha ///
2. [va]sudeva maharaja devaputraṣa agrabhagaparihaṃśadae bhava[tu] ///
3. /// a bha va ti na vi ṣa ///

*Translation:*⁴⁰²

... *dhi* (siddham) in year 85 month... may it be for the state of the highest share of Vāsudeva I the Great King, the Devaputra... *a bha va ti na vi ṣa*...

³⁹⁹ The writing in this line is uncertain. The year and month are clear, but the reading of the numeral 8 for the day not definite. The next four *akṣaras* are illegible; the third might be a conjunct. The word *vacakasya* looks correct and is the only relatively secure reading in the line. After this Shrava (1993: 115) reads *dvita* but I take this to be *ditā*, a past participle of √dā. Next is a clearly written *si* followed by an *akṣara* with an *i* vowel that might be a *hi*; then maybe a *la*, but it is difficult to see the entire letter.

⁴⁰⁰ Falk 2009b: 31, 3.7.

⁴⁰¹ This could be an abbreviation for *siddham*.

⁴⁰² Odani 2000: 831-2.

Year 86 (2)

138) Seated Jina [Shr. #145]: provenance unknown; Year 86; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃ 80 6 he 1 di 10 2 dasasya dhitu pryasya k.ṭubiniye
2. /// [ka]to⁴⁰³ kulato aya-sa[n̄gha]mitraya śiśiniy[e] aya-vas[u]lla[ye] ni[va]tane

Translation:

Year 86, winter month 1, day 12 – (the gift) of x, the wife of Prya, the daughter of Dasa; at the request of the Ārya Vasulā, the pupil of Ārya Saṅghamitra (who is) from the Mehika (?) *kula*.

139) Ekamukhi Śivalinga [Shr. #144]: Mathurā (?); Year 86; object: stone; type: Indic; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. bhag[a]vato⁴⁰⁴ iśvaro pratiṣṭhāpit[o]⁴⁰⁵
2. sa 80 6 gr 4 di 5

Translation:

The Lord Iśvara was installed... year 86, summer month 4, day 5...

Year 87 (2)

140) Squatting Jina [Shr. #146]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 87; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴⁰⁶

[saṃ] 80 7 gr 1 di 20 a[smi] kṣune uccenāgarasy=āryya kumāranandi-śiṣyasya mitrasya

Translation:

Year 87, summer month 1, day 20 – at this moment – (at the request of) Mitra, the pupil of Ārya Kumāranandi (who is) from the Ucchenagara (*śākhā*).

141) Standing Jina [Shr. #147]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 87; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴⁰⁷

1. siddhaṃ ɐ mahārajasya rajātirajasya ṣāhi vvasudevaysa

⁴⁰³ Bühler (1892a: 388) suggests reconstructing Mehika *kula*.

⁴⁰⁴ There appears to be a long *ā* diacritic off the right side of the *ga*, but it could just be a crack in the stone and not an engraver's mark.

⁴⁰⁵ Thakurail (Shrava 1993: 116) reads *pratiṣṭhāpitā*, but last *akṣara* resembles *to* more than *tā*, and this reading would agree with the subject *iśvaro* in the nominative case.

⁴⁰⁶ There also appears to be writing on the lower rim of the pedestal (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 299).

⁴⁰⁷ The only facsimile of this inscription is Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 306, pl. XCVI).

2. saṃ 80 7 he 2 di 30 ///
3. hutasavāptayasya dhitu⁴⁰⁸ avāsikasya riṭeka⁴⁰⁹ śreṣṭhi
- 4.

Translation:

Success! Year 87, winter month 2, day 30 of the Great King, King of Kings, the Śāhi Vasudeva I... (the gift) of the Śreṣṭhinī, the wife (?) of Avāsika, the daughter of Hutasavāptaya.

Year 89 (1)

142) Mamane Dheri Buddha Statue [CGI 161]: Mamāne Dheri (Charsadda Tahsil, Peshawar District, Pakistan); Year 89; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

saṃ 20 20 20 20 4 4 1 margaśiraṣa masi 4 1 iṣe kṣunami niryaide⁴¹⁰ ime deyadharme Dharmapriena ṣamanena piduno arogadaḥṣinae upajayasa Budhapriasa puyae samanuyayaṇa⁴¹¹ arogadaḥṣinae

Translation:

Year 89, month of Mārgaśiras, (day) 5 – at this moment – this pious gift was bestowed by the śramaṇa Dharmapriya, for the blessing of health to (his) father, for the honor of (his) teacher Budhapriya, for the blessing of health to (his) fellow disciples.

Year 90 (1)

143) Seated Jina [Shr. #148]: Mathurā(?); Year 90; object: stone; type: Jain, donor: Jain (Monastic/Jain); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃvatsare 90⁴¹² va /// + + + + + + + + + + ///? sya kuṭubanie d[i]nasya vadhuya
2. ko[tṭiya]to ga[ṇa]to pa ? vaha ? kato⁴¹³ kulato majhamāto śākhā[to] pra_sanikaya⁴¹⁴ bhatibalā[y.] bhi[ni]-
3. ye d[a]na[m]

⁴⁰⁸ Cunningham (1873: 35) transcribes *pitri*, but since this is a Jain image we expect a reference to the donor's relatives. What Cunningham reads as *pitri* resembles *dhitu* "daughter."

⁴⁰⁹ Again, based on Jain donative patterns, this word is most likely some form of *kuṭumbinī*, but only an inspection of the pedestal can confirm this suggestion.

⁴¹⁰ Skt *niryatitaḥ* [nir √yat] – issue, (cause) to give as a present, bestow (Konow 1929: 172).

⁴¹¹ Skt *samanuyāyin* – a fellow disciple (Konow 1929: 172).

⁴¹² The date is from Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 307, pl. XCVII).

⁴¹³ Bühler (1894: 205) associates this with the Jain *Praśnavāhanaka* or *Paṇhavāhaṇaya kula*.

⁴¹⁴ There appears to be a gap between the *pra* and the *sa*, and from the rubbing it is difficult to determine if any letters are missing.

Translation:

Year 90, rainy month *x*... (this is) the gift of the *bhaṭibāla* Bhini, the daughter-in-law of Dina, the wife of *x*, ... (at the request of) Prasanika(?) (who is) from the Koṭṭiya *gaṇa*, the Praśnavāhanaka/Paṇhavāhaṇaya *kula*, the Majhama *śākhā*...

Year 92 (2)

144) Jina Vardhamāna [Shr. #151]: Mathurā (?); Year 92; object: stone; type: Jain, donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// sya vardhamānasya saṃ 90 2 gr 2 di ///

Translation:

... of *x*, of Vardhamāna, year 92, summer month 2, day...

145) Buddha image [Shr. #150]: provenance unknown; Year 92; object: stone; type: Buddhist, donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sa[m] 90 2 he 1 di 5 asya pūrvva[ye]
2. ve[ṇḍa]-vihare vāstavyā-bhikṣusa grā[m.]-
3. desikasa sthuva praṣṭhāpāyati⁴¹⁵ sa-⁴¹⁶
4. rva[satv]ana[m]⁴¹⁷ hita-su[kha]ye

Translation:

Year 92, winter month 1, day 5 – on this occasion – Grāmaśesika, a monk resident in the Veṇḍa vihāra, has a stūpa installed. For the welfare and happiness of all beings.

Year 93 (2)

146) Vardhamāna image [Shr. #152]: Mathurā (Kaṅkalī Ṭīlā); Year 93; object: stone; type: Jain, donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A. -⁴¹⁸ namo arhato mahāvīrasya saṃ [90 3 va] ///

B.

1. /// śiṣyasya gaṇisyā [na]ndiye nivarttanā devasya hīraṇyakasya dh[i]tuy[e] ///
2. /// ? ? [bha](ga)vato vardhamāna pratimā prati[ṣ](ṭhāpitā arhato) pujāye ///

⁴¹⁵ The *ti* needs to be reconstructed, but note the present indicative causative form of the verb.

⁴¹⁶ Sircar (1961-2: 10) remarks that if this is an *ā* for *ācārya* and not a *sa* for the beginning of *sarva* then several *akṣaras* are missing at the end of each line and the reading of the text will change.

⁴¹⁷ Sircar (1961-2: 10) reads *savva* and reconstructs *satvā*, but the two upper prongs of the *sa* are visible and the line underneath the *ta*, which appears to be closing the bottom making a *va*, could simple be a flaw in the stone and not an engraver's mark.

⁴¹⁸ There is a short horizontal stroke that is a sign for *siddham*.

Translation:

Praise to the Arhat Mahāvira, year 93, rainy month... the image of the Lord Vardhamāna was installed by x... the daughter of the goldsmith Deva; at the request of the *gaṇin* Nandi the pupil of... for the honor of the Arhats.

147) Standing Buddha [Shr. #153]: Mathurā (in the Yamuna); Year 93; object: stone; type: Buddhist, donor: Jain(?); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [siddham⁴¹⁹] mah[ā]rājasya devapūtrasya⁴²⁰ vāsudevasya saṃ 90 3 he 4 di 20 5 asya purvvayam bhaga[va]to pi-
2. tāmah[ā]sya svam[ā]tasya avirudhasya⁴²¹ pratimā chatraṃ ca pratisthāpitam⁴²² [a]ryya dharmeśvaram aya māgham
3. aya dhanam pitaram ca śarvanamdi mātaram ca jiva[s]iri purask[r]tya śramaṇenam kāyastenam⁴²³

Translation:

Success! In year 93, winter month 3, day 25 of the Great King, the Devaputra Vāsudeva I – on this occasion – an image of the Lord, the Pitāmaha, who holds his own tenets, who was never refuted and a parasol were installed by the Kāyastha Śramaṇas having praised the Arya Dharmeśvara, Arya Māgha, Arya Dhana, (their) father Śarvanamdi and (their) mother Jivaśiri.

Year 94 (2)

148) Seated Śākyamuni [Prakash 2012: 173-5]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year 94; object: stone; type: Buddhist, donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃ 90 4 he 1 di 10 5 etasya purvvāyam bhagavato śakyamunisya pratimā pratiṣṭhāpitā bhikṣuṇam nagamitreṇa mātāpitṛṇam agra-pratya-

⁴¹⁹ Srivastava (1966-7: 151-3) states the *siddham* sign is represented by a short horizontal stroke and sites Sircar's (1961-2: 10) interpretation of a similar mark at the beginning of an inscription from Kaniṣka II's fourth year [154].

⁴²⁰ The long *ū* vowel is clear but not read by Srivastava (1966-7: 152).

⁴²¹ The designations of the Buddha as *pitāmaha* and *svam[ā]ta* occurs again in an inscription in year fourteen of Kaniṣka II, “the Lord, Pitāmaha, the Supremely Enlightened, the god who holds his own tenets” (*bhagavāto pitāmahāsya sammyasaṃbuddhasya svamatasya*) [168]. The inclusion of this term twenty-one years apart, at the end of Vāsudeva I's and middle of Kaniṣka II's reign, provides another piece of evidence for a second Kuṣāṇa century. This term, *pitāmaha*, is also found in an inscription from Deoriyā, near Allahabad. The epithet *svamatāvīruddha* occurs in an inscription found at Mankuwār, near Deoriyā, and is dated to the reign of Kumāragupta (415-55 CE) (Lüders 1961:118). Perhaps the Kāyastha Śramaṇas hailed from the eastern extent of the Kuṣāṇa Empire.

⁴²² The *sthā* is dental not retroflex; the *sa* resembles the *s* in the ligature *sya* and the *tha* has a clear dot in the center.

⁴²³ The ending is unusual and resembles a conflation of the instrumental singular *ena* with the genitive plural *ānām*.

2. śatāyeṇa⁴²⁴ sahācaryāye agra-pratyaśatāye[ṇ]a sarvasatvānaṃ hitasukhāye bhavatu

Translation:

Year 94, winter month 1, day 15 – on this occasion – the Lord Śākyamuni was installed by the monk Nagamitra. May it be with the sharing of the principle lot by (his) parents, with the sharing of the principle lot by (his) teachers, (and) for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

149) Gandhāran Well [CGI 829]: Peshawar (?); Year 94; object: stone; type: Architectural, donor: Professionals; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃvatsaraya catuṇavatimayi 20-20-20-20-10-4 kuo kari-
2. to sahayarehi aśarakṣitehi matepitu-pu-
3. yayi te motiṃti olohiyaye

*Translation:*⁴²⁵

In the year ninety-four, 94, the well was made by the Aś(v)arakṣita companions, for the veneration of mother and father. May they be happy.

Year 98 (2)

150) Squatting Jina [Shr. #157]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 98; object: stone; type: Jain, donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

sa[m] 90 8 he 1 di 5 asma kṣuṇe koṭṭiyāto gaṇāto ucanaga ///

Translation:

In year 98, winter month 1, day 5 – at this moment – of the Koṭṭiya *gaṇa* the Uccenāga(*ri śakhā) ///

151) Standing Jina [Shr. #156]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year 98; object: stone; type: Jain, donor: Jain (monastic/professional); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴²⁶

1. siddha[m] ◡⁴²⁷ namo arahata mahāvīrasya devanā[śa]sya rājña vāsudevasya saṃvatsare 90 8 varṣāmāse 4 divase 10 1 etasyā
2. purvayā arya dehi[ki]yāto ganā + [pu]ridha + kā kula vahetaputikato śakhāto ganisya arryya devadata[s]ya na
3. /// ryya kṣanasya ///
4. /// prakagiriṇa ///

⁴²⁴ This phrase also appears in the Nāga stone slab inscription donated by the Cāndaka brother in year (one hundred) twenty-six [185] and is similar to the Gāndhārī phrase “may it be for the best share and lot, *agrabhagapadiyamśae bhavatu*” found in line 2 of the Wardak vase [78].

⁴²⁵ Falk 2009b: 26, 2.1.

⁴²⁶ The only facsimile of this inscription is Cunningham’s eye copy (Shrava 1993: 311, pl. CI).

⁴²⁷ This symbol that looks like a modern Devanagari *o*.

5. /// kapadiye puja ///
 6. /// tasya pravarakasya dhitu varuṇasya gandhakasya vadhuya mitrasya /// /// ? tta grā ///
 7. /// ye /// /// vato mahā


Translation:

Success! Praise to the Arhat Mahāvira – in the year 98, rainy month 4, day 11 of the Devaputra, King Vāsudeva I – on this occasion – (this is the gift) ... of Mitrā, the daughter-in-law of the perfumer Varuṇa, the daughter of the cloak maker *x*-ta... at the request of the *gaṇin* Arya Devadata (who is) from the Dehinyāto *ganā* [puridhakā] *kula*, the Vahetaputikato *śakhāto*...

YEAR 99 (1)

152) Stone slab [Quintanilla 2007: 284]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 99; object: stone; type: Jain, donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddham saṃ 90 9⁴²⁸ gri 2 d[i] 10 3 koṭṭiyāto gaṇāto ṭhāniyāto kulāto va[irato śa]khāto ayya sura[po] ///
 2. śiśini dhamaśriye n[i]vartanā ⁴²⁹ grahadatasya dhi[tu] dhanahathi ///
 3a.⁴³⁰ [āna]gha[śa] 3b. kaṇa [śra]maṇa
 4. [ṣṭhi]vijī

Translation:

Success! Year 99, summer month 2, day 13, (this is the gift of)... Dhanahathi, the daughter of Grahadata; at the request of Dhamaśiri, the pupil of... Arya Sura[po]-*x* (who is) from the Koṭṭiya *gaṇā*, the Sṭhaniya *kula*, and the Vaira *śākhā*.

[female figure (left)]: [Āna]ghaśa[ṣṭhi]vijī

[male figure (right)]: Kaṇa [śra]maṇa

⁴²⁸ Bühler (1892a: 392) reads the numeral five with a question mark. This numeral resembles nine, engraved with a small left facing curved head and a long vertical tail, similar to the number nine on a four-sided Jina dated to the year (one hundred) nineteen [175], a Buddha image of year twenty-nine [53], a standing Jina of year forty-nine [72], and a pedestal of year seventy-nine [126].

⁴²⁹ The stūpa railing depicted in the upper frieze interrupts the middle of this line.

⁴³⁰ These two lines are written inside the central frieze and not transcribed noted by Bühler (1892a: 392). These short inscriptions appear to be labels naming figures. In my photograph some of the *akṣaras* in this line are partly covered by a shadow, making a definitive reading difficult.

3. Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions from the Period of Imperial Diminution [153-189].

There is a total of thirty-seven inscriptions from this period: twenty-nine from the reign of Kaniṣka II, seven from Vāsiṣka's reign, one from Kaniṣka III's reign. All of the inscriptions associated with the reign of Kaniṣka II are dated, and among these six are composed in Gāndhārī and the remaining twenty-three are in EHS. The date for Kaniṣka II's rule, based on epigraphic evidence, is from Kuṣāṇa year (1)04-22, ca. 231-49 CE. The seven inscriptions associated with Vāsiṣka's reign are all dated and comprise one Gāndhārī text and six written in EHS. According to the dates in these inscriptions, Vāsiṣka ruled for at least eight years Kuṣāṇa years (1)22-30, ca. 249-57 CE. There is one inscription from Kaniṣka III's reign, a Gāndhārī text that records a well donation made at Āra, in the Attock District, Punjab, Pakistan dated to year (1)41, ca. 268 CE.

3.1. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Kaniṣka II [153-181].

Year (1)04 (2)

153) Squatting Jina [Shr. #15]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Tīlā); Year (1)04; object: stone image; type: Jina, donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddham sa 4 gri 1 di 20 vāraṇāto gaṇato a[r]yā hāḷakiyāto⁴³¹ kulato vajanagarita śākhā[to] ///
2. puśyamitrasya śiśini sathisihāye śiśini sihāmitrasya saḍhacari⁴³² ///
3. dāti sahā grahacetaṇa grahadāseṇa ///

Translation:

Success! In year 4, summer month 1, day 20 – (the gift) was given (by x-)... together with Grahaceta and Grahadāsa (at the request of x-)... companion of Sihāmitra, the pupil of Sathisihā,

⁴³¹ van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 265) emends *ṭa* to *ḷa*, and this seems like the correct reading.

⁴³² van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 265) reads *sachacari*, but if this is a *cha* then the head of the *akṣara* would be over the right loop whereas the head of this character is on the left, which is typical of a *ḍha*. Bühler (1894: 201) correctly reads *ḍha* and equates *saḍhacari* with Skt *śraddhācārin*, translating this as convert. However, this interpretation seems rather extreme. A *śraddhācārin* would literally be “a person who goes with faith,” and I would interpret this as a companion over a convert. This term occurs in a Jina statue from year (one hundred) five [157] and the Sarasvatī image from year fifty-four [83].

the pupil of Puṣyamitra ... (who is) from the Vāraṇa *gaṇa*, the Ārya-Hāṭṭakiya *kula*, the Vajānagari *śākhā* ...

154) Bodhisattva [Shr. #17]: Mathurā; Year (1)04; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [siddham]⁴³³ mah[ā]rājasya kaṇ[iṣkas]ya saṃ 4 he 2⁴³⁴ d[i] 1 etasyaṃ purrvāyaṃ bhikṣor=dha[r]mmanand[is]ya dha[r]mma-[kathi]kasya sādhyavihārisya [bh.] ///
2. pratiṣṭhāpayati mahādaṇḍan[ā]yaka hummiyaka vedyāṃ (sa)kka⁴³⁵ vihāre anenaṃ deyadharmma-parityāgena māta-piṭṛināṃ āca ///

Translation:

Success! Year 4, winter month 1, day 2 of the Great King Kaṇiṣka II – on this occasion – *x* ... the co-resident of the monk Dharmanandi, a dharma-preacher, installs (a bodhisattva image) in the Sakka vihara on the raised platform of Hummiyaka, the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka. By the donation of this pious gift (may it be) for (his) parents, teachers(?)...

Year (1)05 (6)

155) Squatting Jina [Shr. #20]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year (1)05; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// scame 5 gr 4 [di] 5 koṭṭiyā + + + + + to śākhāto vācakasya aryya

Translation: in year(?) 5, summer month 4, day 5 – ... of the preacher, Ārya *x* (who is) from the Koṭṭiyā (*gaṇa*)... the *x* *śākhā*...

156) Tank [Shr. #21]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year (1)05; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴³⁶

1. - siddham - mahārājasya rājātirājasya kaṇiṣkasya savatsare pañcame gr̥ṣmā māse catu-
2. rtthe 4 divase daśame 10 koṭṭiyato gaṇāto brahmādāsiyāto kulato urcenāga-
3. rito śākhāto [ṣa]śinie brahma[śikkāyi]e⁴³⁷ nirvarttanā budhilasya dhītā kṣṇaba-

⁴³³ The short horizontal line indicates *siddham*.

⁴³⁴ There are two interpretations for the month and day, Sircar (1961-2: 10) reads [saṃ] 4 h[e] 1 [di] 1 and Srivastava (1934) reads saṃ 4 va 1 [di] 2. The confusion between *he* and *va* stems from the scribe's use of the later *ha* type that is more vertically aligned than the typical Kuṣāṇa period *ha*. Without being able to inspect the stone I will defer to Sircar's reading. As for the day, there are two clear horizontal strokes after the *dī*.

⁴³⁵ The *sa* is written below the line and is a scribal insertion. I am tempted to interpret this as *svake*, "one's own," but the *akṣara* is clearly *sa* and not *sva*.

⁴³⁶ Shrava (1993: 19) provides the edition of this inscription. I have made a few emendations.

⁴³⁷ Shrava (1993: 19) reads *bhāginie brahmadhikko jīva* but leaves it untranslated. I read *ṣaśinie brahma[śikkāyi]e* "[at the request] of the pupil Brahmaśikkā." We would expect the names of the Jain monastics who requested the donation in this section of the donative formula, but in this instance it appears the requester was not an Ārya but a pupil. There seems to be a metathesis of the *ṣa* and *śi*, as the typical spelling in Jain inscriptions is

4. lasya vadhu⁴³⁸ vasukasya dharmapati viśākhamit[r]āye dāna[m] sarvvasatt[v]āna hitasukha[r]tthāye bhava[tu].

Translation:

Success! In the fifth year, forth - 4 - summer month, tenth - 10 - day, of the Great King, the King of Kings Kaniṣka II, (this well is) the gift of Viśākhamitrā, the first wife of Vasuka, the daughter-in-law of Kṛṣṇabala, the daughter of Budhila; at the request of the pupil Brahmaśikkā (who is) from the Koṭṭiya *gaṇa*, the Brahmādāsiya *kula*, the uccenāgari *śākhā*. May it be for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

157) Squatting Vardhamāna Jina [Shr. #24]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year (1)05; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. devaputrasya kan[iṣ]kasya sa 5 he 1 di 1 etasya pūrvvayaṃ koṭṭiyāto gaṇāto bahmadāsikā[to]
2. [ku]lāto [u]cenāgarito śākhāto sathi[siyasya]⁴³⁹ śi[ś]i[n]i senasya saḍhacari khuḍāye [nivata>(*na)⁴⁴⁰
3. pālasya dithu ? ? [ya] + ? ///
4. vādhamanasya prati(*ma)///

Translation:

In the year 5, winter month 1, day 1 of the Devaputra Kaniṣka II – on this occasion – the image of Vardhamāna (is the gift of) *x...* the daughter of Pāla(?); at the request of Khuḍā the companion of Sena, a pupil of Sathisiya (who is) from the Koṭṭiya *gaṇa*, the Bamhadāsika *kula*, and the Uchenāgari *śākhā*.

158) Vāsudeva Jina [Shr. #25]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year (1)05; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴⁴¹ [me]

A.

1. siddhaṃ sa⁴⁴² 5 he 1 di 10 2 asya purvvaye koḷi-
2. [ji]to brahmadāsikāto ucenakārīto ///

B.

1. ///ś[i]grihāto [sa]///(*ṃbhogāto)

śiṣiyo [161]. The first three syllables, *brahmaśi*, of the pupil's name are clear and the fourth *akṣara* resembles the *kkā* in *sarvvasakkāna* at the end of line 4. For the *yi* the *i* vowel is clear but the *ya* is unusual, and it resemble the *ye* at the end of *brahmadāsiye*. The *e* vowel looks somewhat like a *ca*, but the *ie* ending for feminine nouns occurs in *bhie* [158] and *kuṭubinie* [133].

⁴³⁸ Shrava (1993: 19) reads *va[pu]tra* but the reading of *vadhu* is clear.

⁴³⁹ A second Jain nun named Sathisihā is referenced in an inscribed squatting Jina dated to year (one hundred) four [153], and this could be the same person cited here.

⁴⁴⁰ Bühler reads *devato* (1892a: 381), but the *de* is certainly a *ni* and the *vato* can be read as *vata*. The last *akṣara* is missing but a reconstruction of *na* or *nā* is safe. The word *nirvartanā*, “at the request,” is expected at this point in the donative formula.

⁴⁴¹ The only facsimile of this inscription is Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 236, pl. XXVI).

⁴⁴² Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 266) reads the year thirty before five, but what she takes as the numeral thirty looks more like the *akṣara sa* or *saṃ*.

2. /// sani[da] ///

C.

1. ///? bodhilabhi⁴⁴³ vāsudevā prāvi ? ///

2. /// sarvasat[v]āna(m) hatasukhay. ///

Translation:

Success! Year 5, winter month 1, day 12 – on this occasion – the Vāsudeva image (was installed) by Bodhilabhi... (at the request of) sanida (?)...(who is) from the Koṭi(*yā) gaṇa, the Brahmādāsika (*kula*), the Ucenakārita (*śākhā*), the Śrigriha *saṃbhoga*... for the welfare and happiness of all creatures.

159) Four-sided Jina [Shr. #26]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭīlā); Year (1)05; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴⁴⁴

A. saṃ 5 he 4 di 20 asya purvvaye ko[ṭi]///

B. ///to [ucenagari]to [śākhā]to brama[dāsi] ///

C. /// mahilatasya śiṣyo aryya [kṣarakato] ///⁴⁴⁵

Translation:

In year 5, winter month 4, day 20 – on this occasion – (at the request of) the Ārya Kṣeraka, the pupil of Mihilata (who is) from the Koṭiya gaṇa the Ucenāgari *śākhā*, the Brahmādāsika *kula*

160) Brussels Buddha [CGI 232]: provenance unknown; Year (1)05; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. sa[m] 4 1 phagunasa masasa di paṃcami budhanadasa trepiḍakasa danamukhe madapidarana adhvadidana puyaya bhavatu |

Translation:

Year (1)05, on the fifth day of the month of Phaguna – the gift of the Budhanda, who is versed in the Tripiṭaka. May it be for the honor of (his) mother and father, whose time has passed.

⁴⁴³ Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 266) reads *bodhi-labhae* and translates “in order to attain enlightenment”. I interpret this as the donor’s name and take the *e* vowel as the feminine *i* noun instrumental singular ending.

⁴⁴⁴ The only facsimile of this inscription is Cunningham’s eye copy (Shrava 1993: 236, pl. XXVI).

⁴⁴⁵ The reconstruction of this reading is based on an inscription found an undated four-sided Jina that was requested by the same Jain monastics, “the Ārya Kṣeraka, the pupil of the Ārya Mihilotta” (*a[ryya] mihi[lo]ttasya śiṣy[o] aryya kṣerako vācako*) (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 245). This is also the image that van Lohuizen-de Leeuw uses to support her dropped-hundreds theory based on stylistic similarities between the undated image with another four side-image dated to year (one hundred) fifteen [169]. If these two images were requested by the same Jain monastics ten years apart, then they should be placed in the second Kuṣāṇa century (van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 246).

Year (1)07 (1)

161) Seated Jina [Shr. #29]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year (1)07; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. si[ddham ||] mahārājasya rājātirāsyā devaputrasya śāhi kaṅṅkasya saṃ 7 he 1 di 10 5 etasya pūrvvāyāṃ aryodehikiyāto
2. gaṇāto ariya-nāgabhutikiyāto kulāto gaṇisyā ariya-buddhaśirisya śiṣyo vācako ariya-sa[ndhi]kasya bhagini ariya-jayā ariya-goṣṭh. ///

Translation:

Success! In the year 7, winter month 1, day 15 of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra, the Śāhi Kaṅṅka II – on this occasion – (at the request of) Ārya Goṣṭh-x and Ārya Jayā, the sister(s) of the preacher Ārya Sandhika, the pupil of the *gaṇin* Ārya Buddaśiri (who is) from the Ārya-Udehikiya *gaṇa*, the Ārya-Nāgabhutikaya *kula*.

Year (10)9 (2)

162) Four-sided Jina [Shr. #33]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year (1)09; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴⁴⁶

(Aa) siddham saṃ 9 he 3 di 10 (Ba1) koḷiyāto gaṇāto (Ba2) ṭhaniyato kulāto vair[ā]to [sākhā]to (C1)arya praghā(C2)masya śiṣini (Bb1) ariya tarakasya (Bb2) nirva[r]tanā (Ab) graham[i]trasya dhitu sukhāśirisya vadhu ekaḍalasya (Bc1) kuṭu[m]biniye (Bc2) grahamalāye dati

Translation:

Success! Year 9, winter month 3, day 10 – (the gift) was given by Grahapalā, wife of Ekaḍala, the daughter-in-law of Sukhāśiri, and the daughter of Grahamitra; at the request of the Ārya Taraka, the female pupil of the Ārya Praghāma (who is) from the Koḷiya *gaṇa*, the Ṭhaniya *kula*, the Vaira *sākhā*

163) Four-sided Jina [Shr. #34]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year (1)09; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴⁴⁷

(1a) siddha(m) mahārājasya kaṅṅkasya rājye saṃvatsare navame (2a) ? māse pratha 1 divase 5 a-(3a)[syāṃ] purvvāye koṭiyato ganito thaniya (4a) [ku]lata vairāto sākhāto vācaka (1b) ? ?

⁴⁴⁶ This is van Lohuizen-de Leeuw's (1949: 296) revision of Banerji's (1909-10: 109-10) original reading. I have numbered the lines to make the reading more coherent. The inscription is written on the pedestal and between the feet of a standing Jina. The design of the pedestal consists of a wide upper rim that resembles a platform resting on a lotus flower. Line A is written on the upper rim of the platform and is divided into two sections [Aa and Ab], line B is engraved on three forward facing lotus petals with each petal having two lines of text [e.g. Ba1 and Ba2], and line C consists of two short lines engraved between the feet of the Jina.

⁴⁴⁷ The only facsimile of this inscription is Cunningham's eye copy (Shrava 1993: 240, pl. XXX).

dhata ? .is[ya] ? .ina bud[dha] ? ? ? (2a) bhāṭṭimit[r]as[ya] kuṭubīni(ye) ? vikadā /// (3a) /// (4a) ///
naṃ hita

Translation:

Success! In regnal year 9, *x*-month 1, day 5 of the Great King Kaniṣka II – on this occasion – (the gift of) Vikadā, the wife of Bhāṭṭimitra... buddha... (at the request) of the preacher *x* (who is) from the Koṭiya *gaṇa*, the Ṭhaniya *kula*, the Vairā *Sakhka*.

Year (1)11 (3)

164) Kārttikeya image [Shr. #37]: provenance unknown; Year (1)11; object: stone image; type: Indic; donor: Indic; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃ 11 he 4 di 1 etasyāṃ pūrvvāyāṃ k[ārti]keyasya pratimā
2. pratiṣṭhāpitā viśvadeveṇa viśvasomeṇa viśvabhavena viś[v]avasūna
3. ca bhrātr̥bhi=rvviśvila-[pu]t[r]ehi k[ṣ]at[r]iyehi s[v]ake āvasa[the *posthikā*]

Translation:

Year 11, winter month 4, day 1 – on this occasion – the image of Kārttikeya was installed by the sons of Viśvila, the brothers Viśvadeva, Viśvasoma, Viśvabhava, and Viśvavasū, the Kṣatriyas, in their own house *posthikā*.⁴⁴⁸

165) Gandhāran well [CGI 148]: Zeda (near Uṇḍ, Pakistan); object: stone block; Year (1)11; type: Architectural, donor: status uncertain; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 10 1 aṣḍasaṃ masasa di 20 utaraphaṅe iśe kṣuṇami
2. khade kue [mu]r[o]ḍasa marjhakasa kaṇiṣkasa rajami [toyam]da ca kuo
3. danamukho hiperecaasa sa-dara-vasativaca-saputraka-leaka-
4. sacalokasa hiperecaa-mada-pitarāṇa anugra[he] ṇavudase
5. sagamitrāsa dana

*Translation:*⁴⁴⁹

Year 11, on the 20th day of the month Āṣāḍha, in Uttaraphalguṇa, at this date, a well was dug, during the reign of the Lord, the Marjhaka Kaniṣka, and a reservoir. The well is the pious donation of Hiperecaa, together with his wife Vasativacā (and) together with his son Leaka-Satyaloka, for the benefit of his parents. The reservoir is the donation of Saṅghamitra.

⁴⁴⁸ Skt *āvasatha* means dwelling place or abode for pupils and ascetics, but the meaning of *posthikā* is uncertain and left untranslated by Agrawala (1943: 65-6). The reading for *posthikā* is not entirely clear because the right corner of the pedestal is worn away. The *o* vowel diacritic is clear but the *p* could be a *ṣa* or a *ha*. The next *akṣara* is almost completely missing except for what resembles an *ī* or *o* diacritic above the letter. For the *kā*, only the head is legible and the long *ā* vowel is uncertain.

⁴⁴⁹ Falk 2009b: 26-7, 2.2.

166) Sui Vihār copper plate [CGI 147]: Sui Vihār (near Bahāwalpur, Punjab Pakistan); Year (1)11; object: copper plate; type: Buddhist, donor: Buddhist (monastic); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. maharajasya rajatirajasya devaputrasya kan[i]ṣkasya saṃva[t]sare ekadaśe saṃ 10 1
daśikasya masas[y]a divase aṭhaviśe di 20 4 4
2. [aya]tra divase bhikṣusya nagadatasya dha[rma]kathisya acarya damatrata-śiṣyasya acarya
bhava-praśiṣyasya yaṭhiṃ aropayata iha Da[ma]ne
3. viharasvamiṇi upasika [ba]lanamdi [kuṭuṃ]bini balajaya mata ca imam yaṭhipratīṭhanam
ṭhapa[i]cam anu parivaram dadarim sarvasatvanam
4. hitasukhaya bhavatu

*Translation:*⁴⁵⁰

In the eleventh year -11- of the Great King, the King of Kings, the Devaputra Kaniṣka II, on the twenty-eighth -28- day of the month Daisios – on this day – when the monk Nagadata, the Dharma-preacher, the pupil of the teacher Damatrata (and) the pupil’s pupil of the teacher Bhava raised the staff here in Damana, the Lady of the vihāra, the lay-follower Balānandī and (her) mother, the matron, the wife of Bala (or Balajayā), in addition to this foundation of the staff, subsequently give the enclosure. May it be for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

Year (1)12 (1)

167) Seated Jina [Shr. #38]: Ahichchhatra (Ram Nagar, Uttar Pradesh); Year (1)12; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃ 10 2 va 4 di 10 1 eta[s]ya purvvāyāṃ koṭṭiyāto ganato ba[ma]d.s.yāto⁴⁵³ kulāto u[ce]-
2. nagarito [śākhā]to gaṇi[sya] a[ry]ya pu[śila]ye⁴⁵⁴ śiśini deva[pala]ti hārinān[dasya] bhaginiye
[ni]va-
3. [r]tana sāvikānām va[r]ddhamānām⁴⁵⁵ jina[dā]si rudradeva-dāṭṭaś[ā]lā⁴⁵⁶ rudradeva-sāmini
r[u]d(ra)[d.] + + + ? dāt[t]ā griham[i]trā ru[d]ra ///
4. [ku]mārāśiri vama[dā]si [ha]ti[s]enā grahaśiri rud[r]adātā jaya[d]ā[s]i mit[r]āśiri

⁴⁵⁰ Konow 1929: 141.

⁴⁵³ Based on the lists of other Jain lineages this reading is certain. The heads of the *dā* and *sa* are missing but they can be safely reconstructed as *dāsi*.

⁴⁵⁴ Banerji (1909-10: 110-1) reads *puśilasya*; the *śila* is unclear but the *ye* is visible.

⁴⁵⁵ Banerji (1909-10: 110-1) reads *sāvikānām vaddha[ki]ninaṃ* and translates “the lay-hearers [who belong to the caste] of carpenters,” apparently derived from Skt *śrāvākānām vaḍḍhakinānaṃ*. For *vaḍḍhakinō* he cites *vaḍḍhakinō* found in a Sāñcī inscription that means carpenter and relates this to the modern Hindi word *vaḍḍhahā* of the same meaning. The term *vardhamāna* also occurs in the London Buddha [39] to designate “the area of the Mahākṣatrapa” (Falk 2002-3: 38). I have applied the same meaning of *vardhamāna* in this inscription, and interpreted it to mean “in the areas of the female followers,” retaining the genitive plural ending. The notion that this image was donated in the area, or property of, a group of Jain females (*śrāvikas*) seems likely because most of the donor’s names have a feminine *i* or *ā* ending. A *śrāvakā* named Dinā donated a standing Jina in year forty-nine [72], indicating that lay Jains used this designation.

⁴⁵⁶ The *la* is clear but the vowel diacritic on the *śa* is obscured by a notch in the stone.

Translation:

In year 12, rainy month 4, day 11 – on this occasion – (this is the gift) in the areas of the female disciples: Jinadāsi, Rudradeva-dāttaśālā, Rudradeva-sāmini, Rudra(*deva)...*x*-dātta Grihamitrā, Rudra... Kumārāśiri, Vamadāsi, Hatisenā, Grahaśiri, Rudradātā, Jayadāsi, Mitraśiri; at the request of the sister of Hārinandi, Devapalati the female pupil of the *gaṇin* Puśila (who is) from the Koṭṭiya *gaṇa*, the Brahmādāsika *kula* and the Uchenagari *śākhā*.

Year (1)14 (1)

168) Standing Buddha [Lüders §81]: Mathurā (Mohalla); Year (1)14; object: stone image; type: Buddhist, donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. mahārāja-devaputrasya kaṇiṣkasya saṃvatsare 10 4 pauṣamāse divase 10 asmiṃ divase pravarika hā[s]th(is)y(a)
2. bharyyā saṃghilā bhagavāto pitāmahāsya saṃmyasaṃbuddhasya svamatasya devasya pūjārtham pratimaṃ pratiṣṭhā-
3. payati sarvvādukkhaphānārtham

Translation:

In the year 14, month of Pauṣa, day 10 of the Great King, the Devaputra Kaṇiṣka II – on this day – Saṃghilā, the wife of the cloak maker Hāsthi installs the image for the veneration of the Lord, the Pitāmaha,⁴⁵⁷ the perfectly enlightened one, the god who holds his own tenets, for the cessation of all suffering.

Year (1)15 (1)

169) Four-sided Jina [Shr. #41]: Mathurā (Kaṅkalī Ṭilā); Year (1)15; object: stone image; type: Jain, donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. (a) sa[m] 10 5 gr 3 di 1 asyā pū[r]vvaya[m] (b) [me]hikāto kulāto aryaya jayabhuti- (c) sya śiśinam aryaya saṅgamikay[e] śiśini (d) aryaya vasulay[e] nirvva[r]ttanam ///
2. (a) -lasya dhī[tu] ? .i + + [va]dhu veni (b) [ga]-śreṣ[th]is[ya]⁴⁵⁸ dharmapat[n]iye bhaṭṭisenasya (c) mat[u] kumaramitay[e] dana[m] bhagavato [prat]ji (d) ma savvatobhadrika

Translation:

Year 15, summer month 3, day 1 – on this occasion – (this is) the gift, a four-sided image of the Lord, of Kumaramitā, the mother of Bhaṭṭisena, the primary wife of the merchant Veniga, the daughter-in-law of *x*, the daughter of *x*-la; at the request of the Ārya Vasulā, the pupil of the Ārya Saṅghamikā, both (who are) pupils of the Ārya Jayabhuti (who is) from the [Me]hikā *kula*.

⁴⁵⁷ This epithet of the Buddha occurs in an inscribed standing Buddha dated to Vāsudeva I's ninety-third year [147]. As noted, the use of this relatively uncommon term for the Buddha appearing close together in the epigraphic record (twenty-one years) is another indicator that there was a second Kuṣāṇa century.

⁴⁵⁸ Neither Bühler (1892a: 382) nor van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 242) account for the *akṣara* at the beginning of the line before *śreṣ[th]isya*. This appears to be *ga*, and is the last syllable in the name *veni*.

- C. (1) /// vasajayasya [mā]tu māsigiye dānaṃ sarvvat[o]bhad[r.] ///
(2) /// [sa]rvasavānaṃ sukhāyaṃ bhavatu

Translation:

In year 18, summer month 4, day 3 – on this occasion – (this is) the gift, a four-sided image, of Māsigi (mother of) Vasajaya... (at the request) of *x*... the *gaṇin* from the Koṭṭiya *gaṇa*, the *x* *saṃbhoga*, the Vacchaliya *kula*

173) Standing Jina [Shr. #47]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); year (1)18; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. ṣa 10 8 va 2 di 10 1 e ///
2. dhitu mitaśiriye bhagavato ariṣṭāṇemisyā nivarta[ṇa]⁴⁶¹ ? ///

Translation:

Year 18, rainy month 4, day 11... (at the request) of the lord Ariṣṭāṇemi (the gift of) Mitaśiri, the daughter of *x*...

174) Manikyala Inscription [CGI 149]: Manikyala (Rawalpindi district, Punjab Pakistan); Year (1)18; object: stone reliquary; type: Buddhist; donor: Imperial; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 10 4 4 [kartiyasa maze divase 20] e[tra] purvae maharajasa kaṇe-
2. ṣkasa guṣaṇa-vaśa-saṃvardhaka lala
3. daḍaṇayago veśpaśisa kṣatrapasa
4. horamurt[o] sa tasa apanage vihare
5. horamurto etra ṇaṇa-bhagava-budhaz[a]va
6. p[r]atistavayati saha tae[na] veśpaśieṇa khudacie[na]
7. buriteṇa ca vihara-kara[vha]eṇa
8. sa[m]veṇa ca parivareṇa sadha eteṇa ku-
9. śalamulena budhehi ca ṣa[va]ehi [ca]
10. samaṃ sada bhavatu
11. bhratara svarabudhisa agrapa[ḍi]aśae
12. sadha Budhileṇa navakarmigeṇa

*Translation:*⁴⁶²

Year 18, in the month of Kārttika, on day 20 – on this first (lunar day) – of the Great King Kaniṣka II, Lala, increaser of the Kuṣaṇa line, judge, donation master of the governor Veśpaśi – he is the donation master in his personal monastery – installs here several relics of the Lord, the Buddha, together with the group of three Veśpaśia, Khudacia, and Burita, the builder of the monastery, and together with (his) whole retinue. Through this root of good as well as through

⁴⁶¹ Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 268) suggests reconstructing *nivartana*.

⁴⁶² Baums 2012: 240-1.

the buddhas and disciples may it always be for the best share of (his) brother Svarabudhi.
Together with Budhila, the superintendent of construction.

Year (1)19 (1)

175) Four-sided Jina [Shr. #48]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year (1)19; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁴⁶³

(A1) siddham | sa[m] 10 9 va 4 di 10 asya pu- (A2) rvv[ā]ya vācakasya aryya bala (A3) dinasya śiṣyo v[ā]cako aryya ma (A4) ṛdinaḥ tasya nirvvarttanā
(B1) koṭṭiya [gaṇāto ṭha]ṇiyāto (B2) kulā[to śriḡhāto saṃbho]g[ā]to (B3) a[ryyaveri] śākhāto suci[h] (C) [la]sya dharmmapatniye le /// (D) dānaṃ bhagavato sa[nti] ? ? pratimā (A5) nāśa ? + + ? [tanam] (B6) [rā] namo arattatānaṃ savvalokutta(*mānaṃ)

Translation:

Success. In year 19, rainy month 4, day 10 – on this occasion – the gift, an image of the lord Santi(?), of Le-x, the primary wife of Suchiḥla; at the request of him the preacher Ārya Matr̥dina, the pupil of the preacher Ārya Baladina (who is) from the Koṭṭiya *gaṇa*, the Ṭhaṇiya *kula*, the Śriḡrha *saṃbhoga*, and the Aryyaveri *śākha*... *nāśa* ? + + ? *tanam*... Praise to the Arhats, the highest in the whole world.

Year (1)20 (3)

176) Standing Jina [Shr. #49]: Mathurā(?); Year (1)20; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: (monastic/lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A. siddha sa 20⁴⁶⁴ gr[i]mā 1 di 10 5 koṭṭiyāto gaṇāto ṭhaṇiyāto kulato verito śakhato śirikāto

B.

1. (*sam)[bho]gato⁴⁶⁵ vācakasya aryya saṅghasihasya nirvvarttanā dātilasya ? + ? ? + ? mati
2. lasya k[u]ṭh[u]biṇiye jayavālasya devadāsīsyā nāḡadīnasya ca nāḡadīnaya ca mātu

C.

1. śravikāye di-
2. nāye dānaṃ
3. varddhamānaṃ pra
4. timā –

⁴⁶³ The text is written on four sides of the pedestal and I have rearranged these lines into a more coherent text. The first four lines of side A provide the date and the name of the Jina monks who requested the image. Side B cites the lineage of this Jain monk and identifies the donor. Lines C, D, A5 and B6 are single lines of text that seem to be written on the narrow rim on the pedestal base. Significant portions of this bottom line are missing making a clear reading for the last section of the inscription difficult, most notably the name of the donor given between line C and D.

⁴⁶⁴ The numeral appears to have worn away and Bühler (1892b: 395) cites Cunningham's eye copy for the reading of 20.

⁴⁶⁵ Neither van Lohuizen-de Leeuw (1949: 271) or Bühler (1982b: 395) transcribed *bho*, but the head with the *o* vowel diacritic and right arm of the *bho* are visible. The reconstruction of (*sam)[bho]gato is quite certain based on corresponding Jain lineages.

Translation:

Success! year 20, summer month 1, day 15 – (this is) the gift, an image of Vardhamāna, of the śravikā Dinā, the mother of Jayavāla, Devadāsi, Nāgadina, and Nāgadinā, the wife of x-matila... x of Dātīla; at the request of the preacher Saṅghasiha from the Koṭṭiya gaṇan, Ṭhaniya kula, veri śākhā, and the śirika saṃbhoga.

177) Standing Jina [Shr. #50]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Ṭīlā); Year (1)20; object: stone image; type: Jain, donor: Jain (monastic/professional); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A.

1. [siddham sa 20 gr 3]⁴⁶⁶ di 10 7 etasya pūrvvūya koṭṭiyato gaṇāto brahmadāsiyāto kulāto ucce[nāgarito śā]khāto [śri]grhāto saṃbhogāto braha[m]ta-vācaka ca gaṇina ca [saṅgha]mitrasya⁴⁶⁷

2. aryya [o]ghasya śiṣ[y]a gaṇisyā aryya pālasya śradecaro⁴⁶⁸ v[ā]cakas[ya] aryya dat[ta]sya śiṣyo v[ā]cako aryya sīhā[ta]sya nirvarttāna⁴⁶⁹ [khoṭṭa]mittasya mānikarasya [śrī]jaya[bhaṭṭi] dhitu dā ? sya]

B.

1. lohavāṇiyasya vadhara[dā]ye vadhu hāggadevasya dharmmapatiye mitrasiriye (*dānam) + + + sarvvasatvanām hitasukhāya [kākasi] ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ///

2. vajatala ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ///

Translation:

Success! Year 20, summer month 3, day 17 – on this occasion – this gift of Mitrasiri, the primary wife of Haggadeva, the daughter-in-law of the iron merchant Vadharada, the daughter of jeweler Śri-jayabhāti (and) [Khotta]mitta; at the request of the preacher Ārya Sīhāta, the pupil of the preacher Ārya Datta, the companion of the gaṇin Ārya Pāla, the pupil of Ārya Ogha and the honorable preacher and gaṇin Saṅghamitra (who is) from the Koṭṭiya gaṇa, Brahmadāsika kula, the Uccenāgara śākhā, and the Śrigṛha saṃbhoga.

178) Kurram casket inscription [CGI 153]: Kurram Valley, FATA, Pakistan; Year (1)20; object: copper reliquary; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. (A) [saṃ 20 masa]sa avadunakasa di 20 is[e] kṣunaṃmi (B)śvedavarma yaśaputra tanu[v]akaṃmi raṃṇaṃmi (C)(*navaviha)raṃmi acaryana sarvastivadana pari(D)[grahaṃ]mi thubaṃmi bhagavatasa śakyamunisa

⁴⁶⁶ Bühler (1892a: 383) states the reading of the date is not certain but the numeral twenty seems clear.

⁴⁶⁷ The first two akṣaras are very faint in the rubbing. Bühler (1892a: 383) reads jāmitra, which does not appear to be a typical name found in Jain donations. I tentatively suggest [saṅgh]amitra. The initial sa appears correct and the next akṣara looks like a consonant conjunct with na as the first grapheme and the line extending down I interpret as a faded gha.

⁴⁶⁸ Bühler (1892a: 383) reads this as śra[dhaca]ro, but in the other examples of this word it is spelled saḍhaccara [153 and 157]. In this case, the palatal sibilant has been retained but the aspiration has been dropped.

⁴⁶⁹ There is a long ā vowel on the rttā but not on the na.

2. (A) śarira pradīḥavedi yatha uta bhagavada (B) avijapracaga saṃkara[m] saṃkarapracaga viñāna (C) [vi]ñānapracaga namaruva namaruvapracaga ṣaḍa[ya](D)dana ṣaḍayadanapracaga phaṣa [ph]aṣapracaga
3. (A) vedana vedanapracaga taṣa taṣapracaga uvadana (B)uvadanapracaga bhava bhavapracaga jadi jadipraca[ga] (C)jaramaranaśogaparidevadukhadormanastāivagasa (D) [evam asa] kevalasa dukhaḥaṃdhasa saṃmudae bhavadi
4. (D) sarvasatvana puyae aya ca praticasaṃmupate (A) likhida Mahiphatiena sarvasatvana puyae

*Translation:*⁴⁷⁰

Year 20, month of Audunaios, day 20 – at this moment– Śveḍavarma, the son of Yaśa, installs in (his) personal monastery the New Monastery, in the possession of the Sarvāstivāda teachers, in a stūpa, relics of the Lord, the Śākya sage. As has been said by the Lord: Under the condition of ignorance there is determination; under the condition of determination there is consciousness; under the condition of consciousness there is name and form; under the condition of name and form there are six (sense) spheres; under the condition of the six (sense) spheres there is contact; under the condition of contact there is feeling; under the condition of feeling there is craving; under the condition of craving there is assuming; under the condition of assuming there is existence; under the condition of existence there is birth; under the condition of birth there is aging, death, grief, lamentation, suffering, distress, and trouble. This is the origin of the whole mass of suffering. In honor of all beings. And this dependent arising has been written by Mahiphatia in honor of all beings.

Year (1)22 (3)

179) Seated Jina [Shr. #54]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year (1)22; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain (monastic/professional); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sarttavāhiniye dharmmasomāye dānaṃ [:] namo arahattā[naṃ]
2. siddhaṃ | sava 20 2 gri 1 di + [a]sya purvvāyaṃ vācakasya ayya matridinasya ni
///(*rvartanā)

Translation:

Success! Year 22, summer month 1, day (?) – on this occasion – the gift of Dharmasomā, the wife of the caravan merchant; at the request of the preacher, the noble Matridina. Praise to the Arhats.

180) Vardhamāna Jina [Shr. #55]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year (1)22; object: stone image: type: Jain; donor: Jain (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddhaṃ sa[m] 20 2 gri 2 di 7 vardhamānasya pratimā vāruṇāto gaṇāto petivāmika ///

⁴⁷⁰ Baums 2012: 241-2.

Translation:

Success! Year 22, summer month 2, day 7 – the image of Vardhamāna, from the Vāruṇa *gaṇa*, the Petivāmika *kula*

181) Seated Buddha [Lüders §74]: Mathurā; Year (1)22; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. ˘ siddham sa 20 2 gr 2 di 30 a[syām] pūrvvāyaṃ prāvārika vihār[e] buddha [pra]timā
pra[ti]ṣṭāpitam
2. +++ sya .i,m ś.+++++

Translation:

Success! In the year 22, in summer month 2, on day 30 – on this occasion – the image of the Buddha was installed in the Prāvārika (cloak makers) vihāra by ...

3.2. Inscriptions Composed in the Reign of Vāsiṣka [182-188].

YEAR (1)22 (1)

182) Standing Buddha [Shr. #58]:⁴⁷¹ Sāñcī (Madhya Pradesh, India); Year (1)22; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

⁴⁷¹ Falk (2015b: 127, §118) argues that the Kuṣāṇa king named in this inscription, Vaskuṣāṇa, is not Vāsiṣka but rather an independent ruler who had a very short reign. To support his position, Falk cites gold coins with the Greek legend $\text{PAONANO PAO BAZOKOPANO KOPAN}$, which on stylistic grounds belong to a period after Kaniṣka III, and therefore would be the coins of Vaskuṣāṇa's descendent Vaskuṣāṇa II.

Inscriptions associated with Kaniṣka II go up to year (one hundred) twenty-two, but these three are Jain images and dating formulas do not contain the name of the ruler, so it is possible that the Vaskuṣāṇa could have assumed power by year (one hundred) twenty-two. The latest date for Kaniṣka II is the Manikyala inscription dated to year eighteen, leaving a possible six-year gap between this date and the year (one hundred) twenty-four when the sacrificial pillar bearing Vāsiṣka's name was composed. However, the single piece of epigraphic evidence and limited numismatic evidence for only Vaskuṣāṇa II's casts doubt on whether Vaskuṣāṇa I ruled between Kaniṣka II and Vāsiṣka. The fact that this inscription was found at Sāñcī, and not the Kuṣāṇa heartland of Mathurā, might indicate that if Vaskuṣāṇa did rise to a prominent position then perhaps he was a regional Kuṣāṇa ruler, and this might explain why he did not mint coins, unlike his son.

Although there is no evidence to dispute Falk's argument, and the reading of the ruler's name in this text is certainly not Vāsiṣka, I hesitate to start fragmenting the Kuṣāṇa dynastic chronology. Until further evidence surfaces, I will preserve the association of this text with Vāsiṣka on the assumption that this inscription represents an orthographic variant of the name Vāsiṣka. As has been seen in inscriptions that refer to Kujula Kadphises, Vima Takto, and the metathesis of *kṣa* for *ṣka* in names of Kaniṣka I and Huviṣka the names of Kuṣāṇa rulers are sometimes misspelled. If whoever composed this inscription in Sāñcī was aware of a recently conferred Kuṣāṇa ruler named Vāsiṣka, it does not seem out the realm of possibility that he could have conflated the beginning of the ruler's name, Vās, with his dynastic affiliation, Kuṣāṇa, to produce Vaskuṣāṇa.

Text:

1. (*si)[ddham]⁴⁷² rajño vaskuṣāṇasya sa 20 2 va 2 di 10 bhagavato śakkyam[une]ḥ prat[i]mām pratiṣṭāpitaṃ vidyamatīye pa ? ///
2. ? matāpitṛnaṃ sarvvasattana[m] ca hitas[u]///(*khārthaṃ)

Translation:

Success! In year 22, rainy month 2, day 10 of the King Vaskuṣāṇa, the image of the Lord Śākyaṃuni was installed by Vidyamatī *pa...* (For the welfare) and happiness of (her) parents and all beings.

YEAR (1)24 (1)

183) Sacrificial Post [Lüders §94]: Mathurā (Īsāpur); Year (1)24; object: stone pillar; type: Indic; donor: Indic; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddham || mahārājasya rajātirājasya devapu-
2. trasya ṣāher=vvāsiṣka rājyasamvatsare [ca]-
3. turvi[m]śe 20 4 gṛṣmāmāse caturtha 4 diva[se]
4. triṃśe 30⁴⁷³ asyām purvvāyām rudrilaputtreṇa droṇa-
5. lena brāhmaṇeṇa bhāradvā[ja]sagottreṇā mā-
6. [ṇa]cchandogeṇa iṣ[ṭv]ā sattreṇa dvādaśarattreṇa
7. yupāḥ pratiṣṭhāpitaḥ priyantām=agnay.

Translation:

Success! In the twenty-fourth - 24 - regnal year, the fourth - 4 - summer month, the thirtieth - 30 - day of the Great King, the Devaputra, the Ṣāhi Vāsiṣka – on this occasion – (this) sacrificial pillar was installed by the son of Rudrila, the Brāhmaṇa Droṇala of the Bhāradvāja gotra (and) a Māṇacchandoga (?), having performed a sacrifice lasting twelve days. May the (three) Fires be pleased.

YEAR (1)25 (1)

184) Jina Image [Shr. #60]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Ṭīlā); Year (1)25; object: stone image; type: Jain, donor: Jain (monastic/imperial); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A. –⁴⁷⁴ sa<va>tsare⁴⁷⁵ pa<ñ>
cavi[śe]⁴⁷⁶ hematamas[e] tr[i]tiye divase maś[e] asmye⁴⁷⁷ kśune

⁴⁷² There are a few strokes on the left margin of the rubbing that resemble the right half of *ddha*, and from this I have reconstructed the typical initial word, *siddham*.

⁴⁷³ The dating formula using both cardinal and ordinal numbers is indicative of inscriptions from the second century of the Kuṣāṇa era.

⁴⁷⁴ The short horizontal stroke represents *siddham*.

⁴⁷⁵ The *va* is written below the line between the *sa* and the *tsa*, resembling the ligature *sva*.

⁴⁷⁶ The *ñ* is written below the line between *pa* and *ca*, like the *va* in *sa(va)tsare*.

⁴⁷⁷ It appears the scribe wrote both the subscripts *ma* and *ya*.

B.

1. kottiyato ganato bra[hma]dās[i]kato kul[ā]to uc[e]nāgarito śākhato a[r]ya balatratasya śiṣo sadhi-

2. + + + + + + + + + + sya śiṣini graha[ni] + + [n]ivatana nādisya dhiti[u] jabhakasya vadhu jayabhāṭṭasya kuṃṭubiniya rayaginiye vasuya (*dānaṃ)

Translation:

Year twenty-five, third winter month, day twenty *maśe* – at this moment – (this is the gift) of Rajagini Vasu, the wife of Jayabhaṭṭa, the daughter-in-law of Jabhaka, the daughter of Nādin; (at the request of) Grahni-*x*, the female pupil of *x*... the companion, the pupil of the Ārya Balatrata (who is from) the Kottīya *gaṇa*, the Brahmadāsika *kula*, the Ucenāgari *śākha*.

YEAR (1)26 (1)

185) Stone Slab [Lüders §27]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); Year (1)26; object; stone slab; type: Nāga, donor: Nāga; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddham [sa 20 6 va 3] d[i] 5 etasya pūr[vvayaṃ]
2. bhagavat[o] nāg[en]dr[a]sya dadh[i]karṇṇasya stā-
3. ne śilapatto pratiṣṭhāpito māthurā[ṇ]aṃ
4. śailālakānaṃ c[ā]ndaka bhrātṛkā iti v[i]jñ[ā]-
5. yamānānaṃ teṣaṃ putrehi nandibalapra-
6. mukhehi dārakehi mātāpitṛṇaṃ agra-
7. pratyaśatāye⁴⁷⁸ bhavatu sarvvasatvānaṃ hita
8. sukḥā[rthaṃ] bhavatu

Translation:

Success! In the year 26, rainy month 3, day 5 – on this occasion – the stone slab was installed at the shrine of the holy lord of the Nāgas Dadhikarṇṇa by the boys headed by Nandibala, known as the Cāndaka brothers, who were the sons of the of the actors of Mathurā. May it be for the sharing of the principle lot by their parents. May it be for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

YEAR (1)28 (2)

186) A Buddha image [Willis 1999-2000: 270]: Sāñcī⁴⁷⁹ (Madhya Pradesh, India), Year (1)28; object: stone image; type: Buddhist, donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

⁴⁷⁸ This phrase is also found in a recently discovered inscription on a seated Śākyamuni image dated to year ninety-four [148].

⁴⁷⁹ This inscription found at Sāñcī suggests that the donors in the area were familiar with Vāsiṣka by at least his fourth year, based on the confirmed date in the sacrificial pillar. Moreover, this inscription and the Vaskuṣāṇa inscription are the only two Kuṣāṇa inscribed objects found in this region, suggesting that the name of the Kuṣāṇa king in both texts was meant to be Vāsiṣka.

Text:

1. (*mahārāja)///sya r[ā]jāt[i]rājasya (deva)putrasya ṣ[ā]h[i] vās(i)ṣkasya saṃ 20 (+) 8 hā 1 [di 5] (e)tasyā[m] purvv(āyām) bhagava(to)
2. (*śākyamuni)///sya jambuchāyāśailagr[ho] śrīdharmadevavihāre pratiṣṭāpito kharasya dhitare madhurik(āye |)
3. (*ane)///na deyadharmapāri(tyāgena) ///

Translation:

In year 28, winter month 1, day 5 of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra, Śāhi Vāsiṣka – at this occasion – a stone shrine for the Jambuchāyā (story) of Bhagavata Śākyamuni in the Śrī Dharmadeva vihāra was installed by Madhurikā, the daughter of Khara. Through the bestowal of this pious gift ...

187) Seated Buddha [Lüders §28]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mounds); Year (1)28; object: stone image; type: Buddhist, donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// (*vā)[s](i)ṣkasya rājya-saṃvatsar[e] 20 8 hemanta 3 d[i] ... ///

Translation:

In regnal year 28, winter month 3, day *x* of Vāsiṣka ///

YEAR (1)30 (1)

188) Gandhāra well [CGI 230]: Kamra (near Campellpore, Punjab, Pakistan); Year (1)30; object: stone slab; type: Architectural, donor: uncertain; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. (saṃ) [20]-10 katiāsa masasa tivasa trotaṣe 10-3 maharajasa rajatirajasa ma[ha](tasa)
2. tratarasa jayatasa detriatasa svayabalasa⁴⁸⁰ maharajasa śpala-sakari[ta](sa dhra-)
3. mathidasa devaputrasa vazeṣkasa guṣanasa debamanuśasa(m)p(r)aḍi +++++
4. [jati] [kaṇi]ṣkasa iśa kṣ(u)ṇami [kaśaṇadami++mi]+///

*Translation:*⁴⁸¹

In year 30, in the month Kārttika, on day 13, of the Great King, King of Kings, the Great Savior, the Victorious, the detria?, the Self..., he who is his own army, who is honored by the army of the Great King, the Righteous, the Devaputra Vāsiṣka, the Kuṣāṇa, (of him who is honored? by) gods and men..., of Kaniṣka, at this date, at Kaśaṇada, at...

⁴⁸⁰ For an explanation of this term, see Salomon 1999b: 5-6.

⁴⁸¹ Falk 2009b: 27-8, 2.3.

3.3. Inscription Composed in the Reign of Kaniška III [189].

YEAR (1)41 (1)

189) Gandhāran well [CGI 158]: Āra (near Bagh Neelab, Attock District, Punjab, Pakistan); Year (1)41; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. maharajasa rajatirajasa devaputrasa kāisarasa
2. vazeṣkaputrasa kaniškasa sambatśarae ekacapari-
3. śae saṃ 20 20 1 jeṭhasa masasa di 20 4 1 iśa divasakṣuṇami khade
4. kupe sama[davha]reṇa toṣapuriaputr(*e)ṇa matarapitraṇa puyae
5. atmaṇasa sabharyasa saputrasa aṇugrahartae sarvasapaṇa puyae
6. jatiṣu hitae dhama ca likhito m[aya] ///

*Translation:*⁴⁸²

(During the reign) of the Great King, King of Kings, the Devaputra, Kaisara Kaniška III, the son of Vāsiška, in the forty-first year – year 41, on the 25th day of the month of Jyaiṣṭha, at this date this well was dug by Samadavhara (?), of the Toṣapuriya scions, in honor of his mother and father, for the benefit of himself with his wife and son, for the welfare of all beings... (of all sorts?). And this dharma has been written (by me?)

⁴⁸² Falk 2009b: 28, 2.4.

4. Unnamed and/or Undated Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions [190-293].

The inscriptions in this section are either dated in the Kuṣāṇa era but the name of the ruler is missing, both the dates and the names are missing, or the dating era is uncertain. The first category of dated but unnamed inscriptions contains eighteen objects; twelve in Gāndhārī and six in EHS. Five of the EHS inscriptions are composed on Jain objects that display features consistent with the second Kuṣāṇa century, namely the forward-facing lions on the pedestal. These range in dates from year thirty-one to thirty-five, but since the last known year for Vāsiṣka is (one hundred) thirty and the only known year of Kaniṣka III is (one hundred) forty-one there is no way determine in whose reign these objects were donated. If they are from the first Kuṣāṇa century the dates would correspond with Huviṣka's rule. The sixth EHS inscription is a seated Buddha donated in year thirty-six by the King Yasaga, who is not known from any other epigraphic or numismatic evidence. If he ruled in the first century then he would overlap with Huviṣka, perhaps emerging in the early years of Huviṣka's rule when there was some disruption as reflected in the debasement of Huviṣka's coinage. If Yasaga ruled in the second Kuṣāṇa century then he would be placed sometime between the reigns of Vāsiṣka and Kaniṣka III. The Gāndhārī and EHS inscriptions are listed in chronological order, but again the dates could be in either the first or second Kuṣāṇa century.

The second category are unnamed and undated inscriptions and based on their paleographic and stylistic features or their find spots that are associated with the Kuṣāṇa period. There are eighty-six unnamed and undated inscriptions and all but one is composed in EHS, with a single inscription composed in Gāndhārī. These have been organized by descending chronological order based on the date when they were published and then followed by the

unnamed and undated inscriptions cited in Lüders' *Mathurā Inscriptions*. The majority of these inscriptions are from Lüders.

The last category, “Yavana and Uncertain Era,” consists of ten inscriptions presumably composed in the Kuṣāṇa period but are dated using the Yavana era, which most likely started in 175/4 BCE, or an era that appears to be the Kuṣāṇa era but is not certain. I have included these inscriptions in the corpus mainly for reference purposes, but because they do not contain the names of the Kuṣāṇa rulers they have not been included in the overall total of Kuṣāṇa inscriptions.

4.1. Dated but Unnamed Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions [190-207].

190) Senior Collection Pot [CGI 245]: provenance unknown; Year 12 or (1)12; object: clay pot; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (lay); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

[on the pot]

1. [sa]ba[tsa]ra [ba](**ḍa*)[śa](**mi*) ma[se] a[vadu]nake sa[ste]hi (**paca*)hi i[śa] (**kṣuṇa*)mi
[prati]tha[vi](**da*) [matra]pi[trap][uya]e sarva[śatva]na [p]u(**ya*)[e]

2. r(**o*)haṇasa maṣumatraputrasa

[on the lid]

3. [sa]batsara 10 [2] maṣ[u] a[vadu] saste 4 1 ? ? ? ? rohaṇeṇa maṣumatraputreṇa thu[ba]m[i]
sava[śatva]ṇa pu(**ya*)

*Translation:*⁴⁸³

[on the pot]: In the year (twelve), in the month of Avadunaka, after (**five*) days – at this moment – (this) was established in honor of (his) father and mother, in honor of all beings; (donation) of Rohaṇa, son of Maṣumatra

[on the lid]: Year 12, month of Avadu(naka), after 5 days, (**established?*) by Rohaṇa, son of Maṣumatra, in the stūpa, in honor of all beings.

191) Gandhāran Well [CGI 832]: provenance unknown; Year 16 or (1)16; object: stone; type; Architectural; donor: Buddhist (?); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. sa 10 {{dī}} 4 11 aspaiṣa masasa tri 20 4 1 Bhadasa

2. tajamitraputrasa danamukhe Spovilakasa

⁴⁸³ Salomon 2003: 76.

*Translation:*⁴⁸⁴

Year 16, day 25 of month Aśvayuj; (this is) the pious donation of Bhadra, son of Tejamitra, from Spovila.

192) Mitravarma Reliquary [CGI 368]: Jalalabad, Nangarhar, Afghanistan; Year 20 or (1)20; object: stone; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

[outside of lid]: budhasa

[inside of lid]

1. sambatsara viṃśati 20
2. mase ulo saste 20 10 iśe kṣu-
3. ṇami pratiṭhavite bhagavada
4. dhaduśarira mitravarmasa
5. thubami tanuakami śpae

*Translation:*⁴⁸⁵

[outside of lid]: Of the Buddha.

[inside of lid]: [1] In the year twenty - 20 - [2] in the month of Oloios, after 30 days – at this [3] moment – [4] a relic of the Lord is established [5] in Mitravarma's personal, own stūpa.

193) Incense Burner [CGI 460]: Jalalabad, Nangarhar, Afghanistan; Year 24 or (1)24; object: brass; type: Buddhist; donor: unknown; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

saṃ 20 4 khsaṃdikas[a] di [2] thubaṃmi baūtaṇami acaryaṇa dharmagutakaṇa parigrahami

*Translation:*⁴⁸⁶

(Given in) year 24, day 2 (?) of Khsaṃdika (Xandikos) to the stūpa at Baūtaṇa, in the possession of the Dharmaguptaka teachers.

194) Saṃghamitra Reliquary [CGI 155]: Hadda, Nangarhar, Afghanistan; Year 28 or (1)28; object: pottery; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. sambatsarae aṭhaviṃśatihi 20 4 4 mase apelaē sasteḥi daśahi 10 iśa kṣunaṃmi pratisthapita śarira ramaraṃṇami thubami Saṃghamitreṇa navakarmi(*e)na
2. edena k(*u)śalamule(*na) eteṣa dharmana labhi bhavima y(*e)ṣa dharmaṇaṃ eta vo syet(*i) śarira sarvasatvana nirvanasaṃbharae bhavatu ramasa agripracaya

⁴⁸⁴ Falk 2009b: 33. Falk suggests that this well donation belongs in the first Kuṣāṇa century, 143 CE, but the name of Kaniṣka I is not stated. The well donation made in year eleven [165] has been attributed to Kaniṣka II based on the expansion of his titles, and it is possible this well was donated around this time, i.e. in the second Kuṣāṇa century.

⁴⁸⁵ Baums 2012: 242.

⁴⁸⁶ Salomon 2011: 168.

*Translation:*⁴⁸⁷

[1] In the twenty-eighth - 28 – year, in the month of Apellaios, after ten -10 - (days) – at the moment – relics are deposited in the Rama Monastery in a stūpa by Saṃghamitra, the superintendent of construction. [2] Through this root of good may we obtain those dharmas of which these your relics consist. May it be for the preparation for nirvana of all beings and the best share of Rama.

195) Squatting Jina [Shr. #72]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 31 or (1)31; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A. sa 30 1 vā 1 di 10 asma kṣune

B.

1. /// ?⁴⁸⁸ yāto ga[ṇa]to aryya-verito śākhato [ṭhā]nīyāto kulāto maha[to]⁴⁸⁹ | kuṭumbiniye graha
2. /// ? ? ? [arya go]dāsasya nivarttanam buddhisya dhitu devilasya | śiriye dānam⁴⁹⁰

Translation:

In the year 31, rainy month 1, day 10 – at this moment – the gift of Grahaśiri the wife of Devila, daughter of Buddhi; at the request of *mahata* Godāsa (who is from) the Koṭṭiya(?) *gaṇa*, the Aryya-Veri (Arya-Vajrī) *śākha*, and the (S)thaniya *kulā*.

196) Four-sided Jina [Shr. #74]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā); Year 32 or (1)32; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A.

1. siddham saṃvatsare 30 2 hemantamāse 4 divase 2 vāraṇāto gaṇā[to] + + + + yāto ku///

2. /// ///

B.

1. lato a[r]ya nandikasya nirvarttanā jitāmitr[ā]ya [ritu]nandisya⁴⁹¹ dhītu buddhisya kuṭumbiniye prā[ga]
2. rikasya⁴⁹² || nīnandisya mātu gandhikasya ārahanto pratimā sarvvatobhadrikā –

⁴⁸⁷ Baums 2012: 243.

⁴⁸⁸ Bühler (1894: 202) reconstructs (*koṭṭi) here, but the *akṣara* preceding the *yā* does not look like *ṭṭi* but rather the right half of a *ya* or *pa*, or it could be *ḷa*.

⁴⁸⁹ Bühler (1894: 202) reads *vaha[to]* and suggests this is *bṛhato*, but the *ma* is clear. In a Jain inscription dated to year twenty the epithet *braha[m]ta* is given to the Ārya Saṅghamitra [177].

⁴⁹⁰ Bühler (1894: 202) notes that in both lines there is a small vertical line that he thinks was meant for the donor's name to be read at the end of the text.

⁴⁹¹ I think the donor is Gandhika and both her parents, Jitāmitrā and Rītunandī, are mentioned. Bühler (1984: 203) interprets the donor as Jitāmitrā, the mother of the perfumer Nīnanda. However, in most Jain inscriptions the donor's name comes before the object donated.

⁴⁹² Bühler (1984: 203) suggests this term means ferryman, but I interpret it as a variant of *pravarika*, cloak maker, a profession that appears frequently in Kuṣāṇa inscriptions [168, 181, 228, 262, and 269].

Translation:

Success! Year 32, winter month 4, day 2 – the four-fold image of the arhats (a gift) of Gandhikā, mother of the cloak maker Nīnandī, wife of Buddhi, daughter of Jitāmitrā and Ritunandī; at the requested of the Ārya Nanika (who is from) the Vāraṇa gaṇa, the *x*-ya kula...

197) Seated Jina [Shr. #77]: Mathurā (Mohallā); Year 33 or (1)33; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sa 30 3 gr̥ 3 di 10 asma kṣune vācaka āryya nā/// (left side) śiṣa

Translation:

In year 33, summer month 3, day 10 – at this moment – the preacher Ārya nā... the pupil...

198) Seated Jina [Shr. #80]: Mathurā (Saptrarṣi); Year 35 or (1)35; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

siddham saṃ 30 5 va 3 di 10 asya purvvāyaṃ diyasa grahāto + + + to ku ///

Translation:

Success! Year 35, rainy month 3, day 10 – on this occasion – *diyasa grahāto* + + + to ku...

199) Seated Jina [Shr. #79]: Mathurā (Kaṅkālī Ṭilā); Year 35 or (1)35; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A1: [siddham] saṃ 30 [5] va 3 di 10 asya[am] pūrvvāyāṃ koṭṭiyāto gaṇato [sthāni]yāto kula(to)

B1: vairāto ś[ā]kha[ā]to śirikāto saṃ[bho]kāto ayya baladinasya śiṣini kumarami[ta]

B2: tasya p[u]tro kumārabhaṭi gahiko tasa[na]naṃ pratimā vadhamānasya sa[śita]makhita bo[dhita]

C. /// a[ryya] kumā[ra]mit[r]iye ///

D. (*ni)//rvv[ta]na ///

Translation:

Success! In year 5, rainy month 3, day 10 – on this occasion – the image of Vardhamāna sa[śita]makhita bo[dhita]a (is the gift of) Kumārabhaṭi, the (village-head?), the son of *x*-ta; at the request of the Ārya Kumā[ra]mitri... Kumarami[ta] the pupil of the Ārya Baladina (who is from) the Koṭṭiya gaṇa, the Sthāniyā kula, the Vaitāto śākhā, and the Śirikāto saṃbhoga.

200) Seated Buddha [Shr. #83]: Mathurā(?); Year 36 or (1)36; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

sa 30 6 he 2 di 10 rahj[i]n[o] yasagasa

Translation:

Year 36, winter month 2, day 10 – of King Yasaga ///

201) Spinwam Well [CGI 244]: Spinwam (North Waziristan, Pakistan); Year 39 or (1)39; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: Imperial; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 20 10 4 4 1 mase avadunami ṣa
2. [ste?] 1 1 1 atra divaṣe bhaṭarakaṣami
3. [yo?] kuṣaṇasa daḍaṇayadaṣa ana[ca?]-
4. pahakeṇa kṣatrapeṇa kuḍura
5. [khanavito sa]rvasatvaṇa pu-
6. (yae)

*Translation:*⁴⁹³

In the year 39, in month Audunaios, on day 3 – on this day – the well(?) was caused to be dug by the Kṣatrapa Anacaphaka, general of the Bhaṭṭāraka [Svāmi?] Kuṣāṇa. For the honor of all beings.

202) Swabi Well [CGI 830]: Swabi (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan); Year 40 or (1)40; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 20 20 proṭhavadaṣa maṣaṣa divaṣe paḍhame di 1 iṣa kṣuṇaṃ-
2. [mi] kue khade maṇavena khaevanaputreṇa madue
3. arogadaḁsine piṃdue puyae dhivadarpaṇa puyae

*Translation:*⁴⁹⁴

In the year 40, on the first day of month Proṣṭhapada – at this moment – a well was dug by Maṇava, son of Khaevana, for the bestowal of health on his mother, in honor of his father, in honor of the kindlers of light.

203) Shakardarra Well [CGI 156]: Shakardarra (Attock District, Punjab, Pakistan); Year 40 or (1)40; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: Professional; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 20 20 proṭhavadaṣa masasa divasa ///
2. viṣami di 20 atra tivasakale śal. ///
3. niḁame kuvo khadao tradevaḍaṇa sa-
4. harana daṇamukho

⁴⁹³ Falk 2009b: 29, 3.3.

⁴⁹⁴ Falk 2009b: 29-30, 3.4.

*Translation:*⁴⁹⁵

Year 40, on the twentieth day - day 20 - of the month Proṣṭhapada – on this day – this well was dig at Śal. (?) ... market-place as the gift of the Tradevaḍa business partners.

204) Budhapriya and companions' Reliquary [CGI 511]: Jalalabad, Nangarhar, Afghanistan; Year 44 or (1)44; object: pottery; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃvatsarae caducapariśadima 20 20 4
2. budhapriyasa iyo raṃṇo pradithavavido [i]gamiga budadevasa zaṃdasarasa viharisvamisagilasa bhatamuḍaya
3. budhavarma

*Translation:*⁴⁹⁶

[1] In the forty-fourth - 44 - year, [2] this monastery is established by Budhapriya and, individually, by Budadeva, Zadasara, the monastery master Sagila, Bhatamuḍaya, [3] and Buddhavarma

205) Buddha's Begging Bowl [CGI 367]: Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan; Year 51 or (1)51; object: stone bowl; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist (lay); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

saṃ 20 20 10 1 kartaasa masasa divasaṃmi 10 1 1 1 iṣe kṣuṇaṃmi saṃghe caūdiśami kridañakae puyakaviharami acaryaṇa kaśaviaṇa parigrahaṃmi vaīrasa daṇamukhe ṣaveasa uvajayasa arogadakṣiṇe sarva(*sa)tvāṇa puyae

*Translation:*⁴⁹⁷

In the year 51, day 13 in the month of Kārttika – at this moment – in the (Buddhist) order of the four quarters, at Kridañaka in the Puyaka Vihāra, for the acceptance of the Kāśyapīya teachers; (this is) the pious gift of Vaīra, for the reward of health of the monk Uvajaya, for the honor of all beings

206) Ohind Well [CGI 160]: Und (Swabi District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan); Year 61 or (1)61; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 20 20 20 1 cetrasa mahasa tivasa aṭhami ti 4 4 iśa kṣuṇami sa[vi]rana kha ///
2. ⟨pu⟩rvaeṣeḍe

*Translation:*⁴⁹⁸

Year 61, on the eighth day - day 8 - of the month Caitra – at this moment – was dug (the well) of the Saviras, in (i.e. beneath the *nakṣatra*) Pūrvāṣāḍha.

⁴⁹⁵ Falk 2009b: 30, 3.5.

⁴⁹⁶ Baums 2012: 243.

⁴⁹⁷ Falk 2005a: 448.

⁴⁹⁸ Falk 2009b: 30, 3.6.

207) Kham Zarkar Panel [CGI 557]: Kham Zarkar (near Begram); Year 74 or (1)74; object: stone panel; type: Buddhist(?); donor: Buddhist(?); Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. sevetsara catusatimi 20 20 20 10 4
2. dudha 1 zaṇatraṃ(mi) budhadevasa vīra daṇamukhe

*Translation:*⁴⁹⁹

In the year seventy-four - 74 - (in the month) of Du'zu, (on day) 1, at Zanatra, (this) Vīra (was) a pious donation of Buddhadeva.

4.2. Unnamed and Undated Kuṣāṇa Inscriptions [208-293].

208) Seated Bodhisattva [von Hinüber and Skilling 2016: 21]: Vadnagar (Gujarat); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (monastic); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. sa(stha)tīya bhikhuniye dāna bodhisattva sagaya cetiyakuṭīye
2. āce(r)yana mahāsagh(i)kana pariyaha

Translation:

Gift of a Bodhisattva by the nun from S(v)ā(ṃ)stha(ṃ)ta (?) for her own *cetiyakuṭi*, for the acquisition of the Mahāsāṃghika teachers.

209) Female Figure [Falk 2014: 15-7]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. + + + śiris[u?] + [nā] kāmuk[i?]-ibhā[ye] (pra)
2. [ti]mā pratiṣṭhāpitā priyatā bhagavā mahatr +

Translation:

[siddham?] This statue of a lustful 'elephant woman' was installed by Śrīs[u?] +. May... be pleased.

210) Seated Bodhisattva [Falk 2012: 504-5]: Mathurā(?); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. simdhukaputrasya śreṣṭh(i)sya hastikasya [vi]ta[sa]masya p(u)tro senakaḥ bodhisattva [pra]tiṣṭhāpāyati baḍabhāsare asane savabudhapujāye
2. sarvasatvana hita(sukhā)rtha matāpitṛnaṃ pujaya

⁴⁹⁹ Falk 2010a: 30-1.

3a: atra ca bodhisatvo [gram](e) [pra]tiṣṭh[it](o)
3b: senakenaḥ devaputra ca

Translation:

Senaka, who is the son of the guild leader (and) dealer in elephants [...]ma, hailing from Sindh, had this Bodhisattva installed at the Vaḍabhā-lake, at the seat. For the worship of all Buddhas. For the happiness and well being of all beings. For the worship of mother and father.

211) Seated Buddha [Falk 2010b: 5]: Mathurā(?); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor; Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddham mahā(ra)[ja-rājātirājasya deva] [putra] /// ///⁵⁰⁰ (sya) [pratimā p]ratiṣṭāpitā dharmmadeva-vihāre urāṇaphvar[da](ra)
2. (bhāgi)ṇ[ī]ye ari(ṣ)ṭikāye bhikṣuṃ dharmmadevaṃ kalyāṇamitraṃ dharmmasahāyaṃ punya + + ka?tva? imena deyadha(r)mmaparit(ā)gena ariṣṭikāye urāṇaphvardarasya dharmmadevasya ca dukhākṣaya
3. (bhava)t(u) sarvvasatvānāñca hitasukhārta -

Translation:

Success! (In the year ?) of the Great King, King of Kings, the Deva(putra)...this image (of...) was installed in the shrine of Dharmadeva by Ariṣṭikā, (the sister of) Urāṇaphvardara, after having made the monk Dharmadeva, the good friend, companion in dharma, (the receiver of) the religious gain. Through this full submission of a religious donation, may there be an end of suffering for Ariṣṭikā, Urāṇaphvardara and for Dharmadeva and the aim of wellbeing and happiness for all beings.

212) Peshawar Museum Well Inscription [CGI 154]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor; Indic; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. maha[raja]sa///
2. masasa di... iṣe kṣuṇaṃmi khaṇavide [kuve]
3. vasudeveṇa idradevaputreneṇā [bra]m[h]aṇeṇa
4. obha[ra]vastaveṇa daṇas[y]a avaptir astu

*Translation:*⁵⁰¹

Of the Mahārāja... on the... day of the month... – at this moment – this well was caused to be dug by the Brahman Vāsudeva, the son of Indradeva, a resident of Obhara. May there be obtainment of (the meritorious results of) the gift.

213) Seated Bodhisattva [von Hinüber 2008: 31]: Mathurā; undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

⁵⁰⁰ Falk (2010b: 5) notes about 34 letters are missing in this gap.

⁵⁰¹ Falk 2009b: 29, 3.2.

Text:

1. siddh(aṃ) dhamarakṣītaputrasya upāsakasya śirikasya sā(r)thavāhasya bohisatvaṃ pratisthāpit(o) deyadhamam sah(ā) mātāpitihi sah(ā) sa(r)vasa[tve]hi (bha + na) budhā
2. na āsane śaravanake sarvabudhapujāye mahās(ā)ghikāna bhikṣuṇaṃ jābuvaniyānaṃ praigah(e)

Translation:

Success! The bodhisattva of the son of Dharmarakṣita, the layman Śirika, the merchant (caravan leader), has been installed as a pious gift together with (his) parents together with all beings near the seat of the x(?) Buddhas of the Reed thicket to pay homage to all Buddhas for the acceptance of the Mahāsāṃghika monks of the Jambuvana.

214) Seated Jina [Shr. #163]: provenance unknown; undated⁵⁰²; object: stone; type: Jain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

- A.1. vardhamāna patimā vajaranadyasya dhitā vādhiśiva
- B.1. ṣemasya kuṭīmini dināya dāti bādimaśiye
2. + ka + ena na + rka ye + ta + ri ma

Translation:

This image of Vardhamāna (is the gift) of Dinā the wife of Vādhiṣivaṣema, the daughter-in-law of Vajarandya...

215) Seated Buddha Image [Sharma 1989: 312]: Mathurā(?); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [bha]ṭṭisenaputrasya bhaṭṭihastipotrasya bhaṭṭipriyasya hamārakāra kāyasthasya kuṭū[m]bīniye grahadīnasya dhītū yaśā[ye]
2. hastisya dattasya ca mātare bhagavato buddhasya śākyamunisya pratimā pratisthāpitā sarvvasatvānaṃ hitasukhārtham

*Translation:*⁵⁰³

An image of the Lord Buddha Śākyamuni was set up by Yaśa, the mother of Śayehasi and Dātta, the daughter-in-law of Grahadīna, the wife of the Kāyastha scribe (and) account keeper⁵⁰⁴ Bhaṭṭipriya, who is the grandson of Bhaṭṭihasti, (and) the son of Bhaṭṭisenaputra

216) Bodhisatva Image [Sharma 1989: 313]: Vrindāban; undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

⁵⁰² Rosenfield (1967: 270) dates this image to the year eighty-four, but the numerals are not legible in the text.

⁵⁰³ My translation slightly modifies Sharma's (1989: 312) series of familial relationships.

⁵⁰⁴ Falk (2002-3: 45) states this is an Iranian title, *āmāra*. The same title is found on the Nāga statue dated to year eighty.

Text:

1. sindhuka putrasya śreṣṭhasya hastikasya + +⁵⁰⁵ sa putro senakaḥ bodhisattva [prati]ṣṭhāpaya[ti]
+ + sarva budha puḷāye
2. sarva sattvānaṃ hitartha mātāpitṛṇaṃ puḷāye atra ca bodhisattva ///
3. senakenaḥ damaputra ca

Translation:

Senaka the son... of the Śreṣṭha Hastika, who was the son of Sindhuka (?) installs (this) Bodhisattva... for the honor of all Buddhas, for the welfare of all beings and for the honor of (his) parents... and Senaka, the son of Dama

217) Jina [Bajpai 1950: 14]: Mathurā(?); undated; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddhaṃ bhagavato sumatisya pratimā pra[ti]ṣṭhāpitā] ///
2. 6 mitrāyā somaguptasya dhi[tu] ///
3. capaki ? naryyakṣaya ? [rvv]

Translation:

Success! The image of the Lord Sumati⁵⁰⁶ was installed... 6 (the daughter) of Somagupta, the friend (?)... *capaki ? naryyakṣaya ? [rvv]*

218) Four-sided Jina [van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 244-5]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Ṭīlā): undated; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁵⁰⁷

(1a)siddha ko[ḷi]yato gaṇato ucena(1b)garito śakhato bamhadāsiato(1c)kulato śirigrihato
saṃbhokato(1d)a[r]yya jeṣṭhahastisya śiṣyo a[r]yya] mihi[lo]
(2a)ttasya śisy[o] aryya kṣera(2b)ko vācako tasya ni[r]vata(2c)na vara[ṇa]hastis[ya]
(3a)[ca] deviya ca dhita ja[ya](3b)devasya vadhu moṣiniye(3c)vadhu kuṭhasya kusuthasya-
(4a)dharmapa[ti]ha sthiraye(4b)dana śavadobhadrika(4c)sarvasatvannaṃ hiasukhaye

Translation:

Success! This is the gift, a four-sided Jina, of Sthirā the first wife of Kuṭha Kusutha, the daughter-in-law of Moṣini, the daughter-in-law of Jayadeava, the daughter of Devi and Varanahasti; at the request of the preacher Ārya Kṣeraka, the pupil of Ārya Mihila, the pupil of Ārya Jaṭhahasti (who is from) the Kottīya gaṇa, the Ucenagarī śākhā, the Brahmādāsika kula, the Śirigriha saṃbhoga. For the welfare and happiness of all beings.

219) Jina image [van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 280]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Ṭīlā): undated; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

⁵⁰⁵ There is no image for this inscription to determine how many *akṣaras* are missing from this line.

⁵⁰⁶ Bajpai (1950: 14) relates this image to the fifth Jain Tīrthaṅkara Sumati or Sumatinātha.

⁵⁰⁷ I have rearranged the text to make it more legible.

Text:

1. siddham mahārājasya rājātirājasya ///
2. dehanandisya śiṣyeṇa sen ///

Translation:

Success! Of the Great King, King of kings...(at the request of) sen-*x*, the pupil of Dehanandi...

220) Jina image [van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 282]:⁵⁰⁸ Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā): undated (Year 6?); object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

*Text:*⁵⁰⁹

- (1a)(*siddham sam)///[6? he ?] de 10(1b)etasya p[ū]rvvaya varanāto ga[nā](1c)to aya
hat[ṭ]ikiyato kulāto(1d)vajanagari[to] śakh[ā]to śiriya[to]
(2a)(*sambho)///gato dat[i]sya śiṣiniye(2b)mahanandisya sadhacar[i]ye(2c)balava[r]may[e]
nandiye ca śiṣiniy[e](2d)aka[ma]ye nirvvarthan[ā]
(3a)///[sya] dh[i]tu gramiko jayadevasya vadhūye [gra](3b)miko jayanāgasya dha[r]mapatniye
sihadatā[ye](3c) ? [a]yam⁵¹⁰ dānam

Translation:

(In year 6?), winter month *x*, day 10 – on this occasion - this gift of *x-pā/lā*, the mother of Sihadata, the first wife of the village-head Jayanāga, the daughter-in-law of the village-head Jayadeva, the daughter of *x*; at the request of *x-akāma*, the pupil of Nanda and Balava[r]ma, the companion of Mahanandi, the pupil of Dati (who is from) the Varāṇa *gaṇa*, the Āryya-Haṭikiya *kula*, the Vajanagarita *śākhā*.

221) Vardhamāna [van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 283-4]:⁵¹¹ Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Tīlā): undated (year 7?); object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// (7?) he 2 di 1 asya pyrvvayā varaṇato gaṇato ayya-nyista kulato [gra]⁵¹² ///
2. /// khato śirigrihato sabhogato bahavo⁵¹³ vacak[o] ca gaṇino ca samadi ///
3. /// vasya dinarasya śiṣini ayya jinadasi paṇatidhari taya śiṣini a[yya] ///
4. ghakaraba-paṇatihara-masopavasini⁵¹⁴ bubusya dhita rajyavasusya dhama ///
5. d[e]vilasya matu viṣṇubhavasya pidamahika vijayaśiriye dana vadha ///
6. /// ///

⁵⁰⁸ This is #86 in Shrava's list dated tentatively dated to year forty.

⁵⁰⁹ I have rearranged the text to make it more legible.

⁵¹⁰ Bühler (1892a: 387-8) reconstructs *śilāthambho*, but the last letter resembles *yam* and there is no other instance of an image being referred to as a stone pillar. I suggest reading *ayam danam*, this gift.

⁵¹¹ This is #112 in Shrava's list tentatively dated to year fifty.

⁵¹² Bühler (1894: 209) reads [*sa*], but there is a vertical stroke on the base of the *akṣara* that resembles a *r* conjunct.

⁵¹³ The reading of the first two *akṣaras* are clear but the meaning is unclear. Perhaps it is similar to *maha* found in the Jain inscription dated to year thirty-one [195].

⁵¹⁴ Bühler (1894: 209) interprets this compound as a *dvandva*, meaning Vijayaśiri is the one who fasted for a month (*masa-upavasini*) and one who upholds the teachings (*paṇatihara*) of the Arya *x*-Ghakaraba.

Translation:

(In year 7?) winter month 2, day 1 – on this occasion – the gift, a Vardhamāna image, of Vijayaśira, the paternal grandmother of Viṣṇubhava, the mother of Devila, (the first wife) of Rajyvasu, the daughter of Bubu, who fasted for a month and upheld the tenets of (the Ārya *x*)-ghakaraba; (at the request) of *x* Ārya, the pupil of Ārya Jinadasi who upholds the tenets, the pupil of Dinara...the *bahava*, preacher, and gaṇin Samadi-*x* (who is from) the Varana *gaṇa*, the Ārya-nyista *kula*, the *x śākhā*, and the Śirigrihato *saṃbhoga*.

222) Stone slab [Sahni 1927-8a: 67]: Mathurā, undated; object: stone slab; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. bodhisattvo sahā mātā-pitihī sahā upajhāyena dharmakena
2. sahā ātevāsikehi sahā atevāsinihi śīri vihāre
3. āchariyāna samitiyāna parigrahe sarva-buddha-pujāye

Translation:

This Bodhisattva, together with the parents, together with the teacher Dharmaka, together with the male pupils, together with the female pupils, in the Śīri vihāra; for the acceptance of the Samitiya teachers, for the honor of all Buddhas.

223) Seated Bodhisattva [Lüders §2]: Mathurā (Kaṭrā Mound); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// ++kaye naṃdāye kṣatrapa[sa] ///
2. /// (bo)dhisat[v]a visa + + t[a] + e (+ +) ///
3. savasatānaṃ hitasu(khā)
4. rtha(m)
5. śāvasthidiyānaṃ
6. prarigṛhe

Translation:

... (the gift) of the... Naṃdā, of the kṣatrapa, a Bodhisattva ... for the welfare and the happiness of all sentient beings for the acceptance of the Śāvasthidiyas.

224) Buddha image [Lüders §3]: Mathurā (Kaṭrā Mound); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// + + śāk[y](a)[s](i) + + ///
2. t. sārva[a]satāna
3. hitasukhaye

Translation:

... (an image of) Śākyasi(ha) (was installed) for the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings.

225) Śākyamuni image [Lüders §4]: Mathurā (Kaṭṛā Mound); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. bhagavato ś[ā]kyamunisya pratimā pratiṣṭhāpitā
2. + + + nā + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +
3. pitramātrabha

Translation:

(this) image of the Lord Śākyamuni was installed by (?) ... father (and) mother...

226) Pedestal [Lüders §5]: Mathurā (Kaṭṛā Mound); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// + [nta]mās[e 2 di]///
2. /// + ṃ si + + + + + ///
3. + + + + + + + + + + ta e[tehi] + + + + +
4. + + + + + + + + + + + + [na]ṃ + + + + +

Translation:

...month, day 2...

227) Corpulent figure [Lüders §6]: Mathurā (Kaṭṛā Mound); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

dakṣi

Translation: uncertain

228) Stone Fragment: [Lüders §7]: Mathurā (Kaṭṛā Mound); undated; object: stone fragment; type: uncertain; donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// sya prāvāri ///

Translation:

...of the prāvārika (cloak maker)...

229) Railing pillar [Lüders §11]: Mathurā (Bhūtesar); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: uncertain

230) Jain image [Lüders §13]: Mathurā (Kaṅkāli Ṭilā); undated; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

- 1 /// (śa)khāto vāca[ka] –
 - 2 [s]ya aryya-ṛṣidāsasya nirvarttanā ābhisārakasya bhaṭṭi-
dāmasya mā
 - 3 /// kā
- /// sa + s[v]at. ++ ///

Translation:

...(*the four-sided image of Jina is a gift)... of *x*, the mother(?) of Bhaṭṭidāma, the Ābhisāraka (native of Abhisāra); at the request of the preacher, Ārya Ṛṣidāsa (who is) from the *x śākhā*...

231) Standing Jina [Lüders §16]: Mathurā (Kankālī Ṭīlā); undated; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// (de)[va]putrasya huviṣkasya sa[m] ///

Translation:

... (in) year *x* of the Devaputra Huviṣka...

232) Jina [Lüders §22]: Mathurā (Kankālī Ṭīlā); undated; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. maha[śa]bhas[y]a i[y]a prat(i) –
2. mā pratathapitā āḍīha –
3. [ke]na rājapāliya –
4. kena priya dev[o]

Translation:

This image of Mahaśabha (Maharṣabha?) was installed by Āḍīhaka (who is) from the Rājapāliyaka (*śākhā). May the god be pleased.

233) Pedestal Fragment [Lüders §41]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. saṃ + + [r.] ? ? ? ? ? ? diva
2. se 10 asyā pūrvvay[e] dānaṃ bhikṣusya buddhanaṃndi(sya)
3. (the entire line has broken off)
4. [ḍā]re sarvvasa[tvā]na h[i]tasukhā[r]tha bhava[t]u

Translation:

In the year *x*, day 10, on this day the monk Buddhanaṃndi... may it be for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

234) Railing Pillar [Lüders §42]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: d[i] 10 8

Translation: day 18

235) Railing Pillar [Lüders §43]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: di 20 9

Translation: day 29

236) Corpulent Figure [Lüders §66]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); undated; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

[ś]r(ī)gatapara ◡ buddhadarśanaṃ⁵¹⁵

Translation: unclear

237) Miniature Stūpa [Lüders §68]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); undated; object: stone; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

nuśāpūyaṃye śurānāsyā ditu

Translation:

Gift of Nuśāpriya, daughter of Śurānā

238) Railing Pillar [Lüders §69]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

a. Śīrāha

b. ///vasa///

Translation: uncertain

239) Railing Pillar [Lüders §70]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

hā

⁵¹⁵ Lüders (1961: 102) reads *buddhadarśav[iy](a)*.

Translation: uncertain

240) Railing Pillar [Lüders §71]: Mathurā (Jamālpur Mound); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: uncertain

241) Bodhisattva Image [Lüders §72]: Mathurā (Circular Road Mound); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// [va]rṣāmāse 2 divase 6 [a] + + + + + [ṇena] b[o]dhisāto p[r]atis[th]āpito mi r.ā.i + [h]ā.e [y]e
+ + [va v]o + +

Translation:

... rainy month 2, day 6 – (on this day) – a bodhisattva was installed by x...

242) Stone slab [Lüders §75]: Mathurā; undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

rājanāpitasya jāḍasa

Translation: ... of Jāḍa, the royal barber...

243) Seated Buddha [Lüders §76]: Mathurā (Dhūnsārpārā Quarter); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. + + + + + + + + + + [māse] [p]ra[tha] 1 d.vas. 30 eta[sya]
2. (pūrvāyām) + + + + + + + + + + ye [phal](gu)[ya]śa[sya] vadh[ūy]e devarakṣi[t.]
3. + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + [sa]r[va]sat[v]a-hita
4. ///

Translation:

In the first month, day 30 – on this occasion – ... the daughter-in-law of Phalguyaśa, the ... of Devarakṣita ... for the welfare (and happiness) of all beings.

244) Railing Pillar [Lüders §77]: Mathurā (Gopālpur Quarter); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: Rama

Translation: Rama

245) Stone Fragment [Lüders §79]: Mathurā (Mātā Galī); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// p.to cutakavihāre vyāstā ///
2. /// [h.]sāṅgakana dharmavalaṃ ///
3. /// rṣāṇā ?⁵¹⁶ kṣāraṇika ///

Translation:

... the Mahāsāṅghikas, the supporters of the Buddhist religion... residing in the Cutaka (mango) vihāra...

246) Pillar [Lüders §82]: Mathurā (Bharatpur State Mound); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. + + + ṣṭ[i]cchatraṃ
2. + + + + + + +

Translation:

... post (yaṣṭi?) and an umbrella...

247) Corpulent figure [Lüders §84]: Mathurā (Gāyatri Ṭīlā); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. dasasya vadhū[ye] + ///
2. vṛdhisya bhāgīn[īye] ///

Translation:

...by the daughter-in-law of Dasa... by the sister's daughter of Vṛdhi...

248) Pedestal [Lüders §85]: Mathurā (Dig Gate); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

Dāsasya kuṭu[bini]ye + + [ma]s[i]ye

Translation:

By ...masī, the housewife of Dāsa...

249) Seated Buddha [Lüders §87]: Mathurā (Sītalā Ghāṭī); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// (*sarvasatvā)nāṃ hitasukhārtha[ṃ]

⁵¹⁶ The symbol here looks like a cross inside a box with a horizontal line to the right that has been read as the numerals ninety and one by Sahnī (1927-8a: 68-9). However, the reading of these numerals is not certain and therefore I have not included this inscription among those composed in the reign of Vāsudeva I.

Translation: ...for the welfare and happiness of all beings...

250) Standing Buddha [Lüders §90]: Mathurā (Jamnā Bāgh); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [bhi]khusa budhav[ā]lasa dāna mātā-
2. pit[r]ina pujāye savasavana ca

Translation:

The gift of the monk Budhavāla, for the worship of (his) parents and all being.

251) Pedestal [Lüders §92]: Mathurā (Isāpur); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// + va [eke] ///
2. /// + + + + + + + + dānaṃ

Translation: uncertain

252) Jina Image [Lüders §93]: Mathurā (Isāpur); undated; object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [siddha na]ganandisya śiṣya + + + sya [nirvva]tana + +
2. + + sya dhiti[u] bhavana[nda]sya kuṭumbi[ni]ye ma +
3. + sya devilasya mātu + + ye + +

Translation:

Success! (the gift) of *x*, the wife of *x*, the mother of Devila,⁵¹⁷ at the request of *x*, pupil of Naganandi

253) Nāga image [Lüders §95]: Mathurā (Jamnā Bāgh); undated; object: stone image; type: Nāga; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: Dadhika[r]ṇṇ[o]⁵¹⁸

Translation: Dadhikaṛṇṇa

254) Small Buddha [Lüders §96]: Mathurā; undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

⁵¹⁷ A person named Devila also donated a pillar base in year seventy-seven [99]. In that inscription Devila is identified as the priest of the Nāga Dadhikaṛṇṇa shrine.

⁵¹⁸ The name of the Nāga Dadhikaṛṇṇa appears in 99 and 185.

Text: mah[a]r]aj[ā] ⁵¹⁹

Translation: ...the Great King...

255) Śaka figure [Lüders §101]: Mathurā; undated; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: Nāyasa

Translation: of Nāya

256) Corpulent Figure [Lüders §104]: Mathurā (Rāl-Bhaḍār); undated; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. priyatām
2. sidhaḥ

Translation: May the Siddha be pleased.

257) Pillar Fragment [Lüders §105]: Mathurā (Koṭā mound); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: uncertain

258) Pedestal [Lüders §106]: Mathurā (Koṭā mound); undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: Jayadevaputreṇa ghoṣena

Translation: By Ghoṣa, the son of Jayadeva

259) Female figure [Lüders §112]: Mathurā (Saknā); undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// [tha]vaṣariṣāmāse ///
2. /// [t]vāna hitasūkhā ///

Translation:

In the month of *vaṣariṣā* (varṣa?)...(for) the welfare and happiness of (all beings)

260) Śaka Figure [Lüders §119]: Mathurā (Gaṇeṣrā); undated; object: stone image; type: Imperial; donor: Imperial; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. maha[daṃḍa]nā[yakasay] yamaṣa-

⁵¹⁹ The name of the king is written in a cartouche.

2. [heka]s[y]a [v]iś[v]a[saka]sya ulānāsyā paṭimā

*Translation:*⁵²⁰

The image of the viśvasika Ulāna (the subordinate) of the Mahādaṇḍanāyaka Yamaśakeka.

261) Seated Buddha [Lüders §121]: Mathurā (Naugavā); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// [bhikṣ](u)s[y]a dharmahastika ///
2. vihare ///
3. [p](ra)tim[ā] pratiṣ[th]ap.t.

Translation:

Of the monk Dharmahastika ... in the vihāra ... the image was installed.

262) Nāga/Nāgini image [Lüders §124]: Mathurā (Giridharpur Mounds); undated; object: stone image; type: Nāga; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// [s](ya) prāvārika[s](ya) ///

Translation:

/// of the cloak maker ///

263) Stone-bowl [Lüders §125]: Mathurā (Pālīkheṛā); undated; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// (mah)āsaṅghīyānaṃ pariḡra[he] ma[t]āpitṛṇ[ā]ṃ /// ... /// naṃ hita[s](ukhāye) bh[ava]t[u] ◡

Translation:

For the acceptance of the Mahāsaṅghikas. May it be for the health and happiness (of the donor's) parents ...

264) Detached Head [Lüders §127]: Mathurā (Pālīkheṛā); undated; object: stone head; type: Architectural(?); donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

Lavana

Translation: Lavana⁵²¹

⁵²⁰ Lüders (1937-8: 206) translates this inscription as “the image of the great general, the *yamaśakeka*(?) (and?) *viśvasika* Ulāna.” I have offered my own translation, which is explained in section 3.3.2.

⁵²¹ Lüders (1961: 167) suggests that some of these short label inscriptions are monograms that identify the figure being depicted in the statue.

265) Stone fragment [Lüders §129]: Mathurā (Pālīkheṛā); undated; object: stone image; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: ry[a]

Translation: uncertain

266) Pedestal [Lüders §130]: Mathurā (Pālīkheṛā); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A. Right side

1. /// [r]asya

2. /// katyā

B. Left Side

sa///

Translation: uncertain

267) Pedestal [Lüders §131]: Mathurā (Pālīkheṛā); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

A. (front side completely effaced)

B. (rim of left quarter of the) /// tv[ā]nām hit[a]sukhāe

Translation:

... for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

268) Fragment [Lüders §132]: Mathurā (Salempur); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: dharma

Translation: uncertain

269) Pedestal [Lüders §133]: Mathurā (Maholī-Uspḥār Road); undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: Professional; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [śrī] a[ś]vadevasya

2. bhavanandi-prāvarikaputrāsya

Translation:

Of Śri Aśvadeva, the son of the cloak maker Bhavanandi.

270) Seated Buddha [Lüders §135]: Mathurā (Anyor); undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist (lay); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. (śaky)opāsakasya suśasya hāruṣasya dānaṃ budhapratimā ūttarasya⁵²² hārū[śasya]
2. vihāra sahā mātāpitihi sarvasatvānaṃ hitasukhartha[m]

Translation:

The gift of the Śākya lay person Suśa Hāruṣa,⁵²³ a Buddha image in the Ūttara (northern) Hāruṣa vihāra, together with [his] parents, for the health and happiness of all beings.

271) Nāga [Lüders §138]: Mathurā (Chargaon); undated; object: stone slab; type: Nāga; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. ++ [ra]jati[raja]⁵²⁴ ++ [putra] ///
2. + + + + + + + + + [pu]rvāyyā ///
3. + + + + + + + + + [k]āsas[v]avah[a]darava ///
4. + + + + + + + + + payati ///

Translation: uncertain

272) Kubera [Lüders §140]: Mathurā (Parkham); undated; object: stone slab; type: Indic; donor: uncertain (Jain?); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. āryya[sya] +
2. huṣami +
3. sya niva-
4. rttana –

Translation:

... the request of the venerable (Na)huṣami(tr)...

273) Kubera [Lüders §141]: Mathurā (Parkham); undated; object: stone slab; type: Indic; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// traḥ ya ///
2. /// [dha]tham[o]

Translation: uncertain.

274) Female figure [Lüders §142]: Mathurā (Gukharauli); undated; object: stone slab; type: Indic; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

⁵²² A similar phrase “a temple in the northern Navamikā, *utarāyaṃ na[va]mikāyaṃ hā[rmya]*” appears in the inscription dated to year ten of Kaniṣka I [32]. Perhaps this is another directional marker meaning northern.

⁵²³ Lüders (1961: 171) notes that the doubling of names in this inscription is similar to Vagamarega and Haṣṭhunḥmarega in the Wardak vase inscription [78].

⁵²⁴ The royal epithet suggests that this slab was donated in the Kuṣāṇa period.

Text:

/// [sya] senas[y]a śi ///

Translation:

... the pupil (śiṣyo) of Sena...

275) Pedestal [Lüders §144]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. [si]ddha[m] maharaja ///
2. ya ///
3. paṭimā ne ///
4. va ///

Translation:

Success! (in the year of) the mahārāja ... an image ...

276) Railing pillar [Lüders §145]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: sa[m]ghadevasa

Translation: Saṃghadeva

277) Railing pillar [Lüders §146]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: joṭisa

Translation: of Joṭisa

278) Railing pillar [Lüders §147]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: dāsa

Translation: Dāsa

279) Railing pillar [Lüders §148]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: Joṭisa

Translation: Joṭisa

280) Railing pillar [Lüders §149]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: śivara⁵²⁵

Translation: Śivara

281) Pedestal [Lüders §151]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: Buddhist; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddham śrī śiśurik[a]yā jayadā[sa]sya kuṭumbi + + + + + m[u]gaki[.i]kā
2. [bhi]kṣu

Translation:

Success! ...Śrī Śiśurikā, the wife of Jayadāsa... monk...

282) Buddha image [Lüders §153]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: /// sarvasatvā-hita-sukhār[tha]

Translation: ... for the welfare and happiness of all beings.

283) Fragment [Lüders §156]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// ma ///
2. /// lohitaṇa ///
3. /// [y]e ///

Translation: ...blood relative of the donor (?)...

284) Stone ball [Lüders §158]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: sign for 100

285) Stone slab [Lüders §163]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: /// vakasya najika ///

Translation: uncertain

286) Fragment [Lüders §164]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

⁵²⁵ The inscription is written upside down.

Text:

1. /// [paṇa]śat[a] ///
2. /// m=aṣṭaśata 100 8 gandhe ///
3. /// ? [aṣṭ]a

Translation: uncertain; might be a list of numbers for expenses

287) Pedestal [Lüders §165]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: /// ya[p]asa ///

Translation: uncertain

288) Fragment [Lüders §166]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: /// ḥ savihito ///

Translation: uncertain

289) Coping stone [Lüders §169]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Architectural; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text: /// [pra]tiṣ[ṭh]itaḥ [sa] ///

Translation: ... was installed...

290) Umbrella Fragment [Lüders §171]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Buddhists; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// ni[tata] ? si[dahatha.] ///
2. /// ? [ya]khace .ik[a]syā v[adhū] ///
3. ///[rya] ? ? [ti]niyā [kha] ///

Translation: uncertain

291) Pedestal [Lüders §175]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone image; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. siddha[m] saddhisya vadhu matisena[sya]
2. dhitā nagadasasya dharmapatini
3. /// ///

Translation:

Success! The daughter-in-law of Saddhi, the daughter of Matisena, the first wife of Nagadasa ...

292) Stone slab [Lüders §181]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

/// ?m[i]trasa putrasya rañ[o] viṣṇum[i]trasa dhitu i[m]dragibhadrāye dh[ā]t[i]ye gotam[i]ye
mitrāye dānaṃ ◡

Translation:

The gift of Mitrā, a gotamī, the nurse of Iṃdragibhadrā, daughter of King Viṣṇumitra,⁵²⁶ son of x-mitra.

293) Buddha statue [Lüders §183]: provenance unknown; undated; object: stone; type: Buddhist; donor: uncertain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. ///? bhagavato Śākyamuṇisya [pra] ///
2. /// t[iṣ]ṭhāveti masaravi ? hare dasa ///

Translation:

... (image) of the lord Śākyamuni... (he installs it) in the masara vihāra *dasa* ///

4.3. Yavana or Uncertain Era [10].

1) Stone Bull [CGI 365]: Kashmir(?); Year 100 (=227 CE), Kuṣāṇa era (?); object: stone; type: Indic; donor; unknown; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1 100 narapati maṅkha

*Translation:*⁵²⁷

(In the year) 100, (in the reign of) King Maṅkha.

2) Stone Vessel [Sircar 1955-6: 231]: Kailvan District Patna (Bihar); Year 108 (=235 CE), Kuṣāṇa era (?); object: stone vessel; type: Architectural; donor: EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

rājño arya viśaghamitrasya śavachhare satāthe 100 8 gimha-pakhe s[a>(*ṭha)mā 8 divasa
pachame 5 bhagavato achariyasya kuḍe upanite (*) mahanadake phagunadike kiti-bhūtika-miśa
hi kuḍe upanita bhagavat[o] (*)

⁵²⁶ Lüders (1961: 207) suggests that King Viṣṇumitra in this inscription is the same figure whose coins were found at Rohilkhand.

⁵²⁷ Salomon 1996: 244.

Translation:

In the one hundred eighth - 108 - year, on the eighth - 8 - fortnight of summer, on the fifth - 5 - day of the King Ārya Viśākhmitra, the vessel of the most worshipful teacher is offered as a present. The vessel of the most worshipful one, which is verily associated with his fame and power, is offered as a present (in the name of) the Mahānadaka and the Phalgunadikā.

3) Stone Box [CGI 538]: Swat, Pakistan; Year 286 (=111/2 CE), Yavana era (?); object: stone; type: uncertain; donor: uncertain; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 2 100 20 20 20 20 4 1 1 ca-
2. rimaśaradabah[u]la 4 1
3. śaribhasa

*Translation:*⁵²⁸

(In year) 286 carimaśaradabah[u]la 5, of Śaribha

4) Mahāvira image [Quintanilla 2007: 265]:⁵²⁹ Mathurā; Year 299 (=124/5 CE), Yavana era (?); object: stone image; type: Jain; donor: Jain; EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. nama svarva śidhaṃ ārahāttanāṃ mahārājasya rājatirājasya svarvacchara svate⁵³⁰ d- ///
2. 200 90 9 [:] hematamāsa 2 [di]vase 1 ārahāta mahāvīrāsya prātim[ā] ///
3. /// sya okhārikāye dhitu⁵³¹ ukatikāye ca okhāye svāvīkā bhāgīnī[ye] ///
4. /// śīrikasya śīvadīnasya⁵³² ca vata ārahātāyatāne sthāpīto
5. /// devakulaṃ ca ///

Translation:

Homage to all Siddhas and Arhats. In the year (two hundred ninety-nine) - 299 - winter month 2, day 1 of the Great King, King of Kings; (this) image of the Arhat Mahāvira was installed in the sanctuary of the Arhats by Okhārikā and her daughter Ukatikā, and by Okhā, the lay sister... an accordance with the vow of Śīrika and Śīvadīna... and a shrine.

5) Reliquary Year 303 [CGI 178]: Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan; Year 303 (=128/9 CE), Yavana era (?); object: stone; type: Buddhist; donor: unknown; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

[outside of base]: [1] sabatsa 1 1 1 100 1 1 1 [śravaṇasa] m[asasa] d[ivase 4 4 macayemaṇa bha]gav[ato] śar[ir]a [ta]ṇ[uvae] thuba[e] sagharamu pradīḥaveti

⁵²⁸ Sadakata 2001. The edition appears to be in Japanese and I require an English translation.

⁵²⁹ Cribb (2005: 214) suggests that the unnamed ruler is Vima Kadphises based on the date supposedly in the Yavana era. This is likely the correct interpretation, however I have omitted this from my corpus since the name of the ruler is missing.

⁵³⁰ All the *sa akṣaras* in this inscription have a loop on the tail that resembles the ligature *sva*.

⁵³¹ The *dhi* looks like a *vi*.

⁵³² Both *i* vowels have two lines extending from the head of the *akṣara* indicating long *ī*.

[inside of base]: [2] avaśāūrami madapidupuya(*e) sarvabudhaṇa puyae sa [3]
rvapracā(*ga)budhaṇa puyae sarvarahataṇa puya(*e)
[outside of base]: [4] putradarasa puyae mitrañadīsalohidaṇa puya(*e) maharayasa
gramas[v]amisa avakhazadasa puyae kṣatravasa

*Translation:*⁵³³

[outside of base]: [1] In the 303rd year, on the 8th day of the month of Śrāvaṇa, *macayemaṇa*
establishes relics of the Lord in his personal stūpa in the monastery,

[inside of base]: [2] in Avaśāūra. In honor of mother and father, in honor of all Buddhas, [3] in
honor of solitary Buddhas, in honor of saints,

[outside of base]: [4] in honor of (his) son(s) and wife, in honor of friends, relatives, blood
relatives, in honor of the Great King, the village master Avakhazada, the governor.

6) Loriyan Tangai Pedestal [CGI 111]: Loriyan Tangai, Malakand Dist., Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,
Pakistan; Year 318 (=143/4 CE), Yavana era (?); object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor:
Buddhist; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. sa 1 1 1 100 10 4 4 proṭhavadasa di 20 4 1 1 1 budhaghoṣasa daṇamu[khe]
2. saghorumasa sadaviyarisa

*Translation:*⁵³⁴

Year 318, day 27 of Prauṣṭhapada – (the) pious gift of Buddhaghoṣa, a co-resident of
Saṅghoruma (Saṅghavarma).

7) Jamālgaṛhī Inscription [CGI 116]: Jamālgaṛhī (court 7), Mardan Dist., Khyber
Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan; Year 359 (=184/5 CE); object: stone slab; type Buddhist; donor:
Buddhist; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. saṃ 1 1 1 100 20 20 10 4 4 1 aśpaī[u]sa paḍhammaṃmi lśavaena poda[ena sa]haehi pida-
[pu](*trehi)
2. [u]ḍīliakehi i[ś]e raṇe preṭhavide dhamaūte[ana] parigrahe sarvasa//(*pana) . . .

*Translation:*⁵³⁵

Year 359, on the first of Aśvayuj, an asylum connected with religion was established in this
grove by the śrāvaka Potaka, with (or for) the Uḍḍīliaka companions, father and sons, for the
acceptance of all beings...

8) Hashtnagar Pedestal [CGI 124]: near Rajar (Hashtnagar area), Charsadda, Khyber
Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan; Year 384 (=209/10 CE), Yavana era (?); object: stone image; type:
Buddhist; donor: unknown; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

⁵³³ Baums 2012: 239-40.

⁵³⁴ Konow 1929: 107.

⁵³⁵ Konow 1929: 113.

Text:

1. saṃ 1 1 1 100 20 20 20 20 4 proṭhavadasa masasa divasaṃmi paṃcami 4 1

*Translation:*⁵³⁶

Year 384, in the fifth -5- day of the month of Prauṣṭhapada.

9) Skarah Dheri Image [CGI 133]: Spinvari, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan; Year 399 (=224/5 CE), Yavana era (?); object: stone image; type: Buddhist; donor: unknown; Gāndhārī/Kharoṣṭhī

Text:

1. vaṣ(*e) ek[u]ṇa[ca]duśatimae aṣaḍasa masasa divase 20 1 1
2. s[va]r]gapade daśama bharadu śa[r]mam artha[e] taṇay[e]ś[u]

*Translation:*⁵³⁷

In the four-hundredth year less one (i.e. 399), on day 22 of the month of Āṣāḍha. In heaven may she carry the tenth. I ask for protection of the children.

10) Stone slab [Lüders §123]: Mathurā (Giridharpur Mounds): Year 270, era unknown; object: stone slab; type: uncertain; Buddhist (?); donor: Buddhist (lay?); EHS/Brāhmī

Text:

1. /// varṣa ///
2. mahārājasya 200 70 bh[u] ///
3. gotamiye balānā[sya]
4. tu[mā] ///
5. baladhikāsya bh[u] ///
6. bhāryaye dānaṃ sa[r]va ///
7. [dha] pūcaye sap[itu]m[aduna] ///

Translation:

(Year) 270 of the Great King... the gift of the wife... of Baladhikāsya... gotamiye balānā...in honor of all (buddhas) with (her) parents...

⁵³⁶ Konow 1929: 119.

⁵³⁷ Konow 1929: 127.

Appendix 2: Kuṣāṇa Coins

1. Coins of Kujula Kadphises⁵³⁸

A. Bactrian Issues

Heraus Type (portrait of Kujula with king on horse based on Gondophares 20-45 CE)



silver tetradrachm 15.78g [1996,0303.1]
Obverse: Bust of Kujula Kadphises
Reverse: King of horseback
Inscription (Greek): the tyrant, chief, Kushan



copper 9.42g [IOC.231]
Obverse: Gondophares on horse
Reverse: deity holding trident

Eucratides I Type (based on Indo-Greek king Eucratides *ca.* 175-40 BCE coins)



Silver Obol 0.55g [1890,0404.22]
Obverse: Bust of King (Eucratides)
Reverse: Two star caps of the Dioscuri
Inscription: (Greek): ...ONO... ...OZOYAO
Eucratides



silver tetradrachm 16.86g [1888,1208.133]
Obverse: Bust of King
Reverse: king on horse
Inscription (Greek): Of Great King

⁵³⁸ Coins of Kujula are on the left and the according prototypes are on the right. All images of these coins are courtesy of the British Museum online collection except the original Hermaios issue.

B. South Asian Issues

Hermaeus Type (Kujula imitation of Indo-Greek Hermaeus (90-70 BCE))



Copper drachm 7.13g [1844,0909.24]
 Obverse: Bust of King in profile, with diadem
 Inscription (Greek): meant to read King Hermaeus the Savior (blundered legend)
 Reverse: Heracles
 Inscription (Gāndhārī): “Kujula Kadphises, Kushan Chief, steadfast in the true law”
 (*kajula kasasa dharmathidasa kušana yavugasa*)



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silver drachm 2.24g
 Obverse: Bust of King
 Inscription (Greek): “of King Hermaios, the Savior” (*basileos soterios hermaiou*)
 Reverse: Zeus, seated on throne with scepter
 Inscription (Gāndhārī):
 “of the Great King, the Savior, Hermaya”
 (*maharajasa tratarasa hermayasa*)

Augustus Type (based on Augustus (27 BCE -14 CE) prototype)



Copper 3.37g [1850,0305.184]
 Obverse: Bust of king, in guise of Roman Emperor
 Inscription (Greek): (of Kujula Kadphises Kushan Chief)
 Reverse: King seated on curule chair
 Inscription (Gāndhārī): “of Kujula Kadphises, steadfast in the true law, Kushan Chief”
 (*kuyula ka ? ? [sa] ca dharmathidasa kušana yauasa*)



alloy 15.35g [G1874,0715.429]
 Obverse: Augustus
 Reverse: Tyche

⁵³⁹ Coin image courtesy of coinindia.com/galleries-hermaios.html [MIG 415p, Bop 3A].

Bull and Camel Type (based on Indo-Scythian Kṣatrapa Zeionises' bull and lion coin)



copper 9.27g [1850,1130.41]
 Obverse: Bull
 Inscription (Greek): corrupted
 Reverse: Camel
 Inscription (Gāndhārī): “of the Great king,
 “King of Kings, Kujula Kadphises”
 (*maharayasa rayatirayasa kuyula kasa kaphasa*)



copper 10.35g [IOLC.892]
 Obverse: Bull
 Inscription (Greek): corrupted
 Reverse (lion)
 Inscription (Gāndhārī): “of the Kṣatrapa
 Zeionises/Jihonika son of Manigulasa”
 (*manigulasaputrasa chatrapasa jihuniasa*)

2. Coins of Vima Takto (Soter Megas)



Tetradrachm (Indian-standard: copper alloy) 8.08g [IOLC.1707]
 Obverse: Bust of Mitra, seven rays, 3 pronged tamga
 Reverse: king on horseback
 Inscription (Greek): “of the King of Kings, the Great Savior” (*basileos basileon soter megas*)



Drachm 4.37g [1894,0506.814]

Obverse: Bust with tamga

Reverse: Standing Zeus with thunderbolt in left hand and scepter in right hand

Inscription (Greek): “of the King, the Great Savior” (*basileon soter megas*)



Tetradrachm 9.32 [1894,0506.800]

Obverse: King on horseback (based on Indo-Scythian/Indo-Parthian)

Inscription (Greek): “of the King of kings, Great Savior” (*basileos basileon soter megas*)

Reverse: Zeus, facing right with scepter in left hand, and making benediction with right hand. In the right field is a pot with a flower emerging

Inscription (Gāndhārī): “of the Great King, the King of Kings, the Great one, Savior” (*maharajasa rajatirajasa mahatasa tratarasa*)

3. Coins of Vima Kadphises.



Stater 8g (1888,1208.534)

Obverse: Bust of king with club and tanga

Inscription (Greek): “of the King, Vima Kadphises” (*basilasayasa oohmo kadaphises*)

Reverse: Wesho/Siva holding trident in right hand and animal in left; tamga and nandipada

Inscription (Gāndhārī): “Great King, King of Kings, Lord of the world, Great Lord, Vima Kadphises, the Savior” (*maharayasa rayadiraya sarvaloga isvara mahisvarasa vima kapthisasa tratarasa*)



Stater 7.7g [1933,0712.1]

Obverse: king on elephant

Inscription (Greek): “of the King, Vima Kadphises” (*basilasayasa oohmo kadaphises*)

Reverse: standing Wesho/ and bull

Inscriptions (Gāndhārī): “Great King, King of Kings, Lord of the world, Great Lord, Vima Kadphises, the Savior” (*maharayasa rayadiraya sarvaloga išvara mahiśvarasa vima kapthiśasa tratara*)

4. Coins of Kaniška I.



Stater 7.97g [1894,0506.26]

Obverse: standing king, beard, facing left, nomadic dress, sword to left, right hand holding a spear, left hand making offering, with elephant goad

Inscription (Bactrian): “of the King of Kings, Kaniška the Kuṣāṇa” (*ṣaonanoṣao kaneṣhi koṣano*)

Reverse: standing Wesho, beard, top knot, four arms: lower left = animal, upper left = trident, lower right = extended with water pot, upper right = thunderbolt

Inscription (Bactrian): *oeṣo*



Stater 7.89g [1894,0506.18]

Obverse: standing king, spear, goad, flowing cloak, sword on hip

Inscription (Bactrian): “of the King of Kings, Kaniška, the Kuṣāṇa” (*ṣaonanoṣao kaneṣhi koṣano*)

Reverse: Nana, facing right, right hand with lion wand, left hand holding offering, tamga
Inscription (Bactrian): nana

5. Coins of Huviška.



Quarter stater 1.98g [IOC.305]

Obverse: bust of Huviška, holding club

Inscription (Bactrian): “of the King of Kings, Huviška” (*šaonanošao ooh ///*)

Reverse: Ardoxsho, folded in tunic, holding cornucopia



Stater 7.79g [1865,0803.16]

Obverse: Bust of Huviška, ladder type diadem, emerging from mountain, holding club in his

Inscription (Bactrian): “of the King of Kings, Huviška, the Kušāna” (*šaonanošao ooeški košano*)
right hand, flames on shoulder

Reverse: Skandakumāra (ax; sword to right), Mahāsena (radiating nimbus; sword to right),
Bizago (holding spear, helmet)

6. Coin of Kaniška II.



Quarter Stater 1.97g [IOC.295]

Obverse: Standing king with tailing tunic, holding spear, trident over altar

Inscription (Bactrian): “the King of Kings, Kaniška, the Kuṣāṇa (*ṣaonanoṣao kaneṣko koṣano*)

Reverse: Ardoxsho, sitting on throne, holding diadem in left hand

7. Coin of Vāsudeva II (Brāhmī script)



Stater 7.84g [1946,1004.715]

Obverse: Standing king with tailing tunic, hand over altar

Reverse: Wesho/Siva standing, bull behind

7. Coin of Mahi (Brāhmī script)



Stater 7.67g [1894,0506.116]

Obverse: Standing king, wearing decorated tunic, hold lion scepter in left hand, right hand over altar

Inscription (Brāhmī): Mahi

Reverse: Ardoxsho, seated facing left

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